



# DANBY NEWS

## MEET OUR DOTSON PARK!

Save the date, Thursday, July 31! The Directors of Danby Community and Park invite you, your family, and all your neighbors to join them in Dotson Park for a fun and informational gathering to celebrate our new identity.

We'd like you to know who we are, where the Park is (geographically and organizationally), where we've been, and where we're going.

Only a year ago, we were engaged in an involved legal process to merge Danby's Community Council with Danby's Community Park Association. Today, we're still a not-for-profit and we're named Danby Community and Park. July 31 will be your opportunity to ask questions about what this means for preservation of Dotson Park and our community-based programs.

Sound boring? Not. We promise to make it fun, with food, photos, and fun as we share our plans and dreams for the future. Those plans include much more public involvement. We want to hear your thoughts and dreams for the future of the Park and community programming.

Join us, all summer long...and during October's Harvest Festival! (dcap)

## MUSIC IN THE PARK SUMMER SERIES

Mid-May had a weekend of changeable weather. Saturday's concert began with sunny skies and ended in a drenching downpour. Sunday's singing offered mid-50s temperature and mist in the air, but it was dry and cozy under the hypar pavilion.

Danby Community and Park will continue its Music in the Park, one Sunday afternoon a month, on June 22, July 20, August 17, and September 21. The music jam/song swaps will start at 2pm. There are no rain dates; when being under cover doesn't hold water, there's always next month.

Play a tune, sing a song, or just listen. We don't aim to present performances. Music in the Park hits the mark by sharing songs and tunes together in the natural setting of Dotson Park.

There is no fee, but contributions to support the Park will be welcome. Light snacks are provided and you're welcome to bring more. Sing, play, or listen. No registration, just show up with your friends and family, and with your favorite musical style!

## 2025 CANDIDATE FORUM ON JUNE 4!

PART OF DANBY COMMUNITY AND PARK'S MISSION is to present educational and informative material to Danby residents. This year, the tradition continues with its semi-annual Candidate Forum: candidates for the Democratic nomination to run for public office representing the Town of Danby have been invited to answer questions from the public.

The event will take place in Fellowship Hall of Danby's Community Church on Wednesday, June 4, at 7pm. It will be divided into two halves: three candidates for County Legislator will be questioned 7-8pm, and three candidates for Town Councilperson will answer questions 8-9pm.

As always, the League of Women Voters will moderate the event. The LWV will collect written questions from the public. Each segment begins with opening statements and ends with closing statements. In between, a series of questions will be posed with each candidate getting one minute to answer.

The event will also live-stream on YouTube; afterwards, a recording will be available. Links to both the live-stream and the recording will appear on the LWV web site, [lwvtompkins.org].

## Two Elections During June!

June, 2025 offers two opportunities to vote in Danby: the Primary Election on June 24 and a Special Election of Danby's Fire District on June 17.

The Special Election requests voters to authorize the purchase of a \$656,634 Pumper Tanker, including borrowing \$450,000 via the issuance of a bond. By comparison, the District's annual budget is about \$600,000.

Voting for the Special Election will be 6–9pm in the DVFC Fire Station, 1780 Danby Road. See page 2 for a legal description of the Bond Resolution.

A special pull-out section covering the Primary Election is on pages 3-6.

## This Month Inside the Danby News:

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#### June 2025

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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 15<sup>th</sup> 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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#### The Danby 100!

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners, a special election of the qualified voters of the Danby Fire District will be held at the Danby Fire District Firehouse at 1780 Danby Road, Ithaca, New York, 14850, on June 17, 2025 between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. will be held to vote upon the following Bond Resolution:

BOND RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DANBY FIRE DISTRICT, TOWN OF DANBY, TOMPKINS COUNTY, NEW YORK (THE "DIS-TRICT"), AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION AND EQUIPPING OF A PUMPER TANKER FIRE APPARATUS WITH ATTENDANT EQUIPMENT AND APPLIANCES AND SERVICES RELATED THERETO; ESTIMATING THE TOTAL COST THEREOF AT \$656,634; APPROPRIATING SAID AMOUNT THEREFOR; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$450,000 IN SERIAL AND/OR STATUTORY INSTALLMENT BONDS OF THE DISTRICT TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION.

