



VARNA NEWS

VASP Reopening!

The Varna After School Program (VASP) will be reopening Monday, May 3rd for K-5 students. Director Jacqueline Bouchard has worked for VASP in prior years, and looks forward to welcoming children back to our newly ventilated building. New York State rules about pods of children mean that the program can only have **one pod of ten children this**



Jake the therapy dog visited VASP 10 times!

spring, so spaces are limited. For much more information, and to register, call 607 272 2658 or see <https://www.varnaafterschoolprogram.com/>.

Get Vaccinated

Vaccines are now available for free for all New York State residents above the age of 16. For information on COVID-19 vaccines in Tompkins County, please visit <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/covid19vaccine>.

You can also sign up for vaccinations at facilities statewide at <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>.

New Town Newsletter

The Town of Dryden started a monthly newsletter for residents. You can sign up for it at <https://dryden.ny.us/2021/04/01/signup-for-the-town-of-drydens-new-e-newsletter-here/>. Page 3 includes a variety of relevant items from it.

Freese Road Bridge



The Town of Dryden newsletter reported:

Photo by Simon St.Laurent

“In December, federal and state agencies approved the town’s plan for replacing the Freese Road Bridge with a single-lane unposted bridge. However, the agencies have required the town to first search for a willing buyer for the old bridge. Following this unexpected requirement, the town is developing options for relocation. The town’s preference is to have the old bridge relocated to the village of Groton, to be displayed in a public setting that pays homage to Groton Ironworks. The town has had extensive discussions with Groton officials about this plan and is awaiting approval from the agencies. If the old bridge is relocated, the new bridge in Varna will likely be a historic style single-lane bridge with steel trusses, pending public input.”

Some members of the county Facilities and Infrastructure Committee objected to the one-lane bridge proposal at the committee’s March 18th meeting. On April 20th, though, legislators Martha Robertson, Anne Koreman, Glenn Morey, Deborah Dawson, Shawna Black, and Mike Sigler expressed support for the project. Please write the legislature via Cathy Covert, ccover@tompkins-co.org, to provide your input on the compromise proposal for a new one-lane bridge.

The **Varna Volunteer Fire Company** continues its much-needed operations during the pandemic. If you're interested in helping, please stop by the fire station on a Thursday at 6:30pm.

Ventilation Update



Main ventilator unit installed—photo by Simon St.Laurent



Ducts to be installed—photo by Jan Morgan

Halco is installing the new ventilation and filtration system for the Varna Community Center. The primary purpose is to ensure regular air changes, reducing the chances of viruses spreading, and it should also make future energy efficiency updates simpler. Breathe easier!

Thanks to the following for financial support:



TOMPKINS COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

McPherson Family Fund
Community Foundation
of TOMPKINS COUNTY



The Blue Food Cupboard, now in the vestibule, remains an active and necessary part of the Varna Community Center. A growing number of volunteers keeps the cupboard stocked every day. You don't need to sign up to take or leave food—just stop by! Take what you need, and give what you can (but keep it in the cabinet and cooler). Please spread the word to people who could benefit or give.

The VCA is also receiving food donations from the Friendship Donations Network. We thank our volunteers and Tompkins County Mutual Aid for their support.

The Varna Little Library, in the vestibule of the community center, offers the community a place to find a free book (adults and children) and/or to leave a book for others.



Varna Church Update

This has been a very sad winter for our little church with a big heart. One parishioner gave up her car, and one has gone into a local nursing home. Marge Darchangelo, a parishioner for nearly thirty years or more, and Sandra Wright passed away. A box of food was donated in their memory to the Varna Food Pantry, located at the Varna Community Center. All four ladies will be missed in our church on Sundays and at all other gatherings.

Our Outreach Missions continue: Pew Knitters are meeting once a month to knit for charity. In 2020, we donated 362 items. Any monetary or yarn donations, both new skeins left over from your projects, will be most welcome.

We are still collecting used eye glasses and hearing aids that are no longer needed. We hope we can start up our chicken bar-b-q's soon. We will keep you posted as to dates and times.

