

PATHWAYS

VOL 10 NO.5

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MENDON FOUNDATION

December 2003

A Member of the National Land Trust Alliance

www.MendonFoundationInc.org



This oak tree on the corner of Plains Road and Rt 15A is estimated to be over 150 years old and in need of professional care. Please see inside for details on how you can help preserve this magnificent specimen.

IN THIS ISSUE

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Information about the Lehigh Valley Trail.



What is the origin of the Trail?

The Lehigh Valley Rail Road had its beginnings in 1846 in Pennsylvania, and the first service through the Mendon area and on to Buffalo occurred in 1892. Rochester passengers boarded at the terminal located just south of Court Street in the city and made connections with the main line at Rochester Junction, located just east of Plains Road in Mendon. This station was destroyed by fire in the spring of 1973. The Lehigh Valley "Black Diamond" passenger service, over the main line, ceased in 1961. Freight service was terminated in 1976.

Who owns the Trail?

With the help of a Federal Grant in 1979, Monroe County acquired a portion of the mainline between the Monroe/Ontario county line and the Genesee Valley Greenway in Livingston County. Included was the spur from Rochester Junction to the City. The intention was to convert the property to a Linear Park and Trail.

Describe the Trail for me.

The corridor right-of-way is nominally 100 feet wide. About 70% of the width will remain in an undisturbed natural state. Of the 30' devoted to the trail, 10' will be a stone dust surface, and the remainder will be grass. Our project starts at the Monroe/Ontario County line to the east of Old Dutch Road. There the Victor section of the Trail continues east and

intersects the (north/south) Auburn line. To the west it crosses the Genesee River extending into Caledonia where it joins the (north/south) Genesee Greenway trail system.

The Trail's total distance is 15 miles, split about equally between Rush and Mendon. Also included is a spur, which runs north from Plains Road in Mendon, through Rush to Henrietta. The Trail crosses twelve north/south roads and six bridges. The steel structure of the large bridge crossing the Genesee River is still in place, as is that of the trestle bridge over Honeoye Creek in Mendon. Three smaller bridges are located in Rush. A fourth crosses Irondequoit Creek in Mendon. For most of its distance, the Trail's 10' wide multi-use surface will be made up of 6" of compacted cinders topped by 2" of rolled stone dust. The two high traffic areas, Mendon Station Park and the Hamlet of Rush, will be surfaced with asphalt. The parallel equestrian path will have a grass surface.

When finished, what will the Trail access at intersections look like?

Motor vehicle access will be blocked (except for emergency and maintenance vehicles) at all intersections, utilizing gates, bollards, boulders, berms, etc. Road and Trail safety signage and some landscaping are also planned.

What rules will apply to users of the Trail?

Since the County of Monroe has title to the entire length of the Trail corridor, County Park Rules, as established by the Monroe County Legislature, apply to usage of the Trail. Motorized vehicles will not be permitted.

How will these rules be enforced?

As with all County parks, the Monroe County Sheriff's Department is the enforcing agency. We urge that anyone who observes any illegal usage of the Trail report it, ASAP, via the 911 System. Procedures will also be in place for notifying the Mendon Foundation and the County Parks Department of any violation.

How did the Mendon Foundation become involved in the development of the Trail?

In the 1993-1994 period the Comprehensive/Master plans of the Towns of Mendon, Victor and Rush and the Mendon Hamlet Master plan all cited Trail development as a high priority action. It was also strongly advocated by the Genesee Transportation Council in their Long Range Transportation Plan for the Greater Rochester Area. Similar urging existed in a NY State sponsored comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The Mendon Foundation first approached the County Parks Department in early 1994 to ascertain the status of their plans to convert the abandoned Lehigh Valley right-of-way into a user friendly, multi-purpose Trail. The County had no implementation plans at that time, although it was deemed to be a very worthwhile project.

The first of several public open meetings on the subject was held 11/16/1994. In excess of 50 interested citizens were in attendance. There was overwhelming support expressed for pursuing the project.

In the spring of 1995, the Mendon Foundation agreed that such a project would prove beneficial to the Community and was consistent with its Open Space mission to preserve and enhance Mendon's recreational and natural resources. The Foundation approached the County and offered to assist them in the development and maintenance of the Trail. A five year contract resulted. The agreement was subsequently renewed and now is in its second 5-year period.

