

DANBY NEWS

REMEMBERING GOULD COLMAN

Submitted by Julie Clougherty

I FIRST MET GOULD COLMAN back in the early 90s, when we were passengers in the back seat of a car on the way to a protest in Albany. He struck me then as one of the most interesting humans I'd ever met. Fast-forward 25 years or so, and I took another car ride with him one snowy day in

March 2017, to the Cornell library where he'd spent many years as its Archivist. As he drove, I asked him how he ended up in Danby. Because it was Gould, who told a story like no one I've ever met, I took notes. Because it was Gould, who said things in a way no one else ever did, I made sure to quote him. Now that he's left us to manage without him, I wish I'd done a lot more interviews with lots more quotes.

Gould came to Danby in 1954. He was a grad student at Cornell at the time, shearing sheep to

make money, and one day he left a pair of clippers at a job in Caroline. He went back for them and, on his way back to Ithaca, he happened upon a For Sale sign along Codrington Road. He looked around a bit and found a man sitting on his front porch. He asked the guy if he knew where the property line of the land for sale was. The man was Harvey Updike, and he told Gould, "You don't want her land, you want mine." For the first time since 1938, Harvey walked his land with the stranger who'd approached him, then sold Gould 50 acres of it.

Gould knew he wanted to live in the County. He'd been raised on a farm in Western NY ("real farm country") and, after living in downtown Ithaca, with homes three or four feet from each other, "I did a self-diagnosis, the sum of which was that I needed to get the hell out of here." The first time his father saw his

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DCC UPDATE:

DANBY NEWS TO CONTINUE

...with the help from our friends. To paraphrase the Beatles, *We're gonna try with a little help from our friends.*

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFERS ITS THANKS to the many friends who have already stepped up—before we've even begun asking—with actual donations. Others have already let us know they are ready to offer financial and social assistance, when needed. That time has come.

We believe the *Danby News* can be self-sufficient. As valuable as individual support is to us, we'll have to go beyond that. We will be accepting advertising, offering a larger presence in the *Danby News* than a mention of thanks for our ongoing sponsors. Do you have a local business or a local event you would like to advertise? Both monthly advertisements and one-time notices are welcome. Contact us at the eMail address below for details.

Why do we need to do this? A recent *Ithaca Journal* article, published on April 16, offered a fair and evenhanded assessment of the situation. After about 30 years of collaboration between the Community Council and the Town of Danby—which provided a high-quality publication with both official municipal articles and community news—Danby's current Town Board decided that it has "the responsibility" to publish its own municipal newsletter.

In order to do so, the Town de-funded the *Danby News* and is using that money—plus more—to publish its own *Town News*. It will cover government activities...and anything else the Town Board decides to publish. According to the Town, the initial, April issue of the *Town News*, delivered to a subset of Danby addresses, cost \$1,785.36. We believe (hope!) some of that was related to one-time startup costs. In the same month, the *Danby News* cost about \$850 and

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This Month Inside the Danby News:

- Know Your Neighbor: Al Becker ③
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- Visit From A Hungry Bear . . . ④
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May 2022

Layout: Ted Crane
Count-n-Label Crew:
 Ted and Pamela; others.
Post Office Crew:
 Ted

To contribute:

Danby Area News
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 Ithaca, NY 14851-6886
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 Email: [danbynews@danbycc.org]

Text submissions:

Send text in the body of an unencoded, plain-text Email message (**not** as an attachment); or mail typewritten copy, double-spaced on white paper. Short handwritten submissions accepted; please write legibly.

Graphics: JPEG preferred for photos, GIF for line graphics. PNG also works. Check with editor before sending hardcopy graphics.

Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication date. Materials may be accepted later if time allows. Submissions should generally not exceed 250-350 words (one column). We cannot print political material or letters of opinion.

The Danby News (DN) is a publication of the Danby Community Council (DCC). All statements are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, sponsors, the DCC and its officers, or officials and employees of the Town of Danby. All works remain © of the contributors. Please provide a SASE if you wish to have materials returned. The DN and DCC are not responsible for typographic or other errors.

