

August 26, 2022

## Commission Retreat Held in Osceola

The board and staff of the Tug Hill Commission met at the [Osceola Ski and Sport Resort](#) for their annual retreat last week. Jack Santamour, LandVest forester who is managing the recent BlueSource purchase in the East Branch of Fish Creek Watershed, gave an overview of the new company and its management goals. Scott Steiger, professor at SUNY Oswego, presented more details on the lake-effect electrification study that will begin this fall.

The group also discussed upcoming 2023 activities, including the Tug Hill Commission's 50th anniversary, and played a rousing game of Tug Hill Jeopardy.



*Relaxing at the Osceola Ski and Sport Resort.*

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*Scott Steiger's work will improve understanding of lake-effect lightning.*

## Commission Board Meeting September 19 in Trenton

The Tug Hill Commission board will meet Monday, September 19 at the Trenton Municipal Building, 8520 Old Poland Rd, Barneveld, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Remote access will also be offered by Zoom at [us02web.zoom.us/j/87144555136](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87144555136), or by calling (929) 205-6099, meeting ID 8714455136. The public is welcome to attend.

## Venerable Folks on Display at Turin Library

The Venerable Folks of Tug Hill display, including both the original Loretta Lepkowski paintings and the informational panels, will be at the B. Elizabeth Strong Memorial Library, 6312 East Main Street, Turin, through September 12. Loretta will give a talk about the project on Wednesday, August 31 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the library. All are welcome!

The informational panel portion of the display will also be present at the Oneida County History Center in Utica in September. Anyone interested in having the display at their venue can contact the Tug Hill Commission office.

# Preservation League Technical Assistance Grants Open

The Preservation League of New York State's Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) are available to eligible NYS nonprofits and municipalities for projects that preserve New York State's cultural and historic resources. The grants will support professional services of architects, engineers, and other design and preservation professionals working with nonprofit groups and municipalities to preserve their buildings, structures, and other resources that serve an arts and/or cultural function. The pre-application deadline is Monday, October 17 and the full grant application deadline is Friday, October 21. Complete information about this opportunity, including grant guidelines, the pre-application form, and registration links for webinars and drop-in sessions, is available at [www.preservenys.org/technical-assistance-grants](http://www.preservenys.org/technical-assistance-grants).

Grants of up to \$4,000, with a required 20% project cost match from each applicant, are available to nonprofit groups and municipalities that own or have a long-term lease on buildings that house historic sites, museums, arts facilities, and other important institutions that serve an arts or cultural purpose and are open to the public. Bring questions about the TAG program or a potential application, to a live webinar or a drop-in help session.

Webinar: Wednesday, September 7, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Drop-in Sessions: Wednesday, September 21, 12:00 p.m.; Thursday, October 6, 4:00 p.m.; Monday, October 17, 12:00 p.m.

# 2022-23 Justice Court Assistance Plan Grants Available

The Justice Court Assistance Plan (JCAP) grants for 2022/23 are now available. The Unified Court Systems budget includes \$3 million in JCAP funding for this fiscal year, with the maximum grant amount per court at \$30,000 (joint applications may have a maximum amount of \$30,000 multiplied by the number of courts applying on the joint application). All town and village courts can apply for funding in many areas including office equipment and furniture, security equipment and court room and court facility improvements and renovations.

The application must be filed by justice court personnel, so if boards are aware of an area needing funding, they should coordinate with their court personnel to apply. The deadline to apply is October 14, 2022. Most of the application must be submitted online, with the signature page, board resolution, estimates and the court's budget required to be sent separately via U.S. mail or email. Court personnel will be able to access the page which includes the address or email address for these documents and the user name and password to access the application by visiting the town and village courts website at [www.nycourts.gov/courts/townandvillage/judges\\_only/jcap.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/townandvillage/judges_only/jcap.shtml). Specific guidelines for the board resolution or for requests for construction or security equipment are also available on the website.

For assistance completing the application process, contact the Office of Justice Court Support at 1-800-232-0630 or [jcap@nycourts.gov](mailto:jcap@nycourts.gov) or your circuit rider.

