



AMERICAN DREAM FOR MENDON FOUNDATION

- By Chris Campbell -

The balcony off the hayloft of the Suor barn overlooks fifty-five acres of hayfields, meadows and habitat to fox, mink, beaver, and Max the horse. A creek meandering through the property offers refreshment to deer as it passes on its way to Honeoye Creek. The serenity of the "American Dream Farm" vista is exactly what transplanted suburbanites Sue and Ed Suor were looking for when they moved to Mendon three years ago.

"We searched a long time for just the right property," explains Sue, and this farm is a dream come true for us." Not content to simply enjoy their property while they are living on it, the Suors investigated ways to preserve it for future generations. "We wanted the property to stay the way it is after we're gone," says Sue, "but we don't have children and our family does not live in the area."

The couple considered transferring their property to a national land trust, but preferred the familiarity of a local group. The Mendon Foundation came to mind, and a phone call to co-founder Jeanne Loberg put their plan in motion.

The Suors recently completed legal action to insure that their wishes are carried out. They have stipulated in their wills that if they still own the property at the time of their deaths, it will be turned over to the Mendon Foundation for preservation. Suor siblings will still be able to use the property, but the Foundation will act as land conservators.

"We would like to see it used for educational purposes," Sue says. "We have had groups visit from the city schools for riding demonstrations, nature walks, scavenger hunts and picnics. Afterwards they draw pictures of the horses and other things they've seen."

The Suor legacy will be three-fold -- Ed and Sue become the very first to make the Mendon Foundation beneficiary of their land, and with their donation, they guarantee preservation and continued enjoyment of the land they love.

"This is a milestone for the Mendon Foundation and will enhance and encourage our land preservation efforts in the Town of Mendon," says Jeanne Loberg, Foundation director.

• MENDON FOUNDATION • MISSION STATEMENT

The Mendon Foundation is a non-profit corporation established to:

PRESERVE, protect and enhance the scenic, natural, recreational and structural resources in the Town of Mendon and directly adjacent properties,

MAINTAIN a responsible stewardship of assets and properties held or controlled by the corporation,

ESTABLISH and promote local environmental education on issues pertinent to the preservation of natural resources in the Town of Mendon,

ESTABLISH and promote programs to monitor the natural resources in the Town of Mendon.

As we succeed in these objectives, we enhance property values for all Mendon property owners. The Foundation is supported by membership fees, grants and other contributions. Donations to the Mendon Foundation are tax-deductible.

Proceeds are used to cover easement acquisitions, monitoring and communications.
All labor is volunteer.

GET TO KNOW THE LOCAL WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS...

- By Mary Gerhard -

Water is a vital part of all living organisms. It flows through our veins and in the sap of trees as well as in streams and rivers. Once on the earth's surface, all water begins its downhill passage to the sea, or is recycled through evaporation. Along this course, it carries with it the natural waste from plant and animal communities, together with domestic and factory waste from human settlements. We have learned over the years that it is possible to overload the balance in this cleansing system, to pollute the waterways to the point that recycled water can be damaging, even deadly.

The Town of Mendon is richly blessed with waterways and wetlands. The 36 square mile town is drained by two main watersheds: In the west, lake-fed Honeoye Creek flows through the village of Honeoye Falls out to Rush. In the east, spring-fed Irondequoit Creek drains two-thirds of the surface area of Mendon, approximately 24 square miles. It flows north to Powder Mills Park and on to Irondequoit Bay. Wetlands are scattered throughout Mendon, the most well known areas being found in Mendon Ponds Park.

As told in the early history of the Town, pioneer settlements sprouted rapidly on these creeks, ponds and lakes as water was used to power saw and grist mills, foundries and related commercial ventures. The milling industry is still in evidence; especially in the village of Honeoye Falls where the historic "lower" and "upper" mill buildings are still in use. Cheese Factory Road is named for the once-operating cheese factory, and Bull Saw Mill Road is named for mill owners John and Rebecca Bull who owned property on the road.