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 Help the Danby News build community!
 For info, contact [danbynews@tedcrane.com]

**DANBY NEWS NOTES**

Submitted by Ted Crane

Submission Guidelines: Before submitting an item for the Danby News, please have a look at the *Submission Guidelines*. You can request them by Email from the editor at [danbynews@tedcrane.com] or find them at [danbynyn.org/DanbyNews]. If you're thinking of sending something for publication in the Danby News, there's two documents to read: the *Guidelines* and the *Submission Guide-*

lines at the same web location.

You'll learn what is, and isn't acceptable material for publication. If it's acceptable, we'll make an effort to include it; generally, we print everything we receive! You'll find hints about how to prepare a submission. Following these guidelines makes the editing and layout easier.

A terse version of these guidelines is in the left-hand column of this page. ☘

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS: AL BECKER

Submitted by Pamela Goddard

AL BECKER HAS KNOWN FARM PROPERTY on Hillview Road as home all his life, even though he and Ann fully moved in just 35 years ago. That world has been Al's "natural habitat" and the place where he is most himself.

By his own account, he was something of a wild child. As a kid, he was turned loose to explore the hundreds of acres of undeveloped land. "Hell, I never grew up. I'm not sure I've grown up now."

If you know Al Becker, you know that he can be pretty gruff in his interactions with humans. "There are good points and bad points in every person," Al says. "I don't see eye to eye with a lot of folks on politics, but I can put that on time out when there are a lot of other things we hold in common."

He has a way with non-human critters, large and small. They feel safe with him. He can communicate with all sorts of animals in a gentle and understanding way. When Ann and Al made Hillside Road home, a veritable menagerie of wild and domesticated animals joined them—including horses, dogs, and ferrets. For a while Becker raised fox and mink for fur, but he didn't like the, "killing business." Instead, the Beckers kept a fox as a pet in the house for a while, caged near the woodstove during the day.

Al's done many different things in his life. "I guess I had a short attention span," he says. From digging graves in high school, to fixing appliances and training as an electrician, to working in construction, to running his own business selling boats and tackle to anglers. "I've always been anti-government, anti-authority. So a lot of that work was under the table and off the books."

Horses and bees have been a big part of Al's life since he was a child. After years of keeping horses for his own enjoyment, Al got interested in specialized breeding. He got connected to someone who was raising foals for racing, and brought some brood mares to his farm. Eventually, the Beckers built large barns on the property to

house more than 20 horses. "They are the most delicate four-wheel-drive critter ya got," Al laughs. "They're big, but they're delicate. It takes careful, gentle care."



Becker would only raise one foal at a time, and trainers noticed how easy his animals were to work with. Investing in a race horse is a long term process, Becker explains, training doesn't happen overnight. The foal would travel from West Danby to Florida for two years of training. From there, they would go to Belmont or another track for additional seasoning. Becker's investments were paid back in pride of work, seeing his horses win at the track, and in "breeder's rewards" for those wins.

While only a few of Becker's horses have hit it big, one did quite well. *Becker's Galaxy* raced all over the USA, from New York to San Diego, and from Chicago to Kentucky. Al is

quick to clarify, "I did not name that horse, someone else did." In a race in Kentucky, Becker's Galaxy won by five lengths in a field of 16 horses.

"You get out of an animal what you put into them," Al says. That could well be his philosophy of life. You get out of it what you put into it.

Beekeeping has been in the family even longer than horses. His mother had taken up the interest in the 1950s. All the necessary equipment was in storage, waiting for Al's interest to catch up. At the high point, the Beckers managed 30-35 hives. Al and Ann keep far fewer horses now and just five hives of honeybees. The day I visited, they were cleaning tack for sale—simplifying what they are holding. Jars of honey are lined up for sale on shelves below photos of Becker Farm horses in the winners circle at various tracks.

After a lifetime of different adventures—in the navy, as part of the West Danby Fire Department, and serving 14 years on Danby's Board of Zoning Appeals—Al has lots of stories to share. As he says, "The rest of it's history."