How was the trail design developed?

We gathered input and requested advice from many sources. Some are listed here:

- Eight public forums to request public input.
- Extensive individual/small group discussions with potential users.
- Discussions with developers of other trails including visits to their sites.

- Consultation with National "Rails to Trails" representatives.
- Study of many books and articles by experienced Trail builders and users.
- Consultation with builders of other trails in this area.
- Substantial input from and design approval by County Parks Department personnel.

All Federal and NY State requirements had to be met. (i.e., safety, handicapped access, widths, structural, etc.)

The initial draft of the design was issued by LaBella Associates, a local design firm in late 2002. Further modification occurred, balancing available funds with "field" opportunities and necessities. The final design was set in February 2003.

Why is the Trail important to the County and the Region?

Although this 15-mile Trail stands, as a major and unique trail in its own right, when completed in 2004, it will also be a major addition to the region's recreational trail system. It will not only link the Genesee Greenway (in the west) to Victor's Auburn Trail (to the east) but with the completion of the Lehigh Valley's northern branch, through Henrietta and Brighton, will connect to the Erie Canalway Trail at the Genesee Valley Park. This linkage with several other trails makes the Lehigh Valley Trail a significant part of the region's growing interconnected trail system.

How much will the Trail cost and how is it being paid for?

The development cost of the trail is approximately \$1,300,000. These funds include \$110,000 in local funds, raised by the Mendon Foundation, \$250,000 from Monroe County, and Federal Highway Grant funds totaling approximately \$940,000.

What areas of the Trail are likely to be further developed?

There are three trail areas that are candidates for further development. They are:

1. The Rush Hamlet
Planning has not commenced.
2. Rochester Junction.
Planning is in the preliminary stage.
3. Mendon Hamlet



Planning for the Mendon Station Park is underway but has not been completed. Some initial clearing and construction by volunteers has started.

Who will use the Trail?

Proposed uses include walking, hiking, biking, jogging, cross-country skiing, equestrian, and other types of non-motorized activities. Numerous studies of trail usage around the country suggest the following breakdown of usage.

1. 65% to 75% Bicycling.
2. 24% to 30% Pedestrian (walking, jogging and running).
3. 1% to 5% Equestrian.

When will the Trail be completed?

The Trail is being completed in three phases.

1. The portion of the Trail between the eastern Monroe County line and Rochester Junction (Plains Rd.) is scheduled to be completed by year-end, weather permitting.
2. The contract for all bridgework, clearing, and the approach to the Genesee River Bridge, calls for completion by February 2004.
3. The remaining portions of the Trail will be completed in 2004.

What will be the likely impact of the Trail?

It is anticipated that many benefits will be gained by the communities through which the Trail passes and to the people who choose to utilize the Trail. The project will connect two major statewide trail networks---The north/south Genesee Valley Greenway trail system, which eventually will extend from Lake Ontario through Letchworth State Park to Pennsylvania, and the Finger Lakes trail systems. At the Monroe County line, a hiker can continue to the east, on the Victor portion of the Lehigh Valley Trail, and connect with the Auburn trail that

extends north toward Powder Mills Park in Pittsford, and ultimately the Erie Canal Towpath in Bushnell's Basin. To the south, the Auburn trail passes through Victor, toward Canandaigua and Geneva.

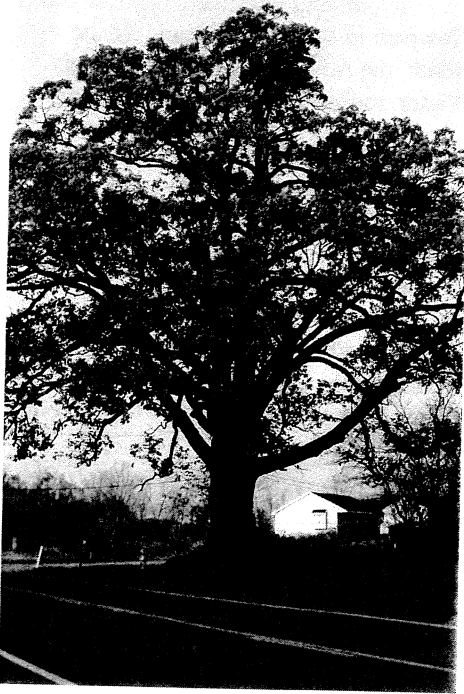
The entire trail will be handicapped accessible. The public will be provided an opportunity to increase their appreciation, of the historical significance of the former "Black Diamond" route. They will also have a close-up viewing of wetlands, wildlife and their habitats, flora and fauna of this region and other natural resources which abound the full length of the corridor.

