



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara seeking nominees for Senate's Veterans Hall of Fame to pay tribute to 'local heroes'

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 26, 2020

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So many veterans served our nation courageously and honorably, and then returned home to lift the lives of our local communities.

Elmira, N.Y., February 26—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) is seeking nominations for the New York State Senate's "Veterans Hall of Fame," an online tribute to the military and civilian lives of distinguished veterans from the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and throughout New York State.

“So many veterans served our nation courageously and honorably, and then returned home to lift the lives of our local communities. The Senate Veterans Hall of Fame is just one more way to give a local veteran a well-deserved and well-earned expression of our gratitude and admiration,” said O’Mara, who represents New York’s 58th Senate District encompassing Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben and Yates counties, and part of Tompkins County (the city and town of Ithaca, and the towns of Enfield, Newfield and Ulysses).

The Senate established its Veterans Hall of Fame in 2005. It honors New York State veterans whose service in the United States Armed Forces has been accompanied by service to the community and accomplishments as a civilian. It pays tributes to veterans representing Senate districts statewide.

The 2020 Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Albany is planned for early May to coincide with this year’s Memorial Day observances.

O’Mara is accepting nominations for this year’s 58th Senate District inductee until Friday, March 27, 2020. Nomination letters, which should include a short biography highlighting the nominee’s military and civilian service awards and achievements, can be e-mailed to

omara@nysenate.gov.

O’Mara has inducted the following area veterans into the Senate Veterans Hall of Fame:

- > Philip C. Smith, a highly decorated Korean War combat veteran and well-known figure in Schuyler County government and veterans’ affairs as the former director of the Schuyler County Veterans’ Service Agency (2011);

- > J. Arthur “Archie” Kieffer, longtime Chemung County historian and a World War II combat veteran (2012);

> Steuben County native, former Painted Post Mayor, and World War II combat veteran

Roswell L. "Roz" Crozier, Jr. (2013);

> Anthony J. "Tony" Specchio, Sr., a lifelong Watkins Glen resident and a fixture in civic and veterans affairs (2014);

> P. Earle Gleason, a lifelong Yates County resident and the former, longtime Director of the Yates County Veterans' Service Agency (2016);

> Warren A. Thompson, a lifelong Steuben County resident and farmer, and a stalwart in the county's civic and veterans affairs (2018); and

> Last year, the late Paul C. "Digger" Vendetti, World War II United States Navy veteran, Elmira native and longtime caretaker at Woodlawn National Cemetery.

Other area veterans who are Hall of Fame members are Frank C. "Fritz" Pesesky, a veteran of World War II and former director of the Chemung County Veterans Service Office (2005);

William K. Kastner, a Vietnam veteran and longtime director of the Steuben County

Veterans Service Agency (2006); and Robert Laskaris, a highly decorated combat veteran and well-known figure in Chemung County veterans' affairs (2008).