Danby News

January, From Both Directions

The first month of our year is named for Janus, a Roman God. This deity had two faces, one looking backward and the other looking forward.

Traditionally this is a time for reflection and planning ahead. And we make resolutions, or set intentions for how things will be better this year.

Here in the frozen north, January can be the coldest month, with dread, fear, hunger, and freezing cold. In the old days, wolves were bold enough—and hungry enough—to enter villages. That's why we say, "Keep the wolf from your door."

January is also a time to finish up the winter festivities. Yes, of There's New Year's Day and the Twelve Days of Christmas extend through January 5, the festival of the Three Kings, and the traditional Twelfth Night, when the Lord of Misrule...rules.

Send the old year out with a whoop and a holler! (pg)

Pancakes On A Winter Morn!

Happy New Year! The Danby Volunteer Fire Company will continue hosting Pancake Breakfasts in 2024 on January 14, February 11, and March 10. Join us Sunday, January 14, 8am-11am for breakfast and support our Jaws of Life fundraiser.

Drive-thru or stop in for a plate of Pancakes, French Toast, Sausage, Scrambled Eggs, and Homefries all for $12.

We are thrilled to have taken delivery of the upgraded rescue tools ("Jaws of Life") that you, the amazing Danby community, have helped fundraise for the initial payment. We are *so* close to meeting our goal of making the final payment.

This Month Inside the Danby News:

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Metku In Concert

Metku, a Finnish-American band featuring Richard Koski, Katrina Mackey, Mike Ludgate, and Phil Robinson, will give a concert on Saturday, January 27 at 3pm. The concert is hosted by Danby's Community Council and will be held in Danby's Community Church Fellowship Hall.

Don't miss the opportunity to hear this extraordinary group of musicians, and hear some of the tunes brought to our region by Finnish immigrants. This community concert is free and available to all.

In about 1910, when inexpensive farmland was for sale in the Finger Lakes, large numbers of Finns began migrating from small towns in Michigan and Minnesota to the Spencer-Van Etten area. They were hoping for a better way of life in the hills of the Finger Lakes. This trend lasted for several decades. The Finnish community became integral to Newfield and Danby.

"My grandparents were born in Finland," Koski explained. "But my parents came from Negaunee, Michigan. My family worked in the iron mines there and wanted to come here to farm. Part of the family came here in 1919, and another in 1930."

Koski's most constant connection with his heritage is his passion for the folk music enjoyed by his ancestors. He

—continued on page 4 ➲

January 2024

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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.

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Lights Alight!

The hunt for the best, most over-the-top lighting display is one of the pleasures of the winter season.

Lately, Danby residents have been notedly restrained but...just go a bit south of the Town border and you get to...Catatonk! (tc)

Danby News Notes

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@danbycc.org] or find them at [danbyny.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 Guidelines* 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. (tc)

Know Your Neighbors: Ben Hogben

If you've been around Danby a long time, you've probably interacted with Ben Hogben. You might not have known it because he's not one to boast or self-promote. Maybe you met him at a Fire Department pancake breakfast, or maybe you saw him drive his antique tractor in a parade. You very well might have heard him play music—either solo or as part of the *Crane Hill Trio*—at Danby Fun Day, the Danby Summer Market, or Danby's Harvest Festival.

Where is Crane Hill, you might ask? That's an old name for the top of the hill where Gunderman and Bruce Hill roads meet. The Hogben family has lived there a long time. At least four generations of this family have lived in Danby, and Crane Hill is where Ben and his wife raised three children. "My father was born in Yorkshire, England and emigrated to Danby with my grandmother as a toddler," Ben explains. "My mother is originally from Chenango County. They met while my mother was visiting relatives in Danby. I was born here."

These family connections instilled a life of community involvement and service. The Hogbens have a multi-generational connection with the Danby Fire Department. Ben is a life member of the Danby Volunteer Fire Company. "I was an active member for 30 years," he says, "and held the positions of Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, and secretary."

When asked about other community service, Ben modestly says, "I am currently the President of the Board of Directors for Longview." A peek at his early studies also shows an interest in elder care. He has an AAS Human Services from Tompkins Cortland Community College, and a BA in Gerontology (Cum Laude) from Ithaca College.

Music is another life-long connection to family and community. Ben plays the violin, viola, guitar, four and five string banjo, mountain dulcimer, mandolin and penny whistle. For ten years he joined up with the Boda family, playing as the *Jersey Hill Ridgerunners*. And there was about 15 years of the *Crane Hill Trio*, with his father and sister. More recently, Ben plays traditional Irish music with a local percussionist.

