

NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
**VETERANS**

*Hall of Fame*  
2015



SPONSORED BY  
SENATOR KATHY MARCHIONE  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2015 - SARATOGA SPRINGS NEW YORK







# Senator Kathleen A. Marchione

September 2015

Dear Friend:

The New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame was created to honor past members of the US Armed Forces whose valor, dedication and distinguished service to our nation are 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 2015 Nominees to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Senator Kathleen A. Marchione

NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
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2015  
New York State  
Veterans Hall of Fame  
Honorees

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**William B. Allendorph**  
Rensselaer County  
Nominated by Dennis Allendorph

Bill Allendorph began his service in the US Army as a draftee in Troy, NY on January 16, 1967. In June 1967 following Basic and Advanced Infantry training he entered Infantry Officer Candidate School and graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant in May, 1968. He received orders for specialized training in advance of deployment to Viet Nam. His training included the study of the Vietnamese language and other duties and responsibilities to serve as an Advisor to Combat Forces of the Vietnamese Army.

In Vietnam he was detailed to Quang Tin Province in the 1 Corps Tactical Zone where he served as Mobile Advisory Team Leader. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in 1969. His duties were to assist the Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces in military operations against the enemy, resulting in numerous and deadly engagements with the enemy. One of the most gratifying missions he commanded in Viet Nam was to rescue an imprisoned US Army Soldier, Specialist 4 Larry D. Aiken, from the enemy. Specialist Aiken was the only imprisoned soldier to be forcibly returned to friendly control during the war. Following his tour in Viet Nam Lieutenant Allendorph was promoted to Captain and assigned to the John J. Kennedy Special Warfare School. He received training as a Special Forces Officer and received the Green Beret. He was then assigned to the 7th Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces, as a B and C Team Leader. For his service and bravery he received 3 Bronze Stars, Army Commendation Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, US Army Parachutist Badge, National Defense Service Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, NYS Conspicuous Service Medal, and the Republic of Viet Nam Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star.

He was honorably discharged on May 1, 1971 and returned to Wynantskill, NY. He and his wife Diane are the proud parents of four sons, John, Jason, Scott and David and one daughter Bess who passed away in 2002. Bill worked for the US Postal Service in several different Capital District, retiring as USPS Supervisor of Customer Service in Mechanicville in 2004.

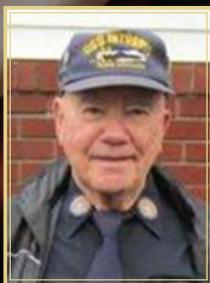


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# NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

## *Hall of Fame* 2015



**Robert F. Burlingham**

Saratoga County

Nominated by Supervisor Tom Wood,  
Town of Saratoga

Robert Burlingham was born in Victory Mills on November 7, 1934. He graduated from Schuylerville Central School and immediately following graduation he enlisted in the United States Navy on June 15, 1953. While in the Navy he was stationed on the Aircraft Carriers CVB 43 USS Coral Sea and CVII USS Intrepid. After four years active duty he was honorably discharged on June 7, 1957 with the rank of AB3, Aviation Boatswain's Mate Petty Officer Third Class. While in the Navy he was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Navy Occupation Service Medal European Class. After his discharge from the Navy he worked for 33 years as a senior Sub-station Operator for Con Edison in New York City.

Upon retirement from Con Edison, Robert returned to his family home in Victory Mills and became active in his community. He is a lifetime member of the Post 278 Schuylerville American Legion and the Greenwich, VFW Post 7291. He serves as chaplain of both the Schuylerville American Legion Post and the Saratoga County American Legion. Following the fire at the Legion Post in Schuylerville he took an active part in the fund raising and construction efforts to rebuild the building. For many years he served as a volunteer bartender at the post and was a leader in the post bingo program. He is a charter member of the Saratoga National Cemetery Honor Guard, having joined on July 9, 1999. He participates in burial ceremonies one day each week and is in charge of the Post rifles and ammunition used in each weekly program.

Beyond all of this he is a warm friendly, courteous person with a good sense of humor. He is always willing to help anyone that he can. Robert Burlingham is dedicated to serving his community and fellow veterans and is a positive role model to everyone.



