



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Honors Ogdensburg Man for Rescue of Mother, Children From House Fire

PATTY RITCHIE November 27, 2012

| ISSUE: [CITIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, FIREFIGHTERS, CONSTITUENTS CORNER](#)



Jefferson Thornton Presented with Prestigious Liberty Medal

State Senator Patty Ritchie honored Ogdensburg resident Jefferson Thornton Monday night for his rescue of a mother and her two young children from a house fire earlier this month. Thornton, a former city firefighter, was awarded the prestigious Liberty Medal at Monday night's City Council meeting, where he was also recognized by the City of Ogdensburg. Earlier this month, Mr. Thornton awoke in the middle of the night to find the nearby home of Brandy Middlemiss in flames. Mr. Thornton then walked across the street to alert Brandy

and her two children—ages 3 and 5. The family was sleeping when Mr. Thornton arrived. He was able to deliver them to safety without any injuries.

“If it weren’t for Mr. Thornton’s bravery and experience, the ending of this story could have been very different,” said Senator Ritchie. “Mr. Thornton essentially put his life on the line, and in the end, saved three people from what could have been a complete disaster.”

“The Liberty Medal represents heroism, and I can’t think of a more deserving recipient than Mr. Thornton.”

The New York State Senate Liberty Medal is one of the highest civilian honors that a New Yorker can receive.

Similar to the national Congressional Gold Medal, the award is given to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts and achievements on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers.

(Pictured in the above photo from left to right are City Councilors Storm Cilley, Dan Skamperle, Bill Hosmer, State Senator Patty Ritchie, Ogdensburg Mayor William Nelson, City Councilors Jennifer Stevenson, Mike Morley and Wayne Ashley)