

DIONONDEHOWA

Wildlife Sanctuary & School

ISSUE 24

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2026

DWS&S

Incorporating Purposes

The Wildlife Sanctuary:

- * Provides a recharge area for wildlife on the Sanctuary and in the region
- * Contributes to the corridor that provides migration routes for large animals
- * Provides habitat for native plants and animals in an ever-dwindling natural landscape
- * Provides riparian and landscape beauty for recreational users of the Battenkill
- * Contributes land to existing forever-wild areas

Dionondehowa School:

- * Focuses on Nature Studies, the Healing Arts, and the Expressive Arts in a beautiful natural setting
- * Encourages the free exchange of ideas
- * Makes Expressive Arts, Healing Arts, and Nature programs available to individuals of diverse backgrounds and interests
- * Engenders a sense of social and environmental responsibility
- * Offers skills for implementing social and environmental responsibility

Dionondehowa 30 years and ancient

It was in 1996 that the Sanctuary received its first land donation of 175 acres, initiating us as the federally-recognized 501(c)(3) forever-wild land-trust: Dionondehowa Wildlife Sanctuary & School, Inc. - with Geoffrey Ovington and me as co-founders.

In 2005 an additional 42 acres were purchased by way of a capital campaign - this parcel, where The Stone Mounds abide, tucks sweetly into the boundaries of the first donation.

As we are located on a rise between the Battenkill River and the glacial Lakes to the west, the Sanctuary feeds two watersheds: the Battenkill and the Hoosick, both then joining the Hudson River, on its journey to the Ocean.

Dionondehowa was born on what had been the Stanton Farm, land which was part of Lot 3 of the Annaquassicook-Schemerhorn Patent. Shortly after the farm was purchased, I asked the land to please show us something of the ancient ones who once lived here. It wasn't long after... that a 4000-year-old spear point surfaced in a newly tilled garden. Thank you.

Even more ancient: let's travel back 12,000 years, when our local glacier slowly withdrew, sculpting the land & waterways which today we consider stable. Acknowledging that subtle shape-shifting is a constant.

We learned, early-on, that the word Dionondehowa translates to "She Opens The Door For Them" (in Abenaki: "someone opens something for someone"). We have long thought The Door might be the River. Or maybe the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. In the last year, though, we have been encouraged to consider that The Door may be a Portal to another realm.

We know this place feels thickly spirited. Not only those animal, plant & tree, or rock-dwellers but the in-between habitat as well. We feel this most pointedly at The Stone Mounds, but the dance is everywhere at every moment.

Dionondehowa School thrives here, too, on every square-inch of 217 acres, every time we venture forth. Our School is also recognized by the NYS Education Department.

This year our intrepid Board of Directors is beginning to review and archive year-by-year the 30 years of projects and programs, newsletters, community engagement, workshops and spiral-bound diaries. Most poignantly, perhaps... on June 28 at 4pm we invite you to join us as we celebrate Taconic Music's 10th year anniversary with their annual concert, here in our renovated barn. Together we'll celebrate Endurance & Beauty & Music, honoring TM co-founders & artistic directors, Ari Rudiakov and Joana Genova who first brought music to Dionondehowa 25 years ago! - because of DWS&S co-founder and fine instrument-maker Geoffrey Ovington.

Gratefully, Bonnie Hoag



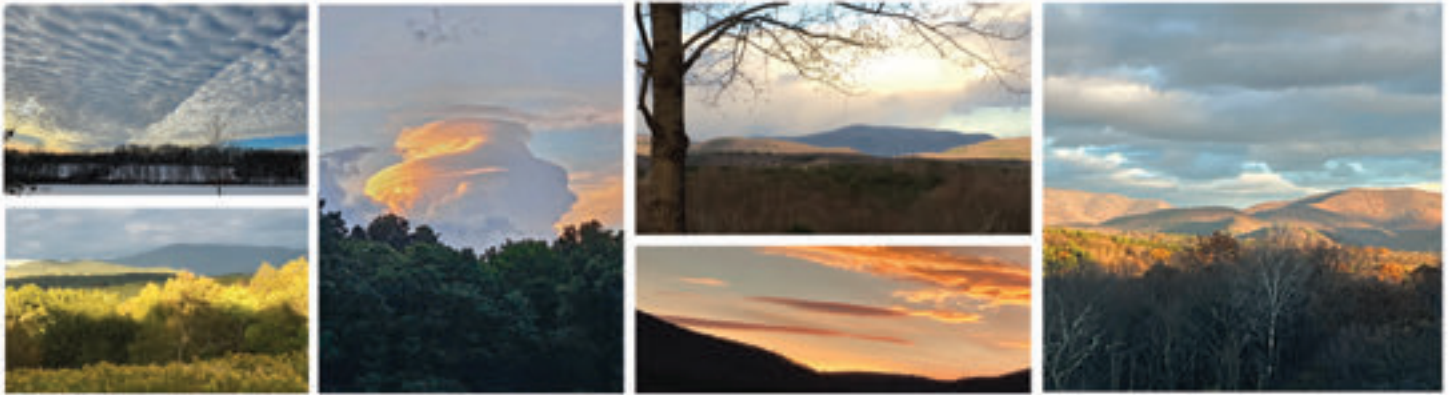
Looking East

Board of Directors

Danielle Anastasia
Nancy Brown
Lindsay Fisk
Bonnie Hoag
Geoffrey Ovington
Eric Strebel

Advisors

Mike Conklin
Lori Giammattei



Deglaciation at Dionondehowa

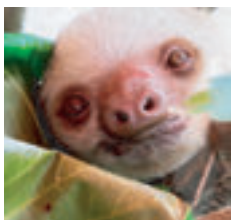
The age of the glaciers in our area is well known on a regional scale, however the specifics of how the ice left the landscape in and around DWS&S is a story that makes the familiar places and patterns of local rivers a foreign landscape.