# Legends and Lore Marker Grant Program Open

William G. Pomeroy Foundation Legends & Lore grants are available to 501(c)(3) organizations, nonprofit academic institutions, and local, state, and federal government entities within the United States. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact an eligible local organization, such as an applicable historical society or folklore related nonprofit. They will often apply for the grant on behalf of the individual.

Does your community have a great piece of folklore that should be shared? Legends & Lore is designed to promote cultural tourism and commemorate legends and folklore as part of our heritage. For more information visit: [www.wgpfoundation.org/history/legends-lore/](http://www.wgpfoundation.org/history/legends-lore/). Grant application deadlines are August 29 and October 17.

# Site Plan Review and Special Use Permits Training September 20

Sponsored by the Jefferson County Planning Department, NYS Department of State staff will overview the statutory authority for site plan review and special use permits. Held at Jefferson Community College, Jules Center Amphitheater, 1220 Coffeen Street, Watertown, the training will provide attendees two hours toward their four-hour annual training requirement, if approved by their municipality.

Part 1 will address the scope and content of a site plan and the role of the site plan in municipal review of development projects. A discussion of design and the reasons some approaches might be preferable to others is included in the course.

Part 2 will address how some uses require additional review and should be granted permission only if the application meets certain conditions. Examples include gas stations, dog kennels, and uses with drive-through windows. The special use permit is also used for development in environmentally sensitive zones with overlays such as for wetlands, steep slopes, and along scenic ridge-lines. Scenarios in which the special use permit tool is most helpful will be discussed, along with rules local boards must follow for reviewing and approving applications for special use permits. Please register [here](#).



## Concluding the County Fair Season

As of August 21, the county fair season in the Tug Hill region ended with the “Family Day” celebration at the Oswego County Fair. As part of an ongoing effort to expand avenues of community outreach and presence, the Tug Hill Commission attended the Jefferson County Fair, Lewis County Fair, Oswego County Fair, and Woodsmen’s Field Days this summer. With help from staff, commissioners, and council of government volunteers, the Tug Hill informational booth was present within all four of the counties that constitute the Tug Hill region.

In the previous year, Tug Hill Commission staff updated tabling items and displays. New trifold and banners help better describe the area the commission serves and explain our core competencies as an agency in a way that can better relate to people who live on Tug Hill. The “Tug Hill Trivia” wheel made an appearance for those who wanted to test their knowledge of the region. Table giveaways included informational pamphlets, maps, and coloring sheets with Tug Hill themes for children. Importantly, the fairs provided an opportunity to disseminate free copies of the updated Tug Hill Recreation Guide, which was created in partnership with the 1000 Islands International Tourism Council, Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, Oswego County Tourism, Oneida County Tourism, Tug Hill Commission, and the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust. This version of the recreation guide reflects the updated [www.visittughill.com](http://www.visittughill.com) website with a new section devoted to waterfalls in the Tug Hill region. Throughout the fairs, hundreds were given away.

The Tug Hill Commission will be continuing the road show next month. In partnership with the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, the Tug Hill Commission exhibit will be present in Constableville from September 9 through September 11 for the Flywheels and Pulleys event.



*Staffers Paul Baxter and Alaina Mallette in Oswego County.*



*The full display at the Lewis County Fair.*



# 2022 Annual Land Use Training

FOR ALL TOWN AND VILLAGE PLANNING BOARD, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS AND CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

## Planning & Zoning: An Introduction (2 Hours)

The most elementary of the Training Unit's course offerings, Planning and Zoning: An Introduction is designed for new members of both planning boards and zoning boards of appeals. The course provides a basic overview of the functions of planning boards and zoning boards of appeals and the land use tools they work with, the role of the comprehensive plan, procedures for holding meetings and hearings, and the enforcement of the boards' decisions.

## Joint Boards: Options for Consolidating Review Boards (1 Hour)

Some local governments across the state have been challenged to find citizens able to serve on their planning boards and zoning boards of appeals. One option is to reduce the number of board members; another is for villages and towns to form joint village-town planning boards and sometimes village-town zoning boards of appeals. This course discusses these and other innovative approaches to maintaining planning boards and zoning boards of appeals when there isn't a waiting list of applicants for those posts.

