

NEW YORK STATE SENATE
VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



SPONSORED BY
SENATOR KATHY MARCHIONE
MAY 14, 2013 - HALFMOON, NEW YORK





Senator Kathleen Marchione

May 2013

Dear Friend:

The New York State Veterans Hall of Fame was created to honor past members of the US Armed forces whose valor, dedication and distinguished service to our nation is only complemented by their continuing service to our communities.

I am pleased to sponsor the Veterans Hall of Fame, and even more pleased to be able to recognize the exemplary individuals who have been nominated from the 43rd Senate District for this honor.

This recognition is but a small tribute for the service, sacrifice and commitment they have shown to the residents and communities of the 43rd Senate District.

Please allow me to extend my gratitude for their service and sacrifices, and welcome you to our celebration of the 2013 Nominees to the Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen A. Marchione". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Kathleen A. Marchione

NEW YORK STATE SENATE
VETERANS
Hall of Fame



2013 Honoree



**James A. Haggerty,
Valatie**

Nominated by: Thomas Rielly

James A. Haggerty served in the US Marine Corps from 1951 to 1954. He is a Combat-Disabled veteran of the Korean War. His awards and citations include the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, Navy Presidential Unit Citation, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal with 3 bronze stars, United Nations Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Korean Presidential Unit Citation, New York State Medal for Merit, New York State Conspicuous Service Star.

He has been an advocate for veterans for decades. He is the Co-Chair and one of the original organizers of the Capital Region Homeless Veterans Stand Down. He is the President of the Eastern New York Homeless Veterans Coalition, President of the Veteran Care Board at Stratton VA Hospital, Executive Vice President and Past President of the New York State Council of Veterans Organizations, representing 38 veterans groups. He is the Vice Executive Director of the Marine Coordinating Council and a member of the Columbia County Honor-a- Vet Committee. Jim is a life member of 15 veteran national service organizations including Disabled American Veterans, Marine Corps League, American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Jim has been very active volunteer in his community as a member of St. John's Pastoral Council, Kinderhook Lake Corporation, Kinderhook Board of Assessment Review and the Kinderhook Zoning Board.

He retired from the New York State Department of Labor as the Assistant Director of Veterans Programs and Training. Jim currently holds the position of District Veteran Director for Congressman Chris Gibson. He has been married to Norah Haggerty for 59 years. They have four children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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VETERANS
Hall of Fame





2013
New York State
Veterans Hall of Fame
Nominees

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VETERANS
Hall of Fame



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VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



Eugene J. Corsale,
Saratoga Springs

Nominated by: Mary Ann Johnson,
Chairman Saratoga County Veteran's Committee

Eugene Corsale served in the U.S. Navy as ME2/C from 1950 to 1954. He served 45 months at sea. During the Korean War he was aboard the battleship USS Wisconsin of the 7th Fleet. In the Mediterranean he served aboard the USS Midway of the 6th Fleet.

Gene has been a strong supporter and promoter of veteran's programs throughout his life. He co-chaired Saratoga County's Honor a Deceased Veteran of the Month program for 9 years and has honored over 100 veterans. He worked with the Albany-Saratoga submarine group on their annual program. He was instrumental in the restoration of the World War II memorial in St. Peter's Cemetery. Gene served as project manager of historic landmarks for the Gideon Putman Cemetery where Veterans from the Revolutionary War and the Civil War plots were located and restored. He worked with a local funeral director to assist the sister of a World War II Veteran to realize a longtime dream to relocate her brother's remains for burial in the Gerald B. Solomon National Cemetery.

He was named the New York State Military Heritage Institute's Veteran of the Year in 2008. He serves as trustee of the Institute. He is a member of the Italian-American War Veteran, served as Vice – Commander of the Adirondack Post 60 of Korean War Veterans of America. He was 2008 project manager for the Veterans Memorial honoring Iraq-Afghanistan veterans and victims of the Global War on Terror and 9/11 attacks, one of the first in the nation. He was a strong advocate for preservation and enhancement of veteran's property tax exemptions as Real Property Tax Director for Saratoga County.