"I learned to play violin from the Suzuki method as a child," Ben says. "I am self-taught with the other instruments. Music is a code, and once someone knows the code, they can transfer that knowledge to other instruments."

Seeing the connection between music and coding helps Ben pay the bills. His day job is Access Services Manager of the Ithaca College Library, where he's been on staff since 1991. "I am responsible for circulation services and technology hardware in the Library. I am responsible for managing the circulation, reserves, electronic reserves, interlibrary loan, and multimedia activities of the Access Services Unit, as well as the supervisor of student employees who work for Circulation. I also coordinate computing/copying/printing services within the library."

Music—and a fascination in figuring out how things work—got Ben into clock restoration and repair. Several years ago, Ben rebuilt an historic clock for the Danby Historian's collection. It is now housed in Danby's Town Hall.

"My father took me to a musical museum in Florida when I was 12," Ben says. "There, I saw nickelodeons, band organs, music boxes, and clocks. This started my interest in antique clocks. I started buying and repairing them for myself approximately 35 years ago. Then, word got out that I fix clocks."

"The town hall clock was a challenge because the gears are made of 150+ year old wood. Wood is not as stable as brass, and is affected by heat and humidity. Several of the gears had to be made from scratch to replace the broken ones." It took time, patience, and attention to detail, and Ben not only restored the clock but brought it to a fully functional state. In the days before the pandemic, it was a delight to hear it ticking away in the town hall library.

Lastly, you might have heard Ben's ministry at church. He is the Pastor of the Caroline Center Church and the Caroline Valley Community Church.

Music is a part of Ben Hogben's spiritual life as well. The CCC web site says, "When you attend a Caroline Center Church service...our services often feature music...."Our guess is that Ben is right there, helping to lead the old gospel songs and backing up the music with fiddle and guitar. (pg)

➲ ***Metku In Concert, con't from front page***

learned to play tunes with his father William, has written tunes in the Finnish traditional style, and is now a renowned musician--fiddle and button accordion--across the US and internationally. The Koski family formed the Finnish Appalachian Orchestra in 1980; Richard has played with such groups as the Crumtown Ramblers, as a duo with his son Jason, and with the popular dance band TOIVO—pronounced "toy-vo", meaning "hope" in Finnish.

The inspiration for Metku sprung from the band members' shared Finnish ancestral heritage and interest in traditional Finnish music and dance. Koski was a mentor to Katrina Mackey (flute and fiddle) and Michael Ludgate (mandolin and banjo). Philip Robinson provides his rhythm guitar.

The Danby Community Council's concert series brings a variety of music to our rural community.

In 2023 Richard, Katrina, and Michael were awarded a NYSCA Individual Artist Grant in Folk & Traditional Arts to create a tune book of the Finnish dance repertoire. They've collected about 50 Finnish and Finnish-American dance tunes, all in the public domain or attributable to Richard: waltzes, schottisches, polkas, and mazurkas.

The Danby Community Council concert series brings a variety of music—and musicians of great skill and diversity—to our rural community. We offer afternoon concerts, accessible to people of all ages and abilities. In January, we're pleased to have Metku lead off our 2024 concerts.

This program is made possible in part with funds from the Statewide Community Regrants program from the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of the office of the Governor and New York State Legislature, and from Tompkins County, administered by the Community Arts Partnership of Tompkins County.

Donations to cover refreshments and other incidentals are always welcome. We can also use volunteer assistance for setup and cleanup on concert afternoons. Contact Pamela Goddard at 607.342.4110 if you are able to help. (pg)

On his death bed, Voltaire was asked to renounce Satan. He replied, "Now , my good man, this is no time to be making enemies."

Time To Re-up To The *Danby News*

It's now been almost two years since the *Danby News* shifted to a reader-supported funding model. The Community Council thanks all the readers who have offered support in the form of paid subscriptions and generous donations.

The *Danby News* is the place to go when you want information beyond official, sanitized announcements in expensive publications funded by your tax dollars.