The trail passes near, and will provide linkage to, the Totiakton and Ganandogan Indian sites, both listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. The Town of Mendon has plans to connect the Trail to Mendon Ponds Park, a national natural landmark.

Thus, the project also provides opportunities for interpretation of these many important features, which exist in our area. Finally, since the Trail passes through the Hamlets of Rush and Mendon, ample opportunity will exist for users to avail themselves of food, drink and other shopping desires.



SAVE THE OLD OAK TREE!



The Mendon Foundation is attempting to preserve this beautiful old oak tree on the corner of 15A and Plains Road.

At the corner of Rush-Lima Road (Route 15a) and Plains Road there stands an old oak tree on the Mendon Foundation's Sibleyville property. Travelers and commuters drive past this stately tree every day. Through wind, ice, rain and snow the old oak tree has stood firm, barely losing a branch or twig. Diane Ham, Town of Mendon Historian, shared some interesting facts about the tree. She talked to Dean Desmann, who lived on Plains Road since he was born in the early 20's. Mr. Desmann now in his eighties always remembers the tree as being as big as it is now. Therefore, this oak has to be at least 150 years old. He recalls in the late 20's when the road was built that the DOT paved the road around the tree so it would not be disturbed. Even back 80 years ago someone was thinking about saving the old oak tree.

Members of the Mendon Foundation would like to give our glorious old oak an overhaul. Oak trees live to be very old, thus she needs trimming and tuning up. John Hauber, member of the Open Space Committee will be working with a certified forester to assess what work needs to be done. Steve Melcher, another member, is submitting information to the National Historic Tree Registry so it can be registered as a historical tree.

In order to revitalize the old oak the Mendon Foundation would like contributions from the community. Everyone that drives by

everyday and enjoys its spectacular beauty may want to consider a \$10.00 or more tax-deductible donation. Help to preserve a beautiful piece of our environment and history through your generous gift. The Mendon Foundation thanks you for your donation.

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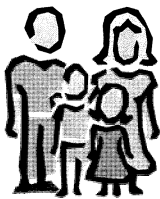
A tax deductible receipt will be sent to you for your donation.

If you are interested in joining the Mendon Foundation, please refer to the membership information.

For further information please contact:

Carl Foss @ 385-2330
 or e-mail Arlene Cluff at
 ajcluff45@aol.com

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NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS

Winter is a good time to sit by a cozy fire and plan your landscaping ideas for the spring. If you're a new resident to Mendon with a bare landscape facing you or a seasoned resident who wants something new and different, then read what the Mendon Foundation has to offer. Have you thought about natural landscaping or woodland gardening? Natural landscapes transform expansive lawn areas into sustaining plant communities that are vital to wildlife and are low maintenance. Woodland gardening adds more visual interest and provides critical habitat for wildlife. Most people live in Mendon because of the open spaces, clean air, natural beauty and the abundance of wildlife. Natural and woodland gardening will enhance this environment with diverse native species of trees and shrubs providing habitat and encouraging nesting of birds and small animals. Seasonal changes of the plants are attractive and interesting.

The Mendon Foundation is offering several native trees and shrubs

for sale. Orders are taken in the spring and fall. Carol and AJ Bellavia recently purchased 29 Norway and Blue Spruce to start their naturalizing border at the back of their house. In the spring they will complete their landscape plan with other native trees and shrubs. Even though the trees are seedlings, the Bellavia's know in a few years everything will be on its way to creating a beautiful, natural border.

If someone would like to plant a natural or woodland landscape, there is free consultation and a design plan with your order. The New York State native trees and shrubs are 2-3 year seedlings grown from seed at White Oak Nursery in Canandaigua. There is a 50% tax deduction for each tree purchased. Each tree or shrub costs \$10. It's a win-win situation for everyone. You get a sturdy, healthy tree or shrub and a tax deduction besides.