Gene's unwavering passion for veterans and his love of community will always be part of the history of Saratoga County.



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Hall of Fame
2013



**James M. Coyne,
Saratoga Springs**

**Nominated by: Saratoga Springs
Supervisor, Joanne Yepsen**

James M. Coyne is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the Army National Guard. James entered the Army in 1966 and served as an enlisted soldier, attaining the rank of Sergeant with the 3rd Armored Cavalry in Germany and the 4th Infantry Division in Vietnam. He joined the New York Army National Guard in March 1973 and served with the 1st Battalion 210th Armor in Albany, New York.

James was born in Albany, New York. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Albany. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant from the Officer Candidate School, Fort Benning, Georgia (Commandants List) in 1975, at which time he was assigned to Platoon Leader, Company B, 210th Armor Albany, New York. He also attended graduate school through the State University of New York at Brockport.

Lieutenant Colonel Coyne has received many military awards and decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal (with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Army Commendation Medal (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters) Army Achievement Medal (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon, New York State Conspicuous Service Cross, New York State Meritorious Service Medal and many more.

His affiliations include: the National Guard Association of the United States, Militia Association of New York, 210th Armor Association, Squadron A 101 Cavalry Association (Past President), Rainbow Division Veterans Association Veterans of Foreign Wars (Life Member and Past Post Commander), American Legion, Italian American War Veterans of the United States, the BOP Elks and the United States Armor Association.



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VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



Robert Desio,
Saratoga Springs

Nominated by: Patricia Desio

Robert Desio served in World War II from February 8, 1943 to February 12, 1946 in the United States Army Air Corps, 20th Air Force. He was a Corporal in the Weather Wing of 20th Air Force and was stationed on Iwo Jima.

Robert has been a resident of Saratoga Springs for 23 years and has been involved in many volunteer activities in the Saratoga County and in the Saratoga Springs community. Robert served as President of the Saratoga Hospital Board and has been a member of the board for 9 years. He also served as a Hospice volunteer for 6 years. He is a former President and current board member of Saratoga Bridges (ARC). He also serves on the New York State Board of Governors NYSARC for the Developmentally Disabled.

He served as President of the Saratoga Springs Historical Society, board member of the Saratoga County Arts Council for 6 years; President of Friends of Opera Saratoga and has logged 1000 hours volunteering for Yaddo Gardens. He also volunteers as a mentor at Skidmore College and serves as Cantor at St. Peters Church in Saratoga Springs.

Robert is married to Patricia Desio and has 7 children, 11 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.



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Hall of Fame
2013



Vincent Devlin,
Stephentown

Nominated by: The Veterans of the
Stephentown Area

In 1944, Vincent joined the Army Air Corp's Aviation Cadet Program to become a pilot and defend his country. When World War II came to an end, the program was discontinued and he left the service – only to return in 1949. He joined the newly formed Air Force in a hope to fly with them. He was denied that opportunity, but chose to remain and serve his country in a different way. He became an aviation mechanic and served his country until 1968. During this time, he worked on several different aircraft from C45s, B25 bombers and F80 Fighter jets while serving on several different bases. He was in Hawaii at the end of World War II, then Guam and Okinawa, Japan during the Korean War and at Norton Air Force base during the Vietnam War. During this tour he was Non Commissioned Officer in charge of field maintenance and transit alert in support of our troops in Vietnam. He was in charge of over 3000 personnel, both civilian and military. He finished his military career at Hurlburt Field, Florida the base where Doolittle trained his attack force on Japan. He received many awards while he was in the military including the World War II Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Army Occupation Medal, Korean Service Medal, 3 Air Force Medals, 6 Army Good Conduct Medals, American Campaign Medal, National Defense Medal (with cluster), United Nations Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Combat Medal.