Our church will hold a board meeting on May 2 to decide on the future of our church: when to open, fundraisers, and/or charity outreach. We plan to open our church for a service on Mother's Day on May 9th at 11 A.M. Please join us to help celebrate all of those mothers that have meant so much to us.

—Alice Humerez and Sis Johnson

Cleaning up Dryden Road

We are looking for neighbors who enjoy exercise, fresh air, and community service! We're organizing a spring clean-up of Dryden Road this spring. If you or your group would volunteer to collect litter and refresh our neighborhood, please contact Meghan McQuaide Reiff at reiffmeghan@hotmail.com. More details and dates to come soon.

Thank you again to our volunteer snow shoveler, **Bradley Simmons**. We love volunteers! Bradley gets Ithaca High School School Community Service Credits for volunteering at the VCA.

Updates from the Town Newsletter

The Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD) announces a spring drive-through rabies clinic for dogs, cats, and ferrets. The clinic will be held from **10AM-1PM on May 22nd, at the TCAT Bus Garage, 737 Willow Avenue, Ithaca.**

Pre-registration is required for the clinic. Call the Health Department at (607) 274-6688 for assistance with registration or to be placed on a wait list if all appointments are full. For more information, visit: <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh/rabies>

New Dog Control Officer

Dog control in Varna as part of the Town of Dryden is now provided by **Jason Leonard**. If you have a dog related issue, please contact Jason at (607) 342-8477. For more information on dog control and dog licensing in the Town of Dryden, please visit: <https://dryden.ny.us/information/dog-control/>

Varna Sewer & Water

Residents in the Hamlet can expect to see several infrastructure projects coming into being in the coming year: Starting mid-summer the Town will be replacing or upgrading both the sewer and water mains in the center of the Hamlet, from the Monkey Run pump station to the Forest Home pump station to the Apple Orchard connecting to the Cornell mains at Tower Rd. The Town applied for grants and low interest loans and will also be bonding for portions of the project. These mains are approximately 60 years old and in critical need of repair.

New Laws: Short-Term Rentals & Excessive Noise

The Town of Dryden adopted two new laws this winter in response to growing public concerns. One law legalizes short-term rentals (STRs), also known as AirBnBs, and sets basic standards for their operation. The law defines a short-term rental, limits the number of days property owners may be absent from their property, and requires all operators to register with the town. A registration application is available on the town's website. The registration lasts for 2 years and carries a \$90 fee. We estimate that there may be up to 300 short-term rentals in the Town.

The second law amends the Town Zoning Law's noise section to set some standards for what may be unreasonable noise in a residential setting. Both of these laws and STR registration form can be found on the Planning Department's webpage: <http://dryden.ny.us/departments/planning-department/>

To have a paper copy of the laws or registration form mailed to you, contact the planning department at planning@dryden.ny.us or 607-844-8888 x216.

Sign up for more Town news at: <https://dryden.ny.us/2021/04/01/signup-for-the-town-of-drydens-new-e-newsletter-here/>

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Visit <https://www.varnaafterschoolprogram.com/> or call 607 272 2658 for more information.



United Way
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EnergyWi\$e Dryden Clean Heat Webinar on May 4th

The Town will host a **Clean Heating and Cooling Webinar at 7pm on Tuesday May 4 via Zoom**. Register in advance for this meeting at <http://HeatSmartTompkins.org/Dryden> or call 607-500-HEAT. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting.

The HeatSmart clean heating and cooling program gives you access to:

- A FREE home energy assessment & installer recommendations
- Information & incentives to improve your home's efficiency & comfort

Funds are available to: seal the air leaks that bring drafts, add insulation to keep the winter warmth inside, and explore heat pump alternatives for less expensive utility bills.

Whether you rent or own your home there are grants and subsidies to help pay for these improvements. The Town of Dryden is partnering with HeatSmart Tompkins to share information about these funds with community residents.

Plus, households earning up to 120% of area median income are **now eligible for grants** from NYSEDA for home energy-efficiency projects. Find out if you qualify.

LEARN MORE & REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR at <http://HeatSmartTompkins.org/Dryden> or call 607-500-HEAT. The webinar is just information. Signing up does not commit you to participating.

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