The list of trees and shrubs for sale with an order form will be published in the spring and fall issues. If you would like to view a list of the plants or order early go to the Mendon Foundation's web

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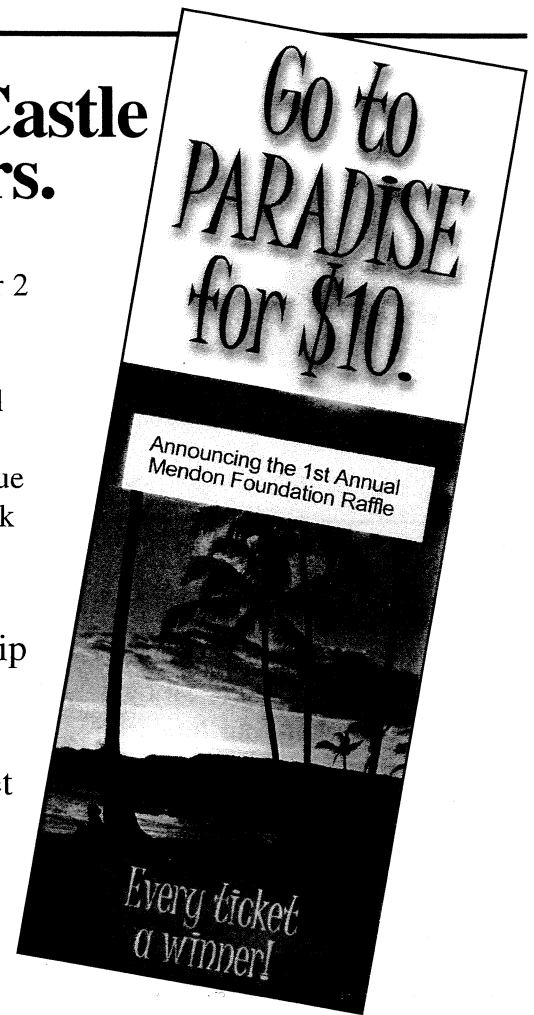
site -
www.mendonfoundationinc.org
and look under "What's New".



Bluebeard's Castle Raffle Winners.

The Mendon Foundation's first annual raffle featuring airfare for 2 and a week in St. Thomas at Bluebeard's Castle resort was a resounding success. We thank all our sponsors and those who participated in helping us continue work on the Mendon Station Park and Lehigh Valley Trail. Congratulations to the winners!

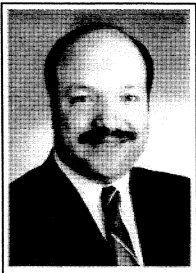
- 1st Bluebeard's Castle Trip
Scot Henderson
- 2nd Honeoye Falls Market Place / Mendon Meadows Market
Jim Hopkins
- 3rd Mendon Village Commons businesses
Jessica Plant
- 4th Molye Chevrolet Oldsmobile Buick
Mohamed Abib
- 5th Mendon Office Park businesses
Christine Brown
- 6th Lou's Cottage Hotel
Tony Canlasico
- 7th Custom Brewcrafters
Renee Reed
- 8th Weider's Pro Hardware
Herm Nies



- 9th Onnie's Closet
Gillian Young
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WHIP: Restoring Grasslands in Mendon.

The New York State Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a part of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill). This voluntary program plans to restore, enhance and establish grassland habitat on privately owned land in the traditional and historical native grassland areas of the Finger Lakes region. Species benefiting from this restoration program are Bobolink, Blue-winged Teal, Henslow's Sparrow, Hellbender, Upland Sandpiper, Northern Harrier, Eastern Meadowlark, Vesper Sparrow, short-eared owl, river otter, Karner Blue Butterfly and Grasshopper Sparrow.

The Mendon Foundation's Open Space, Land Acquisition and Stewardship Committee is working in close collaboration with JoBeth Bellanca of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in recruiting prospective landowners to participate in the program.