## 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 makes the editing and layout easier.

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

for publication in the Danby News, A terse version of these guidelines is in there's two documents to read: the the left-hand column of this page. (tc)

## **ELECTION '25: DANBY IN TRANSITION**

Danby's political demographics are lopsided: 57 percent of registered voters are Democrats, 21 percent have not indicated any party affiliation, and only 17 percent are registered as Republicans. As a result, most elections are decided during the Democratic Primary; this year it's on June 24, with early voting beginning on June 14.

This imbalance wasn't always the case. In recent memory, it was not uncommon for Democrats to register as Republicans to gain a voice in choosing local officials (party registration is required to vote in Primaries, but party affiliation does not restrict a voter's choice during the November General Election).

There will not be a Republican Primary and, unfortunately for Danby's non-Democratic voters, the deadline to indicate party affiliation passed on February 14. New voters, however, can register for the Primary until June 14.



Format of the Candidate Forum

As is usual when there are competitive races, the League of Women Voters of Tompkins County will moderate the forum. The forum will include candidates for two races:

Tompkins County Legislature (Danby and Caroline):

Tomphins County Legislature (Danoy an	a Carounc).
• Irene Weiser	see page 4
• Kyle Emily Erickson	see page 4
Matt Sullivan	see page 6
Danby Town Council (two 4-year position	ns):
Mark Pruce	see page 5
• James Tyler Stein	see page 5
• Zachary Larkins	see page 6

#### Other Candidates

Several offices have uncontested races. Absent an organized write-in campaign, a candidate needs only needs their own vote to win. That's politics.

Town Supervisor

Town Clerk

Town Highway Superintendent

Town Councilperson (2-year term to fill an empty seat)

#### **About the Candidate Statements**

The competitive candidates were asked to provide statements and a photograph for publication. The statements were limited to 340 words (enough to fill a column, depending on the length of words) and are printed verbatim. The photographs were adjusted in size so that all the faces are about the same size and cropped to the same shape.



#### The Candidate Interview

Danby's government is moving toward changing the face of Danby, with a Wastewater plan that will enable denser housing, a Noise Law to codify relations between neighbors, and other laws. All candidates were asked to address "hot topics" in Danby. Some did, others did not.

- biographical information
- why you came to Danby (or Caroline, for LD13 candidates), and how long ago
- your involvement in your community
- most Danby residents do not attend Town Board meetings or follow Town affairs. How would you improve resident engagement?

#### For Town Council Candidates:

- Preserving rural character is part of Danby's Comprehensive Plan. Anecdotal evidence suggests many residents of Danby are here because of its rural character. The formulation of Danby's new Zoning Law used downtown Dryden, Trumansburg, and the Ithaca Commons as models. Are you in favor of developing Central Danby and the West Danby hamlet along those lines? Does the current effort toward dense development of the hamlet area affect Danby's rural character?
- The effort toward establishing a wastewater system in the Central Danby area has generated considerable skepticism from Danby residents. Many think they'll end up paying for something they don't need, for the benefit of dense housing development for new residents. Are you in favor of continuing along this path?
- In recent years, Danby's Government has tackled—and not always resolved—issues with solutions that many residents did not accept. How will you include members

—continued on page 7 ⊃

## IRENE WEISER—LEGISLATOR

We're living through a time of unprecedented injustice and economic upheaval. Some Danby residents are already experiencing job loss, while federal cuts to food stamps, Medicaid, Headstart, and more could cost Tomp-



kins County up to \$25 million—10% of our budget—and impact 40% of county residents. These cuts may also imperil the County's broadband project that would serve many Danby homes, and federal climate funding is being slashed even as extreme weather threats grow.