Danby's Community Council wants us all to get to know each other better. This series of short profiles of interesting folks who live here is one way. Do you have an idea for someone to highlight? Let us know. ❀

COMMUNITY LIBRARY

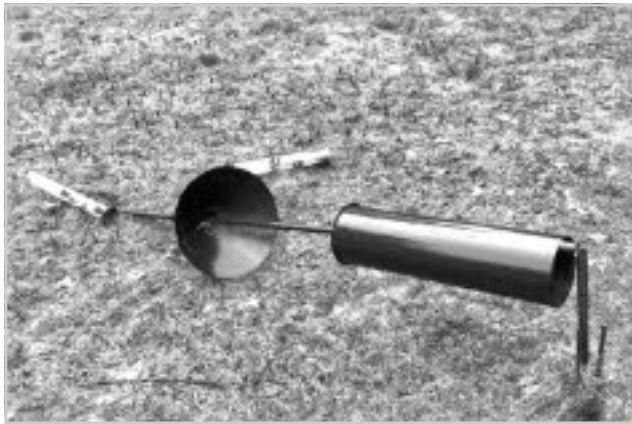
Submitted by Cindy Parlett

MAY IS UPON US and spring has finally arrived! Come see all our gardening books, on display now for reference. Another display includes some of our local authors.

We recently attended the Friends of the Library sale and were able to get some nice items. Our selection of LT books from TCPL has been changed so these will be new as well.

For any history buffs there are a few new items on World War I and II. For any Marvel fans we actually have quite a few of the movies on DVD and will be adding to the list soon.

Our hours are Tuesday, 1-3pm; Thursday and Saturday, 10am-noon. ♣



VISIT FROM A HUNGRY BEAR

Submitted by Heide Stuebel-Horowitz

AFTER ENJOYING all kinds of visitors to our bird feeders (birds, deer, rabbits, squirrels, turkeys, and a pair of ducks) for fourteen years, we had an unwelcome surprise.

A bear discovered our front yard at the corner of West King Road and Jersey Hill Road. We didn't see the nighttime intruder but Cornell Cooperative Extension thinks it was definitely a bear, strong enough to break the feeder poles and pull down a woodpecker cage.

We also learned from CCE that the bear will probably come back next year. Some people take the food in at night, but that's not an option with a Flat Feeder. We would appreciate hearing how other Danby-ites have tackled this problem. Please contact us at [box.820@danbyny.org]. ♣

LAST CHANCE NOT TO BURN

Submitted by Ted Crane

NEW YORK STATE PROHIBITS OPEN BURNING from March 16 thru May 14. During this period, residential brush burning is prohibited across New York State, as are all intentional fires (larger campfires, household trash, etc.). There are certain exceptions, like ceremonial bonfires.

You can find a statewide Fire Danger map at [dec.ny.gov/lands/68329.html] and more info at [dec.ny.gov/chemical/32060.html]. ♣

30TH ANNUAL PLANT EXCHANGE

Submitted by Dan Klein

THE 30TH ANNUAL PLANT EXCHANGE will take place on Sunday May 15, 2022, 1-3pm, outside the DVFC Fire Station on NYS Rt.96B. This free event is an opportunity to swap, donate, and try new perennials, houseplants, seeds, annual seedlings, and anything else garden related. It is not necessary to bring a plant in order to get a plant, nor is it necessary to stay the whole time.

It's much better to divide plants in advance so they don't suffer in the heat on the day of the Plant Exchange. Label what you bring if you can. Also, make sure there are no earthworms in what you bring. There is an invasive non-beneficial earthworm in our area that we don't want to spread.

For more information contact me at 607.272.7582 or [danbydan@hotmail.com]. ♣



➤ **Gould Colman, con't from front page**

son's wooded hillside property, he told him, "Son, you have a grand view, but no soil," and even though Gould wasn't planning to farm it, his father bought him a truckload of topsoil. Gould went on to build the first of nine phases of his home, walking to work at Cornell--from Updike Road--because he couldn't afford a car. Harvey's wife took pity on the hardworking young man and fed him breakfast sometimes.

Gould went on to have a long career at Cornell, including writing a history of its New York State College of Agriculture. It's a wonderfully interesting and readable book, available on Cornell's eCommons. He specialized in the sociology of farm families, interviewing a number of families across New York State over decades, including the children. He was a pioneer and champion of Oral History. He was a teacher, and he and Cynthia helped found Lehman Alternative Community School. He was an Army veteran and was widely traveled.

