



DANBY AREA NEWS

TIGHTEN UP, DANBY!

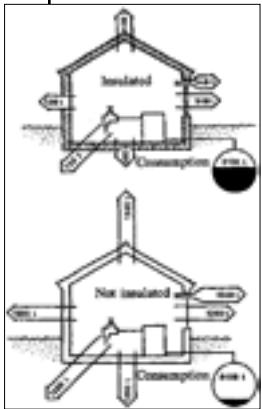
Got Comfort? Winter's here, you know.

Tighten up your home! Come to an event hosted by Danby's Energy Group, Gas Drilling Task Force, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County on Thursday, February 9, 7pm in the Town Hall. Learn how to reduce your energy use and build Danby's energy independence by applying for your low/no-cost home energy assessment!

- Learn how to apply for a low/no-cost home energy assessment by local accredited contractors, worth up to \$500.
- Learn how local energy contractors have reduced home energy use enough to enable switching to clean energy.
- Learn how to take advantage of new

financing to pay for home energy upgrades.

- Information and tips from Cornell Cooperative Extension on choosing local energy efficiency contractors.
- Guidance in completing the 1-page application for a free home energy assessments. ❄



DCC YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS

Submitted by June Pollack, Danby Community Council

The Danby Community Council has scholarships available for Danby youth who wish to attend a program or activity that charges for participation.

The Council can award an amount towards the cost of the activity, generally around 30% of the total cost, which is paid directly to the provider.

For 2012, we have funds for a number of awards. The application is in this issue of the Danby Area News (page 10); additional applications are at the Town Hall or you may contact June Pollack, 607.273.4744 or [dpollack6@twcny.rr.com]. ❄

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS CONTINUE

Submitted by Sharon Gaden and Marrell Cortright

It's Pancake Breakfast season at the fire stations in both uphill and downhill Danby.

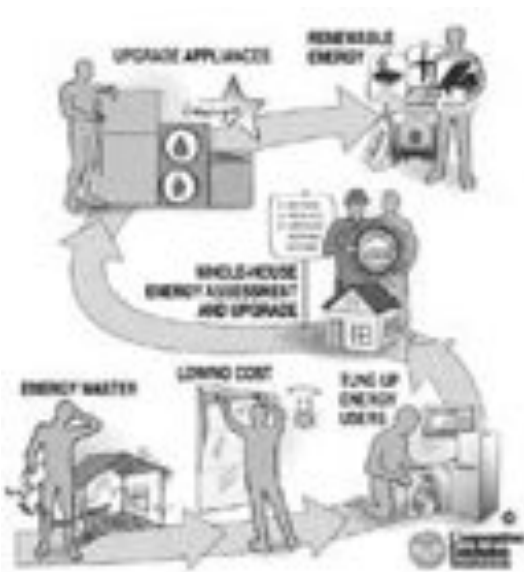
On Saturday, February 11 the West Danby Fire and Rescue will hold its Annual Sweetheart Breakfast in its station, 47 Sylvan Lane, and on February 26, the Danby Volunteer Fire Company presents its second Flap-jack Feast in the Firehouse, 1780 Danby Road.

Why not wake up at your leisure on a weekend and let someone else do the cooking for you? It'll all be served to you while you visit with friends and neighbors. And the events benefit our Fire Companies!

What more could you ask for? ❄

This Month Inside the Danby News:

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February- 2012
Layout: Ted Crane

To contribute:
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Text submissions:
Send text in the body of an
Email message (**not** as an at-
tachment); or mail typewritten
copy, double-spaced on white
paper. Short handwritten
submissions accepted; please
write legibly.

Graphics: JPEG preferred.
TIFF, GIF, or PNG accepted
but discouraged. Check with
editor before sending hard-
copy graphics.

Deadline is the 15th of the
month. Materials may be
accepted later if time allows.
Submissions should gener-
ally not exceed one page. We
cannot print political material
or letters of opinion.

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DANBY NEWS NOTES

Submitted by Ted Crane

Submission Guidelines: Visit the
Town of Danby web page, and have
a look at the "Danby News" section,
[town.danby.ny.us/DAN]. 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*.

The first document describes what is,
and isn't acceptable material for publi-
cation. If it's acceptable, we'll make an
effort to include it; *generally, we print
everything we receive!*

The second document gives some hints
about how to prepare a submission.
Following these guidelines makes the
editing and layout easier.

A very terse version of these guidelines
is presented in the column on the left
side of this page.

**TWO PUBLIC ACCESS
COMPUTERS IN TOWN HALL**

A second computer *for use by the public*
has been installed in Town Hall. You
can cruise the web with it and check
your web-based Email. It has a DVD
drive, so you can use it to view presen-
tations and other DVD media.