Meanwhile, NYSEG's energy costs are soaring, while overcharging and outages continue. And

come January, over half the County Legislators will be new along with new leadership in County departments of Social Services, Whole Health, Finance and Public Works.

In the face of these challenges, our need for experienced local leadership has never been greater. I am the only candidate with proven governing and policy experience, and endorsement by the Working Families Party.

I'm a retired veterinarian, a 34-year Caroline resident, and 4-year Danby property owner. I served nine years on Caroline's Town Board, where I led efforts to ban fracking, expand broadband and community solar, protect aquifers, support youth, seniors, and the food pantry, and provide timely emergency medical services. For the past 15 years, I've led Fossil Free Tompkins, which shut down the coalburning Cayuga power-plant and stopped the Dryden pipeline while securing millions in clean energy funds. I helped draft laws to stop crypto-mining and CO2 fracking and I continue to fight to hold NYSEG and their regulators, the Public Service Commission, accountable.

As your county legislator, I'll work for both progress and accountability—prioritizing fiscal restraint—while maintaining the social safety net and standing up for all whose civil rights are threatened. I'll push for climate resiliency, clean energy, and economic developments that strengthen our rural community. And I'll be available to meet regularly to discuss what's happening.

I'm ready to listen, ready to lead, and ready to get to work. If you believe—like I do—that experience matters, vote for me June 24th. Learn more and/or contact me at [VoteIreneWeiser.com].

## KYLE EMILY ERICKSON—LEGISLATOR

#### Bio

I was born and raised in Tompkins County. We purchased our home in Brooktondale in 2015. We were looking for a forever home, a place where we could build community and feel connected to people and

#### Community

nature.

For the past decade, I have poured my extra time and energy into my role as a teacher, advisor and coach at Ithaca High School. It is a privilege to be part of the lives of young people throughout Danby and Caroline.



#### Engagement

I will prioritize regular and varied communication with constituents. Possible approaches may include regular office hours at the Brookton's Market, Danby Food and Drink, or other local gathering places and submitting monthly update articles to local publications.

#### Internet

The County submitted a grant approximately one year ago to NYS to secure internet for every unserved home in Tompkins County. Though the timeline for reviewing the county's application has been delayed, it seems highly likely that the County will receive the money. I support the existing plan of partnering with Point Broadband, a fiber internet provider, to complete the project.

#### NYSEG

There is an ongoing investigation into NYSEG's billing practices, initiated by Representative Josh Riley in response to constituents' concerns and calls by county legislatures, including Tompkins, which passed a resolution supporting this measure in April. While we wait to learn about the results of this investigation, the NYSEG office at 1387 Dryden Road takes walk-ins for bill-related questions from 9am-3pm.

#### Federal Government

I am proud to be a part of a community that strives to build a safe, healthy and just home for all its residents.

So far, the courts have been helpful in halting federal actions that target progressive communities. We don't know what will come next. In these uncertain times, it is paramount that the legislature remains focused on strengthening local government so that it can continue to be responsive to constituents' needs.

## MARK PRUCE—COUNCILPERSON

I'm a father, partner, web developer by profession, gardener and tinkerer by hobby, and community organizer by passion. I'm 38 years old and moved to Danby ten years ago to live at White Hawk Ecovillage. I love living in



Danby - for its natural beauty, wide-open spaces, and proximity to the culture and community of Ithaca. I work from home for a non-profit dedicated to public service, which ignited my decision to serve our community.

As a volunteer for Loaves & Fishes and No Mas Lagrimas, I've learned how critical community groups, and their partners in local government, are to meeting the

needs of our neighbors and improving our quality of life.

As a leader at White Hawk Ecovillage, I've learned the value, and challenge, of building agreement across perspectives to move towards our short and long term goals.

As a senior manager and web developer at work, I've become a certified project manager and learned to manage complex projects on budget and deadline. I've also modernized our use of data and digital tools - skills I would gladly use on the Town board.