His interests and knowledge were deep and broad. When you asked him a question, you knew you were going to get a thoughtful and, very likely, unexpected answer. He was one of the few people I've ever met who

really thought about what he was going to say before opening his mouth.

Gould and his late wife Cynthia were always involved in Danby life, donating time and money, energy and intelligence, wisdom and wit to various organizations over the years. Their home is like a museum, a library, and a homey cabin in the woods all rolled into one. Last year, it was even used as a movie set. Gould's beloved tractors are there; in his late eighties he would drive one of them five miles to Dotson Park to take people for tractor rides at the annual Harvest Fest.

His presence at meetings was valued and cherished by many. In his late 80s, during his last stint on Danby's Community Council, a song was sung at the close of meetings, at his request: /The Bear Went Over the Mountain/. He was wise and funny and well-read, and when he said anything, it was worth listening to. He and Cynthia raised two really great people, Abigail and Jefferson, and they leave two granddaughters.

Gould lived on his own terms, and he left the world a better place for having been here. Because he was such a unique and interesting man he will be deeply missed, but never forgotten. ❀

➤ **Danby News, continued from front page**

was delivered—as far as we know—to every home in Danby, plus a few. You do the math.

The *Danby News* remains a place for community connection and information, as well as the promotion of the cultural and social programming offered by the DCC and others. The Community Council will continue the *Danby News*, with...a little help from our friends.

Contributions (check payable to Danby Community Council) can be sent to PO Box 6886, Ithaca, NY 14851-6886. \$10 covers the cost of 12 issues, and \$15 is even better. Donations of \$100 or more sends issues to residents who can't afford to pay, and will get you included in *The Danby 100*. We're happy to have you identify and assist us with grant funding.

Advertisers, for fees and sizes contact [danbynews@danbycc.org]. We can help you with ad layout. ❀



A magical, comforting, rural road in Danby

—photo by Ted Crane

CURMUDGEON CORNER

Submitted by Friede

THERE IS A BIG PROBLEM IN DANBY and no one is talking about it.

We moved to Danby, imagining all the peaceful evenings of bird song, sunsets, and enjoying a family meal on the front deck. The simple joys of rural life, away from the constant buzz of a city—airplane traffic, ambulance sirens, trains, subways, human voices, music, cars whizzing by.

Alas, on our first spring afternoon, as we set the table on the patio for lunch, a chorus louder than any we encountered in an urban area started up. A full six hours later, as the sky finally turned dark enough not to see well, the din let off and silence returned to our buzzing ears. Wow. Where had we moved, what had we done?

Must we Mow? A poem about Danby.

Must we mow

On a summer evening when our neighbors are having dinner with the windows open?

Must we mow

When our neighbor's baby is finally finally finally sleeping?

Must we mow

During a perfect spring day as our neighbors are trying to relax in a hammock with a book they have been saving for just such a day?

Must we mow

While the sun is setting so beautifully and our neighbors are quietly watching with reverence for this valley we all call home?

Must we mow

Every single hour of every single weekend once it is finally nice enough to be outside and enjoy the sunshine?

Here's a list of ten things you could do besides mow.

1. Sit on your porch/patio and look over your tiny piece of heaven
2. Take a hike in the Danby state forest
3. Lay under a tree and watch the clouds through the leaves
4. Work in your garden/plant a garden
5. Take yourself out on the town
6. Make a nice meal for your spouse/kids/friends
7. Go to Jennings Pond and enjoy the sunshine and water
8. Have a bonfire in your backyard and invite friends over

SENIORS UPDATE

Submitted by Margie VanDeMark

THE DANBY SENIORS WILL RESUME monthly meetings in May! On Thursday, May 5, we'll meet in Danby's Community Church, at Noon, for a dish to share luncheon. It will be good to get together and visit!

In June our meeting date will be Thursday, June 2. ♣

iMACS: WANTED AND WANT GONE

Submitted by Ted Crane

DO YOU HAVE an unused iMac...or do you need an inexpensive computer?

If you have an iMac lying around, I can fix it up and pass it on to someone who needs one. If you need one, I can help you turn a used gem from Craigslist or FB Marketplace into a useful household tool. No fee, just for fun.

