



# VARNA NEWS

## VASP Reopening



*VASP kids enjoy parachute play*

[The Varna After School Program](#) (VASP) will open for the 2021-2022 school year on September 10, 2021. We have space for children enrolled in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. VASP runs from 2:00pm to 5:45pm, Monday-Friday. Ithaca City School District buses transport students from school to VASP. Please **enroll your children by August 31st** so we can prepare our staff, lesson plans, order supplies, etc. Our website [VarnaAfterSchoolProgram.com](http://VarnaAfterSchoolProgram.com) has more information and can start you on the registration process.

**VASP will host an open house August 28th, 2021 from 2pm-4pm!** There will be indoor/outdoor games, bubbles, ice cream, and tons more fun! Please come out and visit us!

VASP is located at the Varna Community Center where a new, state-of-the-art air-handling system provides ventilation and filtration of air throughout the building. This helps ensure a safe, COVID-free indoor environment. VASP is registered with the NY Office of Children and Family Services. We also have outdoor play areas including a lovely, safe, fenced, and well-maintained playground.

We hope you consider VASP for a fun-filled learning environment for your children. If you have questions, visit the [VASP website](#) or contact VASP Director, Ms. Jacqueline Bouchard, by email [VarnaAfterSchoolProgram@gmail.com](mailto:VarnaAfterSchoolProgram@gmail.com) or leave a phone message at: 607-272-2658.

**Get Vaccinated**

## Route 366 Re-paving

In 2022, the New York State Department of Transportation will be re-paving Route 366 from the City of Ithaca line to Route 13. As [they described it in a mailing](#) sent to residents along Route 366:

“This project will remove and replace the top 4 inches of asphalt surface of Route 366 in both directions for a distance of approximately 3.8 miles. Work will include isolated pavement joint and crack repairs, updated traffic signal detection, and new pavement markings. A new segment of sidewalk and associated Americans with Disabilities-compliant pedestrian curb ramps will be constructed on the south side of Route 366 in the hamlet of Varna, between Forest Home Drive and Mt. Pleasant Road.

Traffic will be maintained on site during construction. Shoulder and lane closures will be utilized for the majority of construction operations. Alternating one-way traffic with flaggers will occur as necessary to complete the work. All work will be performed within the existing highway boundary. No property acquisitions are necessary as part of this project.”

The DOT will host a Virtual Open House Meeting on August 10 at 6pm. You can join at below:

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/onstage/g.php?MTID=e4499ded3300a212ce4b69929072478c3>

or call (518)-549-0500, and enter the access code 161 829 0585#. There will also be a link at <http://dryden.ny.us>.

If you live in the Hamlet of Varna, you are automatically a member of the non-profit Varna Community Association (VCA). There are no dues or paperwork, just friendship and community. The VCA owns and operates the Varna Community Center at 943 Dryden Rd. You are invited to attend activities and to use the outdoor recreation areas. The VCA's volunteer board of directors always welcomes new ideas and helpers! Find more info at: [www.varnacomunityassociation.org/](http://www.varnacomunityassociation.org/)

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>.

### 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/>.

### Blue Food Cupboard

The free food cupboard continues to be valued by our community. Thank you to the volunteers who anonymously fill the cupboard and cooler, and to donors who help fund this work. The Varna Little Library, in the vestibule of the community center, offers a place to find a free book (adults and children) and/or to leave a book for others.

### Varna Church Update

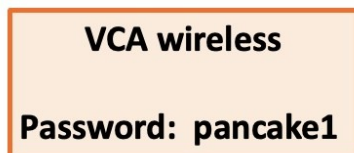
The Varna United Methodist Church is open again on the first three Sundays of each month. Our service starts at 11:00, and we welcome all who wish to join us.

August is **UNDIE SUNDAYS**. As outreach we are donating boys and girls underwear to area schools for the elementary age children who have accidents, so there will be dry undies available.

We will hold a **free clothing give away on September 17th and 18th** from 9 am to 3 pm. Please bring your own bags and, if not vaccinated, please wear a mask. To donate, bring clean clothes to the church before the end of August. Please help us make this outreach event a big success.

The Pew Knitters continue to be busy. One project is knitting stump covers for amputees. Another is a hat, scarf, or mittens for our homeless.

—Alice Humerez and Sis Johnson



### Dryden Road Highway Cleanup

We are looking for neighbors who enjoy exercise, fresh air, and community service! **Thanks to our great volunteers, our first clean-up was a success** on July 10th.

We're organizing a **fall clean-up of Dryden Road on Saturday, October 16th**. If you or your group would volunteer to collect litter and refresh our neighborhood, please contact Meghan McQuaide Reiff at [reiffmeghan@hotmail.com](mailto:reiffmeghan@hotmail.com).



