

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has." -Margaret Mead

# PATHWAYS

VOL 13 NO 2

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MENDON FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2006

A Member of the National Land Trust Alliance

[www.MendonFoundationInc.org](http://www.MendonFoundationInc.org)



## *Have You Ridden the Northern Extension?*

*Photo by John Buck*

*Completed in late June, the Lehigh Valley Trail's Northern Extension has a different feel to it. First it is a single multi-purpose, stone dust trail (sorry no horses). Secondly, it takes you through highly filled sections, which provide excellent pastoral views and then to Cedar Swamp where you ride through a tunnel of trees with water immediately on either side. Perhaps most importantly, it completes (except for a short section just north of the NYS thruway that's rough but passable) the first major circular trail in the Genesee region. North from Rochester Junction, through Rush, Henrietta and Brighton to the Canalway trail; then west to Genesee Valley Park and the Genesee Greenway trail; south to the western end of the Lehigh Valley Trail and then east back to Rochester Junction. All-in-all, an outstanding 27± mile ride.*

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# TEAMWORK AT ROCHESTER JUNCTION

By P. J. Erbley



1909 Rochester Junction Blue Jays

*top row (l-r), Al Treat, Charles "Iron Man" Senn, "Wild Bill" Edwards, "Sol" Whitbeck, Harry Lord; center row (l-r), Bill Desmann, Cornell Lord, Chester Lord, Burton Lord, Art Powell, Van Treat, Clarence Senn; bottom row (l-r), Tom Connor, Roy Senn and Irving Powell.*

What do Life Scout, Liam Dooley, and "Iron Man" Charley Senn have in common? Essentially, both used talent and leadership to keep the banner of their Rochester Junction 'team' out of the mud.

To be sure, numerous teams served this valley axis of Honeoye Creek and Plains Road over the centuries: area farmers, their wives and their hired help; Lehigh Valley Railroad employees, from depot agents to gandy dancers to crack express train

engineers; Totiakton, the long-ago Seneca village on the bluff, where each member worked in tandem for survival of their culture, before another 'team', Denonville's French army, drove them away and burned the town; and, of course, the hard workers of the Mendon Foundation, who have fostered a recreation Renaissance in southern Monroe County.

While Liam and Iron Man's exploits may not have reached the level of an army inva-

sion or a ninety car freight train blasting through at 70 MPH, they are proud members of the permanent lore of the most critical location on Mendon Foundation's *Lehigh Valley Trail* system.

Teenager, Charley Senn, a product of a local farming family, had a resilient pitching arm when he joined the Rochester Junction "Blue Jays" in the early 1900's. One of those nines is pictured here and included players with names commonly echoed in these hills - Lord, Treat, Powell,



Desmann and Senn.

Their homey little ball-park, lovingly called the "Polo Grounds," on the north side of Plains Road between the creek and the railroad, stands tall in corn these days. However, the dust rose high on the summer diamond of ninety years back, when the boys tussled with the likes of the Lehigh Stars, the Pullmans, the Colored Georgians or the Honeoye Falls Husky Farmers. With Senn on the mound for most of twenty years, his moniker in local baseball annals was well earned - Iron Man.

And now, Liam Dooley, of Honeoye Falls Scout Troop 10, has joined the historical tapestry. By managing the rehabilitation of a priceless element of Rochester Junction for his Eagle Scout badge - the west wye bridge over Surrine Creek, where the railroad

branch to Honeoye Falls, Lima and Hemlock began its southward journey - Liam's team of volunteers has provided public access to the soon to be constructed Great Bend Nature Park.

Together with materials supplied by the Town of Mendon, the team amassed 382 hours of sweat equity and gave Rochester Junction a work of art. The coming out party for Rochester Junction's complete rebirth as a transportation hub (fueled by foot power) cannot be too far off. In the words of Mendon Foundation's Warren Wallace, "With the recent completion of the northern extension into Rush and Henrietta, and now the bridge to the south toward Sibley Road, Rochester Junction is regaining some of its old dimensions."

Kudos Liam - your team is a winner!



