



VARNA NEWS

INFORMATION AND ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR THE VARNA COMMUNITY

— Welcome to Varna —

This little hamlet has been around a long time! In Varna, families, students, and businesses do good things today and plan even better things for the future.

If you live here, you are automatically a member of the Varna Community Association (VCA). There are no membership dues.

The VCA is a non-profit organization helping Varna residents, businesses and others by offering a variety of programs at the Community Center (943 Dryden Rd.)

Highlights:

- Professionally-designed playground**
- Basketball practice court**
- Varna After School Program
- Meetings and events of interest to the community**
- AA meeting Thursday evenings 8-9pm**
- Pancake breakfasts on the 2nd Sunday of each month, September - May
- Newsletter with community updates (Varna News)**
- Commercial kitchen
- WiFi and public use computers**

The VCA is run by a volunteer board of directors. Come to an event or meal at the Community Center. You'll meet your neighbors, have a great meal, see the facilities, and start to feel at home in Varna!

** free and open to the public

HAVE DESSERT — PLAY A GAME BE PART OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

Tuesday August 15

6pm - Bring a dessert to share (or just show up!)

6:30 - Presentation and Stall Catchers game

Free and open to the public

The [Schaffer/Nishimura Lab](#) at Cornell conducts research on Alzheimer's Disease using biological findings in mice to develop potential treatments for humans. One step in the research is extremely time consuming though, so another organization called the [Human Computation Institute](#) has developed a computer game called [Stall Catchers](#) to speed things up. People around the world can play the game and accelerate progress toward drug development. You & your family can play and help the process along!

Come to the Varna Community Center (943 Dryden Rd.) on Tuesday August 15. Bring a dessert-to-share and then stay while researchers explain some of the science behind the research, give everyone a chance to play the game, and answer any questions.

Stall Catchers is suitable for all ages — youngsters and great-grandparents alike. No specific knowledge or scientific background is required.



For a brief introduction, watch this intriguing video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-94Zwynm9A&feature=youtu.be>



FAMILY FUN FEST

BOUNCE — ENJOY FREE LUNCH! — CLIMB AND SLIDE —
SHOOT BASKETS — BUILD WITH HOME DEPOT — PLAY
GAMES WITH A TEXAS ROADHOUSE LIZARD — MEET
VARNA FIRE AND RESCUE VOLUNTEERS

— ENJOY MORE FUN STUFF

Saturday August 26

11am - 2pm

Everyone invited

FREE

Varna Community Center
943 Dryden Rd.
(NY Rte. 366)

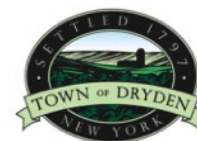
news from the playground

A four-foot-high chain link fence fence now surrounds the Varna playground. Completed in May, the fence provides reassurance to parents while children play, makes life easier for Varna After School Program staff members when groups of kids are playing, and, oh yes, makes the VCA's insurance company happy.

The Town of Dryden made a generous grant to the VCA to cover the cost of fencing materials. Habitat for Humanity provided skilled volunteers to work on the installation. There were 37 holes to drill, 37 posts to set, and 400+ feet of fencing to stretch and secure. Volunteers from the community also helped — a lot! Finally, teens from the Cooperative Extension's Project LEAD laid sheet mulching along the fence to decrease the amount of weed whacking needed to keep the grass down.

Huge thanks go to: Chuck Newman, Keith Randolph, Mark Macera, Jack Banfield, Jim Skaley, and Mike Mahool. These guys did the lion's share of the work.

Sincere thanks also go to: Simon St.Laurent, Vicki Gayle, Scott McArt, Sue Heath, Don Heath, Laurie Snyder, Debby Lecoq, Jan Morgan, and Project LEAD participants.



Mark Macera gets high 5s for his work on the fence.

VARNA AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM IS ENROLLING NOW

FOR THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR!



VASP is a fun and educational after school option for children in PreK through Grade 5. The program is located at the Varna Community Center. VASP students are supervised by well-qualified staff who enjoy providing a variety of indoor and outdoor activities including homework, STEAM projects, crafts, physical exercise, and free play. Transportation from ICSD elementary schools is provided by the school district. On many days when school is not in session, VASP offers full-day care. VASP is reasonably priced and DSS subsidies are accepted. VASP meets all requirements of the NY Office of Children and Family Services (VASP Registration #761382). VASP is partially supported by a grant from United Way.