Email me at [box.888@danbyny.org]. ♣

9. Wash all the winter grime off your car

10. Invite your curmudgeonly neighbor over for a beverage and enjoy the peace and quiet of rural life.

Yes, I know sometimes we must mow. Sometimes I even mow. Yes, I do. I know, it helps with ticks, it allows space for kids and dogs to roam, we can play yard games, it feels nice under bare feet, etc. etc. But gosh dang the incessant hours of droning gas engines is enough to drive someone to madness and that someone is me, your otherwise friendly quiet neighbor minding my own business.

My wish this year is that perhaps we could mow a little less? Perhaps we could let our grass grow just a little bit longer, perhaps we could mow a little less of our acreage, perhaps we could plant more gardens, more trees, leave a little more space for wildness instead of jumping on our loud a\$\$ mowers every dang weekend of the short and beautiful summer in this great part of the world?

Please for the love of silence and quiet and respectful neighborhoods stop mowing when it's so gorgeously perfect outside and just enjoy the sweetness that is a summer afternoon in Danby.

The Curmudgeon Corner is open to complaints of all kinds. Submit your items! Anything that's annoying in modern life is fair game except the Town of Danby and, please, no personal attacks. ♣

Note: Some programs are inside. For programs that take place outside it is vital that your child comes prepared with proper clothing for the afternoon. Students who are not prepared will be sent home on the bus. Please let me know if you need help acquiring cold weather clothing.

All programs adhere to CDC and Tompkins County Health Department Guidelines.

Contact Heidi Doggett with any questions, [hd289@cornell.edu] or 925.240.3572.

More Puppets! (grades 4-5)

South Hill Elementary School

2-5:30pm, Mondays, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23, 6/6, 6/13

Back by very popular request! Youth can choose between making a Muppet-style hand puppet or a marionette creature. The marionettes are more advanced, so it's suggested that if you didn't enroll in the first program you stick with the hand puppet, but if you're ambitious you are free to try whichever model you'd like. The first four meetings will be dedicated to making the puppets, and the next two will be for practice only. Weather permitting, practice will be outside.

Up for discussion: marching with our puppets in the Ithaca Festival Parade on Thursday, June 2. This activity will be optional.

Dungeons and Dragons, Magic: the Gathering, and Board Games (grades 6-8)

Boynton Middle School

3:30-5:30pm, Tuesdays, 5/3, 5/10, 5/17, 5/24, 5/31, 5/7, 5/14

Time for Round 2 of games! This program has been very popular, so we are continuing it through the end of the school year. Youth can choose between participating in (or possibly running) a Dungeons and Dragons campaign, bringing their Magic deck, or trying out an assortment of board games. Exploding Kittens and Tsuro have been favorites so far. Youth can also try making their own human-size board game using props and giant dice.

Games in the Woods (grades 4-5)

Dotson Park

2:30-5:30pm, Wednesdays, 5/4, 5/18, 5/25, 6/8, 6/15

Come play tag, go on scavenger hunts, toss bean bags, and who knows what else? What games do you want to play? Bring your ideas, a water bottle, and some sturdy shoes.

Outdoor Exploration (grades 6-8)

Boynton Middle School/Stewart Park

3:30-5:30pm, Thursdays, 5/5, 5/12, 5/19, 5/26, 6/9, 6/16

Meet at the Boynton Library, then set out to explore. Youth being dropped off from other locations may go straight to Stewart Park depending on timing. Adults can eMail Heidi to coordinate details.

We could walk along the lake, cook a snack at the grill, play games, watch the wildlife, or try out some photography. In case of heavy rain, we'll bring indoor activities to choose from and stick to the library.



Puppet Making (grades 6-8)

Boynton Middle School

3:30-5:30pm, Fridays, 5/16 and 5/13

These are not your average sock puppets! Choose between a Muppet-style hand puppet and a furry, floppy marionette creature. We've got just two weeks to finish our creations, so this is basically puppet-making bootcamp. This program will focus entirely on making puppets. If you'd like to learn about using them, sign up for the short puppetry program listed below.

See description of Ithaca Festival Parade, above.