As manager of Tracy Mitrano's campaign for Congress, I met folks from all over the area and learned about their priorities and values, but also their fears and frustrations with our less-than-functional federal government.

While I am asking for your vote, I don't believe that your involvement in our town should end at the ballot. I will work with the board to make it easier for you to stay engaged in town affairs, for example by hosting informal events (with childcare) to give updates and get input from the public. When tough issues arise, like the potential stormwater system or noise conflicts, I'd like to lead the board to proactively get input from all voices and viewpoints to inform any proposed solutions. When people feel that confrontation is the only way to have their opinions heard, there has already been a breakdown of the process - we can do better than that in Danby.

## JAMES TYLER STEIN—COUNCILPERSON

Hello neighbors! I was recently appointed to the town board after former member Paul Hansen retired. A bit about myself: I'm a former public library Reference Assistant and current IT IAM Specialist at Tompkins Commu-

nity Bank. My wife and I relocated from Athens, Ohio to the Ithaca area in 2014 after losing a hard-fought battle to prevent fracking in our community. We chose the Ithaca area after witnessing the tremendous people-powered movement that demanded and won a state-wide fracking ban, based on scientific research as outlined by the NYS Dept of Health. We were briefly engaged with the



anti-fracking movement in Ithaca, from our arrival until the ban was passed in June of 2015.

Around that time, I was inspired by Bernie Sanders' support of policies like Medicare for All, Raising the Minimum Wage, and A Federal Jobs Guarantee which acknowledges the huge amount of work there is to do to surrounding Climate Change, to name a few. To help the campaign, I volunteered to phone bank and made calls on election day to help voters locate their polling stations.

In 2016 we bought a cabin in Danby, added solar panels, and made it our permanent home. We've welcomed three children since then, in no small part because this community made us feel like the future would be safe here.

My interest in local politics is to ensure this promise is kept, for our family and for everyone who does and who will someday call our beautiful rural town home. I love this community and support its vision for an inclusive hamlet surrounded by nature, with clean air, water, and open space for everyone. I believe in democracy, and so while I will of course bring my own knowledge and experience to bear, I will always solicit and seek to prioritize the positions of my neighbors. I will work towards solutions which foster a sense of community belonging and recognize the financial and material concerns of each individual as integral to the community's peace and well-being as a whole.

## MATT SULLIVAN—LEGISLATOR

I grew up in Danby, graduating from Ithaca High School in 2007. My career has been centered around service—first as a combat medic with the New York Army National Guard, and currently as a paramedic with Bangs Ambu-



lance. My leadership experience includes deployment in Iraq and Kuwait, where I was awarded the Army Commendation Medal. I founded Bangs Ambulance Workers United, a CSEA-affiliated union, where I now serve as president.

People engage when they have real decision-making power and when issues are raised that are important to them. As a representative, I see

my job as translating your will and interests into government action. I will hold regular town halls to hear from you, my constituents, and put you in the driver's seat of county government. I will post updates on social media and explore ways the county can better communicate with residents. Danby is not uniquely challenged with resident apathy. Meeting people where they are is the best way to improve engagement.

Internet access is a necessity for many in Danby, and necessary utilities like electricity and internet can't be entrusted solely to for-profit companies. It is also more of a priority for some people than for others. I would support the establishment of a cooperative, community-owned internet service to provide access without increasing the tax burden or shelling out to for-profit internet companies. A similar model can work for electricity. I plan to explore public utility and co-op electricity generation models that are beholden to their customers, not their shareholders.

It's my goal to ensure necessities like internet, electricity, good union jobs, and childcare are accessible to everyone in Danby.

With federal funding increasingly uncertain, strategies like public corporations and co-ops provide for the common good (like internet and childcare) without increasing the tax burden. I will support public corporations and other non-tax revenue streams for the county. We need to make sure that when the federal government threatens the rights of our citizens, we are self-sufficient and able to stand up for them.