Visit the VASP website: VarnaAfterSchoolProgram.com or visit VASP on [Facebook](#)

****Save the Dates****

Take a Hike in Varna Monday, September 11 6pm

Join Angelika St.Laurent for a short hike to discover a secluded plot of woodland in Varna that is owned by the Town of Dryden. Meet at the driveway across from 1176 Dryden Rd. There is an old logging road that leads to the Town land.

Community Dish-to-Pass suppers: Bring a casserole, salad, dessert or other food to share. Bring your own plate & utensils too. Meet new friends at the Varna Community Center (943 Dryden Rd).

Saturday, September 23, 5pm After supper, we'll be entertained by the Finger Lakes Fife and Drum Corps. The Corps is based in Ithaca, but its members come from the greater Southern Finger Lakes region. They are ages 8 to 18 years and they teach each other to play and march.

Saturday, October 21, 5pm If you have an idea for after-supper entertainment, please contact Debby Lecoq, VCA Program Committee Chair (607-273-9075)

VARNA NEWS SPONSORS

Thanks go to these local businesses for support of the Varna News:

GOLD LEVEL

- Jim Ray Homes, Inc.
- Lifestyle Properties
- Varna Volunteer Fire Company

BRONZE LEVEL

- Rose's Home Dish
- Plantation Inn

THANK YOU!



UPDATES ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN VARNA

SOLAR PROJECTS



Two 5 Megawatt (MW) community solar farms have been proposed in the Town of Dryden. One of these, the “Ellis Tract” project, would be on Cornell land in Varna on Dodge Rd. and Turkey Hill Rd. The other farm would be behind the Willow Glen cemetery off Rte. 13. Both sites would have large arrays of solar panels tied into the NYSEG electrical grid. Community members, including renters,

would be able to buy solar electricity without having to buy solar panels. To date, there has been strong public support for these projects but also concerns from residents who do not want views altered by solar panels.

On July 27, the Town Board approved the State Environmental Quality Reviews (SEQR) for the solar farms, indicating the solar farms would create no negative impacts to the environment. Next steps: (All meetings are open to the public)

- Wed. August 2, 6pm: Dryden Planning Board vote on site plan reviews for the projects
- Thurs. August 10 or 17, 7pm: At one of these meetings, the Dryden Town Board will consider the Planning Board’s recommendation regarding site plan reviews. Public comments can be made at start of the meeting.
- Wed. August 24, 6pm: Dryden Planning Board meeting. There will be a public hearing and preliminary plat review for subdivision approval. The plat review is required because of a NYS rule that solar installations are limited to 2MW increments. The proposed 5MW projects therefore require a subdivision approval.
- Thurs. September 28, 7pm: Dryden Planning Board meeting. Public hearing, final plat review and vote on subdivision approval.

*** **NOTE:** For meeting locations, call the Town of Dryden Planning Department (607-844-8888 ext. 2) ***

Laurie Snyder and David Weinstein represented Varna on a committee that tentatively selected an engineering company to evaluate the options for repairing or replacing the bridge. There remains hope that the historical elements of the 1887 bridge will be maintained, although there are many engineers who lean toward replacement with a two-lane bridge. Laurie and David continue to work toward a solution that will not accelerate the speed of traffic on the dangerously curvy Freese Road, that will include a pedestrian walkway, and that will serve as a traffic calming entrance to Varna from the north.



FREESE ROAD BRIDGE

DRYDEN RD. HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS



Developer Charlie O’Conner of Modern Living Rentals, has applied to build six apartment houses on property across from Game Farm Rd. Forty two units are proposed, with a total of 108 bedrooms in a mix of 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units. The developer has been in contact with Cornell representatives since the site abuts Cornell properties, including the Botanic Garden’s Arboretum. The proposal is currently under review by the Dryden Planning Board. A public hearing will be held Thursday, August 24 at the Planning Board meeting. Information about this proposal can be found at the town’s website: <http://dryden.ny.us/departments/planning-department/permit-review-links/site-plan-review/>

Charlie O’Conner also owns the new apartments at 902 Dryden Rd. at the intersection of Forest Home Drive. The 10 apartments are fully rented. Tenants — a mix of students, professionals and families — are expected to move in by the end of August. Although this development caused controversy during the planning process, these tenants are now our neighbors and we welcome them to Varna.

