



VARNA NEWS

The VCA and the Varna Volunteer Fire Company

The original Varna Community Center, a converted trolley car diner, burned down in June 1953. Recognizing that such a loss could happen again, local residents led by Carl James created a Volunteer Fire Association, the ancestor of today's Varna Volunteer Fire Company (VVFC). The two organizations cooperated deeply, with the VCA building holding fire trucks. As Louise Ranney put it in "They Did It Themselves! The Story of the Varna Community Center":

It included members from both the district of Varna and nearby Ellis Hollow. But their headquarters, with the three engines they now own, are in the community building at Varna. When space is needed for a dance or a dinner, the engines are moved outside. It is the firemen who put on the field day now and raise money with auctions.

The front of the building had two large garage doors. As the VVFC site (<https://www.varnafire.org/about-us/history>) reports:

The first piece of apparatus was a GLF gasoline truck converted into a fire fighting vehicle by the membership and put into service in July of 1954, approximately one year after the first organizational meeting.

The original fire department quarters were located in the West end of the new Varna Community Association building... This building had been built by Community Association and Fire Company members during the year following the fire. It only had room for two trucks.



Varna Community Center, with garage doors at right, in American Agriculturist, October 12, 1957, page 28.

The first real fire truck was purchased in 1956, a Blitz Buggy that lasted the company for 20 years. In 1962, the original tank truck was replaced by a new Ward LaFrance tanker/pumper.

In 1967, it was decided that additional space was needed for the growing department. Land was purchased from the Varna Community Association for \$1, and the department's previous quarters were built on the East end of the Community Association building. These new quarters had room for four trucks, and more equipment.

That additional space is now Bell's Auto, and the VVFC is based on Turkey Hill Road. The two organizations still work together sometimes!

To receive the VARNA NEWS fast and in color, email: newsletter@VarnaCommunityAssociation.org

Pancakes and More on Mother's Day



On Sunday, May 10th, you can enjoy breakfast with us from 8 to 11am. We'll have pancakes, waffles, bacon, sausage, fruit, coffee, tea, hot chocolate and more. It costs \$12.50 for adults, \$10.50 for seniors, and \$8 for kids 5-12. Kids under 5 eat free! We accept cards and

Venmo, with a 50¢ discount for cash or check.

Cornell Herpetological Society Coming to Varna May 13



The Cornell Herpetological Society is a student activity group dedicated to promoting greater interest and appreciation of reptiles (snakes!) and amphibians (frogs!). The 'Herp Club' will pay a visit to the Varna Community Center May 13. This FREE event will be fun for everyone.

The students and their faculty advisor will bring an assortment of animals to show us. They will tell us about each animal and demonstrate how to touch and hold the animals safely. Kids will love this! (Parents may want to wait in the other room, but that's ok too.)

Varna Church Update

Greetings from the little church with a heart. We are sorry to say we will **not** have a clothing give away this Fall. We love seeing people leave with "New to them" items. Thank you to those that pick up others' trash along our roads. You don't get the credit you deserve.

Thank you to all who donate boxes and egg cartons. The demand is getting more than we can supply, so keep the egg cartons coming, and tell others. We need the help. And they are appreciated by those receiving them. Happy

Mother's Day and don't forget the last pancake breakfast of the school year at the Center, on Mother's Day. Be safe on Memorial Day and July 4th. Dads you are not forgotten! Happy Father's Day to you. You are welcome to join us for church services on Sundays from 11am to noon. -Sis Johnson

Varna Volunteer Fire Company

On Sunday, April 12th, our firefighters had the opportunity to train alongside Lansing Fire Department during a live fire exercise led by Meridian Training. We're grateful to Instructor Basher for delivering an outstanding and challenging experience.



Photo courtesy VVFC

Keep up to date

The Varna News is published only 4 times a year, so we've started sending emails between newsletters with updates about goings on in Varna. If you would like to be added to (or removed from) the mailing list, contact chair@varnacomunityassociation.org To make sure VCA messages don't land in your spam folder, please add CommunityAssociationVarna@gmail.com to your contacts.

Chicken Barbecues May, June, and July

Chicken barbecues are back at Varna! The VCA will be cooking on May 23rd, June 13th, and July 11th, from noon to 4pm. Each dinner includes a barbecued chicken half, cooked to perfection, salt potatoes, cole slaw, a roll with butter, and cake. It costs \$12 for adults, \$11 for seniors, and \$8 for children 5-12. Kids under 5 eat free!



Save the date—8/29 Family Funfest!

It's still a few months out, but the VCA is gearing up for another August Family Funfest. We have already reserved the Physics Bus, and will have more to announce in the next newsletter.

The Ithaca College West African Drumming and Dance Ensemble gave a rousing performance at the VCA on April 30th.



Highway Cleanup

Saturday May 30th 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 reiffmegan@hotmail.com. Hope to see you there!

Used Ink & Toner Cartridges Welcomed

The VCA collects Staples 'rewards' for used printer cartridges and uses those rewards to purchase the round sticky tabs that hold your newsletter together. It's win-win-win: you get rid of useless cartridges, the VCA gets 'free' sticky tabs, and the Varna News arrives safely in your mail. We're now out of Staples rewards, so if you have used printer cartridges please consider dropping them off by the front door of the Community Center. And, thanks for the steady supply of bottles and cans! So far this year we have collected nearly \$100 in deposits. **Please drop off your ink and toner cartridges at the front door of the Community Center.** Thank you!



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Cornell Herpetological Society Visit May 13

The Cornell Herpetological Society will be at the VCA on May 13th at 6pm, showing off their snakes, lizards, and a variety of amphibians. If you like these creatures, come pay them a visit!

Pancakes / Waffles / Bacon / Sausage / Fruit / Coffee / Hot Chocolate and more breakfast—**May 10th, 8am to 11am!** \$12.50 adults, \$10.50 seniors, \$8 for kids 5-12. Kids under 5 eat free! Cards and Venmo accepted, 50¢ discount for cash or check.

Chicken BBQs Saturdays May 23, June 13, and July 11, Noon-4pm. All dinners include 1/2 barbecued chicken, cooked to perfection, salt potatoes, cole slaw, roll w/butter, and cake. Adults \$12, seniors \$11, children 5-12 \$8, and children under 5 no charge.

Every Monday, 9:30—Balance & Conditioning for 50+

May

- 10—Pancake Breakfast, 8-11am
- 11—VCA Board Meeting, 7pm
- 13—Herpetology Club Visits, 6pm
- 17—Knitting Club, 2-4pm
- 23—Chicken BBQ, Noon-4pm
- 30—Highway Cleanup, 1237 Dryden Rd, 9am

June

- 8—VCA Board Meeting, 7pm
- 12—United Way Day of Action
- 13—Chicken BBQ, Noon-4pm
- 21—Knitting Club, 2-4pm

July

- 11—Chicken BBQ, Noon-4pm
- 19—Knitting Club, 2-4pm

2026 VCA Board of Directors

Members: Laurie Foster (Treasurer), Mason Jager (Secretary), Deb Lecoq, Janet Morgan (Vice Chair), Matt Perry, Dawn Potter, Simon St.Laurent (Chair)

Meetings: usually held the second Monday of the month, 7pm, at the Community Center

You: Guests are welcome at board meetings. Come and help us make plans for Varna.

Email: Chair@VarnaCommunityAssociation.org



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