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# NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

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**Stephen Dennis**

**Saratoga County**

**Nominated by William F. McBride**

Stephen Dennis enlisted in the Navy at the age of 19, four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He arrived in the Hawaiian Islands just four months later. Assigned to the USS Atlanta, he soon saw action at Coral Sea. On June 4, 1942, the Atlanta was in the decisive Battle of Midway Island. On November 13, the Atlanta was the lead American ship at Iron Bottom Sound on Guadalcanal, taking a direct hit from a torpedo and being hammered by 49 shells. Eight hours later, having lost one hundred seventy-two men with 79 more wounded, the Atlanta went down. Steve and the rest of the surviving sailors were evacuated from the stricken vessel.

Steve was subsequently assigned to serve as a PT boat radioman off the Island of Tulagi. After two years he was assigned to the USS Ancon as a radio operator, and served in the amphibious invasion of Okinawa. On September 2, 1945, he witnessed the formal surrender ceremony, which took place aboard the battleship USS Missouri. He had the momentous task of radioing the news of the surrender back to the United States.

Steve was honorably discharged in November 1945 and then returned to Mechanicville, where he was married to his wife, Mary, on May 5, 1946. They raised three children, and has five granddaughters, one grandson and is a great-grandfather. He worked 31 years at the Westvaco Pulp and Paper plant in Mechanicville.

Steve was active in the City of Mechanicville for many years. He is a longtime member of the Mechanicville Athletic Club and a member of the Cohoes Community Center for over 30 years where he still swims and exercises 3 times a week. Steve is an active member of the American Legion Post #91. He is an active volunteer at the post where he has been instrumental in fundraising efforts as a car parker and flagger. He also volunteers for the Mechanicville Red Raiders football team fundraisers. In 2014 he volunteered for the Saratoga County Veterans Trust Fun fundraiser 5k Run where he helped serve hamburgers and hotdogs to 300 runners that participated. Steve is an active participant in the monthly Saratoga County Deceased Veterans Honors.

2014 was a special year for Steve. In August, he celebrated his 92nd birthday and just two days prior, he was presented with the Medals he earned for his service to our nation in World War II. These included the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with Two Bronze Stars, the Navy Occupation Service Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon and the Combat Action Ribbon and 5 Battle Stars. In 2014, Steve was also awarded his High School diploma which he missed out on when he left school three months prior to graduation. He now has the distinction of being a member of the Class of 2014!



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# NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

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### Vincent Grimaldi

Columbia County

Nominated by Cheryl Rogers, Town Clerk  
and the Town of Taghkanic Town Board

Vince Grimaldi was born and raised in the Bronx and joined the Army when he turned 17. He was stationed in Germany from 1966 to 1967. He 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 honorably discharged on August 26, 1968. He received the National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

He began his working life in New York City, first as a Computer Operator and later as an Ambulance Driver. In September 1971, he moved to Gallatin and worked for the East Hudson Parkway Authority until 1977. He worked for the National Park Service from 1977 until his retirement in 1995. After his retirement he worked for the NYS Dept. of Labor as the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist and Labor Service Representative, covering Columbia and Greene Counties. He retired in April of 2010.

He is very active in the community and volunteers for many organizations including the Elizaville Reds Little League Team, Volunteer 1st Lieutenant Fireman with the Elizaville Fire Co., Town of Gallatin Assessment Review Board, Columbia County Honor-a-Veteran Committee, serving as Chairman, and Secretary for 16 years.

Some of his Veterans related volunteer services include serving as the 19th Congressional District Veterans Advisory Committee Columbia County Director and Web Site Manager for the Hudson Valley Regional Veterans Resource Site. He serves as Master of Ceremonies for both the Hudson Memorial Day and the Hudson Veterans Day Parades and Services. Additionally, he serves as Master of Ceremonies of the Philmont "Thank-a-Vet Day", and Co-Chairman and secretary of the yearly Columbia County Vietnam Veterans Day Service.

Vince is a life member and elected Commander of Columbia County VFW Post 1314, a life member of Rev. F. A. Kelley Disabled American Veterans Post #38, a member of American Legion Post 1 and the NE Vietnam Veterans Reunion Association. He also is a Free & Accepted Mason belonging to Joseph Warren-Soley Lodge in Lincoln, Massachusetts and a Shriner with Cyprus Shriners of Albany.

Mr. Grimaldi married Victoria Duntz on November 29, 1969. Together they raised three children, one son and two daughters. They have four grandchildren, three girls and one boy.



