



VARNA NEWS

Mother's Day Breakfast

Unless there is a new spike in cases, we are planning to hold a Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, May 8th, at the Varna Community Center, 943 Dryden Road. We will offer our usual menu of pancakes, waffles, french toast, bacon, sausage, ham, fruit, scrambled eggs, coffee, hot chocolate, orange juice and more options— from 8am to 11am. \$9 adults, \$8 seniors, \$8.50 for kids 5-12. Kids under 5 eat free!

The VCA can't require masks but still strongly recommends wearing them. Wearing a mask while you aren't eating will significantly reduce risk for you and for everyone else at the breakfast.

We will have the new ventilation system running at full speed, and we will also offer takeout. Thank you to a generous donor for providing recyclable take-out containers, and you can also bring your own (normal-sized) containers for takeout if you prefer.

Dryden Road Upgrades Coming

Work on the Dryden Rd. project became evident last month when workers arrived to do tree trimming and removal. While some residents were alarmed to see mature trees cut down, the task was necessary to create space for a sidewalk that will be installed on the south side of the road from the Forest Home Dr. intersection to the Mt. Pleasant Rd. intersection.



Along with trees, the VCA's roadside sign also needed to be removed. VCA board member Michal Kulagowski volunteered to do that job, and he made short work of it! He found the railroad ties at the base of the sign were falling apart, but the sign itself is in good shape and will be saved. The VCA board will decide where to put

Varna Summer Program

The VCA is delighted to offer a new 8-week summer childcare program 8am to 5:45pm, July 5 to August 26.

Jacqueline Bouchard and Celia Brown, our popular Varna After School Program teachers, will be leading the program as Director and Program Coordinator.

The program will be mostly outdoors at the Varna Community Center (943 Dryden Road) where there are

wooded areas, an excellent playground, and a lawn for sports like kickball and soccer. The program will have themed weeks, such as 'Pirates & Mermaids,' 'Enchanted Forest,' and arts and crafts.



Registration is open to children ages 5-12. For more information, visit www.VarnaCommunityAssociation.org or contact Director Jacqueline Bouchard via email: VarnaSummerProgram@gmail.com or phone: (607) 227-8292.

In addition to campers, the Varna Summer Program is recruiting high school or college age sports coordinators, age 16 and older as well as volunteers to help with games, lunch preparation, and more. We want the Varna Summer Program to be a big success. Please spread the word!



VCA wireless

Password: pancake1



it once the dust settles from the road work. Let us know if you have suggestions.

Crews will arrive soon to move several telephone poles further away from the road to make room for the sidewalk. Then, in the coming months, the big job of grinding off the existing pavement and laying new asphalt will happen. Despite urging from citizens concerned with traffic speed, DOT plans show the traffic lanes will remain 11 feet wide rather than be narrowed to 10 feet. DOT plans also indicate there will be no separate bike lane.

Unfortunately, the replacement of water mains and relining of old sewer lines is on hold. This is due to the unavailability of pipe. The Town is also waiting to hear whether its grant applications for funding the new pipe have been approved. Major kudos go to Town Board member Jim Skaley for the countless hours he has spent working with the Town's hired engineering consultant for the sewer and water line upgrades. (The consultant was so impressed with Jim's detailed understanding of the project, that he offered to hire him. Fortunately for Varna, Jim said "No thanks.")

New Flooring

The old green flooring in the Community Center's entry area and big meeting room is gone! After years of researching options for replacement materials and funding, the VCA board came up with a plan. Flooring could be paid for with a portion of the VCA's Child Care Stabilization Grant award. Those funds, distributed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, came from the federal government as a result of the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act. In addition to helping to support Varna After School Program staff salaries, the money could be used to create a safer environment for children (and everyone who uses the Community Center!)

Clearing everything off the floor, cleaning and putting everything back together was done by a tireless and cheerful group that included: VASP Director, Jacqueline Bouchard; VASP Program Coordinator Celia Brown; Laurie Snyder; Simon St.Laurent; Mason Jager; Meghan Reiff; Michal Kulagowski; and project manager, Jan Morgan.

Rob "Ozzy" Stephens, owner of Orion Epoxy Company of Cortland and his crew did a masterful job removing the old flooring and laying down a new surface that will stand up to spills and other messes; all kinds of activities, including heavy items being moved around; and pretty much anything else.

The new epoxy floor will last decades, has a non-slip surface, and cleans easily.



Before



After

Get Vaccinated

Vaccines are available for free for all New York State residents above the age of 5. Second boosters are now available for people over 50. For information on COVID-19 vaccines in Tompkins County, please visit <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/covid19vaccine>.