“Tiny Timbers” - Thanks to New York State’s recent approval for a home-owners’ association, this development of small single-family houses is ready to be marketed and sold within the next couple of months. The builders are currently working on other projects, so building will likely occur next year.



MT. PLEASANT - FREESE RD- DRYDEN RD.

DRYDEN RD. SIDEWALKS, ETC.



State and federal funds for the planning and design phase of repaving Rte. 366 from the Ithaca City line to Rte. 13. will be obligated (earmarked) soon. NY Dept. of Transportation and the Town of Dryden will seek public input sometime in the next year. Actual construction will probably take place in the spring or summer of 2020.

Greetings from Alice Humerez, Town Crier for the Varna Methodist Church

The Varna Church is a little church with a big heart. We are proud to let everyone know that we now have a counselor on board. Her name is Bobbie Valentine (315-406-9562). Call if you need someone to talk to. She charges accordingly. She is caring, compassionate and very easy to talk with.

We are currently looking for a pianist. We have been so very lucky to have teenagers play for our services throughout these many years. Our most recent pianist just headed off to college. We wish her all the best, but now we need a new pianist. If you know of anyone, please contact us (607-277-7910).

In July we celebrated the wedding of Shannon Thomas and Michael Moravec with Rev. Jeff Losey — one of our church's past ministers — officiating. Another recent event was for a group of Latvians who come once a year to hold a service in our sanctuary. They have been visiting us in Varna for many years.

Our **next chicken BBQ is AUGUST 5**. Dinners of a chicken half, salt potatoes, baked beans, roll and dessert are \$10. Chicken halves will be \$8. Please join us!



Varna Church
965 Dryden Rd.
Worship service: Sundays
at 11am

The Varna News comes out only 4 times a year, but in between issues, here are 2 ways to stay up-to-date about what's going on in the community:

- 1.) Sign up to receive an email from the VCA about once a month. You'll get announcements of meetings and other events. We will not give or sell your email address to any other organization. To sign up, send an email to: events@VarnaCommunityAssociation.org
- 2.) Join the 'Hamlet of Varna' group at nextdoor.com. This is a private social network for residents of Varna. You'll be asked to provide your address in order to verify that you live in the neighborhood. You can post questions such as, 'Can someone recommend a good plumber?'

FREE COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER

Thanksgiving Day, Thursday November 23, noon - 3pm at the Varna Community Center. The next issue of the Varna News will have more details about this popular annual event.

Nominate Someone for an Award

Calling members of the community to reflect and nominate caring adults who have had an impact on them or their children. Nominees must be adults (ages 24+) that support or have supported youth (ages 0-24). Nominees must live or have lived in Tompkins County and/or have supported youth that live/d in Tompkins County. Nominees may be living or deceased. All eligible nominees will be recognized by the Tompkins County Youth Services Department (TCYSD) and 40 will be randomly selected to share their stories and be a part of the TCYSD 40th Anniversary Celebration!

For more information:

<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/youth/40years>

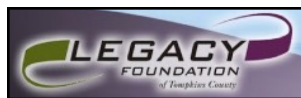
<https://twitter.com/TompkinsCoYouth>

<https://www.facebook.com/ToCoYouth>

Nomination form: [SurveyMonkey.com/r/40CaringAdults](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/40CaringAdults)

Nominations due: **August 31, 2017**

Buy-A-Letter Campaign success! Thanks to many generous donors from the community, money was raised to purchase new lettering for the front of the Varna Community Center. We're in the process of ordering the letters, so watch for the new lettering to appear soon. Special thanks go to donors: Megan and Eric Reiff, Laurie Snyder, John Sullivan, Susan Simmons, Sue and Don Heath, Jan Morgan & Jim Skaley, Angelika & Simon St.Laurent, Chris Kimball, Chuck Kozey & Cindy Todd, Melissa & Jessica Miller, Kim Klein, Dos Amigos, Dave Weinstein & Christina Stark.



More signs coming soon: The Legacy Foundation of Tompkins County approved the VCA's grant application for the purchase and installation of additional signage, such as signs for the playground. The new signs will improve the appearance of the Varna Community Center facilities, and they will let everyone know the rules are for use of the property (for example: **speed limit = 5mph!**)

Neighborhood Watch for Varna?