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# NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

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**John E. Parkinson**

Rensselaer County

Nominated by Paul O'Keefe and

Mary Kuelzow

John E. Parkinson served in the United States Marine Corps from 1948 – 1952. He served in various duty stations around the world. In June of 1950, the Korean War began and he was sent to Japan as part of the 1st Marine Division. He was then sent to Korea and landed at Inchon Harbor. His platoon fought to capture Seoul, the Capital of South Korea. They moved north where John fought in the Chosin Reservoir Campaign. He received two purple hearts, a Bronze Star – V, and a Silver Star. He remained in Korea for an additional 13 months. The platoon he was in started with 96 men and after the campaign ended there were only 6 survivors. Today John is the only survivor from the platoon. John was discharged from the Marine Corps in October 1952.

John worked for Borden Company in Glens Falls for 18 years. He then worked for Agway, and was a school bus driver for the Berlin School District, retiring at the age of 82. After retirement he went back to the family farm and today at 87 years old still raises beef cattle.

John spent the summers of 2003 and 2004 building an orphanage in Tanzania, East Africa that now houses 52 children and has water from a well that is the only source of water for 52 miles.

John married his wife Virginia in March of 1954. They have 4 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. He and his wife have recently celebrated 61 years of marriage.



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# NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS

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**Madison Duane Wehnau**  
Rensselaer County  
Nominated by The Sand Lake Town Board

M. Duane Wehnau was born in the Town of Sand Lake 90 years ago. He proudly served in the United States Navy during World War II, from July 7, 1943 to March 26, 1946. He was honorably discharged at the rank of Aviation Machinist's Mate, Second Class. During his military service, Mr. Wehnau was awarded several military decorations including Aircraft Engine Overhaul, World II Victory Medal, World War II American Theater Medal, Asiatic Pacific Medal, Medal of Good Conduct and the National Defense Medal.

Mr. Wehnau is a charter member of the Lt. Perry Williams VFW Post 3025. He has contributed countless hours over the past decades supporting local service men and women of the Town of Sand Lake. For many years Duane took care of the former site of Veterans' Memorial in West Sand Lake. The monument is now incorporated onto the groups of the new Sand Lake Veterans' Memorial Park.

He was married to his wife Marjorie for 57 years. He has four children; Edwin, Victor, Rodney and Carol. He is a member of the Salem United Methodist Church.



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**Marilynn Wright**  
Columbia County  
Nominated by Rachel Dolan

Marilynn Wright served in the United States Army in the Women's Army Corp (WAC) during World War II. She was stationed at the Engineer Replacement Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and Fort Devens, Massachusetts. She earned the rank of private first class and was the only female who worked with a Seabees unit assigned to repair bridges stateside. Marilynn remembers her time in the service fondly, and says how those years were happy ones. She recalls how her duties connected the supplies to the project. She describes her work as "Marilynn, can you go get this . . . Marilynn, can you go get that." When asked how it was back then to be the only woman working with all men, Marilynn responded by saying "you focused on your job and didn't think about anything but the work and doing it well." Private Wright was honorably discharged on 8/30/43 at the age of 22. She went on to work as a nurse's aide at various facilities in New York State. She married and raised five children. Marilynn spent her adult years living between the Hudson and Oneida, New York areas before transitioning to her new home at Whittier Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center in Ghent, New York where she currently resides.

Over 150,000 American women served in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) during World War II. Members of the WAC were the first women other than nurses to serve within the ranks of the United States Army. Given the opportunity to make a major contribution to the national war effort, women seized it. By the end of the war their contributions would be widely heralded. Marilynn Wright was proud to be one of these women.



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Senator Kathleen A. Marchione would  
like to thank the 43rd District  
Veterans Hall of Fame Advisory Panel