If you're new to computers, one-on-
one introduction/how-to is available.
Contact me at 607.273.8678.

Thanks go to Scott Stratton for the
eMac and to Dan Hevett for the iMac.
Also to Larry Chace for the wireless
network, available both inside and
outside Town Hall.

DANBY WEB SITE

Have you visited [town.danby.ny.us]?

Meeting agendas, minutes, and rel-
evant documents. Happenings in
Danby. Everything in a nutshell. ☘

TOWN CLERK'S DESKTOP

Submitted by Pamela Goddard, Town Clerk

The 2012 Annual Town Clerk's Report provides an interesting "snapshot" of activity which takes place in the Danby Town Hall. A substantial amount of money—outside of the January tax collection—passes through the Clerk's window. In 2011, we had total receipts of \$29,065.62; \$20,543.51 went to the Town via the Supervisor's office, while the remaining \$8,522.11 was disbursed to the NYS DEC (for sporting licenses), to the NYS Animal Population Control Fund, and to the NYS Health Department (for marriage licenses).



Thanks in great part to diligent notification of dog owners (one of the benefits of licensing responsibilities shifting to local municipalities in 2011), the number of Dog Licenses issued to or renewed by Danby residents increased from 566 pups in 2010 to 595 tail-waggers in 2011. These licenses yielded fees of \$8,109, with \$7,326 retained by the Town (\$783 went

to the Animal Population Control Fund). The income offsets a portion of the cost of notifications, staff time, and the Tompkins County Animal Control contract. In 2012, we may need to review our fees—which have not changed for several years—to ensure that they are in line with actual costs.

Many people visit the Town Clerk's office to purchase Sporting Licenses, such as those required for fishing and hunting. Even though many more outlets for these licenses have opened in the past decade, Danby's income from *DECALS* (Department of Environmental Conservation Automated License System) has remained steady. During the past eleven years, an average of \$8,863 was collected by Danby for these license sales. 2011 saw a moderate reduction in *DECALS* sales, with \$7,853 collected, compared to \$8,724 in 2010. Only \$428.89 remained in Danby last year. The rest was transmitted to the NYS DEC.

Compared to a clerk's office in Niagara Falls, or even the City of Ithaca, Danby issues a relatively small number of Marriage Licenses every year. It was my joy to issue fourteen marriage licenses during 2011...three more than in 2010. The past decade has seen an average of ten couples receiving a license to marry (the actual marriage may or may not take place). Marriage records

are the most private information stored in Town Hall. While most details can not be shared in a casual way, I can note that the 2011 licenses included both "traditional" and same-sex couples.

The figures for Building Permits, Planning Fees, and hearings before Danby's Board of Zoning Appeals give an outline of the trend of development within Danby. In this respect, 2011 was within the average for the past decade. Fifty eight permits—including eight solar panel installations—were issued, with an income to the Town of \$11,142.12. The number of building permits issued—new construction, renovations, and other upgrades—implies that construction in Danby has been at a moderate pace in recent years.

In the meantime, we are still collecting taxes. Through the end of February, the Town Clerk's office will be open 10am-5pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 10am-1pm on Saturdays (except 2/19, the Saturday of President's Day weekend). And yes, you can take the edge off the pain of paying taxes by dipping into the full the bowl of chocolate.

In the March "Town Clerk's Desk" column, look for news on our records management program.

Questions? Call 607.277.4788 or send Email to [townclerk@town.danby.ny.us].

TOWN HOURS

TOWN CLERK

Phone: 277.4788 • Fax: 277.0559
Mon-Tue-Wed-Fri, 10am-5pm; Sat, 10am-1pm.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

93 Hornbrook Road • Phone: 272.9169
Mon-Fri, 6am-2:30pm

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICE

Phone: 277.0799 • Fax: 277.0559
Wed-Fri, 10am-5pm or by appointment

TOWN COURT:

Phone: 277.0095 • Fax: 277.0031
Tue, 7pm

All offices at Danby Town Hall except where noted.

ICE DAMS: A MAJOR PROBLEM

(from a press release by Carole Fisher, Coop Extension)

Drive through almost any residential neighborhood this winter and you cannot help but notice the number of houses with massive icicles hanging from roof edges. While this may create a beautiful, wintry scene, ice buildup on roof edges can create some very ugly problems for homeowners.

Ice dams often lead to snow melt water leaking into a house and cause extensive damage. This winter's weather has set up perfect conditions for the formation of ice dams. When moderate to heavy snow is combined with several days with daytime temperatures between 15 and 29 degrees, conditions are ideal for creating ice buildup on house roof edges.