Puppetry (grades 6-8)

Boynton Middle School

3:30-5:30pm, Friday, 5/27, 10am-1pm, Saturday, 5/28

Learn puppetry basics and put together your own short skits. Youth are welcome to either bring their own puppets or borrow one from the program. We'll be going over hand puppets, hand puppets with arm wires, and basic marionettes. Youth may choose to attend either the Friday Session, the Saturday session, or both.

See description of Ithaca Festival Parade, above. ✨

LIFEGUARDS FOR JENNINGS POND

Submitted by Amy Cusimano

THE TEASE OF SPRING IS HERE—which means the hot days of summer are coming soon. Jennings Pond is looking for lifeguards for the 2022 summer season.

You must be 16 or over in age. Requirements include First aid, CPR, AED, Lifeguard and waterfront certifications. These certifications can be done at the Red Cross or the YMCA. All costs for certifications will be reimbursed by the Town of Danby.

Excellent pay and a great place to spend your summer.

We look forward to hearing from you. Contact Amy Cusimano, [myemail607@gmail.com] or Mary Ann Kozak [mkozak1@twcny.rr.com]. ✨

May 2022

DANBY NEWS: EVENT CALENDAR


May 3 • Tue

6pm  Zoom • Town Board Meeting

May 4 • Wed

5pm  Zoom • West Danby Water District Mtg

May 5 • Thu

Noon  Danby Community Church • Seniors!

7pm  Zoom • Danby Community Council Mtg

May 7 • Sat

9am  Town Hall • Library Volunteers Meeting

May 9 • Mon

6pm  Zoom • Town Board Meeting

7pm  DVFC Station • Fire Dep't Meeting

7pm  West Danby Fire Station • WD Fire Dep't Mtg

May 10 • Tue

7pm  DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Meeting

7pm  Zoom • Conservation Advisory Council Mtg


May 17 • Tue

7pm  Zoom • Planning Board Meeting

May 18 • Wed

6pm  Zoom • Town Board Meeting

May 19 • Thu

4pm  Community Church • Danby Food Pantry


May 24 • Tue

7pm  DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Meeting

Jun 1 • Wed

5pm  Zoom • West Danby Water District

Jun 2 • Thu

Noon  Danby Community Church • Seniors!

7pm  Zoom • Danby Community Council Mtg

Jun 4 • Sat

9am  Town Hall • Library Volunteers Meeting

Jun 6 • Mon

7pm  DVFC Station • Fire Dep't Meeting

7pm  West Danby Fire Station • WD Fire Dep't Mtg

Jun 7 • Tue

6pm  Zoom • Town Board Meeting

7pm  DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Meeting

Jun 14 • Tue

7pm  Zoom • Conservation Advisory Council Mtg

Jun 21 • Tue

7pm  Zoom • Planning Board Meeting

Ongoing Events

Seniors Strength Class  via Zoom

Mondays, 9–10am: [zoom.us/j/84819023648]

Thursdays, 9–10am: [zoom.us/j/87163913959]


Contact [jmchurch@twcny.rr.com] for info

Danby Community Library  Town Hall

Tuesday, 1–3pm; Thursday & Saturday, 10am–Noon
 Curbside pickup available; can return in drop box.

Danby Food Pantry  Danby Community Church
 3rd Thursday, 4–6pm


Food Scrap Recycling  Town Hall    
 Saturdays, 9am–Noon

AA Meeting  via Zoom: [zoom.us/j/8209358263]
 Wednesdays, 7pm

Danby Quilters Group ☎ 607.273.2950, Call for Info

Where Things Happen

 Danby Town Hall • 1830 Danby Road

 DVFC Station • 1780 Danby Road

 WDFD Station • 47 Sylvan Drive, off Rt.34/96

 Danby Community Church • 1859 Danby Road

 American Legion Post 221 • 1231 Danby Road

Meeting	Date	Zoom MtgID	Passcode
Town Board	May 3	980 8515 9868	754633
CAC	May 10	972 1566 0090	423584
Planning Board	May 17	958 0817 5336	245871
Town Board	May 18	971 0723 2988	535713
Zoning Appeals	None	986 3534 5196	281804
To join a meeting by telephone, call 646.876.9923			