## Short-Term Rentals (1 Hour)

Short-term rentals have been around for years, but the availability of online booking sites and the growth of local management companies has had dramatic effects on neighborhoods big and small across the state (and around the world). A number of cities, towns, and villages in New York have come up with a variety of means to permit or restrict short-term rentals consistent with the character of the respective communities. This session looks at the problems short-term rentals posed for several of those municipalities and summarizes the regulations with which they responded to the challenge.

## The Event Will Be Held:

Wednesday, September 21, 2022  
3:30 pm - 8:30 pm at the  
Lewis-Jefferson Education Center  
7395 East Rd. Lowville, NY 13367

## Agenda:

3:30 pm	Registration
3:50-3:55 pm	Welcoming Remarks
4:00-6:00 pm	Planning & Zoning Intro.
6:00-6:15 pm	Break
6:15-7:15 pm	Joint Boards
7:15-7:30 pm	Break
7:30-8:30 pm	Short-Term Rentals

## RSVP:

To register, please call Lewis County Planning Department at (315) 376-5422, email [suekulzer@lewiscounty.ny.gov](mailto:suekulzer@lewiscounty.ny.gov), or go online at: <https://www.lewiscounty.org/2022landusetraining>

This workshop will provide four (4) hours of training to meet the NYS Municipality Training Requirement for municipal board members.

Code Enforcement Officers can apply to use these courses as professional development electives.

Note to Planning Board and ZBA Chairpersons and Clerks - Please share this notice with other Board members and officials in your community.



Department  
of State



LEWIS  
COUNTY  
NEW YORK

**FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS  
WILL BE PROVIDED**

# COMPUTER BASICS: DIGITAL LITERACY CLASS

Join us to learn more about  
computing basics such as:

- Scanning Documents
- Emailing
- Video Conferencing
- Google
- And More!

Registration at 5:30  
Presentation 6-7:30



Presented by Mohawk Valley Economic  
Development District and the Local  
Government Education Committee

September 13, 2022

Fulton County

FCCRG

34 W Fulton St, Gloversville

September 14, 2022

Schoharie County

SEEC

287 Main St, Schoharie

September 15, 2022

Montgomery County

MCBDC

9 Park St, Fonda

September 20, 2022

Otsego County

OCCA

7207 NY-80, Cooperstown

September 21, 2022

Oneida County

The Empowerment Center

230 James St, Utica

September 22, 2022

Herkimer County

MVEDD

26 W Main St, Mohawk

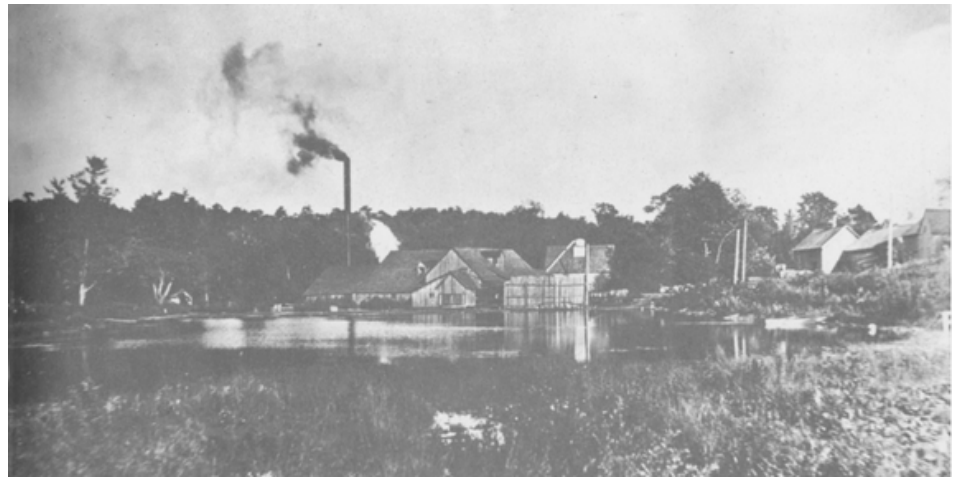


Register now at:

[www.mvedd.org/LGEC](http://www.mvedd.org/LGEC)

A NYS TUG HILL  
COMMISSION HISTORY  
PRESENTATION

# A CENTURY GONE BY: REVISITING SWANCOTT MILLS



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2022  
1:00 P.M. TO 2:30 P.M.  
WEST LEYDEN  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
1157 FISH CREEK RD  
WEST LEYDEN, NY 13489**

**ALSO AVAILABLE VIA ZOOM**

**REGISTER FOR EITHER IN-  
PERSON OR ONLINE  
ATTENDANCE AT**

**[TINYURL.COM/SWANCOTT](https://tinyurl.com/swancott)**

**OR CALL THE TUG HILL  
COMMISSION AT (315) 785-2380**



## **JAMES BURKE**

Author of "A Lifetime on the Hill," musician, and storyteller, Jim will sing and share stories from his family and life experience.



## **LEIGH PORTNER**

Logger, Linn tractor enthusiast and history lover, Leigh will bring artifacts from Swancott Mills and share his recollections.



## **ROBERT SAUER**

Tug Hill Sage, retired Harden forester, NOCCOG chairman and Camden local official, Bob will emcee the event.



# Rabies Vaccine Drops Over Tug Hill

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has recently been distributing oral rabies vaccine (ORV) via airplane in many areas of Tug Hill. APHIS implements the National Rabies Management Program to prevent the spread of rabies in wildlife. Beginning in late July, approximately 3.5 million ONRAB ORV baits will be distributed in parts of Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to test the immune effects in targeted wildlife, specifically raccoons and skunks. APHIS personnel will sample raccoons and skunks following bait distribution to determine vaccination rates.

The image to the right shows what the vaccines look like. More information is available [here](#). A status map of distribution is also available [here](#).



## Sawyer Community Fund 2022 Awards

Fifteen projects and organizations that benefit Boonville, Constableville, and Westernville residents will share \$52,100 in funding from the Kenneth V. and Jeannette Remp [Sawyer Community Fund](#) of the Northern New York Community Foundation this year. Nearly two-dozen organizations applied for grant funding in the fifth year of the grant opportunity. Thanks to the enduring generosity of the Sawyers, the fund has provided more than \$200,000 in support to 60 organizations and projects since grant-making efforts began in 2018.

Highlights of the successful 2022 grant applications are:

- Erwin Library and Institute \$6,700 to enhance seating and meeting space in the main library room.
- Western Town Library \$6,000 to support a playground revitalization project the library is leading.
- Dodge Pratt Northam Art and Community Center \$5,000 to augment the center's summer art classes, support a musical production, enhance a drama course, and bolster an engineering and Lego robotics program.
- Boonville Black River Canal Museum \$4,000 to improve the museum's woodworking space with a more efficient dust collection and air filtration system and necessary materials.
- Constableville for Tomorrow \$4,000 to help purchase a pavilion curtain for the east side of its ice-skating rink, which will allow for easier management of the rink and keeping snow outside during the winter months.
- Constableville Rural Cemetery \$4,000 to purchase a tombstone jack to help restore and rebalance 25 gravestones that are tipping or completely tipped over.
- Friends of Erwin Park \$3,000 to support a collaboration with the village of Boonville for the purchase of a durable sunshade to give children and families a cover near the park's splash pad.
- Flywheels & Pulleys Association Inc. \$3,000 to preserve the history of vintage gas and steam engines, tractors, and farm/home equipment at a local and national level.
- Boonville Search and Rescue Association \$1,500 to support purchase of new skis, poles, boots, and bindings to enhance recreational offerings as interest in trails and cross-county skiing have grown.
- Constable Hall Association Inc. \$1,000 to preserve artifacts and collections tied to the history of Constable Hall and Lewis County.
- Village of Constableville \$1,000 to support purchase and installation of a scrolling LED sign.