*Liam Dooley and his crew, 2006*

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## IMPORTANT!!! 2006 NEW YORK STATE CONSERVATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

Since 2000, land trust representatives of the Land Trust Alliance, have worked diligently in creating a conservation tax credit program. They collaborated with the Governor's Office, the State Legislature, heads of state Departments of Environmental Conservation, Agriculture and Markets and Taxation and Finance, leaders of New York's major conservation organizations and municipal associations including the Associations of Towns and Counties and the Council of Mayors

As a result of this six year effort, Governor Pataki proposed a new conservation tax credit program in his 2006 Executive Budget. This program would give a landowner, who donates a conservation easement, an annual tax rebate equivalent up to 25% of the property tax paid on that land, up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year. It was approved by both houses of the legislature and signed into law and added to the state tax code earlier this year. This is the first legislation of its kind in our nation.

There is also a new federal tax incentive recently passed by the Congress. Anyone donating a conservation easement from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2007 will raise the maximum deduction a donor can take from 30% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) in any year to 50%; allow qualifying farmers to deduct up to 100% of their AGI and increase the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from 6 years to 16 years.

A Conservation Easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and the not for profit Mendon Foundation that permanently protects open space by limiting or restricting the amount and type of development or activity that may occur while leaving the land in private ownership. The easement is designed to protect natural scenic or open space values of real property. These restrictions or easements permit the Mendon Foundation to protect conservation values on lands without interfering with other private property rights of the landowners. When a property owner donates a conservation easement, he or she may continue to live or work on the land, in accordance to the easement's provisions and may sell the land or pass it on to their heirs. There are four types of conservation purposes that are written into the legal agreement. Besides the benefiting from the Conservation Tax credit, there are also significant tax advantages which include the possibility of income tax deductions and reducing estate and gift taxes.

For more information please contact Carl Foss, President or Arlene Cluff, Director. This new conservation easement benefit will enable us to assist interested landowners to explore open space preservation for future generations.



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### FIRST ANNUAL BIRDWALK



In early May on a rainy Saturday morning, a small group of bird lovers walked a portion of the Lehigh Valley Trail to view various birds as they winged their way north for the summer. Stuart Ackerman, Mendon native and

naturalist, led the group on an interesting walk identifying many birds such as the Northern Oriole, Indigo Bunting, Cedar Waxwing, Pileated Woodpecker and several others as they were either passing through or settling in for the season. The group also saw beaver at work in Honeoye Creek at the Clover Street intersection of the Trail. It was a delightful walk in spite of the inclement weather. The Mendon Foundation plans to make this an annual event. Unusual songbirds can be sighted during a small window of time in the spring starting at the end of April through the middle of May. More information about the walks will be posted in the newsletter and on the web site. Plan to join us with the entire family next year for a fun filled, educational walk along the Trail.



# The Beaver: Nature's Habitat Manager

By John Hauber



Few species, in the natural course of their lives, have as profound affect on the environment as the beaver (*Castor canadensis*). In the spring, when they are nearly two years old, beaver leave their natal sites to forge off on their own. Moving up, down, and /or across drainages, they search for appropriate in occupied habitat to establish their own home territory. Hopefully along the way, the beaver finds a mate or perhaps one comes along looking for the same thing as the new area is being established. Through the summer, much must be accomplished. Without the protection of their stick lodge and deeper water, they are vulnerable to some predators and the elements.

In smaller watersheds, a dam is constructed to block up the waters and flow potential feeding areas. Cut trees, limbs, other vegetation, and mud are hauled and pushed up to make a substantial blockage. A domed lodge is created of more branches and mud to form living space above the resulting water level. And, before winter storms arrive and ice forms, feed piles of tender tree limbs are created by sticking them in the muddy por-

tions of deeper water within the dammed area.

In larger streams, rivers, and lakes, the beaver dispense with building a dam that is sure to be washed away. Here, they build bank dens by burrowing into the river bank below water level and then create living space upward above the level the water will reach. Often, a lodge of sticks may accumulate over these sites. Bank lodges also are formed in the around exposed trees and roots along the shore. Winter feed piles are again established nearby in the bottom of the water area.

Beaver are obviously industrious creatures. Their structures and flowed areas change the local landscape for years to come. Expanding numbers create larger dams and more clearing for foods until the area no longer can support them. Then, the population moves on the more suitable areas and starts again. In 15 to 20 years, the original site will revegetate to suitable tree species and another pair may discover the site and begin the cycle again.