He left the service with the rank of Master Sergeant (E-7) to retire in the Stephenstown area. He was nominated by the Veterans of the Stephenstown Area who said “some people think that an extraordinary act makes a hero, but it is the everyday acts of selfless people who keep our military always moving forward who are the true heroes for without their daily efforts, extraordinary things don't happen.”



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Hall of Fame
2013



George H. Doin,
Waterford
Nominated by:
Bettye Doin Thompson

George Doin enlisted in the Marine Corp in 1942 and served until 1945. George served on the USS McKean in the South Pacific. George proved himself a hero through action which saved the lives of fellow crew members. The Times Record published an account of George's heroism as follows: "Pfc. George H. Doin, well known Troy amateur boxer who has been boxing champion of his United States Marine regiment for two years and cited for bravery in the Bougainville campaign. He was wounded in action in the Pacific War Theater."

On September 15, 1944 PFC George H. Doin received the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received as a result of enemy action in the Asiatic-Pacific area in July 1944. On March 30, 1945 he received the Award of Navy and Marine Corps Medal with the following citation: "For heroism following the abandonment of the ship on which he was being transported after an attack by enemy aircraft in the South Pacific area on November 17, 1943. Private First Class Doin, after reaching the comparative safety of a life raft, voluntarily dived into the water on two occasions in order to swim to the rescue of members of the crew who were in danger of drawing or of death from burning oil on the water. His courageous action, taken with complete disregard for his own safety, contributed directly to the saving of two lives and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service." Signed W. F. Halsey, Admiral, U.S. Navy.

George returned to Waterford after the war and became deeply involved in the Waterford Community. He was a founding Charter member of the Waterford Rescue Squad. He served as a scout leader. He was a member of the Troy Boys Club and a Charter member of the VFW Post 5800 and the American Legion Charles J. Brady Post.



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NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

Hall of Fame 2013

George “Jack” Eckert, Saratoga Springs

Nominated by: Eugene J. Ratiglian, Commander,
Hudson Mohawk Counties Council of the Veterans of
Foreign Wars of the United States

In 1944, Vincent joined the Army Air Corp’s Aviation Cadet Program to become a pilot and defend his country. When World War II came to an end, the program was discontinued and he left the service – only to return in 1949. He joined the newly formed Air Force in a hope to fly with them. He was denied that opportunity, but chose to remain and serve his country in a different way. He became an aviation mechanic and served his country until 1968. During this time, he worked on several different aircraft from C45s, B25 bombers and F80 Fighter jets while serving on several different bases. He was in Hawaii at the end of World War II, then Guam and Okinawa, Japan during the Korean War and at Norton Air Force base during the Vietnam War. During this tour he was Non Commissioned Officer in charge of field maintenance and transit alert in support of our troops in Vietnam. He was in charge of over 3000 personnel, both civilian and military. He finished his military career at Hurlburt Field, Florida the base where Doolittle trained his attack force on Japan. He received many awards while he was in the military including the World War II Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Army Occupation Medal, Korean Service Medal, 3 Air Force Medals, 6 Army Good Conduct Medals, American Campaign Medal, National Defense Medal (with cluster), United Nations Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Combat Medal.

He left the service with the rank of Master Sergeant (E-7) to retire in the Stephentown area. He was nominated by the Veterans of the Stephentown Area who said “some people think that an extraordinary act makes a hero, but it is the everyday acts of selfless people who keep our military always moving forward who are the true heroes for without their daily efforts, extraordinary things don’t happen.”



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VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



Cornelius "Neil" L.
Gray, Brunswick

Nominated by: Mary Jo Gray Hughes

Cornelius "Neil" L. Gray was a graduate of CBA in Albany in 1942 and he enlisted in the US Army in December 1942. He was assigned to duty in India in 1943. He was recruited by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and trained in jungle navigation, weapons, explosives, radio codes and evasion tactics. He parachuted behind enemy lines where he operated with the resistance forces in Burma until the end of World War II in 1945.