Ice dams occur when heat and warm air escape from the living areas of a home into unheated spaces near the roof. The escaping heat and warm air build up and increase the temperature enough so that the snow on the roof begins to melt. The melt water flows down the roof until it comes to the overhang at the roof edge. Since there is no escaping heat under the overhang, the melt water freezes and creates a thick layer of ice. This layer of ice becomes a dam, behind which a puddle of water from newly melted snow forms. Eventually this water works its way under roof shingles and into the house.

What should you do if your house is showing signs of excessive ice buildup on roof edges? Two issues that need to be addressed.

- 1) In the short term, the roof may need to be cleared of snow and the buildup of ice may need to be removed from the roof edge to prevent snow-melt water from backing up into the interior of the house. Many roofing contractors provide this service. Working on a snow and ice covered roof is very risky, so homeowners should be certain the firm they hire is experienced in doing this type of work and is fully insured.
- 2) At some point, the underlying causes of the problem need to be addressed. While this does not need to be done immediately, the homeowner may want to identify the problems and fix them before the next winter season. This will usually require the services of a home improvement contractor who understands basic building science and its application to problems such as excessive ice buildup.

WEST DANBY COMMUNITY STOCKS PANTRY SHELVES

Submitted by Peter Fraissinet

The West Danby Community Association began its 19th year on January 14 with a fundraiser that collected several hundred dollars for the Danby Food Pantry.

It was the third such annual fundraiser. The menu, conceived by Chef Michael Short, was not the usual benefit supper fare. Instead, it featured salmon sausage subs with a special sauce and a polenta dish that earned raves from the vegetarian attendees. Irish music, provided by the Grady Girls, added the atmosphere that makes a special evening.

Lots of hands pitched in on this, and our sincere thanks to all who made it happen and cleaned up afterward. A special thanks to Michael Short, to the Grady Girls and Seph Murtaugh for the fantastic kitchen music, to the many dessertistes who make our dessert table so famous, and to the Ithaca Bakery, Tops, and Wegman's for keeping our overhead low with donations for this event. And, to all who came out on a cold January night: you make a difference.

Those folks interested in making donations to the Danby Food Pantry can talk to Joan Barber who heads it up: 607.273.7850. She is likewise looking for a few good volunteers to help in the food distribution process.

Meanwhile, the West Danby Community Association looks forward to a good new year with several events planned to benefit the community (more on these, later!). Our next meeting (and we keep 'em short) is Tuesday February 7, 7pm, at 6 Station Road in West Danby. Interested in coming? Give Peter a call in the evening, 607.564.0030, or simply show up. We meet six times a year, and you determine your own level of participation. ❁

Cornell offers a online fact sheet, Causes and Cures of Attic Condensation and Roof Ice Damming Problems; the URL is awful to type, but it can easily be found by googling "causes cures attic ice".

A list of Building Performance Institute accredited contractors can be found online at [getenergysmart.org] (click on the "contractors" link near the top). ❁

SUPERVISOR'S UPDATE

Submitted by Ric Dietrich, Town Supervisor

It's a new year, and the Town is busily putting together a work plan for the coming year and beyond. We are trying to engage in this process a little differently than we have in the past: our target is a work plan with goals beyond the next twelve months.

What do we want to accomplish this year, how can we build on these efforts to get where we want to be in five years, and how are we going to get there? We hope to build on a model, like the Gas Drilling Task Force or the Broadband Committee, that has worked well for the Town.

The now-forming Energy Task Force is another good example. Groups like these rely heavily on volunteers to scope out projects, understand short and long term goals, and write proposals to present to the Town Board for approval.

Our Town Clerk framed this question in an Email to our committees:

The efforts of communities such as Danby to alter how they function and how their needs are met in such areas as the use of energy in food production, transportation, home heating, will help determine community sustainability and quality of life in the future. Sustainability, a very broad topic, can include many community efforts in a wide range of areas, such as environmental protection and stewardship, economic vitality, and community well-being; and involves making decisions that will benefit future generations while addressing today's needs.

We would like to task you to look at your work in 2012 with the themes of sustainability, energy conservation, and climate protection in mind. Your help is needed in renewing and updating the Town's Vision, as well as working on specific objectives and strategies.

This will be a challenging effort. We will need to involve many different types of people. In addition to the scoping out goals, we will need writers, editors, researchers, public forums, education, and outreach efforts.

The Energy Task Force has had its first meeting. It was reassuring to see so many new faces and talents show up. Our bio-mass boiler is going to be online soon and its primary fuel will be wood chips. This effort to use sustainable and local resources to offset our fuel oil and gas fired boilers serves as an example of efforts the Town is putting forward. But it is only the first step.

What should our next generation fuels look like? Chips can be produced locally, but are there other ways that

we can bring fuel production (gas drilling aside, of course) closer to home?

Although efforts by Danby's Land Bank Coop could make ours a truly unique energy system, we are still some ways off from producing alternative fuels from local endeavors.