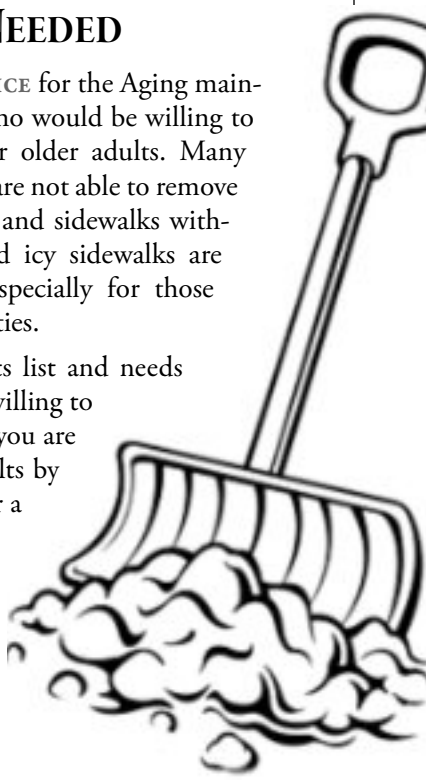
We have to pay the bills and we have to keep asking for your help. Subscribers and supporters, it may be time to re-up. Share news and cheers with your neighbors. Paid subscriptions ($15 or more per household) help. Larger contributions support our community-building efforts. Join the **Danby 100**!

Do you own a business or work for a public-spirited employer? Consider the benefits of helping out with either with text-based or display advertising.

Please make checks payable to *Danby Community Council*, note *Danby News* in the memo, and mail to P.O.Box 6886, Ithaca, NY 14851-6886. (dcc)

Snow Shovelers Needed

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging maintains a list of individuals who would be willing to do snow shoveling/plowing for older adults. Many older adults in our community are not able to remove the snow from their driveways and sidewalks without assistance. Deep snow and icy sidewalks are dangerous for everyone but especially for those who may have mobility difficulties.



The office is always updating its list and needs more workers, especially those willing to work in places in rural areas. If you are interested in assisting older adults by shoveling or plowing—on either a paid or volunteer basis—please call the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 607.274.5482. If your name was listed last year, and you would like to be listed again, please notify COFA.

Keep Your Money Local

Did you know that every time you send back your DMV documents (license, registration, etc.) in the envelope the NYS DMV provides, you are in fact sending all your money to Albany instead of keeping it local?

All the money from "online paperwork" goes to Albany.

When you visit the DMV office in downtown Ithaca (301 Third Street), 12.7 percent of all transaction fees support your local economy and can reduce your property taxes.

Choose to keep your money working here at home. Please make the commitment to keep your DMV money local by doing business with the local office. (rr)

Danby Food Pantry

The Food Pantry has traditionally set up its larder in the Danby Community Church on the 3rd Thursday of each month, 4-6pm (this month, that's Thursday, January 18).

Those in need at other times can call Joan Barber, 607.280.4776, for an appointment.

Set-up help is needed the day before Food Pantry, 2:30-6pm, on the day of Food Pantry to hand out food, etc., and at 6pm the day of Food Pantry to help put extra food away and clean up the room.

danbycc.org Online

The Community Council web page [danbycc.org] is full of useful files and links!

- Upcoming Events!
- Descriptions and Recordings of past concerts and events. We try to offer attendance via both Zoom and YouTube live stream. You can watch your favorite program any time on YouTube.
- Reports, Meeting Agendas and Minutes.
- And, of course, contact info! (dcc)

Free Ramps

Do you need a ramp for yourself or someone in your household to be able to get in and out of your house? If you qualify, the Finger Lakes Independence Center, [fliconline.org] or 607.277.2433, can help you out.

Do you have an unneeded modular ramp? Want to donate it to FLIC for someone else who needs one? FLIC will take it away and install it for another eligible person.

Community Library

A new selection of Adult Fiction from TCPL will arrive in January 2024.

We also have several books by Ken Follet, a Welsh author of thrillers and historical novels: *Fall of Giants, Edge of Eternity,* and *Winter of the World*.

Elmore Leonard was an American novelist and screenwriter, his early novels were Westerns, but he later wrote crime fiction and thrillers. The FX series, Justified, is based on several of his novels featuring U.S. Marshal Raylan Givens. We have: *Riding the Rap, Raylan,* and *Cuba Libre*. (cp)

Free Gadabout Rides!

The County Office for the Aging is making available up to 20 free Gadabout tickets for rides to medical appointments, shopping, etc. There are no income guidelines, but you have to be at least 60 years old. For more information, call 607.274.5482 or visit [tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa] (click on "services", then "transportation").