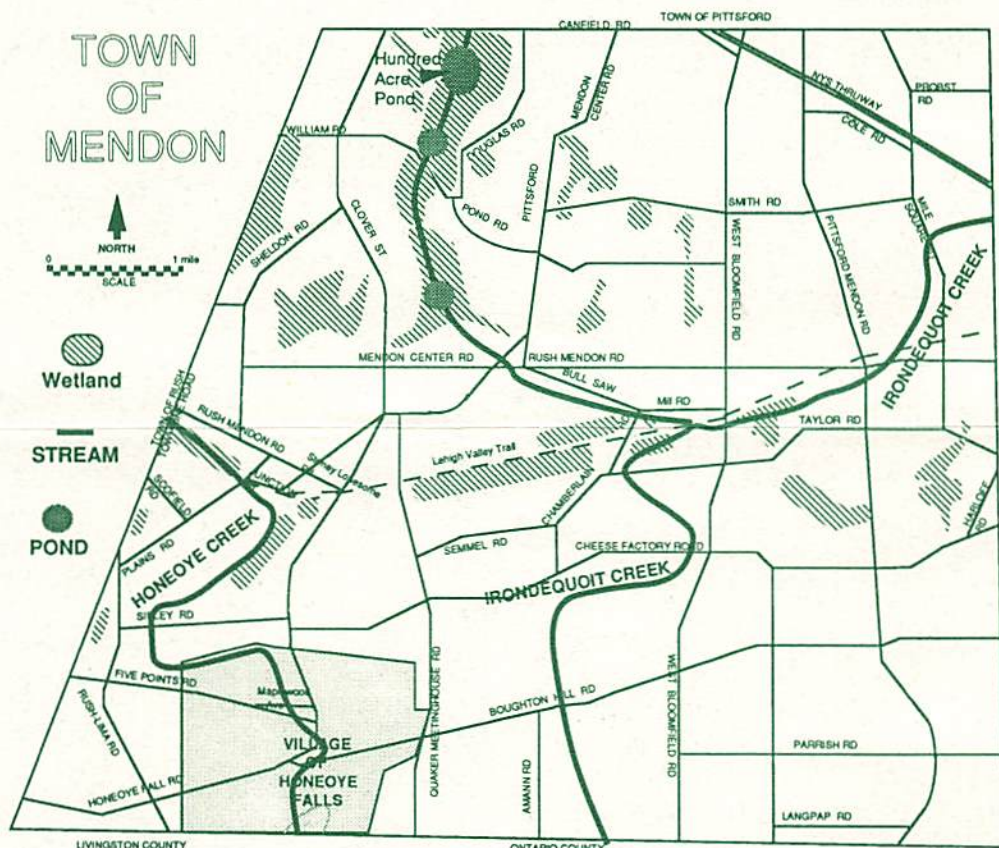
Through the years, the creeks became less important to man as a crucial power source and more important for recreational purposes. Mismanagement of the water resources was common, often through unawareness, leading federal, state and local governments to enact protection codes. Both watersheds contain important protected areas which affect the way residents and property owners may use these waterways. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classifies certain waters of the state on the basis of existing or expected best usage of the waters. The highest classification, "A" or "AA" is assigned to protect waters for uses including drinking and cooking. Category "B" is protected for uses including swimming and other contact recreation, but not for drinking water. Classification "C (t)" protects waters at a level which support trout populations, a valuable and sensitive fisheries resource.

In the Honeoye Creek watershed, a class B stream has been identified from North Main Street in the village to Spring Brook.

In the Irondequoit watershed, class B protected streams include ones that run between Quaker Pond and Clover St., between Rush-Mendon Rd. and Quaker Pond, and between Pond Rd. and Quaker Pond.

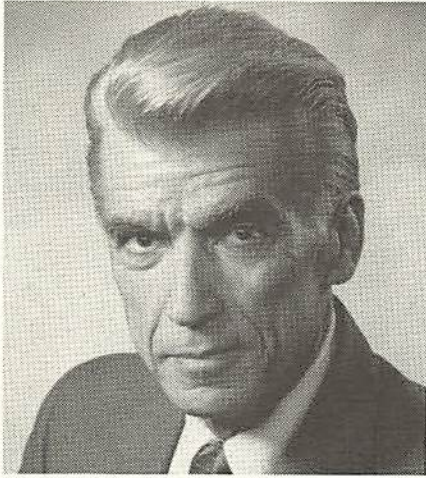
"C (t)" classified streams include: from Parrish Rd. to just north of Cheese Factory; Trout Creek, which runs from Cheese Factory north to Irondequoit Creek; from the intersection with Trout Creek to the Victor Town Line.