A useful project might be to inventory the alternative energy sources already used by our residents. How many wood stoves are in use, how much solar, wind, geothermal, and passive energy (sun rooms) systems have been installed? This inventory would be a resource for others to tap into, to ask questions about, and to get advice from.

Installing "new" forms of alternative energy is only the tip of the iceberg. Much effort needs to be aimed at informing residents about improving the energy efficiency of their homes—energy audits and general "tightening up"—to save on fuel costs, and about the resources that can help offset the initial cost of any needed work.

During the initial Energy Task Force meeting, someone commented that its goal should be to make Danby a showcase for ways communities can become less dependent on fossil fuels. Caroline has adopted a similar goal, and other municipalities are updating their Comprehensive Plans to encourage these efforts.

These are all laudable goals, but can only succeed with your help. Thank you one and all for your enthusiasm in getting us here, and we hope to see more of you in the future, working together to make this happen.

As always, if there is an issue the Town should address, please contact me, [supervisor@town.danby.ny.us]. ☘

DANBY SENIORS UPDATE

Submitted by Margie VanDeMark

The next meeting of the Danby Seniors will be Thursday, February 2, at Noon in the Danby Federated Church. All seniors 55 and over are welcome to join us for fellowship and a dish to share meal.

John & Margie VanDeMark and Ted & Connie Meritt hosted the January meeting and Ted did his usual raffles.

Officers from last year have agreed to continue for 2012: Ted & Connie as President/Vice President; Margie as Secretary; and Dan Clements as Treasurer. We collect \$5 per person a year for dues, the exception being those 80 and over who reach "lifetime" member status. ☘

ON THE VIRTUES OF MODERN FIRE ENGINES

Submitted by Christel Trutmann

Our current fire trucks were built as long as forty years ago--Danby's in 1975 and 1988 and West Danby's in 1990 and 1999--when fires were frequent, manpower was high, and almost everybody could drive standard.

They were built to be indestructible and to carry huge amounts of water. Danby's engine and tanker have non-synchro-mesh manual transmissions, meaning that the driver has to match the gear speed to the wheel speed in order to shift. Let me tell you, this takes some learning for anyone without a commercial driving history! A manual fire truck manufactured today wouldn't comply with the industry standard.



Right now, there are only about half a dozen people who can drive our engine or tanker. At Danby's last fire, one person drove both trucks to the scene, jogging back to the station to fetch the next truck.

Everything about modern fire trucks is firefighter friendly. They are automatic transmission, driveable, and optioned with features to prevent injury to the driver and damage to the truck. Equipment is within easy reach. The Jaws of Life are preconnected to a power source, ready to be pulled off the truck and put to work opening a crumpled car. The master stream (a high capacity water jet) is mounted and preplumbed on top of the truck, operable by one person. The higher capacity pump can draft more powerfully and push more gallons per minute, and it's programmed with fail-safes to protect the firefighters manning the hoses.

In short, tasks that would take multiple firefighters several minutes to accomplish with our old trucks could be achieved with less energy, less risk of injury, and faster by a single firefighter. A new fire truck would have additional qualified drivers. It would beat our old trucks up Danby's formidable hills and arrive faster on scene. Its equipment could be deployed quickly by two or three firefighters, who could even have energy left over to fight the fire or tear apart a wrecked car.

And, oh, it would be red. ❀

DANBY FIRE DISTRICT NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETINGS

Submitted by Deanna Bowles, Sec'y Treasurer, Danby Fire District

Please take notice that the Danby Fire District of the Town of Danby, Tompkins County, New York, will hold its regular meetings on the 2nd and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 P.M. Meetings in February, April, June, August, October, and December (even months) will be held at the West Danby Fire Station, 47 Sylvan Lane, Town of Danby. Meetings in March, May, July, September, and November (odd months) will be held at the Danby Fire Station, 1780 Danby Road, Town of Danby. All meetings of the Danby Fire District are open to the public. This notice is being given in accordance with the provisions of Section 104 of the Public Officers Law of the State of New York.

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

AMERICAN LEGION UPDATE

Submitted by Marvin Eastman

Things have been going at a nice pace as we head into February, here at the Ithaca American Legion.

We will be having our steak dinner (\$10) on February 4, 5:30-7pm, followed by the Chicken BBQ (\$8) on February 12, Noon-'til and our Fish Fry (\$10) on February 17, 5:30-7pm. Look for our Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner on March 17!

The Steak Dinner includes a mouth watering Steak cooked to order; choice of Baked Potato, Onion Rings, or French Fries; Salad Bar; Veggie of the day (Green Beans); Dessert and Coffee/Tea. Try to arrive early as we have been selling out by 6:30pm.

The Chicken BBQ includes 1/2 Chicken; a dinner roll; and a choice of two from Baked Beans, Salt Potatoes, or Macaroni Salad.