Adult beaver have few enemies

and create shallow water habitats for many other species: water-fowl, shore birds, other water oriented mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. Management of beaver numbers, through regulated trapping can extend the time the colony may occupy any one area without "eating it out" and causing abandonment. Harvest management also lessens the negative aspects beaver have on man's desires: flooding of highways, home sites, farmlands, and woodlands, and feeding on valuable trees and shrubs. Trapping relieves these problems, while providing recreation, food, and valuable furs from a renewable resource.

Above all, beaver and their ecosystems provide a rich opportunity for natural history study, environmental education, and casual observation. Enjoy yourselves out on the trail and you may be surprised by what you see on the South side of the Trail, just East of Clover Street.



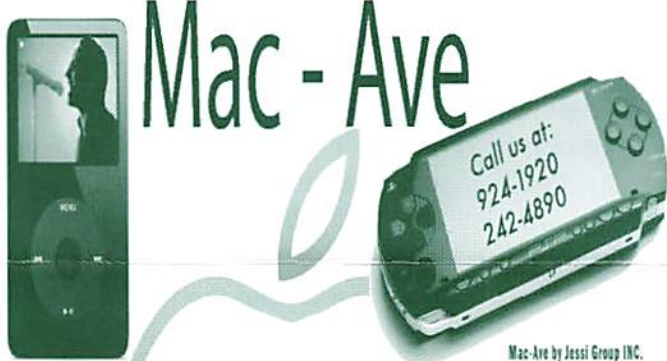
## WYE a BRIDGE? Photos and copy by Warren Wallace

Troop 10 Life Scout, Liam Dooley has just completed his Eagle Scout Project by rebuilding the West Wye Bridge over Surrine Creek to Rochester Junction. This bridge will provide a vital link in connecting the Town of Mendon's Great Bend Nature Park (under construction) to the Lehigh Valley Trail. The bridge will be open for public use as soon as the connecting trail is built.

Liam planned the project, arranged for the delivery of materials, and over saw construction and clean up. All told 20 people volunteered 382 hours working on the project.

The Foundation would like to express it appreciation, and that of the community, to Liam and his crew for a job well done; in making this important addition to redevelopment of Rochester Junction. Additional thanks also go to the Town of Mendon, which supplied the materials and removed construction debris.

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*The bridge prior to reconstruction*




*The bridge after reconstruction*



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# HABITAT RESTORATION FOR THE SMALL PROPERTY OWNER ECOLOGICAL WORKSHOP

SPONSORED BY THE MENDON FOUNDATION  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006  
1 PM – 4PM  
SIBLEYVILLE NATURE RESERVE  
MENDON, NY

**SPEAKER:** Jim Engel, owner of White Oak Nursery in Canandaigua, expert in native plant propagation and an avid promoter of native plants and their uses in both natural and human landscapes.

## 12:30 PM: REGISTRATION

### 1-2:30 PM: HABITAT RESTORATION:

This lecture will focus on how to restore diverse native plant communities easily and economically using self collected seed. Techniques will be demonstrated on how to control non-native invasive plants.

### 2:30- 2:45 PM: Break with refreshments

### 2:45 - 3:45 PM:

HANDS ON EXPERIENCE IN COLLECTING, CLEANING AND PLANTING SEEDS OF NATIVE PLANTS WITH A HIKE AROUND SIBLEYVILLE RESERVE.

### 3:45 - 4:00 PM:

EVALUATION AND ADJOURMENT

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### 1-4 PM:

NATIVE PLANT SALE BY WHITE OAK NURSERY AND AMANDA'S GARDENS OF SPRINGWATER  
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**FEE:** \$20 Mendon Foundation members ,Couples \$35, \$25 nonmembers, Couples \$45

### PRE-REGISTRATION ENCOURAGED.

Directions to Sibleyville: From 390 south, take Exit 11, turn left onto Route 15, turn left at the second light onto Route 251 East. Follow 251 to the four corners of Rush. Turn right onto Route 15A. Follow Route 15A south to Plains Rd. Turn left onto Plains Rd. Follow Plains Rd. to Sibleyville Estates on the right. Turn right onto Sibleyville Lane. Turn right onto Gravel Hill Lane. Proceed to the cul-de-sac. Parking will be available on Gravel Hill Lane.

From the Town of Mendon, proceed to Plains Rd. Going west on Plains Rd., turn Left onto Sibleyville Lane. Going east on Plains Rd. Turn right. Turn right onto Gravel Hill Lane. Proceed to the cul-de-sac.