Eligible lands include privately owned land and Federal land when the primary benefit is on private or Tribal land. If you are eligible for the program, there are certain conservation compliance and wetland conservation requirements to be met. WHIP provides cost-share payments to the landowners under 5 or 10 year agreements. A 15 year agreement is available for those who wish to undertake habitat development practices on essential plant and animal habitat. The minimum acreage

requirement is five acres or more. A committee member will initially evaluate each parcel to decide eligibility for the program. JoBeth Bellanca will then assess the site and rank the parcel for application. After the land is accepted into the program, a schedule is established for planting of specific warm weather grasses suitable to the land. Members of the Committee will monitor the progression of the program and report to Ms. Bellanca.

If you would like more information about the program please e-mail Arlene Cluff, Chairman @ajcluff45@aol.com or JoBeth Bellanca @jobeth.bellanca@ny.usda.gov. We will be happy to walk your property with you and evaluate the site for eligibility.

Several landowners have successfully participated in the program over the past two years. At Sibleyville Nature Reserve on Plains Road, the grasslands are growing after a successful planting this spring. This Reserve owned by the Mendon Foundation is open to the public. Habitat restoration should be completed in the next two years with the grasses fully grown.

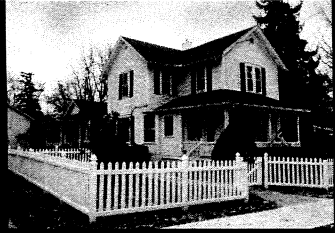
Here's an environmental program that offers an interesting method of preserving open space. Enhance your environment and increase your property values.



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2003 Mendon Arts Festival Report

The second annual Mendon Arts Festival was a successful winner the weekend of our Fall event. Isabel blew through town early and provided us two warm sunny beautiful days. Everyone -young and old had a great time. This festival would not have been possible without the help of the following people.

Tim Schiefen, President of the Mendon Business Association, opened incredible doors to get help for many tasks. He always

had a smile for everyone and never let any kinks in the plan get in the way of achieving a triumphant festival.

The Festival Chairmen met weekly to tackle problems and keep things running smoothly. Ann Frank organized all the artists and vendors and donated a beautiful print from her Gallery; Linda Liljequist worked tirelessly pounding the pavement for sponsors; Dianne Tucker efficiently managed the budget and paid the bills; Regina Couch and Dianne Tucker organized the raffle prizes; Sandy Wigg assisted with advertising; Heather Hoffman worked with all the restaurants in arranging their food specials for the weekend. Special thanks also to Tamara Federico, Leona Piro and Jenna Chudyk for their contributions to the festival and help to the Chairmen. Gil Goodman gave of his time and creative talent in designing the brochure, poster and map and making signs for the sponsors. Many thanks to Noreen Goodman, Kelly Schiefen, Dorothy Lindblom, Jeanne and Peter Loberg, Brad McAdam and all the family members who worked at the information booth and all the various events.

Another person who deserves many kudos is Warren Wallace. Warren is the Mendon Foundation's Director who is in charge of the Mendon Station Park. He quietly and diligently worked everyday for several months getting the park in shape for the festival. Thanks to Warren's efforts and leadership the pavilion was stained and the roof complet-

ed; and the stairs were built to facilitate easy access to the park. Warren, also, arranged all the entertainment and events that took place in the Station Park. Special thanks to Brian Eder and Jonathan Friedlander, who organized the popular Jack Russell Terrier races and helped Warren set up the staging area and to John Farrell who set up and manned the games of skill. Our donut and cider sale would not have been possible without the great salesmanship of Todd Foss. The native plant and tree sale ran smoothly with the help of Janet Leone, Andy Vaughn, Lee Schilling, Steve Melcher, Dave Covert, and Eileen Dobroski. Carl Foss, Mendon Foundation President, Dick and Sue Dehm and Roy Cluff also worked tirelessly all weekend helping wherever needed.

The festival committee is already planning a bigger and better festival next year. If you have any suggestions or comments please e-mail Arlene Cluff @ ajcluff45@aol.com.

Many thanks to all of you who came and participated. We hope we put a little bit of sunshine and fun into your weekend and look forward to seeing you all again next year.



