

## Regional contractor of the year

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Joyce and William Santillo moved from a large southern Dutchess County home into a cozier Poughquag house, but missed their "big, country kitchen," as William Santillo described it.

The couple entertains frequently and does a lot of cooking, requiring more preparation, serving and storage space in the kitchen.

The Santillos sought out the Fishkill-based firm Nurzia Construction Corp. to radically rework their kitchen and living area.

Owned by the father-son team of Mike and Pete Nurzia, the company usually follows a "design-build" model, which means the builder/contractor is central in the project from design to completion.

"Controlling the process in-house, we feel, creates a better relationship with the customer. Being involved in the process from Day One means we're able to see the big picture better than breaking up all the pieces," Pete Nurzia said.

Working in collaboration

The company starts with the budget a client has and, depending on the project, might design a plan or collaborate with an architect or interior designer. In this way, the builder can monitor how changes or revisions during the process might affect the cost or other aspects of the project.

William Santillo characterized the project as a collaboration guided by the builder.

"Pete (is) very good and has built many houses, so he knows exactly what he is doing. He gave us good ideas and steered us in the right direction. If we were saying something he knows is terribly wrong, he let us know," he said.

"In a way, it was fun. We felt we were part of it, designing and working with Pete. I had some doubts at first, but it turned out perfect," he said.

Not only did the couple think the results were excellent, so did two professional organizations that granted Nurzia Construction Corp. local and regional awards for this project.

In January, the project won the National Association of the Remodeling Industry's annual regional competition and was named 2008 Regional Contractor of the Year in the residential kitchens under \$30,000 category.

Nurzia Construction Corp. is a member of the association's mid-Hudson Valley chapter.

The region includes 10 Northeastern states and winners go on to a national competition.

The Builders Association of the Hudson Valley has an annual recognition program, the Pinnacle Awards, presented in March.

Jean Rowe, the group's executive officer, said this year Nurzia Construction had five wins - more than any other company in the region, which includes Dutchess, Ulster, Orange, Sullivan, Putnam and Westchester counties.

"I think the caliber of submissions was top notch. It shows (the company) understands how to present itself. ... The judges were impressed," Rowe said. Nurzia's presentation was precise, concise and thorough. Also, they were quality projects, she said.

Rowe said contest judges are totally independent of the association and come from a variety of construction firms and building associations in other regions of the tri-state area.

Won several categories

The Hudson Valley group's commendations for Nurzia Construction included prizes for new home construction, residential remodels, commercial renovation and Web site.

Nurzia Construction also is affiliated with several other professional groups, including the National Association of Home Builders, the New York State Builders Association, Tealtors groups and Energy Star.

Pete Nurzia has been a member of the Builders Association of the Hudson Valley since 2001 and was elected to its board of directors in December.

Joyce Santillo had praise for the staff at Nurzia Construction.

"Every contact that I've had (at Nurzia Construction), all have been very helpful, very kind and considerate of our needs," she said.

Nurzia said he encourages this kind of cooperation and customer service ethic throughout the company.

"We encourage an environment of creativity. We ask for input from everybody. We help each other out and we all take a lot of pride in building and remodeling homes.

"We want to grow our business and we feel the only way to get there is good work at fair prices. All of us have a constant goal of doing a beautiful project and making our customers happy."

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#### Resources

\* Hudson Valley Builders Association, <http://hvbuilder.com>

\* National Association of the Remodeling Industry, [www.RemodelToday.com](http://www.RemodelToday.com), 1-800-611-NARI (1-800-611-6274); Mid-Hudson Valley chapter, [www.nari.org/hudsonvalleychapter](http://www.nari.org/hudsonvalleychapter)

\* Nurzia Construction, [www.NurziaConstruction.com](http://www.NurziaConstruction.com), 845-897-9400.

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