He was a graduate of Siena College in 1950. He then enrolled in Georgetown University for post graduate work. He was recalled to active duty with the US Army for Korea in May of 1951. He was assigned to the US Army Counter Intelligence Corp. at Ft. Holabird, Maryland. He was then transferred to Japan as an intelligence agent and later transferred to the 7th Infantry Division where he served until the end of the Korean War.

Neil attended various military schools and served as a special agent for counter intelligence. He continued to serve in classified intelligence assignments in the United States, the Far East and Europe until he was assigned to command an element of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam.

After he retired from the Army, he was employed by the Atomic Energy Commission and later by General Dynamics in the Navy's Nuclear Propulsion Program. He was a charter member of the North Albany American Legion and was the 2nd Commander. Neil received a Bronze Star for valor in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. In 1998, Neil was inducted into the Air Commando's Hall of Fame in Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. In 2012 Major Gray became the third inductee into the Grey Beret Hall of Fame in Hurlburt Field, Florida for his accomplishment in the Commando Combat Weather Team.

Under conditions that were adverse in the extreme, Neil Gray proved himself to be brave and conscientious, an outstanding member of the military who exemplified the qualities of the ideal soldier.

As an outstanding citizen and roll model, Major Gray helped to preserve the freedoms we cherish as Americans.



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NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013

**Edward H. Johnson,
Halfmoon**

Nominated by: Kenneth J. DeCerce

Edward H. Johnson joined the United States Army in 1941. He served as a Corporal in the 803rd Aviation Engineers. He was deployed to the Philippines and worked on the development and repair of air fields. The Japanese captured the Philippine islands with the exception of Bataan, a mountainous peninsula on the Island of Luzon. The American forces, including Corporal Johnson, were led by General Douglas MacArthur and they began their last stand on Bataan Peninsula in January 1942. MacArthur had only about 50,000 men while the Japanese had five times as many. The American soldiers fought heroically for more than three months. The Americans held off the overwhelming Japanese forces until April 9, 1942 when they surrendered.

The Japanese commanding officer forced his prisoners to march day and night for more than 60 miles to a concentration camp. Many died along the way, others were tortured, shot and buried alive. This horrible journey became historically known as the Bataan Death March. Corporal Edward H. Johnson was a survivor of that infamous ordeal and continued to be held as a prisoner of war of the cruel Japanese Army surviving for three years until August 21, 1945 when World War II ended.

After the war, Mr. Johnson returned to his life as a dairy farmer in Halfmoon. He married his wife on January 12, 1946. They had two children and four grandchildren. Ed was a member of the Defenders of the Bataan Corridor, the National Farmers Organization and was a founding member of the Hillcrest Volunteer Fire Department.



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NEW YORK STATE SENATE

VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



Franklyn C. Mooney, Jr.,
Stephentown

Nominated by: The Veterans of the
Stephentown Area

Franklyn Mooney joined the Navy in 1943. He was stationed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he was trained as a Pharmacist's Mate Second Class. He was trained to administer medical assistance to wounded servicemen at the Veterans Administration Hospital. Franklyn was then trained as an Orthopedic Appliance Mechanic and was assigned to the department that made artificial limbs for service members. This Navy department provided the devices used in all the VA hospitals east of the Mississippi River. They also produced approximately 40 limbs each month that were meticulously designed for each individual's needs.

Franklyn Mooney was honorably discharged from the United States Navy in 1946. Mr. Mooney answered the call to duty and provided a valuable service to many of our fallen serviceman. He received the Victory Ribbon, American Theater ribbon and the Good Conduct Medal. He and many like him, helped countless wounded servicemen return to their homes and live a fulfilled life.

After the war, he returned to Stephenstown where he continued his career as a glass blower.



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Hall of Fame
2013



Howard W. Snyder, Jr., Grafton

Nominated by: by Richard Terpening,
Post Commander, Carner, Etman,
Smith VFW Post 6340.