*Meghan gets volunteers ready to clean*

### Varna Sewer & Water

The sewer and water mains through Varna were installed in the 1960s. They need serious upgrades! Water main replacement and relining of sewer mains will begin around March 2022. Rte. 366 repaving will start about May 2022. Since the water and sewer line work needs to occur before repaving, NYSDOT plans to pave areas outside of the central hamlet area first. Look for more information on this work in the next Varna News when cost estimates will have been finalized.

— Jim Skaley, Dryden Town Board

### Varna Volunteer Fire Company

Varna Volunteer Fire Company serves the Hamlet of Varna and the Ellis Hollow community. We run about 300-400 calls a year. Whether you are interested in being a firefighter, EMT, driver/operator, or support member, we have a spot for you! Come by the station (14 Turkey Hill Rd) between 6:30-7:30pm on a Thursday evening or email [chief@varnafire.org](mailto:chief@varnafire.org) if you have any questions.



We also will be at the Ellis Hollow Faire on Saturday 9/11/21 at the Ellis Hollow Community Center. We will have a table with goodies for kids and information about the fire department. We also will have demonstrations throughout the day. Come by and say hi!

We are also looking for a treasurer! The commitment is about 1 hour per week, and knowledge of QuickBooks Online is required. If you're interested or have questions, send an email to [chief@varnafire.org](mailto:chief@varnafire.org).



On June 18th, at 2:23am, VVFC was dispatched to a structure fire at the Plantations Bar & Grill (1285 Dryden Rd). Mutual aid crews were on scene for about 7 hours until the fire was mostly extinguished, and then VVFC firefighters remained on scene for another 8 hours while the state Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) conducted their investigation. (They did not find anything suspicious.) We thank crews from Cayuga Heights, Etna, Freeville, McLean, Groton, Dryden, and Dryden Ambulance for their assistance. - Tiffany Ho

### Support for VASP

In June, Dryden Middle School students awarded a \$383 United Way FOCUS grant to the Varna After School Program to help provide fresh fruits and vegetables for afternoon snacks. Also in June, the VCA participated in 'Giving is Gorges.' Our online fundraiser called 'KidZart' brought in generous donations to help purchase art supplies for VASP. We are so grateful for the support!

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

### Dryden Rail Trail

The Dryden Rail Trail through Varna, between Monkey Run Road and the East Hill Recreation Way should open in the next month or so, as the Town and volunteers complete work. Looking eastward, the stretch to Route 13 is open, but the Town is formalizing it and New York State wants a bridge over Route 13 to continue the trail to Freeville:

"The Town of Dryden is advancing completion of up to a 1.13 mile section of ADA-compliant multi-use trail via a locally-administered federally-aided project called Dryden Rail Trail Phase 2. When completed, the Dryden Rail Trail will provide an off-road, non-motorized commuter and recreational route connecting the Villages of Dryden and Freeville with the hamlets of Etna and Varna and to the City of Ithaca via the East Ithaca Recreation Way. PIN 3950.71 involves completion of a portion of the trail between Monkey Run Road and Hallwoods Road, including a proposed multi-use trail bridge over NYS Route 13. Proposed trail and bridge will consist of ADA-compliant trail aligned on existing former rail bed between Monkey Run Road and across NYS Route 13."

You can find more on the Rail Trail Task Force's work at <http://dryden.ny.us/board-commission-list/rail-trail-task-force/>. For more on the political site of the rail trail, [https://www.ithaca.com/news/dryden/dryden-public-express-split-views-on-rail-trail-bridge/article\\_1674c5ca-e9a9-11eb-af54-b3a3e9363d4c.html](https://www.ithaca.com/news/dryden/dryden-public-express-split-views-on-rail-trail-bridge/article_1674c5ca-e9a9-11eb-af54-b3a3e9363d4c.html) provides an overview.

### Pancake Breakfast



*The new ventilator is running, keeping the Varna Community Center safer!*

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

Non-Profit Org  
US POSTAGE PAID  
ITHACA, NY 14850  
PERMIT #312

## READY FOR PANCAKES?

Plans aren't solid yet, but we hope to have at least an occasional pancake breakfast again, starting in October, possibly October 10th.



To Volunteer: Contact Simon St.Laurent at [simonstl@simonstl.com](mailto:simonstl@simonstl.com).

To Attend: Watch for the green flag in front of the Community Center

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## COVID Alert \* COVID Alert \* COVID Alert \* COVID Alert

COVID cases have jumped lately, nationwide, statewide, and in Tompkins County specifically. Most of this newsletter was written while it seemed like the pandemic was fading, at least for a while. Plans and dates described here may change. Please get vaccinated, wear masks, and take steps to help keep COVID-19 away. Hopefully that will let us proceed with the exciting plans described here. We hope to see:

**August 10th**— NYS DOT virtual meeting on Route 366 repaving project.

**August 28th**—VASP Open House

**September 11th**—Varna Volunteer Fire Company at Ellis Hollow Fair

**September 17th and 18th**—Varna Church clothing giveaway.

**October 10th**—Pancake Breakfast

**October 16th**—Highway Cleanup



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