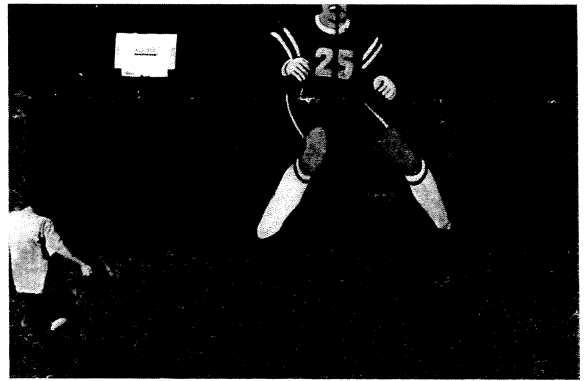
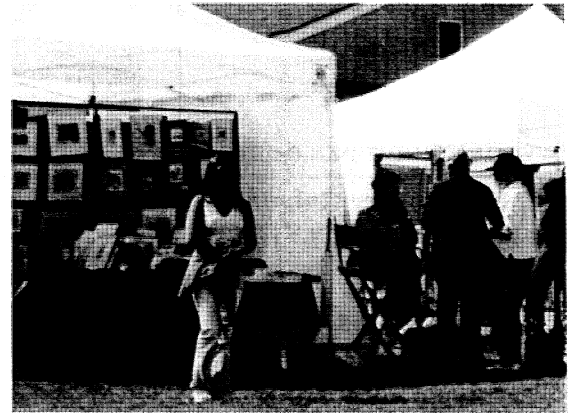
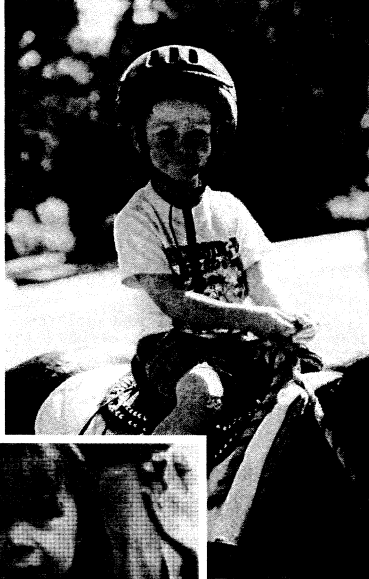
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Arlene Cluff,
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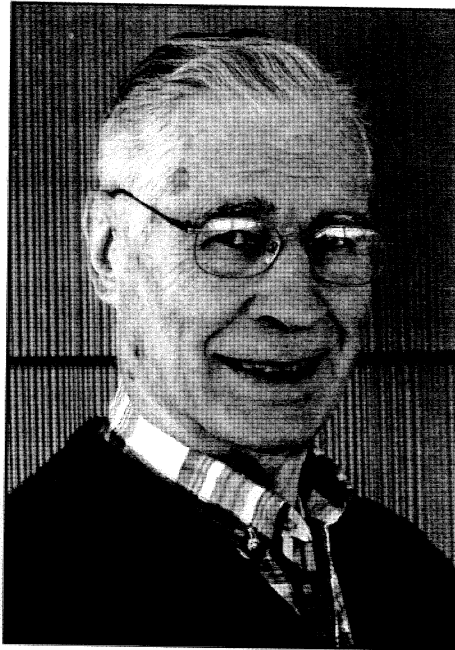
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Wayne Gilman retires as treasurer of the Mendon Foundation.



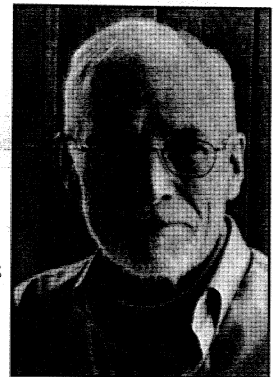
Community College Foundation. After his retirement from Kodak, Wayne served as Vice-President of Finance of the Rochester Area Hospital Corporation.

As important as his skills as a financial officer, however, is the fact that Wayne was devoted to preserving the beauty and maintaining the many values inherent in a rural area with an abundance of open space. His vision and energy during the early years of the Foundation's existence have laid a solid base for the future and will long be remembered.

