May 2024 FREE TO RESIDENTS

Danby News

Danby Road Trash

On Earth Day weekend, April 20-21, two groups of volunteers hit Danby's major roads to remove roadside trash.

In West Danby, a group organized by Peter McDonald walked NYS Rt.34/96, leaving it, "...looking great in our hamlet." McDonald added, "You know who you are, heartfelt gratitude from all of us."

Uphill, on NYS Rt.96B, a 2.2-mile stretch was curated by several volunteers over a period of two days. Pam Wooster, Mark Tucker, and Barham Lashley, along with Community Council volunteers Cathy Darrow, Pamela Goddard, and Ted Crane.

"Curated" is the correct word, as the volunteers kept track of the items found. We now know what people passing through Danby leave behind. [Naturally, no self-respecting Danby-ite would leave trash on our own roads...or anywhere.]

Some general observations. Speed limit signs are a popular target. Throwable trash items are found concentrated near the 40- and 55-MPH markers. Road sections with drainage ditches have more, and larger, garbage, while the lawns leading to the road are often close to pristine. [The proud owners of those lawns are probably doing continuous, year-round cleanup.] Finally, accident scenes are a good source of plastic auto parts, while rusty metal parts can be found almost anywhere.

As one volunteer observed, "Those snap-in plastic parts...tend to snap out pretty easily, too. And snap into a million pieces."

The winner overall—and not for the first time—in the item count was...Energy Drink bottles. Beer and soda cans are probably a distant second. There may be more fast food wrappers and cups than drink containers, but they're seldom recognizable after a few rain-and-dry cycles. American Spirit fell many places down in the count this year. Bacardi Rum was an also-ran. (tc)

Fish Fry For Equipment

Doug's Fish Fry will be at Danby Volunteer Fire Company on Friday, May 10, 11am-6pm. Part of its sales go to the DVFC. Members will also be selling drinks and baked goods for equipment fundraising.

To place orders by telephone, before 4pm, please call 607.753.9184.x2.

Take a Harp Journey

On Saturday May 4, Grace Scarpino-Stoutenburg brings her musical harp tour to Danby! This concert will take advantage of the special acoustics of the Sanctuary of Danby's Community Church. Refreshments will be served in the Fellowship hall. Along with the other concerts in the Community Council's concert series, this concert is especially good for the whole family.

Grace will present a program she calls, *The Evolution Of The Harp In Western Music*. This mesmerizing journey includes everything from arrangements of medieval chants to music of the most modern era. We'll learn about the origins of the harp in the ancient world and how it continues to be a vibrant instrument today.

Expect to hear harp solo selections spanning more than four hundred years, from 1550-1990. During that timespan, the harp has evolved from a simple troubadour's accompaniment to a grand pillar of elegance and sonic range. There will be time for audience members to engage in questions and answers.

Given the nature of the instrument, and the acoustics of the sanctuary, we can promise that the sound will be ethereal and lovely.

Grace Scarpino-Stoutenburg is a near neighbor to Danby. She currently lives with her husband and two young children at the Spencer end of Michigan Hollow Road. Her Master of Arts degree in musicology from the Penn State School of Music complements her Bachelor of Music degree from the Crane School of Music, where she specialized in harp performance and musicology.

—continued on page 4 ➲

This Month Inside the Danby News:

Know Your Neighbors: Tony Serviente ③
Volunteers Help Community . . . ④
Who Is Responsible (for roads) . . ④
How Assessments Work . . . . . ⑤
Pair In Habitat . . . . . ⑤
Burn Barn Still In Effect . . . . . ⑤
Spring For The Danby News . . . ⑤
Reminiscing . . . . . ⑥
What Part Of Us Is Taxes? . . . . ⑥
Coffee, Donuts . . . . . ⑦
Community Library / Seniors . . ⑦
Plant Exchange . . . . . ⑦
Calendar . . . . . ⑧

May 2024

Layout: Ted Crane
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Ted and Pamela; others.
Post Office Crew:
Ted

