

Nancy N. Doniger and The Little Village that Could: Montour Falls Answers the Climate Action Call

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As a certified Climate Steward and lover of the outdoors, **Nancy N. Doniger** uses her skills to add capacity to the Village of Montour Falls Sustainability Committee. Montour Falls, with a population of just 1,604, was the first community in Schuyler County to become a certified Climate Smart Community (CSC), but more have followed.



Looking for a meaningful way to create positive change in her community, Nancy joined the Montour Falls Sustainability Committee in 2023. She provides the committee with invaluable experience in writing and editing, as well as a passion for nature and ecology. Since joining, Nancy has contributed to the efforts of the committee by working closely with Mayor James Ryan to set agendas for meetings, communicating with committee members, updating sustainability information on the Montour Falls website, and running the Sustainable Montour Falls social media. She also arranged and co-presented a talk highlighting the village's sustainability initiatives to the Watkins Glen-Montour Rotary Club.



In 2024, Nancy is assisting the Sustainability Committee to advance Montour Falls' bronze certification to silver. She is leading a subcommittee to organize two "repair cafes" where people who are good at fixing things can repair objects and clothing to extend their life and keep them out of the landfill. Repair cafes are fun, community-minded events that meet CSC standards for sustainability.

With current climate issues facing the community such as rising temperatures and their devastating effect on agricultural crops, trees and plants, wildlife and pollinators, as well as flooding due to severe storms, Nancy believes that urgent action is necessary. She has a vast background in journalism, as well as group organization, based on her career and years of community service before moving to Montour Falls, and applies these skills in a multitude of ways as a member of the Sustainability Committee. Since beginning her work in Montour Falls and completing the Cornell Climate Stewards (CCS) training, Nancy learned that the climate is changing more rapidly and destructively than ever, and that reversing it to preserve a livable earth requires decisive, informed action. This motivates her to work harder on the local level and to communicate the facts to community members and beyond. This is the best kind of legacy she wants to leave.



“We all have different backgrounds, interests and gifts,” Nancy said. “As individuals, we can’t stop climate change, but working together, we can make a meaningful difference. Now more than ever, the pressing need for decisive action grows more urgent. Everyone can contribute, and everyone’s help is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and slow rising temperatures before it’s too late. Our children and grandchildren and the future of life itself depend on it. We can do it if we try.”

The Cornell Climate Stewards Program trains volunteers on the science and solutions to climate change, so that they can support their communities with local climate action projects. For more information, visit the Cornell Climate Stewards website at <https://climatestewards.cornell.edu/>