Wetlands are defined by the State DEC as (cont. on page 4)



Monroe County Department of Planning & Development

WAYNE HARRIS LEADS ADOPT-A-STREAM



Wayne Harris is a Rochester attorney and founder of the Adopt-A-Stream program. Mr. Harris talked with us about his involvement in Adopt-A-Stream and some of his other activities of environmental interest. He has lived in Mendon for eleven years.

"Back in the early 60's, I walked with another fellow from the Genesee to Honeoye Falls along the stream," recalls Mr. Harris. "At that time, Honeoye Creek was 'F class' - which means you can throw just about anything into it. There was a milk plant in the village that discharged whey into the water and there was a sewer plant. The level of coliform was very high. I worked with the Monroe County Conservation Council to reclassify the stream to B, but ran into resistance from various local and county governments. Forces were marshalled in the community, including real estate brokers and experts in water quality, who collected factual, technical, and scientific data. We made projections that the community would develop into a primarily residential, light industry town, which in fact has happened. Only after this intense effort, was a class B rating finally won for Honeoye Creek."

This is a typical example of how Wayne Harris approaches a challenge. Having facts and verifiable data is a powerful ally in building support for any cause.

Mr. Harris' longterm love of the outdoors has resulted in his spearheading many worthwhile projects for the benefit of this area, and beyond. Perhaps the best known such project is the Adopt-A-Stream program initiated in 1986 by Delta Laboratories, Inc. for which Mr. Harris is the unpaid president.

The Adopt-A-Stream program invites people who are concerned about our nation's waterways to take an active role in assuring their wellbeing. Groups supported by local cosponsors (civic organizations or sports clubs) agree to evaluate their adopted waterways and take action together to improve their lake, stream, pond or wetland. There are now more than 143 groups in 33 states participating in the program.

The Mendon Foundation is a cosponsor with the Honeoye Falls-Lima Senior High School in the Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) program to evaluate Honeoye Creek. The water quality tests are used as part of an overall plan to establish a trail along the creek. Mr. Harris explained that typical cosponsors in rural communities tend to be farm bureaus, or scout troops. He envisions a national scale organization such as Kiwanis, or even General Motors auto dealers, for example, picking up sponsorship of AAS with local schools; the combined effort would help those communities environmentally besides building good community relations. Data collected from points all across the country could yield meaningful and significant results, valuable information in preserving or retrieving safe water quality.

The Adopt-A-Stream program gives students a chance to work in the community in a hands-on project, using disciplined and logical methodology. Students learn skills that can be applied in other parts of their lives. The program gets them involved, gives them a sense of achievement, and helps to develop confidence. Stimulated by the AAS contact in the school, many participants have chosen careers or hobbies in areas completely unrelated to the program.

Initial funding for the AAS program was provided by grants and donations with the understanding that the participants, by purchasing the manuals and materials, fund the ongoing costs. Lack of significant funds to develop the program has continued to frustrate Mr. Harris. With more funds, he can envision hiring a retired teacher to follow up with participating organizations at least twice a year for feedback on activities, results and suggestions for improving materials. Years ago, some money was available from Walk for Water, but that has run out and no funding has been awarded from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Among his other activities, Mr. Harris is funding a dig for artifacts in Mendon Ponds Park to locate the site where French troops camped in the 18th Century. He has also assembled a group of investors to save the Powder Mills Park Fish Hatchery. He believes the annual fishing day held at the Park is another activity that young people can experience and develop new interests.

Mr. Harris is a notable, and local, example of the impact a committed, focused individual can have. We want to recognize his achievements and continuing interest for the benefit of the area, and, ultimately the entire ecosystem.

ADOPT-A-STREAM QUEST CONTINUES

Eight Honeoye Falls-Lima economics students recently completed the second phase of the Adopt-A-Stream program, a long-term project aimed at creating pathways along Honeoye Creek to connect village parks. The project began during the 1992 Fall semester when Roland Lyle's senior economics students studied the Creek's water quality using testing equipment donated by the Mendon Foundation.

Jon Adair, Sarah Bachmann, Meredith Berk, Megan Johnson, Kevin Mahaffy, Cindy Mamoone, Michele Schiavo and Kim Wells, with the help of Honeoye Falls Mayor Anne Morton and the Mendon Foundation, created a survey, a map and compiled information on conservation easements. After presenting their ideas to the Village Board for approval, the students mailed the packet to nine property owners whose land borders the creek. Later, the group met with the homeowners to personally discuss their concerns and suggestions.

