NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie
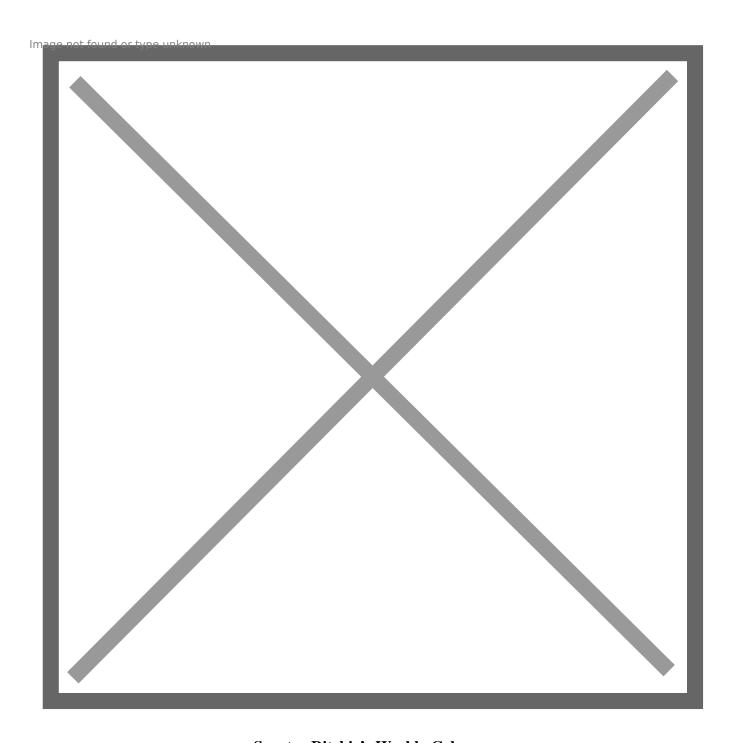
Do You Love Your Library?

Patty Ritchie

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Here in Upstate New York, there are no shortage of days spent inside seeking refuge from the winter weather. If you're like me, you know that there's nothing better than curling up with a good book. Luckily, throughout our region there are dozens of spectacular libraries offering bestsellers, classics, children's books and all sorts of other types of family friendly entertainment perfect for winter days spent indoors, or any other time of the year.

In an effort to recognize the tremendous services our area libraries provide, I've launched new awards aimed at honoring area librarians and libraries. You can cast your votes for the best libraries and outstanding librarians by visiting my website at www.ritchie.nysenate.gov. If you don't have access to a

computer, please call my Watertown office at (315) 782-3418. The deadline to participate is March 23rd.

As a member of the Senate Select Committee on Libraries, I've been working to provide libraries with the resources they need to continue to offer books, other types of entertainment, programs, job-hunting tools and so much more. Since 2011, my colleagues and I have been successful in

including $15 million in restorations and increased budget funding for libraries across the state. In addition, to date, I've worked to secure more than $250,000 in special funding to help enhance services at more than 50 libraries and in two library networks in our region.

In the past several years, I've had the opportunity to visit dozens of libraries throughout Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties and at each, I've had the chance to see firsthand the tremendous impact they have on their communities. I know what an invaluable resource our libraries and our librarians provide, and I hope you'll take the time to cast your vote for these new awards, which will help them receive the recognition they deserve.