Howard Snyder enlisted in the Air Force in August 1965. He served as an Airplane Mechanic and was sent to Viet Nam. Staff Sergeant Snyder received the Airman's Medal for bravery. The Citation reads as follows: "Sergeant Howard W. Snyder Jr. distinguished himself by heroism involving voluntary risk of life at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Republic of Vietnam on 18 February 1968. On that date, while exposed to firing from hostile forces and under constant danger of a tremendous fuel explosion, this man voluntarily helped to contain and then distinguish a raging fire on a grounded C-130B aircraft that had been struck by a mortar round." The citation goes on to say that the exemplary courage and heroism displayed by Sergeant Snyder reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Howard was honorably discharged and returned home where he has been very active in the community. He volunteers at the Grafton Methodist Church and has worked on the Veterans Memorial located in the Grafton Town Park. He volunteers at the Senior Center and is very active in the local VFW Post.



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VETERANS

Hall of Fame

Hawley Waldron,
Mechanicville

2013

Nominated by: Mechanicville Mayor
Anthony J. Sylvester, Sr.

Hawley Waldron served his country in the United States Marine Corps during World War I. He served as a Gunnery Sergeant in the 81st Company, 6th Machine Gun Battalion, 2nd Division. Hawley fought in the Battle of Belleau Woods, under the command of Marine Corps General John Lejeune. He was recognized for bravery on many occasions during World War I. The citation for his bravery in the Battle of Belleau Woods is as follows "He displayed great bravery in leading his gun crew through heavy shell and machine gun fire in the advance of Tigny. By constantly exposing himself he assured the safety of his crew". In the book World War I the account of the Battle of Belleau Woods describes the following: "The Marines attacking Tigny took the heaviest fire of all, they were trapped in a ferocious cross fire and suffered the heaviest casualties. The Germans were firing on them at nearly point blank range."

Hawley was awarded with the Silver Star with two gold stars, the Victory Medal with one silver star, two bronze stars and two Croix-De-Guerre Medals. He was recognized again in 1918 for his bravery at Blanc Mont with the following citation "Gunnery Sergeant Hawley Waldron remained at his piece under heavy bombardment in spite of the losses inflicted around him and displayed great courage and coolness."

After the war he returned to the City of Mechanicville. He married Caroline Sipperry and was the proud father of eight sons and two daughters. Hawley was employed by West Virginia Pulp & Paper Mills as a crane operator. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.



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NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

Hall of Fame
2013



**Robert D. Webster,
Saratoga Springs**

Nominated by: Marni Clements

Robert D. Webster was drafted in to the United States Army in 1966 at the age of 19. He completed basic training at Fort Hood, Texas. He was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam. He was assigned as a gunner on an armored cavalry assault vehicle.

On November 9, 1968 while involved in a heavy engagement against enemy forces an RPG hit the armored personnel carrier, during which time he was injured. He then removed 3 American comrades from a disabled armored vehicle while under enemy fire. He carried them to safety and bandaged their wounds. Robert then returned to his vehicle where his crew overran an enemy recoilless rifle position. He then dismounted and with the aid of his platoon leader killed the enemy crew and captured the recoilless rifle intact.

For his personal bravery and devotion to his comrades he was cited with the best traditions of the U.S. Army. Sergeant Webster received the following awards: The Purple Heart and the Bronze Star with "V" for outstanding heroism.

For the past 22 years, Robert has devoted much of his time to helping others suffering from P.T.S.D and substance abuse. In this endeavor he has always demonstrated the utmost compassion and altruistic demeanor.



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Senator Kathleen A. Marchione
would like to thank the 43rd District
Veterans Hall of Fame Advisory Panel
for their diligence and integrity in
selecting the 2013 43rd Senate District
Veterans Hall of Fame

NEW YORK STATE SENATE
VETERANS
Hall of Fame



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Hall of Fame
2013



43rd Senate District Veterans
Hall of Fame Advisory Panel

**Allen Ayotte, Halfmoon,
Saratoga County**

Allen is a lifetime resident of the Town of Halfmoon. He is a veteran of the United States Air Force. He was stationed at Chanute Air Force Base, Illinois where he was trained as a support specialist, dealing with aircrew members in-flight safety, survival equipment and procedures for ejection seat operations. He was then assigned to Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, South Carolina. He was nominated for and received the 363rd Combat Crew Training Wing Airman of the Year and was then promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

