

Greenskeepers praised for environmental contributions

Seven area residents well known for their contributions to the environment were honored last week with the William E. Boye Jr. Humanitarian Award, presented by the Wyckoff Family YMCA at the annual Friends of the Y dinner.

The event celebrated "those who keep our community green and beautiful."

Jim and Judy Abma, owners of Abma's Farm, were commended for their commitment to farming and saving their land from development.

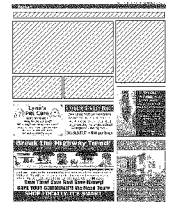
"You have to strike a balance with the environment, a balance between the traditional – how things used to be – and technology," said Jim Abma. The presentation was made by Rutgers Professor Joel Flagler, a state agricultural agent who has worked closely with the Abmas.

Mark Borst, BSLA, CLT, president/owner of Borst Landscape and Design, one of the largest design/build, lawn care and landscape maintenance firms in northern New Jersey, was praised as a leader in the green industry and for his forward-thinking approach to dealing with the environment. Chris James, a long time friend who presented the award, noted that they had often collaborated on environmental issues even though their companies compete in the marketplace.

Ginny Duffy presented their award to Tom and Mary Bugel, calling them "valiant guardians of the environment." The Bugels started Partners in Pride in Wyckoff, and Tom spearheaded the campaign to save Spring Lake from development.

Scott Fisher, Wyckoff's Department of Public Works manager, who tends to the township's parks, playgrounds, public areas, roads, buildings, and facilities, was praised as a "can-do man" by former Wyckoff Mayor Rich Alnor, who also commended him for his service to the community as a firefighter. "He has a good aesthetic eye and is a great problem solver," said township Administrator Robert Shannon in making the presentation along with Alnor. "He does everything with enthusiasm and energy." Fisher helped design and build the township's 9/11 Remembrance Memorial and Freedom Garden.

Also honored was Allendale Mayor Vince Barra, whose efforts since becoming mayor in 2007 have led to the preservation of the Fell House and to the construction of a community park and special needs housing on another parcel previously slated for housing. His presentation was made by Tom Toronto, president of Bergen County United Way, who praised Barra for his longstanding commitment to preserving open space.





Pictured from left: Scott Fisher, Mark Borst, Mayor Vince Barra, Judy Abma, Jim Abma, Mary Bugel and Tom Bugel.