

Sustainability Hero



June 2023



Mary Crawford Go Green Galloway (Atlantic County)

For over a decade, Mary Crawford has been a dedicated community and sustainability leader working to build a better future for the [Township of Galloway](#). She has served as the co-chair of [Go Green Galloway](#) for the past ten years and as a Galloway Township Council member for four years, including her two-year term as Deputy Mayor. In addition, she is the past president of the Galloway Township Business Association and the Galloway Township Women's Club, and is a member of the [League of Women Voters - Atlantic County](#).

As part of the Go Green Galloway team, she has organized and participated in roadside cleanup events, garden work parties, environmental film events, the Galloway Green Market and has secured several grants through the [Sustainable Jersey Grants Program](#). Mary created the Go Green Galloway non-profit organization which allows the green team to pursue additional fundraising opportunities.

Mary works to create a welcoming, fun environment for green team members. She is organized and known for being calm in any circumstance. Green team members say she is known for her words: "Don't worry. It will all be just fine!"

Compelled to run for office after the 2016 election, Mary was elected to Galloway Township Council and subsequently served as the deputy mayor. She said, "Being able to step up for positive change and take political office was a great experience. Although COVID response was a major focus of our work, we were able to pass a stronger Tobacco Use ordinance, a ban on balloon releases and tougher stormwater regulations that will make us more resilient to climate change."

Go Green Galloway Team: Mary said, "The volunteers of Go Green Galloway continue to be the most dedicated and hardworking people I have ever had the pleasure of working with. Over the years, I've learned so much about sustainability. All year long, we work on efforts to make Galloway a sustainable township. We're always seeking to educate ourselves and our community to be good stewards of our environment."

Go Green Galloway is a stand-out green team in the Sustainable Jersey program. Mary said, "I make sure our focus is more than completing sustainability actions. We want to bring people together. We work through consensus and are open to everyone's ideas. We create experiences to build the team including social events and hands-on projects like road clean ups and garden plantings. I want participants to feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in doing good for Galloway."



Go Green Galloway is working to involve the next generation of sustainability leaders, for example the [Galloway Green Market Instagram](#) account is managed by one of these new members. Mary makes an effort to reach out to the volunteers with a phone call or an email to say thank you. She said, “It’s hard to join a group of people who know each other, it’s our job to make sure they feel welcome and that their expertise and time is contributing to something worthwhile.”

Sustainable Jersey Silver-Certified: Certified with Sustainable Jersey since 2009, Galloway Township has maintained certification at the silver-level since 2010 and has received \$57,000 through the Sustainable Jersey Grants program. The township received the Sustainable Jersey Leadership Award in 2013 and the [Creativity Award](#) in 2010. The [Galloway Township Office of Sustainability](#) partners with residents, businesses, non-profits, community leaders, local governments and Go Green Galloway. Mary’s leadership resulted in Go Green Galloway becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. She said, “As a nonprofit, this helped our green team to not be a burden on the township because we are able to apply for grants and accept donations.” Galloway Township’s sustainability actions are documented in the [2022 Sustainable Jersey Certification Report for Galloway Township](#). For more information, visit the Go Green Galloway [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Reduce, Reuse, Inspire! In 2020, Mary, working with the Galloway and Absecon green teams, developed and funded a campaign called: Reduce, Reuse, Inspire! The campaign’s aim was to reduce the consumption of single-use plastics in the community through education and outreach. Activities included a video contest and a reusable bag design contest for area students. The winner’s art was featured on bags made from recycled plastic and given away at the Galloway Green Market. The outreach included lectures, luncheons/dinners, film screenings and the installation of new water bottle refilling stations in the parks. Mary said, “Because of the pandemic, we had to pivot from our original plan that included a lot of face to face outreach. We created outreach materials instead of meetings.” A toolkit of information was provided to local businesses and delivered to restaurants with samples of alternatives to Styrofoam and plastic. The project was supported by a \$20,000 [Sustainable Jersey grant](#) funded by the PSEG Foundation.

Galloway Green Market: This summer the [Galloway Green Market](#) will launch its 7th season. Under Mary’s leadership, Go Green Galloway started the market in 2017 and the green team has been managing it ever since, bringing locally grown goods to the community.

