



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## A Veterans Day message from Senator O'Mara

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 10, 2016

| ISSUE: **VETERANS DAY**



Most of all we will 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.

America will be observing this year's Veterans Day with American troops still bravely engaged in the war against terrorism.

It's being 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 so our annual tribute to veterans remains meaningful on so many different levels.

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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 this 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.

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 on Friday, November 11th, to observe Veterans Day. See the following local stories, including listings of Veterans Day observances:

> *The Chronicle-Express*, "**Let's honor veterans while we still can**"

> *Star-Gazette*, "**Elmira-area Veterans Day ceremonies on tap**"

> *WENY-TV*, "**Beecher Elementary Honors Local Veterans**"

> WETM-TV, "**Honoring our Nation's Veterans this Veterans Day**" and "**Hornell Students Celebrate Veterans Day in a Colorful Way**"

> *Star-Gazette*, "**Smiles, gratefulness abound at somber Veterans Day event**"

> *observer-review.com*, "**Veterans Day will honor service**"

> WETM-TV, "**Local Organization Educates Veterans**"

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. For example, **I have been proud to lead the call** over the past several years in the Legislature for increased state support for an initiative known as the Research & Recognition Project that's working to help veterans, and active military servicemen and servicewomen, recover from the debilitating impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It's important work, it's producing extremely encouraging results and I'm proud to be a part of this effort to help veterans and active military, and their families, reclaim their lives.

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.

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 **P. Earle Gleason of Yates County**. I've been privileged to honor the following local veterans with the same tribute over the past several years: **Anthony J. Specchio, Sr., Roswell L. "Roz" Crozier, Jr., J. Arthur "Archie" Kieffer** and **Philip C. Smith**.

**Watch a special tribute** to the United States Marine Corps, which celebrated its 241st Anniversary on Thursday, November 10, 2016.