To contribute items:
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PO Box 6886
Ithaca, NY 14851-6886
Phone: 607.273.8678
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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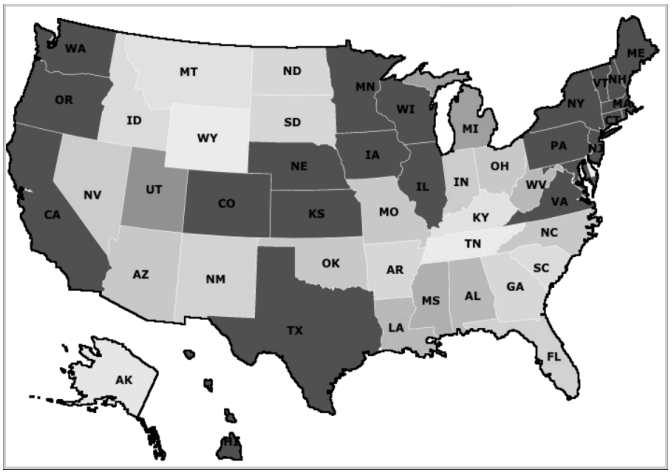


Which States Pay The Most Taxes Over A Lifetime?

Residents of darker states pay a greater percentage of their income to taxes than do residents of lighter states.

See item on page 6.

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: Tony Serviente, Stained Glass

During the pandemic, many people found new ways to work from home. Few of them built complete a creative studio and teaching space for the purpose. Danby neighbor Tony Serviente did just that. After decades of stained glass work, he brought his work home in a major way.

Serviente Glass Studios has been creating and restoring vitreous beauty for more than 40 years. When you talk with Tony, it's clear that he loves every minute of it. It's all a way for him to bring beauty to the world, to our eyes. He also connects the past with the present. "I restore damaged and failing windows for entire churches, as well as homes and institutions," Tony explains. Everything has a lifespan. At around 100 years, the lead in stained glass begins to fail. "No matter how well it was done, at some point it will need to be repaired. No matter the technique, I love what I do, and I enjoy collaboration with folks that want some glass beauty in their lives."

I had the joy of visiting Tony in his new studio on a soft spring day a few weeks ago. The view thru the west- and north-facing windows was lovely, looking out on fields and a small pond. The leaves were just budding out on the trees. "I love living here," Tony said. "We have such a diversity of interesting people in Danby. Now, my 'commute' is so easy. *[He just walks out his back door.]* I've gotten to know Danby even better in the past two years. I don't miss being downtown, at all."

Tony landed in Danby in the 1990s after living in various other places in Tompkins County. While he and his wife Barbara were living on Rt.96B, they fell in love with a country house on Muzzy Road. With luck and good timing, they scored the home when it came on the market and have been there ever since.

Finding his studio downtown in Ithaca, back in the mid-1990s, was similarly serendipitous. That space in Fall Creek, which he now rents out, served him well for a long time. When the pandemic hit, he had time to reassess what he really needed and wanted for his creative work. The new studio is somewhat smaller, but has all he needs in terms of equipment, glass stock, and space for working with restoration windows. It also has space for teaching students and apprentices.

Building the studio on Muzzy road seemed inevitable. "I finished building my fifth, and last, studio, two years ago. This is where all of my work is done, and where classes and workshops are held. I enjoy company; if you'd like to visit don't forget to confirm I'll be in, as my hours are by chance and appointment. After a career of 40 years and counting I get to indulge."

Teaching, both at the Glass Studio and across the country, is more than a passing interest. He is committed to passing on skills and keeping the craft alive. "I love to teach and I work with the philosophy that I will have no secrets," says Tony. "If you are a beginner I will try to infect you with the enthusiasm that I contracted 40 years ago. If you are experienced I may be able to steer you in new directions, or give you the benefit of things I have learned."

"Stained glass is becoming an endangered craft," Tony explained. "Most of those who have glass studios are aging and there's no one coming up to take over." To keep the skills alive, Serviente works with four to six apprentices at a time at his studio. He regularly teaches at the Corning Museum of Glass and offers regular classes on Saturday afternoons at his Muzzy Road studio. "Some students keep coming back. I've made a lot of friends through students."

