



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Honors Two Croton Businesses with NYS Empire Awards

PETE HARCKHAM July 18, 2025

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State Senator Pete Harckham with (l-r) Laura Ferris-Croteau, her uncle David Harbolic, husband David DeNoris and mother-in-law Theresa Trinidad

Croton-on-Hudson, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham visited two long-standing local businesses in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson this week—the Croton Bait & Tackle Shop and the Croton Animal Hospital—to present each with the prestigious New York State Empire Award and recognize their lasting contributions to the local economy and

community.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and those that stand the test of time become woven into the fabric of the community,” said Senator Harckham. “It’s important to recognize their legacy of service and excellence. I’m proud to honor these two outstanding establishments that have each made a meaningful impact on Croton and beyond.”

The Croton Bait & Tackle Shop is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. Established in 1965 by Ina “Pat” Ferris and her husband Richard, the shop quickly became a cornerstone of the local fishing community, offering specialized gear and friendly service to generations of anglers. Today, the store is owned and operated by the couple’s daughter, Laura Ferris-Croteau, who began working there as a child and took over full-time management ten years ago following her father’s passing.

“I am honored to accept this award on behalf of my late parents, who turned their dream into a reality,” said Ferris-Croteau. “I’m proud to carry on their legacy and continue supporting our local fishing community. Thank you to Senator Harckham for this recognition, and to the Croton community and our loyal customers for your continued support over the years.”

The Croton Animal Hospital, recently recognized as the second-best animal hospital in New York and 13th in the country by *USA Today*, was founded in 1973 and has delivered compassionate, high-quality veterinary care to pets across Northern Westchester and Putnam counties for over five decades. It is one of just 4,500 veterinary hospitals in the U.S. and Canada accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), a status it has maintained throughout its 52 years of service. Ownership has changed hands over the years, from founder Dr. Michael Henes to Dr. Bruce Hoskins, and now to Dr. Mark Gustavson, but the hospital’s reputation for excellence has remained constant.

“We were thrilled to receive this award from Senator Harckham,” said Dr. Gustavson. “We strongly believe that the human – animal bond is tremendously important to the people of this community—and everywhere. I’m truly grateful for the effort and energy that each and every member of our staff puts in on a daily basis and for the faith and trust our clients give us when they allow us to care for their four-legged family members.”