Deglaciation was the process at the end of the last ice age when the ice retreated from the landscape through fits and starts as the climate warmed. During this period that spanned thousands of years, our current topography was revealed from beneath hundreds of feet of crushing ice. In general, the ice sheet retreated northward, giving way to smaller 'tongues' of ice that occupied the valleys of the area. These tongues of ice fed enormous quantities of meltwater and sediment into swollen rivers that evolved as the landscape they flowed across was gradually revealed.

During this process of glacial retreat, there was a time when a tongue of ice and associated sediment occupied the Shushan leg of the Battenkill Valley on the eastern edge of the Sanctuary. The ice and sediment proved a substantial dam, which redirected the flow of meltwater south through the wide Cambridge Valley, instead of north through the current valley at Shushan. Gradual retreat of the ice tongue eventually saw an 'outburst' event take place - one fateful day when the river jumped its banks and came to find its current course.

Drake McDonough

Research credit & further reading - DeSimone and LaFleur, 1985 NYSGA tour



Celebrating Pam Cali

We celebrate our friend Pam Cali who shuffled off January 8, 2026.

Pam was an early Board Member for DWS&S and the Founder of the Agricultural Stewardship Association which continues to flourish, buying farmland easements to keep our Towns in farming.

This photo, taken by Pam, is of a young and soulful two-toed sloth she met at a wildlife sanctuary in Belize, where she was volunteering many years ago.

The Pam Cali I knew, and loved, would be appalled by the loss of farmland and wild habitat due to industrial solar - as well as the current farming practices of CAFOs: soil & water contamination and the suffering of the animals. ~BH

Forest Recovery on The Sanctuary

In 2016 David Hunt laid out a 20-meter square plot in the Sanctuary woods, initiating our Old-Growth Forest Recovery project which was to be monitored every five years to assess the progress by way of measurements of key maturity features, including Tree Metrics, Surface Metrics, Biodiversity Metrics, Disturbance Metrics.

In 2021 the first 5-year monitoring was accomplished. This year we return to the plot for further assessment of progress toward Old-Growth Forest Recovery. But this time... without David, our extraordinary friend, who died in 2023.

We'll be calling in his spirit for guidance as Dionondehowa Board Member, Eric Strebel, and David's son, Terrason, lead us to our project site in our spirited Sanctuary woods where... following David's protocol, we intend to update the measurements as we imagine ahead to 2141, the year David estimated would bring our forest to "the incipient old-growth state".

David, who called his work *Ecological Intuition & Medicine*, is also responsible for bringing a calm sensibility to the border with a neighbor who repeatedly hunted and trained his dogs on the Sanctuary. And for more than twenty years he guided annual efforts to restore the corridor of the Creek that flows for about a mile across the Sanctuary into the Battenkill. This meant systematically removing invasive plant species, some of which had been broadly introduced by the NYS-DEC.

And he guided our efforts over several years, to clean up the Stanton dump site, which - out of sight - was on the steep incline to the same beautiful Creek. We estimated that it was initiated in the early 1930s and was last used in the mid 1960s.

We miss you David. We welcome you Terrason.

**We welcome Lindsay Fisk who joined our
Board of Directors in November, 2025!**

Special Thanks to our Advisors

Lori Giammattei, who supports us in so-many ways, including as a contributing photographer to this Newsletter.

Mike Conklin, our go-to problem-solver who keeps us humming.

Dionondehowa's 2026 Calendar of Events

March 21 *Dionondehowa at Cambridge Central School for Mud University's volunteer recruitment program 10am - Noon*

April 25 *Union College Ozone House Workday*

May 9 *Annual Bird Walk guided by Rey Wells 9 - 11am (Donation)*

June 20 *Writers Retreat 10am - 4pm*

June 28 *Taconic Music Concert – The Muse Room 4pm*

More programs will be announced as the year unfolds.



Sometimes we molt
straight out of our old skin.
Sometimes we go 'round & 'round
what's-in-our-way.

Visits to the Sanctuary by appointment are welcomed;
please contact us at 518.320.0502 or dionondehowa@yahoo.com

✧ *Being Alive is A Mystical Adventure* ✧



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Come to your senses at Dionondehowa!

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☼ *Come to your senses at Dionondehowa!* ☼

Email us at dionondehowa@yahoo.com
for a PDF copy of any of the following:

- ☼ *"In Love with The Land"* - an essay
- ☼ Patents and Programs: H.A.A.R.P.
- ☼ *"Alon"* based on a true story
- ☼ *"Rationing the Sun"* based on a true story
- ☼ Dionondehowa Diary excerpts
- ☼ *Is it Cloud Seeding or is it Solar Radiation Management?*
- ☼ Patents and Programs: SRM
- ☼ *Restorative Art*
- ☼ *Dionondehowa Wild Plants List*
- ☼ *Biowarfare and "Lyme" Disease*
- ☼ Poems from *"Contents Under Pressure"*

Dionondehowa Wildlife Sanctuary & School, Inc. is a non-profit land trust located on 217 acres bordering the Battenkill (Dionondehowa before the Dutch came) in southern Washington County, New York State. While the Sanctuary serves as a refuge and recharge area, the School is dedicated to Nature Studies and to the Healing and Expressive Arts, using them to engender social and environmental responsibility, in an atmosphere both contemplative and joyful. The name Dionondehowa, pronounced dye-on-on-duh-how-uh, was first recorded in 1709 and is listed in Beauchamp's *Aboriginal Place Names of New York State*. It means "She Opens the Door for Them" and may have referred to the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee) Confederacy.



Special thanks to Peter Andrea for this Newsletter's design.