

"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 14 NO 1

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MENDON FOUNDATION

SPRING 2007

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*Bikers enjoy the serenity on the extension of the Lehigh Valley Trail north of Rochester Junction.*

*Photo by John Buck*

## IN THIS ISSUE

Mendon Ponds Park / Eagle Scout Projects / Birdwalk  
Champion Skiers / Oak Tree Update / Plant Sale  
Mendon Station Festival / New Development Studies / Earth Day

## MENDON PONDS PARK

(First in a series of three articles)

By Diane C. Ham, Mendon Town Historian

The first mention of Mendon's ponds that we know of is found in a written account of a campaign in 1677 by the Frenchman, Chevelier de Baugh, who was Denonville's aide. Governor Denonville of Canada led an army composed of 3,000 French and Indians who were retreating after burning the Seneca village of Ganondagon, south of Victor. It states that upon their retreat, the Army of 3,000 men camped on high ground, above "three pretty little lakes" to the west (Mendon Ponds) and then followed the Irondequoit Gaurarqua Trail (now Clover Street) north. This campaign alienated the Iroquois Confederacy and helped to insure English colonial dominance in New York.

Besides the "three pretty little lakes" mentioned which are now known as Hundred Acre Pond, Deep Pond, and Mud Pond, there are also in the group two fairy-like pools, now known as Round Pond and Devil's Bath Tub, almost hidden from sight among the hills. (Hundred Acre Pond forms the source of Irondequoit Creek.)

Many geological formations and debris from the continental ice sheet are found in what is now Mendon Ponds Park. In the days of the continental glacier two million years ago, when the whole area was covered by a massive sheet of ice, the melting down of the glacier resulted in the interesting land formations now found in the Mendon Ponds area. Masses of sub-glacial material were built up by the moving ice sheet until it was unable to carry its load further, causing the unusual



*Photo by John Buck*

drumlin formations, varying from domes to slender ridges. Devil's Bath Tub is an excellent example. There are eskers or ridges of gravel accumulated in the beds of heavily loaded streams draining the melting ice sheet. There are also deep kettles, or kettle lakes, formed by the melting away of the buried blocks of ice which had become detached from the ragged glacier's edge, and, as a result of these ancient geological phenomena, today we have this beautiful area of hills, lakes, ridges, and valleys known as Mendon Ponds Park. The lakes at Mendon Ponds Park are the only natural bodies of standing water in Monroe County, except three "lakelets"--one in the Irondequoit Valley, one near Bushnell's Basin, and Blue Pond, three miles west of Scottsville.

The Mendon kames or hills are choice examples of the peculiar product of glacial ice and water acting in concert. The hills were built up by the melting ice sheet in old Lake Warren, one of the latter lakes of the glacial succession. Lake

Warren covered the basins of the present Lakes Erie and Huron, emptied into old Lake Chicago at the western end and reached eastward to what is now Lake Otisco. When the ice broke loose in the region of Syracuse, Lake Warren fell away and became Lake Dana, and in those early days the high hills which we now see at Mendon Ponds Park were islands in Lake Dana.

The hills in Mendon Ponds Park are the third highest in the County of Monroe. The highest elevation is the Hopper Hills near Ionia, with an elevation of 1,020 feet above sea level; the second highest, Baker Hill near Macedon, with an elevation of 928 feet, and the third highest, the hills at Mendon Ponds Park, with an elevation of 840 feet.

The topography of the area would never have been noticed if it wasn't for the early inhabitants to Mendon who settled in the Mendon Ponds area.

(To be continued in the next issue of "Pathways.")

# Troop 10 Scouts receive "Golden Spike Award" for their Eagle Projects on the Lehigh Valley Trail

The Mendon Foundation, in cooperation with the Monroe County Department of Parks, has developed a special "Golden Spike Award" to recognize outstanding projects done by volunteers on Lehigh Valley Trail.

The Foundation presented the first two of these awards to scouts **Liam Dooley** and **Evan Schmidt**, last month, at their respective Troop 10, Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremonies.

Liam's project was rebuilding the West Wye Bridge at Rochester Junction, to connect the Town of Mendon's Great Bend Nature Park to the Lehigh Valley Trail. A total of 19 volunteers spent over 400 hours in planning and completing the bridge. Of special note, is that he found that he had to discard all the old rotted bridge ties and salvage replacements from the Honeoye Creek Railroad Bridge over three quarters of mile away, before construction could start. Funds for the project were provided by the Town of Mendon.


