



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

A Veterans Day message from Senator O'Mara ~ see listings of local Veterans Day observances

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 8, 2013

| ISSUE: **VETERANS**



America will be observing this year's Veterans Day with the promise of troops coming home, but with so many others still bravely engaged in the war against terrorism.

It will be observed at a time when the world's stage remains embroiled in uncertainty and instability. It truly is a momentous and dangerous time in world history and our annual tribute to veterans remains meaningful on so many different levels.

But most of all we still stand proud in local ceremonies around the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions to honor the sacrifices and the victories of our soldiers – past,

present, and future. In so doing, we reaffirm our pride in this nation's servicemen and servicewomen and, of course, we turn our thoughts and prayers to those young soldiers whom we've lost from here at home in the recent past.

Since the terrible unfolding of September 11, 2001 this generation has realized, all too painfully, that our freedom here at home can be threatened at any moment. We have been reminded, as well, that our troops always stand ready to protect freedom again and again.

The freedoms we cherish have been hard-won by the soldiers of previous generations and by those of this generation who have continued to serve. They are true American heroes, and we are grateful to each and every one of them.

Travel through this region's individual communities and it's striking to reflect on the common landmarks that stand tall as reminders of the guiding principles and the underlying strengths of our nation: town and village halls, county courthouses, churches, elementary schools, local public libraries. These fundamental American places still echo the very reasons for our nation's founding and her endurance as the world's great democracy.

And so we can't forget the monuments and memorials that America's communities have seen fit to build to honor our veterans. Indeed, there may be no more powerful or poignant landmarks anywhere and we'll gather in so many of these places throughout this weekend and on Monday, November 11th, to observe Veterans Day. For a listing of local events, see the following from:

> The Leader, "[Veterans Day observances set in Corning, Bath](#)"

> Star-Gazette, "[Area Veterans Day observances](#)"

Sacrifice is the fundamental truth that we remember and honor on Veterans Day, especially today when sacrifice can too often seem an on-the-decline virtue in American life.

To always honor our veterans is the reason that New York State government seeks to constantly recognize military service through the development of new laws and the administration of programs and services that seek to address the many challenges facing today's veterans in areas such as health care, employment and education. This year, for example, I was proud to help sponsor and secure the enactment of a new [Hire-A-Vet tax credit](#) to encourage employers to hire returning veterans.

*The **state Division of Veterans' Affairs** was established in 1945 to assist veterans, members of the armed forces, their families and their dependents. Since then, the division -- in concert with its offices in counties locally and statewide -- has strongly advocated for New York's millions of veterans and veterans' issues at the local, state and national levels. It's a proud history of service.*

*New York Governor Andrew Cuomo continues to undertake an "**Experience Counts**" initiative to help returning veterans better transition into the civilian workforce, and the state's attorney general offers a **resource guide for veterans and active duty service members**.*

The observance of Veterans Day is appropriate and meaningful as one way that we, as American citizens, collectively show our support for our troops, as well as keep those we know in our thoughts and prayers.

It's an occasion, as well, to honor the memories of all those who have gone before.

*Earlier this year, as part of the Senate's annual Veterans Hall of Fame induction, I was proud to have the opportunity to honor local veteran **Roswell L. "Roz" Crozier, Jr.** I've been privileged to honor the following local veterans with the same tribute over the past several years: **J. Arthur "Archie" Kieffer** and **Philip C. Smith**.*

Watch a special tribute to New York State veterans.