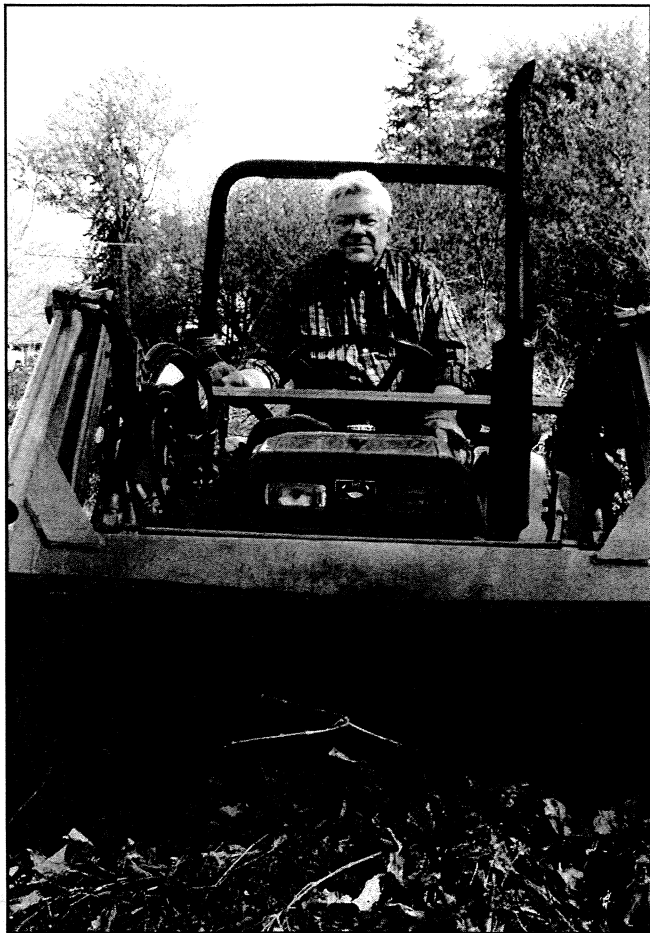
The Mendon Foundation was just one of our area organizations that benefited from Wayne Gilman's talents as a financial officer. He helped shape the financial structure of the Foundation in 1995 and continued as its treasurer until this past summer. His devotion to open space and land conservation - he served on the Town of Mendon Conservation Board for a number of years - coupled with his business experience and knowledge made him a valuable officer of the Foundation.

Wayne's genius was evident early on at Eastman Kodak, where he worked over forty years, and retired as a comptroller at Kodak Park. Other organizations benefited from his devotion to sound fiscal management. For twelve years he served on the Board of Trustees of Monroe Community College where he continues to serve as Honorary Trustee. In addition, he is a member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the Monroe

John Schaefer, a newcomer to Mendon, has agreed to serve as treasurer. He is a member of the Foundation's Open Space Committee and, after a lifetime



of Rochester city living, purchased the home of Evelyn Lewis on Pittsford Mendon Center Road. The Foundation's twenty-seven acre open space parcel is situated to the east of his property. John is an attorney who practices part time in the area of trust and estate law and is retired from the New York State Unified Court System where he served for many years first as a part time law clerk to a number of judges and later as Chief Clerk of the Monroe County Surrogate's Court. He is the treasurer of Garth Fagan Dance, Inc., a world renowned modern dance company directed by the Tony Award winning choreographer Garth Fagan, and has been a member of their board for several years.



Thank You - ALL

The old saying, "Deeds Speak Louder Than Words," says volumes about the Mendon Station Park.

During the past year over 100 people have volunteered more than 1500 hours working in the Park.

The Foundation would like to thank all, who have given so generously of their time and talent to help make the Park a reality.

PATHWAYS

is the newsletter of the Mendon

Foundation, a completely volunteer organization which exists with the generous support of its members, volunteers, and contributors. This newsletter is published three times a year and paid for through the generous support of our advertisers.

The Mendon Foundation

P.O. Box 231

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OUR VISION STATEMENT

We believe in preservation.

We believe in recreation.

We believe in education.

We believe in community stewardship.

OUR PURPOSE

To improve the quality of life in our community.

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. Our phone: **585-624-8730**

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My interests are:

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- Mendon Station Park
- Community Playground
- Mendon Hamlet
- Fundraising
- Communications
- Open Space/Preservation

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