Glass work hit a high in popularity in the 1990s. It's not as big a thing now. Some of the specialty glass that Serviente uses has have been passed on from other studios that closed when their owners died. At some point Serviente may cut back on glass restoration work but he expects to keep working with stained glass for a long time.

"This is what 'retirement' looks like for me. If someone were to tell me I couldn't work with glass anymore, it would feel like a punishment. I love what I do."

(pg)

Volunteers Help Community

What would it be like if there were more activities to brought people together in fun and friendly ways? Wouldn't it be wonderful if members of our community came together to work together and get to know each other?

Do you crave a sense of community? Do you find yourself appreciating local resources and activities and think, "Maybe I can do something to help?" Several local organizations need volunteer help and would be happy to welcome extra pairs of helping hands.

Volunteering connects you to others. Unpaid volunteers are often the glue that holds a community together. Helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need. Volunteering is a two-way street: It can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you choose to help. Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your network, and boost your social skills.

Volunteering can provide a healthy boost to your self-confidence, and life satisfaction. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity.

Consider helping out with Dotson Park. Imagine the pride of helping to create and maintain a beautiful space in the center of Danby. Those involved are doing as much as possible to make the park accessible to a wide range of people: a children's garden, story walk, a sledding slope in winter, taking care of disc golf and walking trails for adults and the entire family, and even building and maintaining raised walking areas over the wetlands.

Helping to present local concerts and programs is both energizing and relaxing. There's the joy of seeing expressions of wonder and engagement on the faces of neighbors. (pg)

Time lives a life of its own.

—Kjell Eriksson

➲ ***Harp Journey, con't from front page***

During the last decade, Grace has had the honor of performing with orchestras and wind ensembles at Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Mansfield University. She regularly performs as a soloist throughout Central NY, for both public and private events. Her passion for teaching is evident from her work with students of all ages and abilities. (pg)

Who Is Responsible?

A quick reference guide

Danby's roads are maintained by a number of different highway departments.

There are no Interstate roads in Danby.

State roads are identified by a while shield with black lettering. The New York State Department of Transportation is responsible for these roads. Tompkins County is part of DOT Region 3, headquartered in Syracuse, 315.428.4351. The Tompkins/Cortland office can be reached at 607.756.7072.

Incidentally, NYS DOT is also the "parent" of the Adopt-A-Highway program.

If you see a blue shield with yellow lettering (the official NYS colors), Tompkins County is responsible for the road. Its offices are on Bostwick Road, 607.274.0300 or `[highway@tompkins-co.org]`.

Finally, if there is no state or county shield, look for a street name sign. If may say "County" or "State Highway" with a number. If so, contact the State or County. If not, start with the Town of Danby's Highway Department, 607.272.9169 or `[highway@danby.ny.gov]`. Even if it does not have the maintenance responsibility, it can help you figure out who does.

In a City or Village (Danby has neither), contact the local Department of Public Works.

As always, there are, "exceptions that prove the rule." The Town and the County sometimes trade responsibility for sections of road. This usually happens when the trade would consolidate each jurisdiction's inventory. For example, a section of Town road might connect two County roads, and vice versa. (tc)

"Tell us about the food," said Hector.
"Everything tastes as you wish it to," replied the Wizard.
"My cornmeal would taste like chocolate?" asked Hector.
"Indeed," said the Wizard. "It is the American way."

—W.P.Kinsella, Butterfly Winter

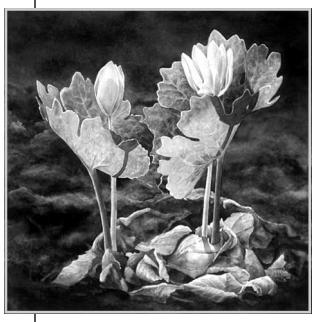
A Fine Art Camp

Danby Art Camp returns for its 2024 season!

Students of all ages can choose one or two weeks of fine art camp, running Monday thru Friday, 9am-1pm:

- July 15 to 19
- August 5 to 9

The studio is located in Danby, NY.



Come paint from imagination, abstract, or photos. Use any subject of your choice like animals, landscapes, portraits, fantasy, or anything else. You can work with color pencil, watercolor, charcoal, or pastel. If you have no idea where to start, I can lead the way with fun and varied exercises. For beginners and advanced artists alike.