When it comes time to Fry Fish, you get Baked or Fried Fish; Salad Bar; Dinner roll; choice of Baked Potato, Onion Rings, or French Fries; Dessert, Coffee, Tea.

All of our events have been well attended in the past and we appreciate your patronage and patience. Please try to get here early as we do sell out for several of the dinners. Again, thank you for your patronage.

If you are looking for that special place for an event give us a call, 607.272.1129 and see if we can help. ❀

LIFE IN DANBY

This month's observations from Danbyites

Submitted by Julie Nichols Kulik

Here are some observations and stories from the beautiful place we call home. I would love to hear about what you have seen and heard out there! I do not publish locations in the article, to protect the innocent, but am recording locations in a Danby sightings database. Here is what I have heard from folks in the last two months.

Mammals: Bear and coyote scat, “Tons of red squirrels this year (and a healthy nut growth on our trees)” “Many coyotes. And I had a long eye-to-eye gaze with a mink out by the pond.”

Birds: Lots of woodpeckers (downy, hairy, red-headed, pileated). “Many huge flocks of geese go right over our house flying in very perfect V formations. Oh, and about a month ago a lone goose was swimming in our pond. It’s very rare to see just one. In a few days, it had dropped dead. Brian fished it out of the water. We think it might have been shot, as there was a little blood underneath.”

“We’ve had a Northern Shrike hanging out in the field near our house. We saw it yesterday and followed it for a while without very good looks. But today it appeared close to the road on a hay bale for a while while we sat in the car staring it awe. Such a gorgeous bird!”



The McElwees of Comfort Rd. on the trail at Jennings Pond 07-Jan-2012. Photo by Ronda Roaring

“While walking (or rather, struggling through the mud) on the trails out back in the early evening a pheasant flew out of the brush along the trail. I was thrilled that he was still going and I hope he makes it through the winter.”

“Lots of snow geese going over—very large flocks Christmas day, New Year’s day, a couple days ago.”

Amphibian: Spotted salamander in a base-



DANBY RENEWABLE ENERGY GROUP

Submitted by Eric Banford

A new group has been formed to research and advise the Town about effective long-term strategies for sustainable/renewable energy sources for Town buildings and for its residents.

Our first meeting in January saw seventeen people discussing lots of options for projects. We are researching bulk purchase of solar panels to get the price down, and to work with a solar installer to get some on-the-job training for Danby residents.

Together with the Gas Drilling Task Force and Cooperative Extension, we’re organizing the *Tighten Up Danby* event on February 9 in Town Hall. It’ll demonstrate energy efficiency options and help connect residents with contractors and loan options. Low-interest, on-bill financing is beginning to become available in New York.

With the Danby Land Bank Coop, we will help organize a demonstration of a portable pelletizer in April.

There have been eight solar, and a number of geothermal, installations during the past year in Danby. We talked about having a tour, so residents to see what’s going on, and learn how to pursue these options. We talked about getting wind legislation in place, to support large and small turbines. We hope to have many hands-on workshops this year.

We touched on many other things, so you can see that ideas abound. This group has a lot of energy! Our next meeting will be in late February, but we haven’t set place or time, so contact me, 607.277.0183 or [\[brew_bird@yahoo.com\]](mailto:brew_bird@yahoo.com), if you would like to join us or receive future mailings. ❁



SLEDDING THROUGH LIFE

Submitted by Jim Reagan

Angela had not spent the winter in Danby since 2004. She preferred her little “double-wide” in the gated community in Zephyrhills, Florida. Now January, Angela was still at the family home on the Comfort Road, and she was not happy.

After more than a half a century living in Danby, she had grown weary of the ice and snow; it really was too hard on her joints; besides, it was too difficult to get out and do things when the weather was so cold and the roads so slippery.

“Stupid cancer,” she muttered, sipping her coffee in the kitchen on a particularly wintry morning. “I’d have been in Florida by now...had my heart set on that bridge club we started last season...the sun never shines here in the winter.”

It was in June, shortly after her return from Florida, when she had noticed the lump. Her daughter would insist that she get it looked at; she was that way.

Angela sort of wished that they had left well enough alone because she hated the inconvenience of the doctors’ appointments and the chemo. It didn’t help when her daughter constantly reminded her that she was lucky to get one of the best oncologists in the Northeast.

It was the closeness with her pals that she enjoyed in Zephyrhills and all the planned activities that Angela really missed. Her closest friends in Danby were either living somewhere else or dead. There was nothing for her to do but wait for the next appointment and endure the ice and snow. “Rotten cancer,” she hissed over her morning coffee, “I hate it...hate the dark and the cold.”