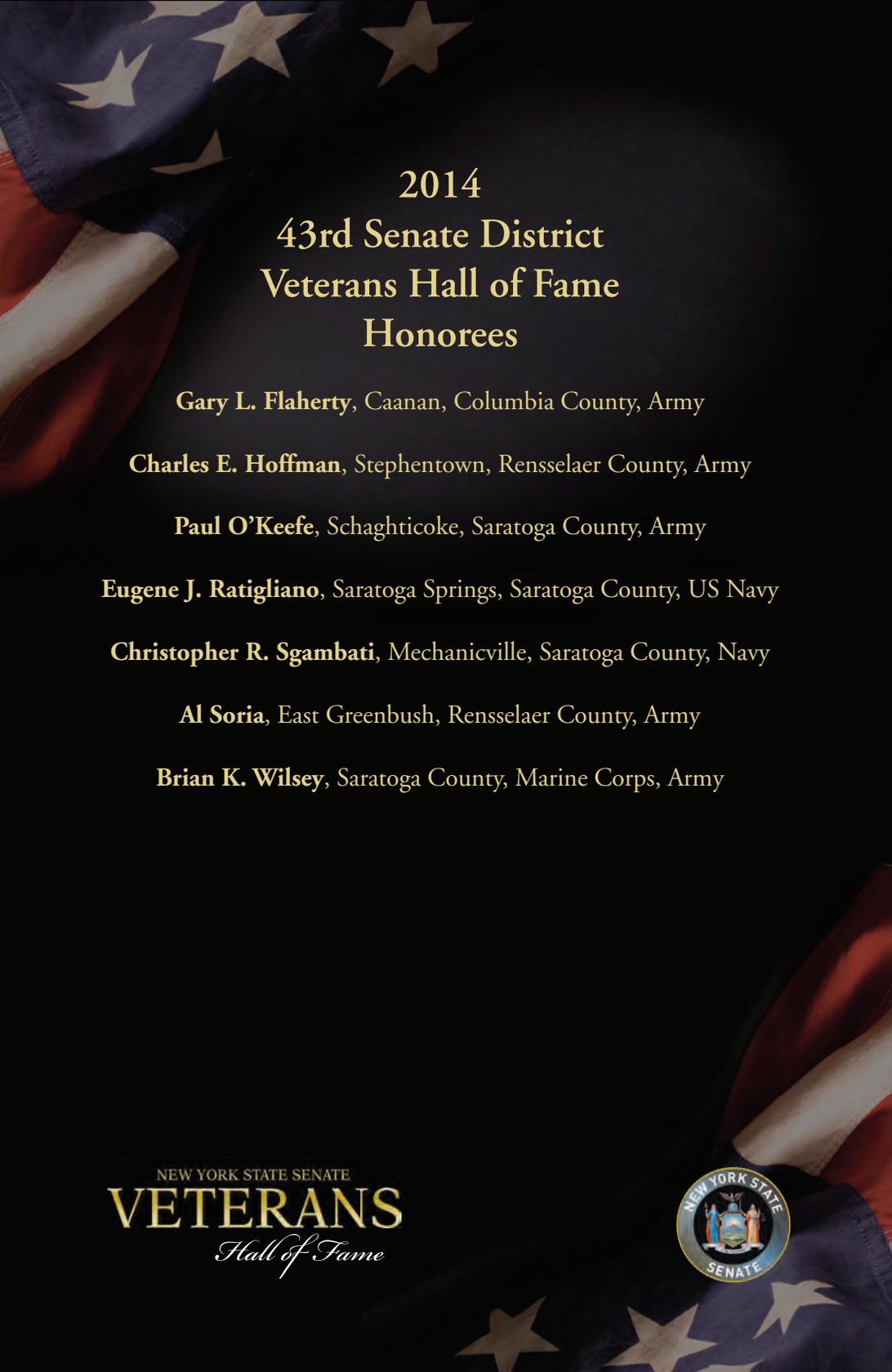
Allen Ayotte, Saratoga County

Jody Luskin, Rensselaer County

John James Miller, Columbia County

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2014  
43rd Senate District  
Veterans Hall of Fame  
Honorees