## **ZACHARY LARKINS—COUNCILPERSON**

I grew up in Hartville, Ohio, a small rural community an hour south of Cleveland. I've been working in construction for over two decades. My partner has a degree in enology and viticulture and we were looking to move to an

area that was suitable for that field so we moved here in 2023.

I started attending town board meetings when I moved here because I wanted to understand the community better. I also attend most planning board meetings. I volunteered my time on the boardwalk project in Dotson Park and am currently working on seeing a new skatepark/ town park and a cross walk into existence.



Posting notices on facebook of current town activities and talking to people about what's going on in person is the base level of trying to get more people involved in town events.

Danby has a unique opportunity to develop areas to retain residents and an opportunity to provide more housing so more people can enjoy this town. It can start something that is its own thing. Danby doesn't have a school, a 55 plus/assisted living community, or a grocery store/general store. Having the density preserves rural areas. If the town continues on the path of establishing a public wastewater system that will only help with the density and possibility of businesses being mixed in with residential within the hamlets. I support a public sewer system if it is paid for only by the people who use the system. Density can support this. More residents means a larger tax base.

From talking to residents it seems like anytime an issue comes up there is discussion at town board meetings. The loudest voices don't always have the answer that is most beneficial to the whole of the town, but it is important to hear everyone's concerns.

I plan on making space for people to have their voices heard, not just within the time span of a meeting.

#### Danby In Transition, continued from page 3

of the public in the consideration of future sensitive questions?

• In general, how will you promote meaningful input to Town decision-making from Danby residents who do not share your viewpoint?

For County Legislature Candidates:

- Danby has one of the worst Internet coverages in the county. It has been more than 10 years since the Legislature began to address this issue, county-wide. There does not appear to be a useful solution in the near future, and future Federal funding is uncertain. *How do you propose to provide good-quality service to Danby?*
- Many residents feel that NYSEG is providing poor service and is generating inaccurate bills. How do you propose to address this problem?
- The current Federal administration appears to be pushing back against "woke" local governments. For example, sanctuary cities and DEI. How do you propose to future-proof existing and new County policies? How about the many arts and educational organizations in the county? Will this add a crushing burden to county taxpayers?

## SUPPORT THE DANBY NEWS

If you want information beyond official, sanitized announcements in expensive, tax-dollar-funded publications, the *Danby News* is the place to go.

The extensive civics-related coverage in this issue—elections—is not available elsewhere. We need your support to continue providing similar community information.

Help us by covering the cost of your issues! Paid subscriptions (\$15 or more per household) are appreciated. We encourage larger contributions to help support our community-building efforts and to provide issues to those who cannot afford to subscribe.

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

I started jogging today.
I didn't want to...
but the ice cream truck wouldn't stop.

This Issue's Writers

○ cp.....Cindy Parlett

○ dcap .Danby Comm/Park

○ cp.....Ted Crane

## SENIORS UPDATE

Danby's Seniors will meet, as usual, on the first Thursday of the month, June 5 at Noon in Fellowship Hall of Danby's Community Church. Please bring a generous dish-to-share with a serving utensil and your own table service. Beverages are provided. After lunch, the entertainment will be bingo.

There will not be a meeting on July 3; instead, our annual chicken BBQ is on Thursday, July 10 in the American Legion. You must sign up for this BBQ.

## REMINISCING #34

From June 11, 2009

WAYNE MYER'S BEAUTIFUL GARDENS, located at 1071 Michigan Hollow Road, were included in the Open Days Garden Tours on June 13 and July 11.

Clean up days for Jennings Pond were scheduled for June 14 and June 21, and the pond and picnic area opened for the summer of 2009 on June 27.

I wished a Happy Father's Day to my Dad, Bob Gombash (he passed away in 2014), to my husband Garry and to my son Jeff. Are you too big now to crawl up on your dad's lap for a story? Well, then, put your arms around him, or give him a handshake or lovingly tuck him in if you are his caregiver. Do whatever it takes to let him know what he means to you. If he is no longer with you, keep him in your thoughts as you go about the day.