Great for child/adult combination, all ages welcome starting at 7yo.

Tuition is $200 per week. Preregistration is required. Open studio classes are also offered on Mondays and Saturdays, 10am-1pm, throughout the year.

For more information, visit **[camilledoucet.com]** or contact me directly, **[doucetcamille@gmail.com]** or 607.272.8781.

Support The *Danby News*

When you want information beyond official, sanitized announcements in expensive, tax-dollar-funded publications, the Danby News is the place to go. We work on a tight budget; a fraction of what taxpayers shell out for a government publication. We have to keep asking for your help and you've been responding.

Paid subscriptions ($15 or more per household) are appreciated. If you can afford it, help keep your neighbors in touch with our community; larger contributions support our community-building efforts. Join the **Danby 100**!

Business owners, please consider the benefits of helping out with either with text-based or display advertising.

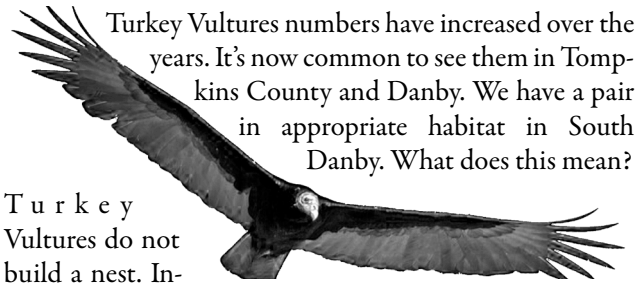
Please make checks payable to *Danby Community Council*, note *Danby News* in the memo, and mail to P.O.Box 6886, Ithaca, NY 14851-6886. (dcc)

Eyes squinting against a fierce glare
often do not see the light that is before them.

Pair In Appropriate Habitat

Pair in Appropriate Habitat is one of the designations used for birds we see.

A pair [of birds] observed in suitable habitat during its breeding season. Confirm through behavioral cues that it is a mated pair. Do not use for a male and a female observed in the same general area. Use only if the birds are interacting in a way that suggests they are paired.



Turkey Vultures numbers have increased over the years. It's now common to see them in Tompkins County and Danby. We have a pair in appropriate habitat in South Danby. What does this mean?

Turkey Vultures do not build a nest. Instead, they use what nature and humans provide—a large hole in a tree, a sheltered spot on the ground, a barn, etc. One bird laid an egg in a tuft of grass next to barn in Spencer; the egg was subsequently run over by a tractor.

The eggs are about the size of a turkey or goose egg. As with owls, hawks, and other birds of the class, male Turkey Vultures are smaller than females. They have a sensitive sense of smell and hunt for dead animals and human trash (trash may smell good, but isn't good for them). They have no vocal cords and can't sing or call like most birds, but they will hiss if threatened. There's lots of info on the Web about them. Keep looking up! (rr)

How Assessments Work

Video From Assessment Department

The Tompkins County Assessment Department recently published a 4-minute video detailing how property assessments work in Tompkins County. Find it on the web at **[tompkinscountyny.gov/assessment]** and on YouTube **[youtube.com/watch?v=-YcZGq_nqD0]**.

The short and simple video describes how the Department tries to fairly evaluate every property in Tompkins County. Property values are summed to a Total Assessed Value of all properties in a given taxing jurisdiction (Town, County, School). Elected Officials create a budget for their jurisdiction which, after adjusting for non-tax income, becomes the Tax Levy. The Levy is divided proportionately among all properties in the jurisdiction.

A one-page PDF file summarizing the video is also available, but its URL is much too complicated to reproduce here. Contact the Department, 607.274.5517.

Reminiscing #21

For this month's *Reminiscing*, I went back to my May 26, 2005 Ithaca Journal column.

I started that column out with a shout out to all college graduates, after watching the fireworks over South Hill celebrating Ithaca College graduation. The fireworks recognized hard work, achievements, and dreams for the future. I hope those dreams came true for all.