**Gary L. Flaherty**, Caanan, Columbia County, Army

**Charles E. Hoffman**, Stephentown, Rensselaer County, Army

**Paul O'Keefe**, Schaghticoke, Saratoga County, Army

**Eugene J. Ratigliano**, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County, US Navy

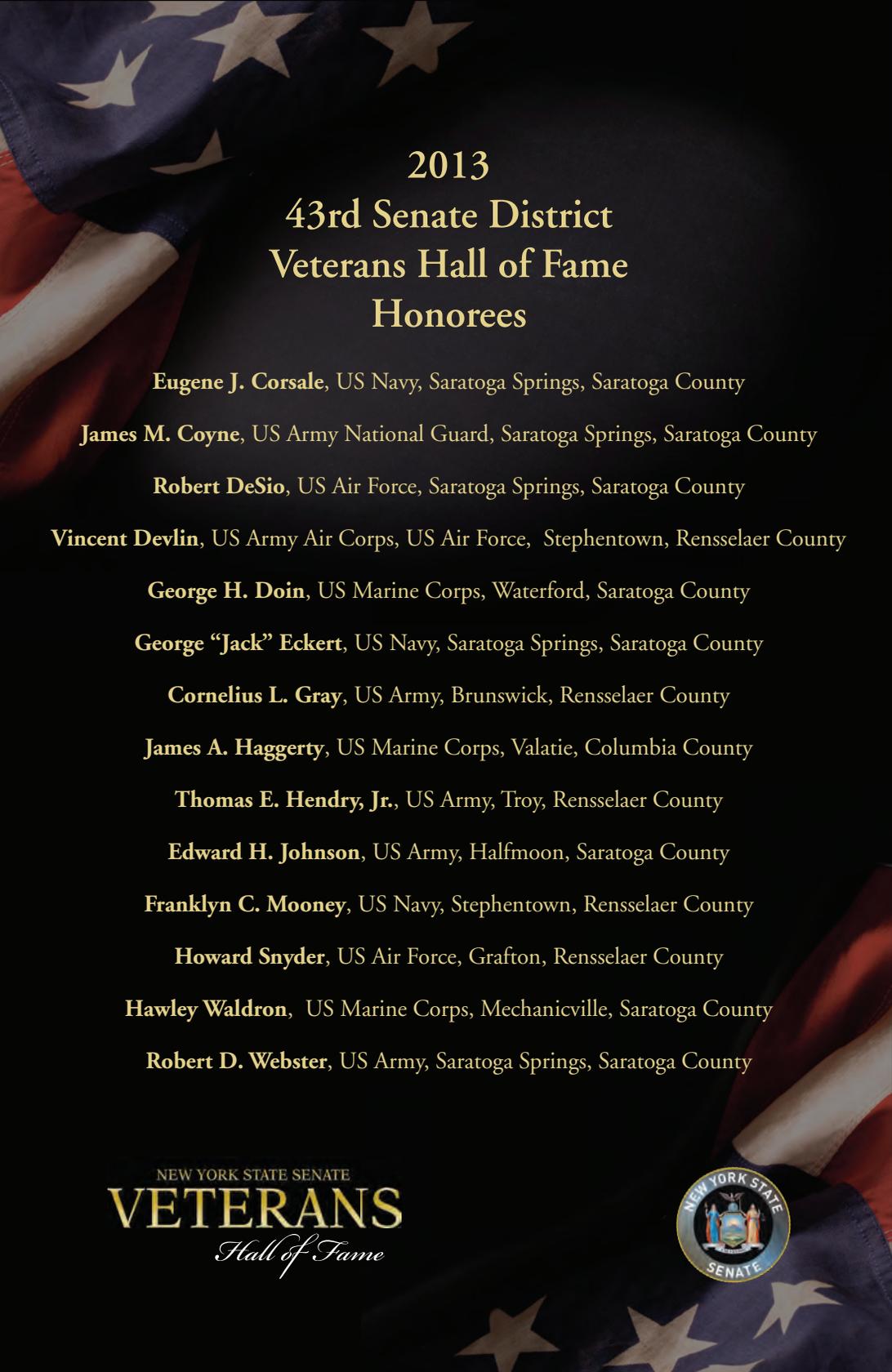
**Christopher R. Sgambati**, Mechanicville, Saratoga County, Navy

**Al Soria**, East Greenbush, Rensselaer County, Army

**Brian K. Wilsey**, Saratoga County, Marine Corps, Army

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The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The text is centered and overlaid on this background.

# 2013 43rd Senate District Veterans Hall of Fame Honorees

**Eugene J. Corsale**, US Navy, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County

**James M. Coyne**, US Army National Guard, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County

**Robert DeSio**, US Air Force, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County

**Vincent Devlin**, US Army Air Corps, US Air Force, Stephentown, Rensselaer County

**George H. Doin**, US Marine Corps, Waterford, Saratoga County

**George “Jack” Eckert**, US Navy, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County

**Cornelius L. Gray**, US Army, Brunswick, Rensselaer County

**James A. Haggerty**, US Marine Corps, Valatie, Columbia County

**Thomas E. Hendry, Jr.**, US Army, Troy, Rensselaer County

**Edward H. Johnson**, US Army, Halfmoon, Saratoga County

**Franklyn C. Mooney**, US Navy, Stephentown, Rensselaer County

**Howard Snyder**, US Air Force, Grafton, Rensselaer County

**Hawley Waldron**, US Marine Corps, Mechanicville, Saratoga County

**Robert D. Webster**, US Army, Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County

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