

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming Honors WWII Veteran George Becker of Riga as 2024 Inductee to NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame

Senator Pam Helming announces that World War II Veteran George Becker of Riga is the 54th District's 2024 Inductee to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.

George Becker achieved the rank of Electrician's Mate Second Class in the U.S. Navy. He enlisted in 1942 at the age of 17 and attended boot camp and Navy Class A school at Sampson Naval Training Station in Romulus.

In August 1943, he shipped out to Treasure Island in California and was assigned to the commissioning crew of the USS Emery, a destroyer escort. The USS Emery departed for the South Pacific in October 1943. One month later, the Emery joined a 200-ship task force involved in the invasion of the Gilbert Islands. After returning to Pearl Harbor in December 1943, the USS Emery again departed as part of the task force that invaded the Marshall Islands in January 1944.

Mr. Becker was part of several subsequent protection and escort missions during World War II. His last assignment was aboard the USS Admiral W.S. Sims, a troop transport ship commissioned after the end of the war. When the Japanese formally surrendered on V-J Day, September 2, 1945, the USS Admiral Sims was designated to bring American troops home. Mr. Becker and his shipmates made two trips to Manila and one trip to Okinawa, bringing back almost 5,000 troops on each voyage.

For his service, Mr. Becker received the World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, and Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

Mr. Becker worked for Rochester Gas & Electric for 41 years. A resident of Riga, he went on to serve his community when his military service ended. He was a member of the Board of Assessment Review, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Monroe County Planning Council, and a 27-year member of the Town Planning Board where he served as chairman for eight years.

George met his wife, Florence in the summer of 1940. They dated during his time in service and married on October 25, 1947. George and Florence were together for nearly 61 years when Florence passed away. George and Florence had four sons, David, Douglas, Daniel, and Bruce.

[Read Mr. Becker's full bio.](#)

Senator Helming said, “Less than one percent of the 16 million Veterans who served during World War II are with us today. We should know their stories and that’s why I’m so honored to recognize Mr. Becker in this way. He is a deeply humble man and a family man deserving of our appreciation and respect. Mr. Becker shared that his time in the military taught him to respect authority, get along with people, be patient, and appreciate what you have. He said what he loves most about America is our freedom. And we enjoy those freedoms because of Veterans like Mr. Becker. I am grateful that his name is now enshrined in the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.”

The Becker family said, “Dad is a very unassuming and humble man who has never sought recognition for himself. We are very proud of him for his time in the Navy and his service to the community. We would like to thank Legislator Steve Brew and Senator Helming for this honor.”

Monroe County Legislator Steve Brew, who nominated Mr. Becker, said, “It was a profound honor to nominate fellow Riga native George Becker for this prestigious recognition. His exemplary service to our country during World War II and his steadfast dedication to our community reflect the core values of patriotism and civic duty. George’s humility, strong family values, and unwavering commitment to his fellow citizens exemplify the very essence of American exceptionalism. We are deeply grateful for his contributions, and this honor is a fitting tribute to his remarkable legacy.”

Mr. Becker was recognized on Tuesday at the Veterans Hall of Fame ceremony in Albany.

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