Something changed in Angela one day when she was looking through some old photo albums. There she was, just a kid, with her brothers and sisters smiling like crazy during what looked to be a blizzard; all bundled up in those funny looking coats and hats that she still remembered.

They had been sledding; even in the old black and white, grainy photos of the era, it was clear that they were all having the time of their lives. Her brother, Tim, as usual, was licking back the inevitable river of snot streaming from his nose, a disgusting act that always made them laugh in delighted horror.

Angela remembered that day! She recalled that school had been cancelled. They had gone sledding and had to shed their wet clothes when they came into the house.

Funny that she never remembered being cold or uncomfortable, but she did remember the chaotic pile of

AT THE DFC...

All of these events are happening at the Danby Federated Church, 1859 Danby Road. For more info, 607.272.1687 or [office@danbyfederatedchurch.org].

Chicken and Biscuit Dinner

Friday, February 10, 2012, 5-7pm. Chicken and Biscuit, Squash, Green Beans, Corn, Harvard Beets, Apple Sauce, Pies and Assorted Desserts, Beverage. Adult: \$8; Children: \$4.

Inviting all Seniors and non-seniors!

Monday, February 20, Noon, come for lunch and stay for board games, fellowship and fun with friends. Soup, bread, dessert and beverage are provided. ❁

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

The photo of Ric Dietrich and Gay Huddle in the January issue of the Danby News was incorrectly credited: it was taken by Penny Dietrich, not Garry Huddle. In addition, Gay noted the absence of Southview Tree Farm’s owner, Hemmo Huttinen, who was under the weather that afternoon. ❁

boots, coats, snow-pants, hats and mittens piled in the backroom. They had drunk hot cocoa and played some games. Had it been so very long ago? Right at this particular moment it didn’t seem so.

On the way to Syracuse to see the doctor, Angela smiled, thinking of the fun that she used to have in the snow. She laughed thinking of Tim enjoying his green slime. She thrilled remembering the feeling of flying down the hill on her very own sled; wishing the ride would never end.

Angela realized that Danby was her home; Florida was just a place to escape to. She wondered if she had forgotten something of her roots; her heritage, even though every important event in her life had occurred here.

Angela’s reverie was interrupted when her daughter asked her why she was smiling. She responded that she was sledding down her favorite hill; that brother Mike was throwing snowballs, and that Sam, the black dog, was running along besides her barking...all the while the sun was setting behind the hills in a golden blaze.

It was at that very moment that Angela realized that she would never be afraid of doctors or of cancer treatments again. ❁

CUE CARDS FOR THE PUBLIC?

Submitted by Ted Crane

I had a dream the other night. It was one of those “test anxiety” epics. Here’s the plot: there’s a book report assignment with a twist. The teacher has a specific book in mind, but hasn’t given out its title or the name of the author. Or, maybe, it was given and forgotten?

Arriving in class, *sans* book report, you find a few student leaders sitting up front around a table, discussing the book. Strangely, though, it seems as though some of them have the same predicament: they don’t sound like they read the book, either. Or, maybe, they read a different book?

Some local government meetings can be a little like a test anxiety dream. Let’s face it: some of the folks up front might have had a fire in the belly to sit up front but didn’t sign up to do a lot of homework. It’s up to the rest of those present to read the books, recognize the issues, and ask the right questions.

A citizen’s task isn’t made any easier when what’s being discussed—the text of any potential laws, regulations, or resolutions—isn’t available to the public. How do you know whether to support or to question a policy, if the details of the policy aren’t available to you? One way this happens is when a participant personally prepares a document and distributes copies at a meeting—often enough, giving copies only to “important” participants.

Just remember the dream: they’re taking the test, but the grade goes on your report card. You have to live with the results. You are a participant, too.

During the summer of 2011, the New York Senate and Assembly passed legislation intended to increase public access to documents being discussed by a public body. Six months later, the bill reached the Governor’s desk; it was signed on January 3 and goes into effect in early February. Unfortunately, perhaps to avoid undue pressure on smaller governmental bodies, its language is somewhat vague.

“[Documents]...scheduled to be the subject of discussion by a public body...shall be made available, upon request...to the extent practicable as determined by the agency...”

This requirement can be satisfied by having paper copies available—a fee can be charged!—to the public. If the agency (read: Town, County, Authority, etc.) maintains web site, the documents should be posted as soon as practicable, prior to the meeting. But, all the details are left open.

