

Howard William (Bill) Michaels
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Bio Information:

Bill received his BS from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1989 majoring in hospitality and tourism management. Returning to his home community of Cooperstown and Fly Creek, NY, Bill became the General Manager of the Tunnick Inn. In 1992, deciding the foodservice side of the operation was not his forte, he bought into a half partnership of a motel property on Otsego Lake. After six years as the managing owner of the motel and helping out at the family cider mill whenever possible, Bill came to a crossroad. With his parents more than ready for retirement, Bill, recognizing that he could not run both the motel and the Mill, made the decision together with his wife Brenda to purchase the Mill and was released from all ownership responsibilities at the motel.

Bill and Brenda took over the Mill in 1999 making Bill responsible for operations and finance and Brenda for purchasing, marketing design and human resources.

Bill and Brenda Michaels, working as a team have positioned the Fly Creek Cider Mill as a must-see destination in any Cooperstown visitor's itinerary. The Mill is currently well positioned to remain a viable agriculture-related business located in the small hamlet of Fly Creek.

Bill and Brenda were awarded the Otsego County Chamber's Small Business of the Year Award for 2000. In 2001 they received the New York State's Agri-tourism Business of the Year Award. In 2001 the North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association named them "Newcomers of the Year" and in 2002 honored them with "Best Newsletter" award, and in 2005, "Best Brochure." The Rochester Institute of Technology awarded Bill the "Entrepreneur of the Year" in 2002. In 2003 the Mill brought home a Silver Ribbon at a National Cider Tasting held in Charlotte, NC.

Civic responsibility has been strong with Bill Michaels starting with a three-year appointment to the Town's Zoning Board of Appeals. Under the leadership of Tony Scalici Bill worked with the land use law to hear requests for area and use variances. In 2001 Bill was elected to the Town Board as Councilman. His knowledge of the Land Use Law was further developed during the Board's adoption of many changes. He used his experience on the Zoning Board to aid the Town Board's various modifications to the Law. As Councilman Bill attended town-wide focus groups to garner input for changes to the comprehensive plan and the Land Use Law. After his term ended Bill was appointed to fill a two-year vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals. In 2008 Bill was again elected as Councilman to serve a four-year term.