Evan selected the construction of 60 feet of rails, at Mendon Station, for his project. He knew



*Liam Dooley, at his Troop 10 Eagle Scout Court of Honor, holding his "Golden Spike Award" and flanked by his parents, Tom & Dianne Dooley of Taylor Rd. Mendon.*

that it would be challenging, as no one involved had ever laid track before, but he didn't expect to end up swimming in an ice fringed Irondequoit Creek, searching for parts. In addition to organizing 31 volunteers, who worked a total of 331 hours on the project, Evan also raised \$2,250 by selling tie name plaques, which will be installed later this spring. He intends to use all money, in excess of actual material cost, to start a special fund to help bring a Lehigh Valley Locomotive to Mendon Station.

**Both of these young men truly do deserve special recognition for their commitment to their projects and the benefit those projects have brought to the community.**





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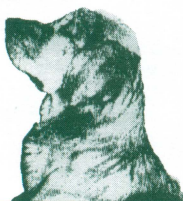
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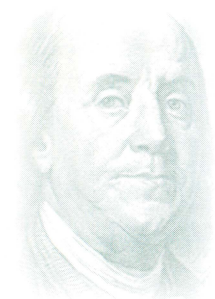
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## Come join us for the 2nd Annual Mendon Foundation Birdwalk

By Arlene Cluff



Bird lovers, families, and hikers come and join us for a bird walk along the Lehigh Valley Trail. Stuart Ackerman, Mendon native, bird enthusiast and naturalist will lead the walks. Identify and observe a variety of song birds as they wing their way north through Mendon.

### Dates & locations of walks:

#### **April 28**

Quaker Meeting House Road  
At the entrance to the Lehigh Valley Trail.

#### **May 5**

Markus Park, adjacent to the Trail south on Quaker Meeting House Road.

#### **May 12**

Quaker Meeting House Road.  
At the entrance to the Lehigh Valley Trail.

#### **May 19**

Fisher Park, Victor, adjacent to the Lehigh Valley Trail. Take Mile Square Road to Main

Street Fishers, turn onto Old Dutch Road. (For information about the park go to:  
[www.victorhikingtrails.org](http://www.victorhikingtrails.org).)

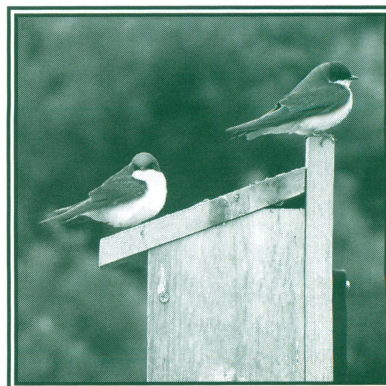
**Time:** Meet at 6:15am sharp.  
Hike to begin @ 6:30 am.

**Be sure to wear appropriate weather gear and hiking shoes. Don't forget your binoculars and camera.**

Breakfast will be served following the walk at the Mendon Community Center, 157 North Main St., Honeoye Falls, NY. Donations for breakfast are appreciated.

Please contact Arlene Cluff @ 624-3182 or e-mail @ [ajcluff45@aol.com](mailto:ajcluff45@aol.com) if you plan to attend any of the walks. This will help in ordering food for breakfast.

We look forward to meeting all of you and hope you will attend this educational and enjoyable event.



## Champion Skiers Make Productive Use of Lewis Property

*Text & photos by John Schaefer*

What happens when you combine a champion cross-country skier with 26 acres of open space consisting of rolling woods and fields, and two neighbors willing to share the use of their land? Well, in Mendon, you end up with a championship venue for cross-country skiers. The Pond Road property of Duncan Douglas, a member of the 1998 and 2002 Olympic biathlon teams, is adjacent to the Mendon Center Road property donated to the Mendon Foundation in 2001 by Evelyn Lewis, herself a cross-country skier. Having access to the open space from his back yard, Dr. Douglas purchased a Kubota ATV with a grooming device and, in preparation for the 2006 Winter Olympics, prepared a number of training trails on the Foundation property, on the neighboring acreage owned by John and Maggie Loncz, and on part of our yard which contains two trails on the side of a steep slope.

