



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

## November Constituent of the Month: Mary Beth Artz

ERIC ADAMS November 5, 2012



**Award:** Constituent of the Month

Mary Beth Artz is a singer, actress and lifelong resident of Brooklyn, NY, with a passion for the city's urban wildlife. To her there is nothing more inspiring than to see the "V Formation" of the Canada Geese flying over her home in Windsor Terrace.

One of her passions is helping people connect to the wildlife that share our city and our world. She is a part-time educational instructor with the Wildlife Conservation Society, and that passion led her to study Conservation Biology at The Center for Environmental Research and Conservation at Columbia University.

After the slaughter of Prospect Park's Canada Geese in 2010, she banded with community members, adults and children alike, to organize "Hands Around the Lake" in Prospect Park to voice opposition to the killings of the geese and to demand that the city find humane, non-lethal alternatives to deal with the issue. She, along with many community members, continues to speak up for the humane treatment of the geese through a city-wide advocacy group called "Goosewatch NYC."

"Act locally, think globally" is one of her mantras and feels it is important for communities to get to know and appreciate the local wildlife in their areas. "If we learn to connect with what is in our own 'backyard,' we may be able to foster more empathy for the wildlife in other parts of the world." She is one of the founding members of a community based group called W.I.L.D. (Wildlife, Interests, Learning and Development) for Prospect Park.

W.I.L.D. is comprised of area residents who are passionate about wildlife, and their mission is to connect with those who visit Prospect Park's Lakeside and help them learn about the many ways that they can help keep the wildlife safe.

During monthly lakeside cleanups, they scan the area for possible dangers to the waterfowl and other wildlife such as discarded fishing line, barbed hooks and all types of plastic litter.

By doing so, they believe they are helping to create a safer park for visitors as well.

“We are blessed to have the wildlife that we do in NYC. There is much we can learn from them,” Artz explains. “With ever shrinking habitat and continued urban expansion, it is important that we find positive ways to help people understand their connection to the natural world and learn to peacefully co-exist with the nature in our midst. Ultimately, what we do to the wildlife, in the end we do to ourselves.”

For more info

W.I.L.D. for Prospect Park- <http://www.wildforprospectpark.com/>