Mary explained, “We named it the Galloway Green Market because we also include informational programs and events to spotlight sustainability activities in addition to produce.” For example, the [Give Where You Live - Buy Nothing Smithville/Leeds Point/Port Republic](#) is a featured part of the market that offers people a way to trade and share stuff; it is part of the [BuyNothing](#) project.

The Galloway Green Market is open for 11 weeks, every Thursday evening from June 30 to September 7. The market features a rotation of approximately 30 vendors weekly including farmers, honey, baked goods, fresh foods, local craftsman as well as sustainable community outreach. The market income comes from vendor fees which are spent on advertising, music and a vendor appreciation picnic on the last day. The Township supports Go Green Galloway efforts by providing tables, tents, chairs, a PA system as well as trailer to keep the materials on-site. The township staff assists with setup on market days.



The market is in the Historic Smithville Village Greene parking lot, which is an easy walk to the NJ Transit Bus #559, across the street from a large apartment complex and next to a 55 and older community. In 2022, the market was an authorized [New Jersey's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) market. NJ SNAP benefits were issued on a Families First Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that works like a debit card. Galloway Township received 15 Sustainable Jersey certification points after completing the actions: [Farmers Markets](#) and [Making Farmers Markets Accessible](#).

Invasive Plant Species Education and Eradication: Go Green Galloway leads a community-wide program to educate residents and businesses about problems and solutions associated with invasive plant species. In 2019, the [Galloway Township Environmental Commission](#), with a grant from the [Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions](#), created a 12 Tenacious Invasives [video](#) and [brochure](#). The film and brochure explain the importance of avoiding invasive plant species and what to look for by highlighting 12 of the most invasive plants in the South Jersey area. Go Green Galloway worked with the Galloway Township Environmental Commission, the area [AmeriCorps New Jersey Watershed Ambassadors](#), the local chapter of the [Native Plant Society of New Jersey](#) and resident volunteers to not only educate about this problem but to physically remove invasive vines, shrubs and trees. Galloway Township received 10 Sustainable Jersey certification points after completing the action: [Innovative Community Project](#).

In May 2023, Go Green Galloway received a \$10,000 Sustainable Jersey grant funded by the PSEG Foundation for a project named: Go Native! At Glenn by the Bay. Go Green Galloway will work with the [Absecon Green Team](#), using expertise from a collaboration with the National Park Service and other partners, to remove invasive species and build pollinator gardens with native plants at the under-utilized Glen by the Bay community park. Signage and events such as "Walk and Talks" will be used to educate park visitors about the importance of naturalizing open space and encourage them to use native plants on their own property. Mary said, "We had a meeting to brainstorm what to do for our next grant and the green team was immediately excited to carry on the work we are doing with invasive plants eradication. We're excited to get started."



Peaceful Pickers: Go Green Galloway has [nine committees](#) for volunteers to participate in. Mary is an active participant with the Peaceful Pickers committee. "Litter and illegal dumping are a problem in Galloway Township, so we usually head out on a weekend morning to clean up some of the worst locations in our community along with help from the Galloway Clean Communities program," Mary said. "This committee is perfect for roll-up-your-sleeves volunteers,"

Education & Experience: Mary graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering and earned an MBA from Pace University in Finance. For over 14 years, Mary has worked for Merrill Lynch and is a Vice President, Senior Relationship Manager at the company.

More About Mary: Mary grew up in Morris County, New Jersey, and is the youngest of four children, which might explain her consensus building skills. She spent childhood family vacations in Cape Cod, sailing and having adventures by the ocean, which created a lifelong tie to nature and the Jersey shore. Mary lives in Galloway with her husband Tom, whom she met on a blind date arranged by family. The couple just celebrated their 32nd wedding anniversary. Their daughter Jamie is following in her mother's footsteps. She is working for the [Mass Audubon's Coastal Waterbird Program](#) and received a degree in Natural Resources: Wildlife and Fisheries at the University of Connecticut. In her free time, Mary enjoys playing tennis, hiking in [Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge](#) and travel.

