

PARKS & TRAILS NEW YORK 2010 COMMUNITY TRAIL AND GREENWAY AWARDS

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD



The award recognizes an individual or not for profit organization that has demonstrated strong leadership and made exemplary and significant contributions to a trail project.

In most locations, the 26-mile trail that runs through Westchester County's Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park is full of runners, walkers, and children on bikes. However, several years ago within the City of Yonkers

the Aqueduct Trail looked very different. It was not well used and there were no trail adopters.

That is, until Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail members Joe Kozlowski and Elisa Zazzera came along. Joe asked local Scouts to join him in the first-ever Clean-up and Awareness Day. However, he soon learned the task was more than young boys could take on alone.

Joe's many contacts in the community and Elisa's superb organizational skills were just the right combination needed to get the entire community involved in successfully tackling the problem. Joe and Elisa enlisted the support of Assemblyman Mike Spano, Friends of the Aqueduct members, several Scout troops, State Parks and Yonkers government officials, local firemen, neighborhood residents, civic groups, and Groundwork Yonkers, an environmentally focused community development organization. During the last three years, Joe and Elisa have organized multiple clean up days that have invested the community in removing the graffiti, debris, and invasive plants that made the trail feel unsafe and unwelcoming.

As a result, now people can see into the trail so they're using it more. And, trail neighbors are even beautifying their adjacent land.

In recognition of their efforts to organize and energize community stewardship and pride in the Yonkers section of trail within Old Croton Aqueduct State Historic Park, Parks & Trails New York recognizes Joe Kozlowski and Elisa Zazzera with its Volunteer Service Award.