Light the Path Forward

The Friends of the Walkway have been awarded grant funding to complete a transformative installation of color-changing LED lights to our three overlooks - the natural next step after mounting more than 450 solar powered lights to our northern railing last year - but we need your help raising grant matching dollars so that we can have the new, colored lights in place and ready to turn on as soon as possible. I hope you’ll join our campaign to make this possible.

These lights will make parts of the iconic Walkway structure visible even when the sun goes down, supporting not only nighttime activities on the bridge, but waterfront redevelopment in Poughkeepsie and Highland. One of my favorite things about the Walkway is that it’s been the host venue that’s helped local charities raise more than $10 million over the last decade. These state-of-the-art lights will not only look beautiful, improve park safety and security, and make fun events even better, they’ll also help the Walkway continue to raise awareness for programs and services that make a real difference in the community. Imagine the park’s overlooks (the wider sections of the bridge by the elevator, flagpole, and western shoreline) lit in pink or blue for all to see?

Help us make this dream a reality.

Please visit walkway.org/forward to give online. 100 percent of your contribution is tax deductible. If you have questions or would like to speak to me about this project, don’t hesitate to call 845-454-9649. Thank you for lighting the path forward and supporting Walkway Over the Hudson. “We want it to continue to grow and be there for people to enjoy.”

Diane Haight
Interim Executive Director

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW YOUR SUPPORT ENHANCES THE WALKWAY EXPERIENCE, VISIT WALKWAY.ORG/DONATE
Following a stage four colon cancer diagnosis in November 2018, 54-year-old Sharon Koblenz Feldman started walking, tenaciously believing salvation was only a stride away. While finding strength and inspiration in the views surrounding Walkway Over the Hudson, she was determined to live a long and meaningful life through each step. Nearly every day for the next three and a half years, Sharon got out of bed, put on her make-up (she never went anywhere without it), laced up her sneakers, drove from Somers to Poughkeepsie, and walked along the Walkway accumulating as many as 20,000 steps per visit. Sometimes joined by family, often chatting with passersby, she approached each trip with a zest for life and always remembered to count her blessings.

“Getting to her next walk is what helped her fight through 58 rounds of chemotherapy,” said Naava Koblenz, Sharon’s sister-in-law “No matter the weather, if she could get out of bed, she was walking.”

Nearing the end of her fight, Sharon’s family chose to celebrate her life and legacy by installing a bronze medallion along the Walkway’s north railing. In July 2022, surrounded by loved ones, Sharon was there for the unveiling ceremony to see that her name – and the traits of strength, courage, and passion for life that she inspirationally embodied – would be forever attached to the park she loved so much. Sharon Koblenz Feldman passed away three weeks later, at the age of 58.

“The bridge was her bridge, but it’s everyone’s bridge,” Naava said. “Seeing the medallion gives our family & friends peace and a place to remember Sharon. From our perspective, the Koblenz and Feldman families continue to travel to the Walkway and Hudson Valley. To learn more, visit walkway.org.”

The Friends of the Walkway mourn the loss of Don Cady, a decorated Korean War veteran, longtime Hudson Valley resident, and member of the inaugural class of Walkway Ambassadors. If there was a job to be done on the Walkway, Don did it. From greeting tens of thousands of guests during his decade of service to giving tours, answering questions, assisting in emergencies, being among the first to ride the glass-enclosed elevator (and encouraging others to do the same) and even donning a Santa suit every winter to make children smile, no one embodied the spirit of the Walkway or helped create The Walkway Experience quite like Don.

To honor Don’s legacy, Walkway Ambassadors have created the Don Cady Memorial Award, which will be presented each year to the volunteer that best embodies Don’s dedication, can-do attitude, and love of the Walkway. “Don was an Ambassador for 12 years, and there is no finer way to preserve his memory than with this award,” said Michelie Dalbo, a fellow Ambassador. “Don’s sense of humor, knowledge of Walkway history, and contagious spirit are worthy of being emulated by all.” The inaugural Don Cady Memorial Award will be presented in December at the Friends of the Walkway’s Annual Meeting.

**Our Gift to You.**

Join or renew your membership through December 31 at the level of Enhanced Individual/Family and receive two Walkway bananadas.

This special edition Marist X Walkway design draws on the beauty of the Walkway, its as a railroad bridge, the glory of the Hudson River, environmental sustainability, and the connection between the Walkway Over the Hudson and Marist’s Poughkeepsie campus.