[2025: Father's Day is June 15!]

**३**♠ (gh)

## **COMMUNITY LIBRARY**

GREAT FINDS from the Friends of the Library Sale! John Grisham, Janet Evanovich, James Patterson, Ann Cleeves, Elly Griffiths, Charles Todd, Freida Mc-Fadden, and Deanna Raybourn, to name a few of your favorite authors.

The shelves are being rearranged so more books can fit.

There are talented local authors among us. With Flag Day and the Fourth of July coming up, *Red, White and Blue* by Diane Zimmer will be on display for all to see.

Your Father's Love by Niki Alling, another local author, would be perfect for Father's Day on June 15. 

②♠ (cp)

Gravity is one of most fundamental forces in the universe. If you remove it, you're left with gravy.

Danby Community and Park **Danby News** PO Box 6625 Ithaca, NY 14851-6625 NON-PROF ORG U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO.352 ITHACA, NY 14850

## **DANBY NEWS:** EVENT CALENDAR

June 2 • Mon

6pm ← Town Hall+Zoom • Town Board Meeting June 4 • Wed

5pm WD Fire Station • West Danby Water District

7pm @ Community Church

2025 Candidate Forum (7pm: Leg., 8pm: Town Council)

June 5 • Thu

Noon @ Community Church • Seniors

June 7 • Sat

9:15am Town Hall • Library Volunteers Meeting

7pm A DVFC Station • Fire Dep't Meeting

7pm WDFD Station • WD Fire Dep't Meeting

June 10 • Tue

7pm DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Meeting

7pm 🙀 Zoom • Conservation Advisory Council

June 12 • Thu

2pm Zoom • Regulatory Review

June 16 • Mon

6pm Town Hall+Zoom • Town Board Meeting

June 17 • Tue

6-9pm DVFC Station

Fire District Bond Resolution Vote

7pm ← Town Hall+Zoom • Planning Board Meeting June 19 • Thu

4pm Community Church • Danby Food Pantry

June 22 • Sun

2pm 🛍 Dotson Park Hypar Pavilion

Park Songs Community Sing (and music)

Meeting	Date	Zoom MtgID	Passcode	
Town Board	June 2	882 2697 6101	905098	
CAC	June 10	835 4940 5296	879507	
Youth Commission	June 12	See Town web site		
Planning Board	June 17	893 3897 1114	956288	
Town Board	June 16	847 9505 5187	308958	
Zoning Appeals	June 24	Unknown?	None?	
To join a meeting by telephone, call 646.876.9923				

Warning: Zoom meeting info and agendas change frequently!

June 24 • Tue

6am-9pm A DVFC Station and WDFD Station Primary Election

6:30pm Appeals DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Mtg
7pm Town Hall+Zoom • Board of Zoning Appeals

July 2 • Wed

5pm WD Fire Station • West Danby Water District July 3 • Thu

9:15am 🛍 Town Hall • Library Volunteers Meeting July 7 • Mon

6pm ← Town Hall+Zoom • Town Board Meeting
July 8 • Tue

7pm ← DVFC Station/YouTube • Fire District Meeting
7pm ← Zoom • Conservation Advisory Council
July 14 • Mon

7pm DVFC Station • Fire Dep't Meeting
7pm WDFD Station • WD Fire Dep't Meeting

#### **Ongoing Events**

Seniors Strength Class a via Zoom

Mondays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:30am

Contact [jmchurch@twcny.rr.com] for Zoom link

Danby Community Library A Town Hall

Tuesday, 1–3pm; Thursday & Saturday, 10am–Noon Books can be returned via the outdoor drop box.

Food Scrap Recycling ← Town Hall C←← ← □ □ Saturdays, 9am-Noon

AA Meeting wia 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