



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy Inducts Legendary WWII Serviceman Chick Galella Into New York State Veterans Hall Of Fame

TERRENCE MURPHY May 18, 2018

| ISSUE: **WWII VETERANS, VETERANS HALL OF FAME, HONORING LOCAL VETERANS**



Albany, NY - With Memorial Day approaching, it seemed appropriate that Senator Terrence Murphy would honor Armando "Chick" Galella, one of the most respected veterans living in the 40th Senate District. Senator Murphy inducted Galella into the New York State Veterans Hall of Fame at a prestigious ceremony held at the State Capitol in Albany on May 15.

The Senate established the Hall in 2005. It was designed to pay tribute to New York veterans who served admirably in the United States Armed Forces and also recognize their accomplishments as civilians.

Senator Murphy said, "There are very few people left who can tell the tale of what happened at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941, and likely even less who stormed the beach at Okinawa. Chick is a true American hero. He survived not one, but two of the most pivotal moments in the Second World War. It is a privilege to pay tribute to Chick's military and civilian service."



Armando "Chick" Galella was born in New York City on January 1, 1921. Galella's mom, Theodora, and father, Vincenzo, moved from the Bronx to North Tarrytown in 1922 along with his older brothers Frank and Alfred. Galella's nickname derives from his skinny, bird-like legs. He weighed about 110 pounds when he first tried to enlist in the Army in 1940. He was deemed too small for combat and was initially turned away. In order to get into the Army, he took the advice of the enlistment officer to eat a few bananas and drink a lot of water before weighing in again.

Galella began his training at Fort Slocum in New Rochelle, and then was shipped to Fort

McDowell, California, before sailing for Hawaii. After training, Galella was assigned to the 443rd Signal Corps at Hickam Air Base near Pearl Harbor.

Galella survived the attack on Pearl Harbor that killed 2,403 people. He went on to serve five years in the Pacific theater, earning the highest rank an enlisted man can achieve, Battalion Sergeant-Major. Galella received the Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service and bravery in the Battle of Okinawa, which was the largest amphibious invasion of the Pacific campaign and the last major campaign of the Pacific War. He returned home to North Tarrytown, marrying Leda DiFelice in 1947. The couple was married for 65 years until Leda's death in 2015.

Galella's service to his country is equaled only by his outstanding service to his community. A lifelong resident of North Tarrytown, (now known as Sleepy Hollow), Galella served as a Village Trustee, Deputy Mayor, Fire Commissioner, and as a member of Pocantico Hook and Ladder Company. Galella was appointed Grand Marshal for the Sleepy Hollow Columbus Day Parade in 2002 and the Sleepy Hollow St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2018.

In 1999, Galella petitioned the Village to rename a waterfront park in Sleepy Hollow "Horan's Landing" in honor of his friend John J. Horan, who was killed in the Pearl Harbor attack. Horan, who grew up just down the street from Galella's house in Sleepy Hollow, was the first resident of the village to be killed in World War II. An American flag and Horan's photo are proudly displayed at the park.

Galella remains a respected local treasure - he drove in the inaugural procession when the Tappan Zee Bridge opened in 1955. He was in the car when Governor Andrew Cuomo took him for a ceremonial spin across the new bridge in August 2017.

At 97 years young, Galella never misses an opportunity to share his story, speaking at schools and memorial services. He is determined that people not forget the sacrifices made by his fellow soldiers and wants to ensure that we all learn from his experiences.

"The world needs more men and women like Chick," said Senator Murphy. "He has remained a humble man who has repeatedly said he was no hero and that there were other people more deserving of being honored than himself. He lost a close friend, survived the horrors of war, and yet has nothing but compassion in his heart for others."