



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Wishing You and Yours a Very Merry Christmas

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE December 20, 2019

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

It is hard to believe Christmas is here and that 2019 is drawing to a close. Between the holiday parties and shopping for gifts for loved ones, the season always seems to go too quickly.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas, it has been heartwarming to see just how generous Central and Northern New Yorkers are this time of year. Whether it is giving of your time to ring the bell at the Salvation Army's Red Kettle or donating food to a local food pantry so a

family in need can have a nice Christmas dinner, the people of our region always go above and beyond to take care of their neighbors, especially during the holidays.

This time of year, in addition to looking out for the less fortunate, many members of our community also make extra time to show their support for the brave men and women of our military. In 2019, I was again pleased to take part in the “Christmas Cards for Our Troops” program. This special effort, which is organized by the Albany Veterans Miracle Center and Ogdensburg native and radio personality Melody Burns, collects signed Christmas cards to send to troops serving overseas or being treated in hospitals, as well as to veterans.

While receiving a holiday card greeting seem insignificant to some, this small gesture of sending Christmas cards to the brave men and women of our military lets them know their service and the many sacrifices they have made defending our nation are appreciated. This year, thanks to the generosity of individuals, families, businesses and other organizations throughout our region, more than 10,000 cards were collected in my offices.

If you missed an opportunity to give back during the holiday season, do not forget that there is always a need to do so every day of the year. In fact, it is estimated that almost 30 percent of all charitable donations that individuals make occur during the holiday season, and specifically December. Whether it be a monetary donation to a local organization in need or volunteering your time to a worthy cause, as we enter 2020, I encourage you to remember this statistic and continue to give back throughout the year.

From my family to you and yours, I wish you the best for a holiday filled with happiness and special memories made with loved ones. Merry Christmas and happy New Year!