There are several Watch programs in Ithaca. The most successful ones are where neighbors get to know each other, become familiar with cars that belong in the area (and those that don't), notice who regularly walks to the bus stops, and so forth. It's not a matter of being intrusive or nosy. Rather, it's a matter of being aware, knowing your neighbors, and calling for help if a problem is suspected. To get a Watch started in Varna, contact Eric: (esambolec@ithaca.edu) (517-490-0310)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017

Varna Community Association, Inc.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Linda Besemer | Matt Perry |
| Sue Heath | Kim Simmons (Secretary) |
| Debby Lecoq | Susan Simmons (Vice Chair) |
| Scott McArt | Laurie Snyder |
| Melissa Miller | Jessica Sofen |
| Janet Morgan (Chair) | Simon StLaurent (Treasurer) |

Sustainability Grant Received

The Varna Community Association was recently awarded a grant to replace the three toilets at the Community Center with low flush fixtures. The grant is from Sustainable Tompkins as part of their Neighborhood Mini-Grant Program. The new toilets meet ADA standards. With children in the building throughout the school year, the toilets get lots of use. The new toilets will reduce water usage. At the time this newsletter goes to print, we are looking for a volunteer to install the toilets. If you can help, please contact Sue Heath, VCA Buildings and Properties Committee Chair (sheath4@twcny.rr.com) (607-272-8919).



RENT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

The Community Center is a great place for meetings, birthday parties, receptions and workshops. Here are the fees for renting the facilities for private events:

Facility use rates for private (non-commercial) use

	½ day	Full-day	Evening
Small room only	\$30	\$50	\$40
Large & small rooms	55	75	65
Kitchen use (add)	30	40	35
Kitchen use only	60	120	60
All facilities	85	115	100

To inquire about renting, email: rentals@VarnaCommunityAssociation.org

WHAT MAKES A GOOD COMMUNITY? In a 2010 study done in 26 towns across the US, the Knight Foundation and Gallup found five factors that consistently had the strongest influence on people’s feelings of attachment to their communities. In order of importance, these five factors were: **1.** opportunities for social interaction and citizen caring, **2.** openness or how welcoming a community is to different people, **3.** aesthetics - physical beauty and green spaces, **4.** educational systems and opportunities, **5.** basic services, or community infrastructure. The Varna Community Association is dedicated to helping make Varna a place that is strong in all these areas.

The VCA board knows everyone is busy. We know everyone has attachments to communities at work, at schools, or other places. But if Varna is where you live, you owe it to yourself and your neighbors to think about how this hamlet can grow its sense of community. The brief survey below asks for your ideas about programs and events that would entice you to come out, show up, and be part of the community. Please take a minute to let us know what you think!



1. What is an event or program would you like to have available in Varna?

2. Would you like events or programs to be available for (check all that apply):
 _____ Children only _____ Adults only
 _____ Women only _____ Men only
 _____ Seniors only _____ Families

3. Describe one thing that would make Varna more welcoming:

Please mail your responses to: Debby Lecoq, VCA Program Committee Chair, 935 Dryden Rd. Ithaca NY 14850

To take the survey online, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M25NYWX>

THANK YOU

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

**Non Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Ithaca, NY 14850
Permit #312**



May 2017: Volunteers drill post holes for the new fence around the Varna Community Playground. In the rain. Of course.

CALENDAR OF VARNA EVENTS

Events are at the Varna Community Center, 943 Dryden Rd. (NY Rte. 366) unless otherwise indicated.

August 15, 6pm — Dessert to pass, Alzheimer's game and research presentation

August 26, 11a - 2p — **Family Fun Fest**

September 10, 8am to noon Pancake Breakfast

September 11, 6pm Explore a hidden piece of Town-owned land in Varna. Location: see pg. 2

September 23, 5pm — Dish-to-pass supper; Finger Lakes Fife and Drum Corps concert

October 8, 8am-noon — Pancake Breakfast

Pancake Breakfasts

Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10

8am - noon

Featuring all you care to eat, pancakes, French toast, cooked-to-order eggs, breakfast meats from Clark's market, hash browns, fresh fruits, breakfast breads, homemade unsalted butter and whipped cream, orange juice, coffee, tea or hot cocoa. We source all menu items locally.

Adults \$8, Seniors \$7.00, ages 5-12 \$7.50 under age 5 free.

Volunteers get a free breakfast! To volunteer, contact Susan Simmons sasrvcs121@yahoo.com