



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

REAR ADMIRAL RICHARD WEST WILL BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT SAMPSON VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY DEDICATION CEREMONY JULY 30th

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO July 15, 2011

| ISSUE: **VETERANS**



A genuine naval hero with deep roots to the Sampson Naval Base and the Finger Lakes Region will be the featured speaker at the dedication ceremony for the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Rear Admiral Richard West, USN (Ret.), is a distinguished and accomplished naval veteran, whose career has encompassed a wide range of operational experience, high-level assignments, and leadership positions.

Admiral West has a unique personal connection to the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery. He was born while his father, Dana L. West was stationed at the former Sampson Naval Base, where the cemetery is now located, as a Recruit Company Commander in the U.S. Navy. Dana West would serve in World War II aboard the Navy

destroyer U.S.S. Gyatt. He went on to an accomplished career as a coach, teacher, mentor and later, principal to the students of the Port Byron School District. In 1999, Port Byron named its new school building Dana L. West High School in his honor. He will now be one of the first servicemen to be buried at the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

“I can think of no one more fitting to deliver the keynote address at the cemetery’s dedication than Admiral Richard West, who has proudly followed in his family tradition of courageous service to our Nation and to our community,” said Senator Nozzolio. “His outstanding leadership, knowledge and experience has been invaluable in reaching this important milestone in the creation of the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery. It is a tremendous honor that Admiral West will be joining us on this momentous day for our servicemen and women.”

“Admiral West’s personal support and assistance has helped us overcome many obstacles to establish the cemetery as a world-class final resting place for the many veterans who served with honor and dignity,” continued Senator Nozzolio. “I look forward to his keynote address, which will surely be a moving tribute to the dedication and sacrifice of our Nation’s veterans.”

Growing up in Port Byron, New York and graduating from the University of Rochester, Admiral West has strong ties to the Finger Lakes Region. His highly accomplished 38-year military career began when he joined the Navy in 1965, serving as a Surface Warfare Officer. Admiral West served in the Vietnam War with the Riverine Forces, a joint U.S. Army and Navy force that carried out strike and patrol operations along the Mekong Delta. He would go on to three tours of duty in the Pentagon. He also served on several ships and was Commanding Officer of three, two during hostilities in the Persian Gulf.

Richard West was appointed Commanding Officer of the Navy Surface Warfare Officers School in Newport, Rhode Island and was selected for Admiral while serving there. For three years, he served as Oceanographer and Navigator of the Navy where he managed a multi- million dollar program providing navigation support for the U.S. Navy and led the Navy’s transition to electronic navigation.

After retiring from the Navy, Admiral West served as President and CEO of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE), an association of 74 of the country’s leading oceanographic research institutions, universities, and laboratories. In his leadership position at CORE, Admiral West testified several times before the U.S. Congress and addressed the United Nations on Safety of Life at Sea.

The dedication ceremony will take place on Saturday, July 30th at 11:00 a.m. at the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery, just south of Sampson State Park along Route 96A in Romulus. That portion of Route 96A has been officially renamed the “Sampson Veterans Memorial Highway” to further memorialize all veterans, and in particular the men and women who trained and served at the Sampson Air Force and Naval Base.