Reaction was mixed. Several landowners were reluctant, but others were receptive. The students noted that the landowners need more information and assurances to ease

their concerns.

The group learned that such a project is not as simple as it may appear. As they reviewed the results with the Village Board, Kevin Mahaffy reported, "It was nice to see the community and the school working together, but it was a humbling experience to see the red tape involved." Mayor Morton reassured the students, "Perhaps by the time you have finished college, there will be a trail."

Lyle plans on continuing the project until the creek trail is reality. The students have produced a video of both phases of the project. In the future, they may conduct an open forum to further inform the community, gather ideas and address concerns.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Carl Foss - 624-1634 • Mary Gerhard - 624-3812
Peggy Henderson - 624-5158
Susan Katz - 586-1933 • Jeanne Loberg - 624-2225

WETLANDS, cont.

transition areas between uplands and aquatic habitats. They include marshes, swamps, bogs, wet meadows and flats. Besides the presence of standing water for some portion of the growing season, wetlands are identified on the basis of vegetation because certain plants outcompete others, thereby serving as a good indicator of wet conditions over time.

For many years, people did not recognize the value of wetlands and consequently, New York lost almost half of its wetlands to activities such as filling, draining and polluting. Through ecological awareness, people have come to recognize that wetlands help to control erosion by slowing movement and filtering sediments. They cleanse water of pollutants and provide habitats for feeding and nesting fish and wildlife, including some rare and endangered species. They absorb, store and slowly release rain and melt water, minimizing flooding and stabilizing water flow.

Wetlands are very plentiful in the Mendon area. However, the State maps and regulates only those that are at least 12.4 acres, or of significant local importance. The DEC has established four classes of wetlands, Class I being the highest, depending upon the degree of benefits supplied. Benefit is generally associated with water quality, erosion con-

trol or habitat maintenance. There are 19 designated wetlands in the Town: six class III, eleven class II, and two class I. The Class I wetlands include areas surrounding Quaker Pond, Hundred Acre Pond and Deep Pond in Mendon Ponds Park.

In addition to State regulation of wetlands, the Town Factors Affecting Development (FAD) ordinance includes areas of one acre or more, and Federal wetland legislation also regulates the wetland areas of Mendon.

Anyone wishing to work within a regulated wetland or the 100 foot buffer zone must obtain a DEC permit. Work affecting wetlands not regulated by the State will fall under the scrutiny of the Town Planning or Zoning Boards.

The Town of Mendon is fortunate to have quality waterways and plentiful wetlands. We now know there have been periods of deterioration, that this has taught us how essential responsible and knowledgeable water management is. Government and private enterprise have begun the efforts to educate, and all of us can help by being conscientious in our recreational activities and responsible in our business practices.

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PICNIC - IN - THE - PARK • The first annual Foundation "Picnic in the Park" was held June 15 in Mendon Ponds Park. Participants enjoyed a fascinating nature walk led by R.I.T. Professor Franz Seischab, and a wonderful grilled dinner with home-made desserts. Thanks to Susan Katz and John Spinelli for organizing the event.

HONEOYE FALLS VILLAGE DAYS • The Foundation staffed an information booth at the Honeoye Falls Village Days, June 18 - 20. Lime Rickeys were made on the spot and enjoyed as a heat-beater.

MEETINGS • The Mendon Foundation meets the third Tuesday of every month at the Mendon Fire House, Route 64, at 7:30 pm. The public is welcome.

COMPUTER • The Mendon Foundation needs a computer. Anyone who has an excess 286 or newer, to donate, call Carl Foss at 624-1634 or Mary Gerhard at 624-3812.

HELP • The Mendon Foundation needs volunteers for a variety of committees suited to your schedule and time availability. They include: Newsletter (you don't need to be a great writer), Finance, Fundraising, Membership, Land Acquisition and Land Management.

Join Today!

Your membership supports the enhancement of Mendon property values, environmental education and resource preservation!

_____ Individual / Family membership \$25.00 _____ Business Membership \$50.00

_____ I'd like to know more, please call me

Name _____

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Please mail to: The Mendon Foundation, P.O. Box 231, Mendon, New York 14506-0231

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