Free Gadabout rides are also available for veterans, sponsored by the Disabled American Veterans. For information, contact Tom Eddy, DAV, 607.227.4975. (rr)

When your party [*has competition*], you feel discredited. It's like everything you believe in has been rejected. You don't know how to move on from that bitterness.

—Joanie Caucus, Doonesbury

DVFC Welcomes New Officers

The Danby Volunteer Fire Company congratulates our newly elected Line and Staff Officers for 2024.

- Chief - John Gaden
- 1st Assistant Chief - Dan Saracino
- 2nd Assistant Chief - Peter Goodman
- 3rd Assistant Chief - Jethro Forbes
- Lieutenant - Simon Wyatt

- President - Peter Goodman
- Vice President - Derek Dougherty
- Treasurer - Steve Hilsdorf
- Secretary - Sharon Gaden
- Director at Large - Ivan Ross

Line Officers, pending approval from the Danby Fire District, will be sworn in during the Danby Fire District Organizational meeting on January 9.

Reminiscing #17

I went back to January 12, 2014 to find out what was going on in the Danby, West Danby and Newfield neighborhoods:

The American Legion on Danby Road was preparing a fish dinner (2024 update: their dinners are always good and open to the public. The Tuesday night chicken wings are delicious).

The Newfield Lioness group was preparing a chicken and biscuit dinner at the Newfield Fire Hall.

A pancake breakfast was being served at the Danby Fire Hall (2024 update: the next one will be Sunday, January 14, 8-11am, sit in or drive through).

The Chili Challenge was coming up at the Danby Church on January 24 (2024 update: the Health Department now prohibits such events).

We were able to extend our gratitude to Frank Proto for representing Danby/West Danby and Caroline for over 28 years on the Tompkins County Board of Representatives and Legislature. There were two chances to gather for this, held in Danby on December 27 and in West Danby on January 19. Frank always did right by us!

Fall Creek is my birth neighborhood and Danby is the neighborhood we adopted as adults. I was not surprised by the Fall Creekers who worked together, along with city work crews, to avert serious flooding problems due to an ice jam in Cascadilla Creek!

For January, 2024, I hope that it is the start of a good year, one of peace, good health and happiness. (gh)

Danby Fire District Organizational Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Organizational Meeting for the Danby Fire District of the Town of Danby, County of Tompkins, New York, will be held on Tuesday the 9th day of January 2024, at 7:00 P.M. at the Danby Fire Station, 1780 Danby Road, Town of Danby, County of Tompkins, New York. The regular meeting will follow.

By order of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Danby Fire District.

Sharon Gaden, Secretary, December 12, 2023

Fire District Election Results

The least well-known—and probably, the lest understood—election on Danby's annual calendar took place on Tuesday, December 12.

Years ago, Danby's Town Board offloaded the task of providing fire protection to the town. It authorized the creation of the Danby Fire District to govern that service. Like the Town, the District is a political subdivision of the State of New York. It contracts with the Danby Volunteer Fire Company and the West Danby Volunteer Fire Company to provide fire and EMS protection.

There are five Commissioners governing the Danby Fire District; each serves a 5-year term. The Commissioners determine the District budget (that pays the Companies' expenses) and it is incorporated *without revision* into the Town budget. At almost $600,000, the Fire levy is about 20 percent of the combined Fire and Town levy, but the Fire levy has grown more slowly than the Town levy.

Charlotte Griggs, who had been appointed (and then elected) to serve the remainder of the term of a retired Commissioner, was the only candidate. She will now serve a full term from 2024 until the end of 2028.

Nineteen (out of about 2500) Danby residents voted. All of them voted for Charlotte. (tc)

This Issue's Writers

- cp.... Cindy Parlett
- dcc.. Comm. Council
- gh ... Gay Huddle
- mv .. Margie VanDeMark
- pg ... Pamela Goddard
- rr..... Ronda Roaring
- tc .... Ted Crane

Seniors Update

Danby Seniors invites all those 55 and over to join us for monthly dish to share luncheons at the Danby Community Church, always the first Thursday at Noon. We'll next meet on January 4, and again on February 1. Word is that Ted Merritt has agreed to call Bingo in January.

We had a lovely luncheon at LaTourelle on December 7, an appropriate location since Emily Wiggins was a founding member back in 1968. Big thanks go to Theresa Klinger and Tammy Lopez for putting together the array of great prizes and the nice slide show! Theresa did a great job of organizing this event and keeping track of the 96 attendees. Sue Sill took many nice photos that day and they are on the Facebook page for Danby Seniors. Several bakers made cookies and we also had a big sheet cake for our 55th anniversary. John Simon provided good music with guitar and song.