We would travel to Philadelphia for our grand-daughter, Maddison ("Maddi") Huddle's graduation from Temple University, and two days later we watched as Maddi was commissioned into the United States Army, to honor her commitment to the ROTC program. After that time has passed, we wouldn't be surprised to see Maddi make the Army her career. If I had to choose a word to describe our pride, it would be *bursting*! I have always felt such patriotism on Memorial Day, and this year will be even more special to us.

In my column from 2005, I wrote that the median age of WW2 veterans (at that time) was 76.7 years old and, while printed facts could be found in history books, who would be left to talk to us about World War experiences first hand, speaking from the heart, to tell us stories that we should all hear?

With that in mind, I was able to contact several Danby area war veterans: Harold Beach (Army), Charles Boykin (Marines), Gerald Dawson, who served in the Navy aboard the USS Arkansas, a destroyer ship that checked in at every port around the world, Frank Raponi (Marines), who served in the Korean War and felt the USA did the job they needed to do and he remembered the buddies he lost, and Bob Doan (Army) who served in Japan.

I visited with Gerry Fredericks, who lived with her husband Bill on Bald Hill Road until his passing in March. Bill was a highly decorated WW2 veteran. I held in my hands both his Silver Medal and Purple Heart. Bill was injured in Normandy and evacuated to England to recuperate. Gerry told me that Bill, when in the back lines, tailored his own dress uniform (including his Eisenhower jacket), as well as those of his buddies. Gerry didn't know Bill even knew how to sew! During the war, Gerry worked for Bell Aircraft in Buffalo, makers of the experimental one-man fighter jets.

My Dad, Bob Gombash, proudly served in the Air Force and Garry's Dad, Harry Huddle, in the Army. I was so grateful to all who shared some of their stories with me. As author Willa Cather noted, "The history of every country begins in the heart of a man or woman."

All during the time I wrote my columns for the Ithaca Journal, the very best part was always the special people I met along the way.

I would like to extend my most sincere condolences to the family of our friend and neighbor, Linda Fetherbay, who passed away after a long and brave fight against that terrible disease, cancer. Linda and Ed put their roots down in Danby, raising their daughters here, and giving back to the community in many ways. They were good folks and they will be missed. (gh)

What Part Of Us Is Taxes?

For many of us in Danby, income tax season is over and done with. We're about halfway from the first installment of Property Tax season to the next (and in the middle of figuring what our properties are worth). Sales Tax season never ends.

A recent study (details: `[self.inc/info/life-of-tax/]`) analyzed how much tax the average person is estimated to pay over a lifetime. The study drilled down to provide estimates by state, including New York.

The average American will pay $524,625 in taxes over a lifetime, about one-third of all estimated lifetime earnings. New Yorkers are the fifth (#5) worst hit, paying $748,199 (you could be living in #1, New Jersey, and pay $987,117_. Or you could brave *real* winters in #40, Alaska, and pay only $400,742.

It's interesting to note that, while New Yorkers get hit with substantial taxes on earnings (income tax), personal spending (sales tax), and property, they're down at #40 when it comes to vehicle taxes: only $20,171 over a lifetime.

Measured by a completely different yardstick, as of 2019, residents of Ithaca, NY, had an average credit score of 734. That score is right up there with the average scores of the highest-rated two states in the country, Minnesota, 733, and Wisconsin, 725. The rest of New York is nothing special at 712. Mississippi comes in last at 667. (tc)

This Issue's Writers

- cp.... Cindy Parlett
- dcc.. Comm. Council
- gh ... Gay Huddle
- pg ... Pamela Goddard
- rr..... Ronda Roaring
- tc .... Ted Crane
- tk .... Theresa Klinger

Community Coffee and Donuts

Danby's Community Church is offering Free Coffee And Donuts on Mondays, once a month, 8-10am, on May 20 (also Jun.17, Jul.15, Aug.19). 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.

Community Library

Paying homage to our local authors, there is an entire display case dedicated to them. DVDs, children's books, Young Adult, biographies, and Adult Fiction can be found here. Come in and see the talented authors in our community for yourself.