While Duncan did not qualify for his third consecutive Olympics - he was, after all, over forty years of age - he did well in other world class championship events. This year, with the benefit of abundant snow, he has developed about three miles of wide trails on which he trains whenever he is free from his duties as an anesthesiologist, including nighttime workouts. He competes against the best and has done well both in Europe and the US. In February he outdistanced all comers, including some Olympians, and won the Lake Placid 50 K freestyle Loppet with an impres-



sive time of 2:25:18.1!

This is not the end of the story, however, other championship cross-country skiers are taking advantage of this impressive course. The boys and girls 2007 Sectional and State champion cross-country skiers at the Honeoye Fall-Lima High School have also trained here. According to their coach, Bernie Gardner, "this site has stellar grooming" and "is ready for use soon after the snow falls" thanks to the diligent efforts of Duncan Douglas. Furthermore, when a vicious cold wind is blowing, the area, protected by surrounding forests, is more conducive to working out. And it's near the school, which is also advantageous in bad weather.

All this is about synergy.

Evelyn Lewis donated 26 acres of land to the Mendon Foundation to be held as open space and used for recreation. Duncan Douglas needed a place to train, and made a major commitment of time and money to utilize the land. Two landowners adjacent to the open space acceded to opening their property to enhance the training area. School children and their coach utilize this exceptional venue to train. For me, this captures the mission of the Mendon Foundation: preservation, recreation, education!

Of course, I have one added bonus: the absolute delight of looking out my office window and watching these healthy young people enjoy the outdoors.

John Schaefer is the Treasurer of the Mendon Foundation

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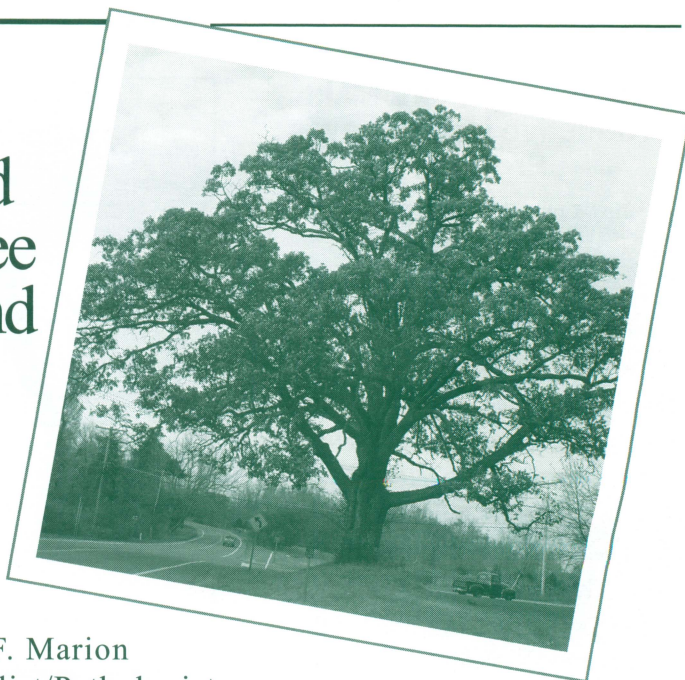
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## The Old Oak Tree Year End Report



Dr. Daniel F. Marion  
Tree Specialist/Pathologist

Dear Carl and Mendon Foundation members,

You will be happy to know that we are achieving good management response despite the ongoing contaminants from hydrocarbons and road salt to this tree, as well as the several biotic disease problems that we observed. You may have seen some areas of wilting in two regions of the upper canopy of the oak tree this summer, but we have been able to manage this aspect appropriately and there has been no death or dying back of the branch tissue as a result. We had noted some root tip necrosis and dieback from several factors, both environmental and disease-based, but we are also able to produce new generative tissue to compensate for it, and it shows. Also, we are getting a good increase in chlorophyll levels, which subsequently results in the production of starch - a very important component for this tree in terms of tolerating winter injury and salt damage. This oak tree is now ready to enter the winter and to tolerate its effects.

There is a very small chance we may need to wrap the base 2 or 3 feet of the trunk with a double layer of burlap, held loosely in place with twine. I will be monitoring the weather conditions this winter and contact you if the wrapping will be necessary. We will do this for you at no additional cost.

I want to wish you all the best for a wonderful, peaceful holiday season ahead- Good health and cheer,

Dan

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# Seniors lay rails at Rochester Junction

*Text & photos by Warren Wallace*



Under the direction of Rod Ham, a number of senior men from the Honeoye Falls Presbyterian Church helped lay the 45 feet of rails that will, later this spring, become home to the 40 foot Lehigh Valley Boxcar, that was donated last year by Duane Thompson. Rod has also volunteered to head up the restoration of the car, once it arrives.