In January we will elect officers for the new year. The proposed slate is: Pat Phelps, President; Pat Sawyer, VP; Theresa Klinger, Secretary; Cindy Cerrache, Treasurer. Let Pat P. know if you have interest in serving as well.

Tammy Lopez has created a Facebook page for Danby Seniors. Check it out if you haven't already! (mv)

Free Coffee and Donuts

Danby's Community Church is offering Free Coffee And Donuts on Mondays, once a month, 8-10am, on January 15 (and Feb.19, Mar.18). Open to the public!

The Church is at 1859 Danby Road. Call 607.272.1687 or visit **[danbychurch.org]** for more information.

PS: They're in need of prep and cleanup volunteers.

NY Senior Action Council

The New York StateWide Senior Action Council, **[nysenior.org]** occasionally distributes information of interest to seniors via eMail.

Its mission is described, in part, as,

- To achieve through united action the dignity, well-being and security of all senior citizens of New York State
- To promote the general well-being of the aging through educational processes outlining the legislative needs of the elderly
- To monitor programs and services to the elderly of New York State to ensure their full representation and participation in planning, implementation and evaluation

Recently, the Council noted that, "Your voice is urgently needed to tell your Congress member: Oppose creating a debt commission, which would allow changes to Social Security via a closed-door process to cut already modest earned benefits while avoiding public accountability."

It advised Seniors to call their member of the House of Representatives at 202.225.3121. In Tompkins County, our representative is Marcus Molinaro (R-NY19). You cannot eMail him directly, but can contact him via **[molinaro.house.gov/contact/]**.

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Jan 2024

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Danby News
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Danby News: Event Calendar

Jan 1 • Mon
New Year's Day
Jan 2 • Tue
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
Annual Organization Meeting
Jan 3 • Wed
5pm WD Fire Station • **West Danby Water District**
Jan 4 • Thu
Noon Community Church • **Seniors**
7pm Zoom • **Danby Community Council Mtg**
Jan 6 • Sat
9:15am Town Hall • **Library Volunteers Meeting**
Jan 8 • Mon
7pm DVFC Station • **Fire Dep't Meeting**
7pm West Danby Fire Station • **WD Fire Dep't Mtg**
Jan 9 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
Annual Organizing Meeting
7pm Zoom • **Conservation Advisory Council**
Jan 11 • Thu
7pm Zoom • **Danby Youth Commission**
Jan 15 • Mon
8am Community Church • **Coffee and Donuts**
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
Jan 16 • Tue
7pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Planning Board Meeting**
Jan 18 • Thu
4pm Community Church • **Danby Food Pantry**

Meeting	Date	Zoom MtgID	Passcode
Town Board	Jan 2	962 1625 1190	071939
CAC	Jan 9	972 1566 0090	423584
Youth Commission	Jan 11	See Town web site	
Planning Board	Jan 16	958 0817 5336	245871
Town Board	Jan 15	990 7294 9108	569826
Zoning Appeals	Jan 23	953 8273 3938	None?
To join a meeting by telephone, call 646.876.9923			

Warning: Zoom meeting info and agendas change frequently!

Jan 23 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
7pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Board of Zoning Appeals**
Jan 27 • Sat
3pm Community Church
Community Council Concert: Metku

Feb 1 • Thu
Noon Community Church • **Seniors**
7pm Zoom • **Danby Community Council Mtg**
Feb 2 • Fri
All Day • **Groundhog Day**
Feb 3 • Sat
9:15am Town Hall • **Library Volunteers Meeting**
Feb 5 • Mon
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
Feb 7 • Wed
5pm WD Fire Station • **West Danby Water District**
Feb 12 • Mon
7pm DVFC Station • **Fire Dep't Meeting**
7pm West Danby Fire Station • **WD Fire Dep't Mtg**
Feb 13 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
7pm Zoom • **Conservation Advisory Council**

Ongoing Events

Seniors Strength Class via Zoom
Mondays and Thursdays, 9–10am
Contact [jmchurch@twcny.rr.com] for Zoom link
Danby Community Library Town Hall
Tuesday, 1–3pm; Thursday & Saturday, 10am–Noon
Books can be returned via the outdoor drop box.
Food Scrap Recycling Town Hall
Saturdays, 9am-Noon
AA Meeting via Zoom: [zoom.us/j/8209358263]
Wednesdays, 7pm

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