## Contact Us

### NYS Tug Hill Commission

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Watertown, NY 13601

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Toll Free within the region:

1-888-785-2380

Email: [tughill@tughill.org](mailto:tughill@tughill.org)

Visit us at:

Web: [www.tughill.org](http://www.tughill.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission](https://www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission)

To request our newsletter electronically please email [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) or call

1-888-785-2380.

For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).

# Meet the Commissioners - Mike Yerdon

## Where are you from?

I'm from Redfield. My family was German and came to this country with the Dutch in the 1700s and settled around Hammond, NY, and the Black Lake/Bright Hill area. In the 1840s, five brothers came to Redfield, and portions of my family have been here since.

## Tell me about growing up in Redfield?

Redfield is a small community but land-wise it is the biggest town in Tug Hill. I attended a nearby one-room schoolhouse until 2nd grade, Redfield for grades 3 through 6, and then Sandy Creek until I completed high school. It was a tight knit, family-oriented community. I had one sister and seven brothers, so I never worried about finding things to do or having someone to play with. We almost had enough kids for a full ball team!

## What are some of your favorite things to do in your free time?

I don't often have much free time, but I fish and hunt when I can. In the past I served on the Sandy Creek School Board, and coached softball and baseball when my son and nieces were growing up. I coached fast pitch softball for my nieces, and we spent a lot of time traveling up and down the East Coast playing. My nieces even went to the state championships twice.

## Tell me a little about your background, career, and journey to become a commissioner?

I have an engineering degree in HVAC and plumbing from SUNY Canton. I've worked as project manager doing mechanical contracting for schools and hospitals, and once I even worked as a marketing manager for the Carrier equipment distributor. Between school board and town supervisor for Redfield, I've been in local politics for 30+ years. I've been a commissioner for about 25 years.

## What do you like most about the Tug Hill Region?

I like the wilderness and the small communities that work together. Bigger cities may think we live a "slower life," but the people here are more involved in sports, kids, and communities. Of course, people could always be more involved – and it does seem like volunteering has gone down compared to the past – but it's important to invest in your communities.

## Where are some of your favorite places to visit in Tug Hill?

Nothing specific, but the core area of Tug Hill is very unique. Here in Redfield, we have core forest in the northern and eastern portion of the town. The watershed of eastern Lake Ontario is also very important.

## What projects/initiatives are you working on for the behalf of the Tug Hill Commission and the community?

The staff and commissioners work as a joint operation. The board can suggest things, but our Director, Katie, runs point. I think the Tug Hill Commission is perhaps the most unique agency in the country, since we are not regulatory, and work from the bottom-up instead of the top down.



## What do you enjoy most about being a commissioner for the Tug Hill Commission?

The fellowship between the commissioners and the staff is a big part. It is a pleasure to be a part of and do my own small part to help the region.

## What is your long-term vision for the Tug Hill Commission and the Tug Hill Community?

We need to continue to support local communities, provide training to improve capacity, and keep municipalities informed to keep Tug Hill the Tug Hill. We need to give municipalities the support and opportunities they need locally, rather than having them travel to Albany or New York City for several days.

## What would you tell someone thinking about joining a leadership role as a commissioner?

The commissioners meet monthly, so someone thinking about joining needs to have time to participate. It takes commitment and keeping in touch with not just your own community, but the region itself. The commissioners, come from all over the region, and have a mix of all political parties. But there's no time for divisiveness: we work together for the betterment of our communities. We are effective because we are not "big government."

## What are a few major accomplishments you've seen while at the Tug Hill Commission?

Getting the Special Areas legislation through the state, and efforts protecting watersheds and water quality. Also, our ongoing work with training, especially with zoning and master plans, to help municipalities make their communities better. I can speak to this personally. I've seen firsthand how Redfield has become a more efficient operation, which is necessary for survival.

## Is there anything else that you'd like to share?

It's been a privilege to serve on the commission. Working with conservation efforts, especially the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, to protect lands has also been a great thing. Our relationship to the Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is critical.