14 scouts and leaders from West Bloomfield's Troop 56 winter hike the Lehigh Valley Trail on March 3rd.



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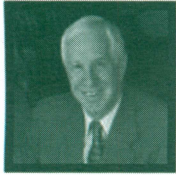
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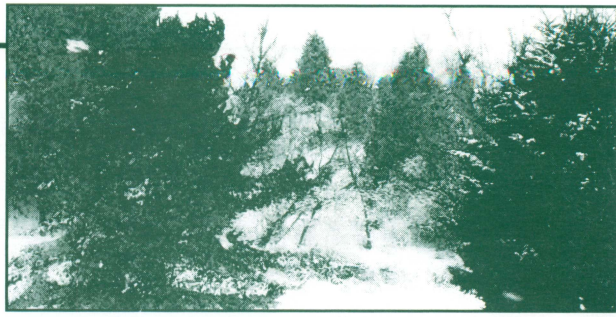
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## Native tree, shrub, wildflower & plant sale

The Mendon Foundation is sponsoring a native plant including trees, shrubs, woodland and wildflower plants supplied by Jim Engel of White Oak Nursery and Ellen Folts of Amanda's Garden. They will provide expert advice on plant selection and ways to attract songbirds and wildlife to your natural garden landscape.

**Date:** Sunday, June 3, 2007

**Time:** 9 AM – 1 PM

**Location:** Mendon Station Park, located in the Hamlet of Mendon at the corner of Pittsford-Mendon Rd. (Rt. 64) and Rush-Mendon Rd. (Rt.251) behind Cibi's.

A percentage of the proceeds will benefit the Mendon Foundation. For more information contact Arlene Cluff @ 624-3182 or e-mail @ [ajcluff45@aol.com](mailto:ajcluff45@aol.com)

## MENDON STATION FESTIVAL

The Mendon Foundation proudly announces the new Mendon Arts Festival – "MENDON STATION FESTIVAL" to be held Saturday, September 8, 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM and Sunday, September 9, 2007, 12 noon – 5:00 PM. This festival will feature family entertainment, art and craft vendors, food, native plant sale, giant inflatables, the annual "Pet Parade", games of skill and Boy Scout demonstrations.

The festival will be held in Mendon Station Park, at the trailhead to the Lehigh Valley Trail, in the Hamlet of Mendon.

**Free admission and free parking  
Handicap rest room facilities available.**

Would you like to volunteer some time working on the festival? For more information contact Arlene Cluff @ 624-3182 or [ajcluff45@aol.com](mailto:ajcluff45@aol.com).

Watch for a complete festival schedule on the Mendon Foundation website [www.mendonfoundationinc.org](http://www.mendonfoundationinc.org), local festival websites and newspapers.

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## The Mendon Foundation participating in two development studies

### Lehigh Valley RR Corridor Trail Feasibility Study: Genesee River to the Village of Caledonia

In late 2005 the Foundation received a gift of 26+ acres of land located on the west side of the Genesee Greenway, where it joins with the Lehigh Valley Trail, Which was configured to extend to River Rd. At that time, the Foundation expressed its intent to use this gift to extend the Trail west to River Rd. in the Livingston County town of Caledonia. This declaration, in turn, was the coalescing factor in bringing the Livingston County, the Town of Caledonia, the Village of Caledonia, Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway and the Mendon Foundation together to make a grant application to the Genesee Transportation Council for a feasibility study of extending the Trail all the way into the Village of Caledonia.

Since this 7.8 mile railroad right-of-way trail conversion was originally proposed in the Genesee Transportation Council's "Regional Trails Initiative - Phase 1" and further recognized in the GTC's "Regional Rights-of-Way Preservation Action Plan." The application was favorably received; a grant was awarded, engineering consultants selected, a steering committee formed and the resulting Feasibility Study is scheduled to be completed by year end. The Foundation is represented on the Steering Committee by Warren Wallace, who is responsible for the Foundation's Trail and Park Development and Maintenance.