Upcoming Projects Need Funding

The VCA currently is waiting to hear back from three recent grant applications that would support additional improvements to VCA programs and facilities. Here's what we've requested:

- United Way of Tompkins County's Community Care Fund – funds for equipment purchases and staffing expenses for the new Varna Summer Program. (Simon St.Laurent wrote this application)
- Legacy Foundation of Tompkins County – funding for installation of an outdoor water faucet on the back of the Community Center. Access to drinking water will be essential for kids and adults in the Varna Summer Program (Jan Morgan wrote the application)
- Community Foundation of Tompkins County – money to help pay for upgrades to the Community Center bathrooms (Jan Morgan wrote this application)

While each of these local foundations has supported the VCA in the past, we won't know if we get funded until early this summer. These are all worthy projects, so if you would like to help make one or more of them happen, please consider making a donation! Contact VCA chair Laurie Snyder for more information: snydwood@yahoo.com or leave a message at 607-272-2658. Thanks!

Flag Missing

Have you wondered why the US flag is missing from the pole in front of the Community Center? The answer is simple – and it's not political!! On a recent windy day, one of the ropes broke and left the flag attached by only one corner and flapping wildly. An Air Force veteran in the neighborhood was able to lower the flag. However, replacing the ropes needs to wait for a calm day and – more importantly -- a way to reach the top of the pole. (Perhaps when a crew arrives to move telephone poles near the Community Center they can be persuaded to stop by with an aerial device or cherry picker. We'll find out!)

Voting May 17th and June 28th

The Varna Community Center will be open for polling in May and June. On May 17th, from noon to 9pm the Ithaca City School District will be having elections about the 2022-2023 budget, candidates for School Board, and four propositions.

Find more information at: <https://www.ithacacityschools.org/vote#School%20Board%20Member%20Election>.

For a detailed look at the proposed 2022-2023 budget, visit <https://ithacacityschools.org/budget>.

Read about the candidates running for School Board here: <https://www.ithacacityschools.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=1633>.

State and local primary voting will be held June 28th from 6am to 9pm. Early voting will be available from June 18th to 26th. Sample ballots, times and locations will be available on the Tompkins County board of Elections website: <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/boe>. Your vote is needed!

Rent the Varna Community Center

Do you have a family party or a meeting coming up and need a space that will allow room for lots of people? VCA is once again available to be rented. The rates are reasonable, the air handler cleans the indoor air regularly, and the floor is no longer cracked and green! Masks are strongly recommend while inside the building. Email: rental.vca.facilities@gmail.com or leave a message at: 607-272-2658

Blue Food Cupboard

The Free Blue Food Cupboard and cooler continue to be busy. We are always happy for cash or food donations. Thank you to those of you who continue to support this community outreach. The Varna Little Library, in the vestibule of the community center, offers a place to find a free book (adults and children) or leave a book for others.

Varna Church Update

Greetings from the little church in Varna, with a BIG heart. Plans are under way for at least two chicken barbeques, on June 11th and July 9th, noon 'til gone. Please mark your calendar. Prices are not set due to weekly rises in costs, but we will set a fair price. Both will be drive thru, take out, and **halves only, no dinners**. We do have some volunteer positions open and will be accepting offers after the first of each month. Please call Sue Simmons 607 280 8042. *Please enter on the right side of the church, and exit on the left side.* Thank you.

As you put winter items away, keep our Fall Clothing Give Away in mind. Set aside clothes to drop off at the church at a later date, which will be listed in a later newsletter. We do enjoy doing this giveaway, but can always use extra help, before, during, and after.

Our church services are 11 - 12 every Sunday and our doors are always open to anyone who comes to worship with us. We hope you can join us.

-Sis Johnson

Varna Volunteer Fire Company

Varna Volunteer Fire Company serves Varna and Ellis Hollow. We answer approximately 300-400 calls a year. Recently, we have responded to multiple chimney fires in our area. Please remember to have your chimneys cleaned regularly. Creosote can build up in the chimney and cause a fire. If chimneys are used regularly, we recommend an annual inspection and cleaning.

As a 100% volunteer service, we need YOUR help to protect our community. Whether you are interested in being a firefighter, EMT, driver/operator, or support member, we have a spot for you! Come to the station (14 Turkey Hill Rd) between 6:30-7:30pm on a Thursday evening or email: chief@varnafire.org if you have any questions.

Spring Highway Cleanup

Saturday May 21st at 9am will be the Spring road clean-up of Rt. 366. If you'd like to help keep Varna beautiful, get some fresh air, and spend time with neighbors, meet us at the turnout across from 1237 Dryden Road. If you have any questions contact Meghan McQuaide Reiff at reiffmeghan@hotmail.com. Hope to see you there!

Varna Community Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 4771
Ithaca NY 14852-4771

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Highway Cleanup May 21st

Meet at 9am at the turnaround across from 1237 Dryden Road to make Route 366 a much prettier place!

The *Varna News* is published quarterly, in February, May, August, and November. Simon St.Laurent (simonstl@simonstl.com) is the editor.



The blue food cupboard and cooler continue to serve the neighborhood. Donation of food and personal hygiene items welcome!