The Town of Danby, whose leaders were elected on a platform that included both transparency and inclusiveness, is typical of other small governments: it runs hot and cold. The generalities of some resolutions

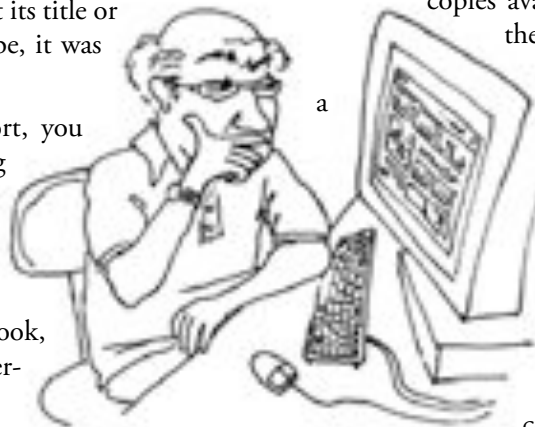
are discussed at length and special public meetings are sometimes called to answer questions, while other resolutions are voted on with little or no public discussion, and some documents are presented for approval with no advance notice at all.

Tip O’Neill, Speaker of the U.S. House back in the good ol’ days, coined the phrase, “All politics is local.” Many believe that Washington is a bottomless pit and that Albany is broken, but the closest level of your government—the Towns—is easily accessible. One evening of your time, once a month, is all it takes to participate and to show your leaders that you care.

Beginning in February, the law suggests that you will be able to, “read all about it.” If your local legislators provide documents in a timely fashion and your local administration follows up by placing them on the web, you

should be able to do your homework at home.

The meeting room in Danby’s Town Hall is equipped with a wireless network. The public can access online documents directly via laptop, or it can read them on one of the several public access computers in the room...but only if the documents are made available by legislators and administrators. It’ll take considerable action on their part to allow the public to do its part of participating in the process. ♣



**Beginning in February...
all documents being
discussed by a public
body...shall be made
available...to the public,
in print and online.**

DANBY COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Submitted by Patti Meyers

True Grit, the DVD that is, has returned to the Danby Community Library shelves! We are still missing other DVDs...although, in some cases, we have the cases. Just in case, do you have a stray DVD that you need to return? *The Notebook* or *Pursuit of Happiness*, perhaps?

Returning them would show true grit and firmness of character.

In keeping with this theme, when you visit us please make sure we have your Email address on your registration card. It makes communication a lot easier. Better yet, make sure that you have an up-to-date registration card for the Danby Community Library!

Remember, it's nice and warm inside the Library!

New DVD

New AudioBooks

New Books

The Smurfs
Garrison Keillor: Stories
Jodi Picoult: Short Stories
Dean Koontz: A Big Little Life
Great American Stories
The Tiger's Wife
The Night Strangers
Love in a Nutshell
The Cat's Table
Nightwoods
The Marriage Plot
The Night Circus

Look forward to some upcoming Library events:

- Tax Help—call 607.273.1511 for an appointment
- Annual BookSale and Open House (4/28)
- Volunteer meeting and workbee, First Wednesday of every month

ADOPTIVE/FOSTER PARENTING MEETING NOTICE

Do you want to make a difference in the life of a child? And are you:

- Over the age of 21?
- Able to develop a meaningful relationship with children?
- Have extra room in your home and heart?

If you answered, "Yes," to the questions above, please consider attending an informational meeting to learn what the next step is to becoming a certified foster, adoptive or respite parent. The next meeting for those interested in caring for children and teens in their homes will be held on Thursday, February 9, at Noon in the Human Services Building, 320 West Martin Luther King Jr. Street in Ithaca. If you are unable to attend this meeting or want further information, please call Judy Voorheis at 607.274.5266.

Danby Community Council Scholarship Application

The Danby Community Council provides scholarships to youth who are Danby residents and need financial support to attend special camps/programs (sports, computer, art, dance, music, etc.). Funds are limited, so please apply quickly.

Youth's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ Email _____

Name of camp/program _____ Program Dates: _____

Address of camp/program _____

Camp/Program Contact Info: _____ Total Cost: _____

Is the youth currently eligible for a free or reduced cost lunch program? _____

I verify that the information provided on this application is accurate.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Please send the application, with proof of enrollment in program and (if applicable) payment of deposit, to:

Danby Community Council
c/o June Pollack
43 Hornbrook Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

Questions? Call 273.4744 or
Email [dpollack6@twcny.rr.com]

Community Council Youth Programs February 2012

Happy New Year! The Danby Children and I have been having fun outdoors, during this mild Autumn. Lots of Primitive Pursuits adventures, Fun on the Farm, and finishing up the year with Holiday Crafts in the Town Hall.

These programs are funded by the Danby Community Council, and are free to Danby residents. Registration is required.

Program flyers and permission slips are in the Danby Town Hall, or can be found at [ccetompkins.org/4h/rural-youth-services/danby] Questions? Please contact: Julie Kulik, 607.272.2292.x222 or [jnk54@cornell.edu].

Lunch Bunch

(grades 6-8)
Wednesdays, Jan 18-Feb 29.
Boynton Middle School

In school program, during lunch time. Take a break from the cafeteria! Eat exciting snacks, play games and get to know people you usually don't sit near in the noisy lunch room.

