



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Thank You For Helping Brighten The Holidays For Those Defending Our Freedom

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

It is hard to believe that the holidays have come and gone. I truly hope that you had a wonderful time with family and friends, as well as wish you the best in the New Year.

During the holiday season—and especially here in our region—it's important to remember the brave service members who sacrifice so much for our freedom, including spending long periods of time away from their loved ones.

That's why since 2012, I've been participating in the "Christmas Cards for Our Troops" program, which collects cards, personally signed by donors and distributes them to current and former service members at veterans' hospitals, army installations and other locations to let them know they are remembered and appreciated during this special time of year.

In 2018, with help from people across Central and Northern New York, I was able to donate 10,000 Christmas cards to the program. I cannot stress how thankful I am for the individuals, community groups, families, students and businesses who dropped off or sent cards to my offices and helped brighten the holiday season for those who have given so much to our nation.

I would also like to thank radio personality and Ogdensburg native Melody Burns for again spearheading the initiative through the Albany Veterans Miracle Center. Thanks to Melody's hard work, an estimated 200,000 cards were sent to troops and veterans this year. That brings the total number of cards delivered through this program to more than a million.

Again, thank you for taking the time out of your busy holiday schedule not only to donate cards, but also to show our dedicated current and past service members that their sacrifices have not been forgotten.