Niki Alling
Amy Dickinson
Mary Ellen Gleason
Linda Grace
Sequoya Griffin
Eleanor Henderson
Lamar Herrin
Robert Lieberman
Richie Moran
Gail Mazourek
The Payton Family
Karl Pillemer PhD
GN Price
Bob Proel
Beth Saulnier
Steve Lawrence
Dr. Bill Thomas

(cp)

Plant Exchange

The 32nd annual Danby Plant Exchange will take place on Saturday, May 18, 1-3pm in its usual location, the DVFC Fire Department Pavilion, 1780 Danby Road. The date and time were announced as part of *Privilege Of The Floor* during Town meetings.

No further details are available, but it's likely to be similar to previous instances. You can find historical Danby News items at **[danbyny.org/DanbyNews]**; look for the May 2018, 2020, and 2022 issues.

It's a really great event. You should check it out, either to share your extra plants or to find new ones!

You're not old when your hair is gray
And you're not old when your teeth decay
But you're on your way to that long long sleep
When your mind mind makes appointments
that your body can't keep.

Seniors Update

Join us on Thursday, May 2 at Noon for our monthly dish to share in Danby's Community Church, 1859 Danby Road. Bring your own table service and a utensil to serve your dish. Everyone over age 55 is invited.

This month's entertainment will be the acoustic guitar duo *Friday at Fred's* from Endicott, NY. For several years, they have been making the "senior circuit" in Broome and surrounding counties...to great reviews. You can find more information about them on their Facebook page.

The June meeting will be held on June 6. We are working on a bagpipe player for entertainment. The first trip of the year will be on June 7 to Auburn, NY. We'll see the Broadway show, *Jersey Boys*, at the Rev Theatre. There are still a few seats left. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pat Phelps, **[patriciaphelps2.0@gmail.com]**.

Save the date: The July BBQ will be held on July 11 at the Ithaca Eagles Club, behind Wegmans. More information is coming soon! (tk)

A hundred years ago, everyone had a horse
and only the rich had cars.
Today, everyone has cars
and only the rich have horses.

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May 2024

Danby Community Council
Danby News
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Danby News: Event Calendar

May 1 • Wed
5pm WD Fire Station • **West Danby Water District**
May 2 • Thu
Noon Community Church • **Seniors**
7pm Zoom • **Danby Community Council Mtg**
May 4 • Sat
9:15am Town Hall • **Library Volunteers Meeting**
3pm Community Church
Community Council Presents *Harp Concert*
May 6 • Mon
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
May 9 • Thu
7pm Zoom • **Danby Youth Commission**
May 10 • Fri
11am-6pm DVFC Station • **Doug's Fish Fry**
May 13 • Mon
7pm DVFC Station • **Fire Dep't Meeting**
May 14 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
7pm Zoom • **Conservation Advisory Council**
May 16 • Thu
4pm Community Church • **Danby Food Pantry**
May 18 • Sat
1pm DVFC Pavilion • **Plant Exchange**
May 20 • Mon
8am Community Church • **Coffee and Donuts**
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
May 21 • Tue
7pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Planning Board Meeting**

Meeting	Date	Zoom MtgID	Passcode
Town Board	May 6	882 2697 6101	905098
CAC	May 14	835 4940 5296	879507
Youth Commission	May 9	See Town web site	
Planning Board	May 21	893 3897 1114	956288
Town Board	May 20	847 9505 5187	308958
Zoning Appeals	May 28	Unknown?	None?
To join a meeting by telephone, call 646.876.9923			

Warning: Zoom meeting info and agendas change frequently!

May 28 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
7pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Board of Zoning Appeals**

Jun 1 • Sat
9:15am Town Hall • **Library Volunteers Meeting**
May 3 • Mon
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**
Jun 5 • Wed
5pm WD Fire Station • **West Danby Water District**
Jun 6 • Thu
Noon Community Church • **Seniors**
7pm Zoom • **Danby Community Council Mtg**
Jun 10 • Mon
7pm DVFC Station • **Fire Dep't Meeting**
Jun 11 • Tue
7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • **Fire District Meeting**
7pm Zoom • **Conservation Advisory Council**
Jun 13 • Thu
7pm Zoom • **Danby Youth Commission**
Jun 17 • Mon
8am Community Church • **Coffee and Donuts**
6pm Town Hall+Zoom • **Town Board Meeting**

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