Boynton Magic

(grades 6-8)
Wednesdays, Jan 18-Feb 29, 3:30-5pm
Boynton Middle School

We'll play the strategy trading card game called Magic: The Gathering, that is always changing! We will design and make our own cards and game pieces. Over the course of the game we will take turns playing cards such as creatures, sorceries, and other spells. This program is designed for beginners to the game. We will learn it together!



Lunch Bunch

(grades 4-5)
Fridays, Jan 20-Mar 30
South Hill School

In-school program at South Hill during lunch. Come have lunch with other youth from Danby in your grade, play games, do crafts and go outside on nice days. We will also help with the South Hill Valentine's Day food drive.

Fun Fridays

(grades 3-8)
Fridays, Jan 20-Mar 30, 2:30-5pm
Danby Town Hall

Bus available from South Hill Elementary and Boynton Middle schools.

Come join us at the Town Hall for Crafts, Stories/Plays, Games and guests from the community to share all of these things with us! We will go on a few field trips on snow shoes and in the Cooperative Extension van, locations to be selected by the participants (possibilities are SPCA, GeoCache hunting, Science Center).

Coming Attractions in April: Primitive Pursuits, and Fridays at the Youth Farm on Nelson Road. ❁



Postal Patron

DANBY AREA NEWS: EVENT CALENDAR

- Feb 1 • Wed
6:30pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Library Volunteers Meeting**
- Feb 2 • Thu
Noon 🏠 Danby Federated Church • **Seniors Luncheon**
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Community Council Meeting**
- Feb 4 • Sat
5:30-7pm 🏠 American Legion Post 221 • **Steak Dinner**
- Feb 7 • Tue
7pm 🏠 6 Station Road • **W.Danby Comm. Assoc. Mtg**
- Feb 8 • Wed
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Gas Drilling Task Force Meeting**
- Feb 9 • Thu
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **TIGHTEN UP DANBY**
- Feb 10 • Fri
5-7pm 🏠 Danby Federated Church • **Chicken & Biscuit**
- Feb 11 • Sat
8-11am 🏠 West Danby Fire Hall
Annual Sweethearts Breakfast
- Feb 12 • Sun
Noon 🏠 American Legion Post 221 • **Chicken BBQ**
3-5pm 🏠 1792 Danby Road • **Handspinners Meeting**
- Feb 13 • Mon
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Town Board Meeting**
7:30pm 🏠 Danby Fire Hall • **Fire Department Meeting**
- Feb 14 • Tue
7pm 🏠 West Danby Fire Hall • **Fire District Meeting**
- Feb 16 • Thu
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Community Park Meeting**
- Feb 17 • Fri
5:30-7pm 🏠 American Legion Post 221 • **Fish Dinner**
- Feb 20 • Mon
Noon 🏠 Danby Federated Church
Lunch and Board Games
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Town Board Meeting**
- Feb 21 • Tue
7pm 🏠 West Danby Fire Hall • **Fire District Meeting**

- Feb 22 • Wed
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Gas Drilling Task Force Meeting**
- Feb 23 • Thu
7pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Planning Board Meeting**
- Feb 26 • Sun
8-11am 🏠 Danby Fire Hall • **Pancake Breakfast**
- Feb 27 • Mon
1-2pm 🏠 Danby Federated Church • **Mobile Food Truck**
7:30pm 🏠 Town Hall • **Conservation Adv Council Mtg**
- Jul 14, 2012 • Sat • **Danby Fun Day and Parade**

ONGOING EVENTS

- Danby Community Library Open** 🏠 Town Hall
Saturdays, 10am–Noon, Wednesdays, 1:30–3:30pm,
and when the **Open** sign is out!
- West Danby Volunteer Fire Company** 🏠 WD Fire Hall
2nd Monday, 7pm.
- Military Family Support Group** 🏠 Federated Church
2nd Thursday, 6:30pm.
- Danby Fire Commissioners** 🏠 Fire Hall or WD Fire Hall
3rd Tuesday, 7:30pm.
- Seniors Strength Training Group** 🏠 Federated Church
Mondays, 9am.
- AA Meeting** 🏠 Federated Church
Wednesdays, 7pm.
- Danby Quilters Group** ☎ 273.2950
Fridays, 9–11am.

WHERE THINGS HAPPEN

- 🏠 **Danby Town Hall** • 1830 Danby Road
🏠 **Danby Fire Hall** • 1780 Danby Road
🏠 **West Danby Fire Hall** • Sylvan Lane, off Rt.34/96
🏠 **Danby Federated Church** • 1859 Danby Road
🏠 **American Legion Post 221** • 1231 Danby Road