



**Adirondack  
Park Agency**

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**TERRY MARTINO**  
Executive Director

2019 Adirondack Park Agency  
Forest of Heroes Tree Ceremony

In Honor  
of  
George Canon

Executive Director Terry Martino's Remarks

It is an honor to memorialize a great native Adirondacker – George Canon. He was beloved by all who knew him. A bigger than life personality, enveloped in magic with a put you at ease sense of humor. George was a proud, driven man from the heart of the Adirondacks who put his soul into everything he did.

His lifetime achievements are truly legendary. Mr. Canon is probably known best for his abilities to negotiate with Albany powerbrokers on behalf of Adirondack towns and villages. A small-town politician who carried the clout of a heavyweight. He was well know and respected not only by our current Governor, but also by Governor Andrew Cuomo's father - former Governor Mario Cuomo. And certainly, every Governor in-between. He had the uncanny ability to organize, to work across party lines and build relationships with people who were not his natural allies - with the intention to work out compromises that benefited Adirondack residents.

George often said that just because somebody had a different point of view it didn't mean he had to dislike them. It was his nature to see the merits of others' points of view. And I think this was his true magic, his special charm. Even though he fought vigorously for his beliefs, he did so in a way that showed respect for other opinions. This fact ultimately endeared him to people of all walks of life and had a profound impact on land use policy across the Adirondack Park.

Certainly, one of the things that also gave George Canon so much credibility was the fact that he was deeply rooted here – he was an authentic Adirondacker. Born in Indian Lake, he graduated valvictorian of the Newcomb Central School. As George told the story, he was one of the last to leave the old uprooted mining town of Tahawus. An experience that undoubtedly shaped his personal constitution with regards to land use policy, property rights and use of eminent domain.

Mr. Canon was Newcomb Town Supervisor for 26 years and served as Chairman of the Essex County Board of Supervisors. His visionary leadership resulted in Newcomb

securing one of the first APA Approved Local Land Use Programs. He was very influential in the State's decision to locate an APA Visitor Interpretive Center in Newcomb and preserve the historic Camp Santanoni.

Mr. Canon served on the Department of Environmental Conservation Region 5 Open Space Committee. His position on State Land policy was well respected and helped shape many State Land Classification actions and Unit Management Plans. He was also very influential in encouraging New York State to stop the use of eminent domain to acquire Forest Preserve land.

George was Chairman and a long-serving Board Member of the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board as well as a founding member and past president of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages.

He was also the spark that championed the effort to construct the High Peaks Golf Course in Newcomb. His legacy of support for Adirondack community initiatives is a cornerstone of his life. He was a strong proponent of Newcomb's comprehensive plan, the smart-growth hamlet plan and all the projects negotiated with the Nature Conservancy as part of the historic Finch Pryun deal.

His concern for the people of the Adirondacks was very evident in his life achievements. He did all he could to improve the situations and standards in Newcomb and across the Park. He was recognized statewide as someone who knew what he was talking about and who was not afraid to speak up.

In his own words, "not bad for a guy who grew up on dirt floors in a tar paper shack".

Today we will dedicate a red Oak tree in our Forest of Heroes Arboretum for George.

Oak trees are synonymous with strength and steadfastness. John Evelyn in his *Sylva, Or a Discourse of Forest-Trees*, calls it the 'pride and glory of the forest'.

The Red Oak has been a favorite of both lumbermen and landscapers since colonial times. The Red Oak is also an important habitat tree. Acorns from this tree are at the top of the food preference list for blue jays, wild turkeys, squirrels, small rodents, whitetail deer, raccoons and black bears.