



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

Senator Phillips Joins With Community in Remembering Heroic Airmen Who Died Protecting New Hyde Park

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Senator Elaine Phillips (R-Manhasset) recently joined with community leaders, veterans organizations and local residents at a ceremony remembering five young men who made the ultimate sacrifice protecting the New Hyde Park community 75 years ago. Supervisor Judi Bosworth; Town Clerk Wayne Wink; Councilmembers Lee Seeman and Peter Zuckerman; Nassau County Legislators Rich Nicoletto and Ellen Birnbaum; and Assemblyman Tony D'Urso also took part in the ceremony, which was organized by the Town of North Hempstead.

Lieutenant Charles Van Eeuwen, Second Lieutenant James Orr, Private First Class James Orr, Private First Class Edwin Onufrowicz and Cadet Earle Ray were crew members on an Army B-25A bomber which suffered a catastrophic engine failure just moments after taking off from Mitchell Field on January 1, 1942. Knowing they couldn't keep the plane in the air and were too far to return to the airfield, they chose to stay with the plane instead of bailing out and risking it crashing into the New Hyde Park homes below. They steered the plane away from the homes, crash landed into a vacant sandpit and were killed when the plane exploded on impact. As a result of their actions, there was not a single civilian casualty.

The ceremony marked the 75th anniversary of the men's heroic sacrifice and celebrated their bravery, heroism and selflessness. The event was held at Tully Park, where a monument stands in honor of the five heroes.