## REGISTRATION FORM

PAYMENT MAY BE MADE BY CHECK PAYABLE TO THE MENDON FOUNDATION. MAIL WITH REGISTRATION FORM TO:

MENDON FOUNDATION  
PO BOX 231  
MENDON, NY 14506-0231

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ \$20 MEMBER  
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\_\_\_ \$35 MEMBER COUPLE  
\_\_\_ \$45 NON MEMBER COUPLE

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**THANK YOU!**



# Stewards of the Land – At Work

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Earth Day at Honeoye Falls-Lima was even larger this year. Middle School students joined Manor School and High School students in this one day event. School teachers, administrators and staff, joined parents, PTA, and Mendon Foundation volunteers, in organizing and conducting this fun learning experience.

Financially the event was supported by Lima Rotary, Honeoye Falls Rotary, Canandaigua National Bank, Mathstone Corporation, Bristol Garden Center, Countryside Flower Farm, Ted Collins Associates, White Oak Nursery, Paradox Designs, Stottler family, Tim Schiefen, Charlie and Karen Johnson, Delta Laboratories, and members of the Mendon Foundation.

The events during the day included presentations by Dr. John Hauber (DEC Wildlife officer ret.) – local wildlife, habitat, with artifacts; Jim Engel – discover the beauty of our world through natural landscaping, habitat planting, grasses; Jim Atwater – a guided walk and learning to identify trees and understanding their importance to our environment. Kim Agar's High School class participated in this event also. Robin Long and Judy Spring – Honeoye Creek's ecosystem and water quality by taking water samples, conducting tests, and evaluating the water system by working with Water Watch Program. Also presenting was Ron Walker who brought live hawks and owls and discussed birds of prey as part of our world. A great interest to all was a presentation on bears, who do live in our near by world. Professor Kim Babcock, FLCC, told about her experiences tagging tranquilized bears and then mapping the individual bear's travels, over time, using GPS. A real bear paw was truly interesting! And Linda Discoll, Research Scientist from Delta Labs helped participants collect, identify and learn about water insects. Visitors for the day were Robin Long's 6th grade class from Harley School.

The Habitat Garden between the football/soccer stadium and Manor School was enlarged. Donated trees, shrubs, and annuals were planted according to Jim



Engel's plan. High School students from Kim Agar's Environmental studies class guided and helped Manor School student participants. The site was prepared, soil worked, and the plants found a permanent home. Numerous other student volunteers "policed" the entire Honeoye Falls-Lima campus. Plastic gloves and plastic bags were used to accumulate a very surprising volume of trash! Who knows? Maybe some life long environmental habits may have been established.

Nearly 700 Silky Dogwood starter shrubs were taken home by Manor School students, continuing an annual Mendon Foundation tradition. This small shrub is native to our area. It has grey green leaves and produces numerous white flowers, followed by white berries in the fall much loved by song birds. Its modest height makes for a good hedge or hedge row planting.

A community Earth Day also was scheduled for Saturday, April 22, at our Sibleyville Nature Reserve. Tents were set up, presenters and volunteers were present. And then the rains began. Unfortunately it became a non event. We will try again next year!

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Photos by John Buck



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Contact Arlene Cluff, Director @ 624-3182 or e-mail [ajcluff45@aol.com](mailto:ajcluff45@aol.com) if you are unable to go to the web site for more information or to receive an order form.

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# PATHWAYS

is the newsletter of  
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## The Mendon Foundation

P.O. Box 231

Mendon, N.Y. 14506-0231

[www.MendonFoundationInc.org](http://www.MendonFoundationInc.org)

## Board of Directors:

Carl Foss, President: 624-1634

John Buck: 624-5525	John Farrell: 624-5914
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Arlene Cluff: 624-3182	John Schaefer 582-3025
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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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for a tree.

Source: Michigan State University

## HELP!!!

The Open Space, Land Acquisition and Stewardship Committee is looking for volunteers to join the committee. There are several projects that need to be completed and we can use your help. If you enjoy walking around the open spaces of Mendon; if you enjoy working on the computer entering data; if you like working with children for Earth Day or working at the various festivals and carnivals in Mendon then this committee may be for you. Meetings will be held quarterly or more often as needed. For more information call Arlene Cluff, Chairman @ 624-3182 or e-mail [ajcluff45@aol.com](mailto:ajcluff45@aol.com).



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