### Rush Hamlet and Honeoye Creek Greenway Plan

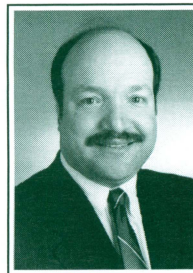
Late in 2005 Town of Rush submitted a grant proposal to the Environmental Protection Fund, Quality Communities Program, proposing to prepare a "Strategic Plan for the Hamlet of Rush and the Honeoye Creek Greenway" (Rush to Honeoye Falls). The Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, Monroe County, Village of Honeoye Falls and the Mendon Foundation were co-applicants on the grant. Funding has been approved and a steering committee, including members from the Town of Rush, Village of Honeoye Falls, Town of Mendon, Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, Monroe County Planning Department, Monroe County Department of Parks and the Mendon Foundation has been formed. Carl Foss and Warren Wallace are the Foundation's representatives on this Steering Committee.

The scope of the project is to: Prepare a strategic development plan for the Hamlet of Rush and the Honeoye Creek Greenway that will:

- Coordinate prior plans of the four municipalities involved.
- Promote inter-governmental cooperation at the Regional, County and Local levels.
- Target economic development opportunities.
- Prepare strategies for preservation of open space necessary to preserve the integrity of the corridor.
- Involve the public and other stake holders in developing a unified action plan for advancing public objectives, implementing projects, and managing the greenway corridor.

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# Honeoye Falls Schools celebrate 3rd Annual Earth Day.

By Charlie Johnson

The third annual Earthday celebration at Honeoye Falls-Lima Schools is scheduled for April 20. The Mendon Foundation's Education Committee in conjunction with the Honeoye Falls/Lima School District are sponsoring the celebration of Earth Day at the Elementary School. The Earthday celebration will have events for elementary school children. This observance celebrates life on our planet and focuses our energies on preservation, education and stewardship of the earth and our environment.

The purpose of the Earth Day events is threefold:

- Introduce students to the environment and raise awareness about environmental issues.
- Increase exposure to and interaction with nature.
- Educate students on the 3-R's (reduce, reuse, recycle)

One of the most popular elements of last year's Earth Day was the seedling give-away program. Each of the approximate 750 elementary students was gifted with a free seedling to take home and plant with their family. This year's seedlings will consist of four different seedlings one type for each class at the manor School. The seedlings

arrive packed in bundles and require separation into individual packages. A small army of volunteers separates each seedling and places it into a plastic bag with a small amount of topsoil together with planting instructions. These individual seedling packages are then handed out to each student at the conclusion of the school's Earth Day Celebration.

The school's scheduled events include presentations and activities for the students throughout the school day. Kim Babcock "Dr. Bear" who is a professor at Finger Lakes Community College, will amaze her audience with incredible facts about bears, their habits and habitat and even show the students a real bear claw.

John Hauber, a wildlife biologist, will offer his extraordinary slide show that highlights local birds and animals and includes a variety of animal artifacts that students can touch and see.

Steve Aman, founder of The Sanctuary, an environmental education center, will offer a unique hands on drumming session based on the teachings and beliefs of Native Americans.

Robin Long, a teacher from The Harley School, together with her sixth grade environmental studies students will provide several hands on displays illustrating water quality and the effects of pollution on our ecosystem.

Linda Driscoll, a wildlife biologist with Delta labs, will present a very wet interactive display on water insects that includes identifying actual living creatures.

Kimi Romeo, from Cornell Cooperative Extension, will provide an enlightening presentation on recycling. Students will take part in a school property litter clean up sponsored by Delta Labs and Friendly's Restaurants.

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Peter Jemison, from Ganondagan State Historic Site, will provide an informative presentation on Native American culture, specifically the Seneca people. Every day life in a bark longhouse will be discussed and a variety of actual artifacts will be available for viewing.

Those who have walked the path between the school buildings along the athletic fields may have noticed a garden that was originally planted two years ago and enlarged last year. Local nurseries Bristol's Garden Center, Ted Collins and Countryside Flower farm all provided trees, shrubs and perennials for use in planting the garden.

Again this year Jim Engel from White Oak Nursery will be heading up the team that plans the garden, prepares the soil, plants the plants and spreads the mulch and pulls the weeds. Jim works with second graders who are teamed with environmental studies students from the high school to do all of the planting.

High School students will be involved through Mr. Coogan's photography class documenting the day on film; Mrs. Agar's environmental studies class will be teaming with younger students to help plant the garden; Mr. Cumming's students will be helping clean up the school grounds and art classes will create posters promoting Earth Day to be displayed in the school buildings and in local businesses

A very big thank you to Dan McCarthy, Manor School principal, for all his time energy and devotion to making Earthday such a huge success.



## **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**  
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