In December of 1967, Allen was assigned to the 16th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron at Tan Son Nhut Airbase, Saigon, Vietnam. He was honorably discharged in December, 1968. Allen was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Defense Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Allen returned home to Halfmoon was married to Denise and had two daughters. He served as a New York State Capital Police Office, Fire Protection Specialist with the New York State Department of State and New York State Fire Instructor. He has been a member of the West Crescent Fire District, W.K. Mansfield Hose Co. for 48 years. Allen is a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1498, Halfmoon Clifton-Park and a member of the Halfmoon-Clifton Park American Legion Post 1450. Allen is also a member of the Halfmoon Historical Society.



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Hall of Fame
2013



43rd Senate District Veterans

Hall of Fame Advisory Panel

**Colonel Charlie Johnson,
Troy, Rensselaer County**

Colonel Charlie Johnson was born and raised in a small rural town in Mississippi. He attended the United States Military Academy, West Point and graduated in 1955. Commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant of Infantry, Colonel Johnson served 26 ½ years in the US Army, retiring in 1981.

During his Army career, his assignments were primarily in the troop leading positions, but also included two tours at his Alma Mater. Colonel Johnson served three tours of duty in Vietnam as a Vietnamese Ranger Advisor, an Operations Officer in the Special Operations Group and as a Light Infantry Battalion Commander. His military education includes the Infantry Officers Basic and Advanced Courses, the Command and General Staff College, the Army War College, Airborne and Ranger Schools and the Pathfinder Course. He has graduate degrees from Columbia University and Penn State University.

Since arriving in the Capital District in 1999, Colonel Johnson has been active in community service. This includes the Troy Mayor's Ethics Committee, Board of Trustees of Oakwood Cemetery, Habitat for Humanity and the NYS Governor's Commission for State Veterans Cemeteries. He is a member of the Tri County Council Vietnam Era Veterans, American Legion Post 1610, VFW Post 8444, and Stratton VA Medical Center Volunteer DAV Van Driver.

Colonel Johnson is married to Trudy Hall and has three children. He is a 2011 Honoree of the New York State Senate Hall of Fame.



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Hall of Fame
2013



43rd Senate District Veterans

Hall of Fame Advisory Panel

**Vince Grimaldi, Gallatin,
Columbia County**

Vince was born and raised in the Bronx. He joined the Army at the age of 17. He was stationed in Germany from 1966 to 1976, serving with the 101st Ordnance Battalion as a Supply Clerk. He volunteered and served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 with the 18th Engineer Brigade, S-3 Operations as an Administrative Specialist and Motor Vehicle Operator. He was medically evacuated due to a non-combat condition and was honorably discharged on August 26, 1968.

He worked as a Computer Operator for various companies on Wall Street and then worked as an Ambulance Driver for the City of New York. In 1971 he moved to Gallatin, Columbia County and worked for the East Hudson Parkway Authority. From 1997 to 1995 he served as the Chief of Maintenance for the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site in Kinderhook, NY and the Minute Man National Park in Concord, Mass. In 1996 he served as the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist for the New York State Department of Labor covering Columbia and Greene Counties until his retirement in 2010. He is married to Victoria and has three children and four grandchildren.

Vince serves as Secretary for the Columbia County Honor a Veteran Committee, Director of the 19th Congressional District Veterans Resource Web Site. He serves on Congressman Chris Gibson's Veterans Advisory Committee. Vince also serves as Secretary and Master of Ceremonies for the Hudson Memorial Day and Veteran's Day Parades. He is Co-Chairman for the Columbia County Vietnam Veterans Day Service. He is a life member of Columbia County VFW Post 1314, a life member of the Disable American Veterans and a member of Jennings Willets American Legion Post #346.



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