

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Welcome Spring
- The Perfect Tree: American Chestnut
- Virgil Stories Volumes I & II
- Community Organized Events C.O.V.E.
- Looking forward to Summer VBS
- Virgil Legislative Redistricting

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Town of Virgil News

VOLUME VII ISSUE II

SPRING 2022

Free Septic System Maintenance Workshops

The workshop will focus on home septic system management. Topics will include how a septic system functions, current system standards, maintenance requirements and schedules, trouble shooting, and septic system failures. Homeowners will also receive resource materials to help them with future septic system maintenance.

Sponsored by Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District with sup-

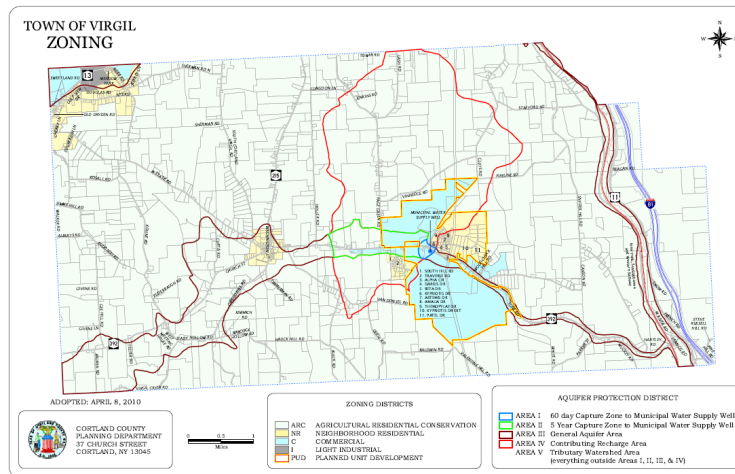
port from the Cortland County Health Department and funding from a CWIA/EPF Water Quality Improvement Project Grant administered by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Registration is required
Call Cortland County SWCD at 607-756-5991
(Space is Limited)

Tuesday, 4/26 Harford Town Hall
Wednesday, 4/27 NYS Grange Cortland
Thursday, 4/28 Homer Town Hall
Monday, 5/9 Virgil Town Hall
Tuesday, 5/10 Cincinnatus Town Hall
Wednesday, 5/11 Scott Methodist Church

All workshops will be held from 7-8pm
Multiple property owners are welcome to attend, but only one certificate may be redeemed per property per year. Property must be in Cortland County.
Cortland County homeowners can receive a \$100 rebate coupon good for septic system maintenance by attending one of these free workshops.

Virgil Zoning Map



History of the Municipal Clerk

The Municipal Clerk is the oldest of public servants in local government, along with the tax collector. The profession traces back to before Biblical times. For example, the modern Hebrew translation of Town Clerk is "Mazkir Ha'ir" which literally translated, means city or town "Reminder." The early keepers of archives were often called "Remembrancers" and before writing came into use, their memory served as the public record. Ancient Greece had a city secretary who read official documents publicly. At the opening of a meeting, one of his first duties was to decree a curse upon anyone who should seek to deceive

the people. St. Paul and his followers during his missionary work in Persia (now Western Turkey) owed their safety to the action of a town clerk. As related in Acts 19:22-41, written in A.D. 58, the artisans of Ephesus who made the idols of the time, feared the effect of Paul's missionary work on their trade. They incited a mob to seize two of Paul's followers. The town clerk, however, spoke out against this action and insisted that charges laid against these men had to be settled in the proper manner and before the proper authorities. There was no justification for riotous conduct. With that, he dispersed in the crowd. Author Unknown

C.O.V.E

The former Virgil Youth Commission has been transformed into Community Organized Virgil Events (C.O.V.E.). The purpose of this committee is to strengthen the unity of the Virgil Community by providing programs and events that support all ages. Right now the Committee is supporting the Virgil Ski Club, but they are looking to expand their scope and have family fun nights, a summer concert series and a Virgil winter festival, but they can't do it alone, they need new members with more ideas.

Their meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Virgil Town Hall. Their next meeting will be held on May 9th. Please consider attending the meeting and supporting the community. Follow them, on Facebook @VirgilCOVE or an Instagram@Virgil COVE. Contact them via email at virgilocove@yahoo.com

Virgil Community Organized Virgil events is planning on hosting a Family Fun Day at Hope Lake Park on June 11th 2022. Keep a look out for further information. Please contact C.O.V.E. if you wish to volunteer for this event.



“There are so few American Chestnut trees left that if you have seen a mature tree in the forest, you are in a small group. “

“The Virgil Town Board approved the planting of American Chestnut trees on town property. It will be wonderful to be a part of this effort”

The Perfect Tree By: Val Ross Virgil Historical Society President

There are so few American Chestnut trees left that if you have seen a mature tree in the forest, you are in a small group. There are still some chestnut trees in our area but most are small seedlings that sprout from the stumps of old trees and don't live long lives. A rare few live 10 or more years, but that is long enough to produce chestnuts. A fungal blight was introduced in the US in 1904, and by 1940 most of the American Chestnut trees had been killed by it.

Native Americans, early settlers, colonists and people in rural areas up to the 20th century depended on the chestnut crop as a food source to help them get through the winter, as well as a source of income in lumber and nut sales. It's hard to imagine how different the landscape must have been at that time. It is estimated that 3 to 4 BILLION chestnut trees were lost to the blight. Think of all the small critters like squirrels and chipmunks, as well as deer and bear and turkeys that the trees supported, and then all of the animals which ate those animals. When the chestnut went, the woodland population dwindled. The range of the chestnut tree went from Mississippi to Maine with large concentrations in Appalachia. It is estimated that one out of four trees within this range was the American chestnut. One theory about why the chestnut was so prevalent is that when the native people burned large swaths of forest (as they sometimes did, to get rid of the underbrush for ease of hunting), the chestnut and shagbark hickory were the most fire-resistant trees. The American Chestnut Society was founded to restore this important tree to the forests of the East coast. There are two important ideas for the restoration: to experiment with cross-breeding and backcross breeding the American and blight-resistant Chinese chestnut trees ; and genetic engineering-to grow a transgenic blight-resistant chestnut. It is now known that cross-breeding the American and Chinese chestnut trees is not enough. Chestnut blight resistance is very complicated, and the Chinese varieties have blight resistance spread over dozens of genes. William Powell, a professor at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, NY, has been working on the chestnut problem.

He began taking embryos from a tree in Binghamton that had not completely died because of the blight. He inserted a wheat gene in the embryos that produced an enzyme that would protect the tree from disease. After much experimentation , one line looked promising. It was named Darling 58 after a colleague of Powell . Because of backcrossing, Darling 58 is genetically an American chestnut tree with one extra wheat gene that gives it resistance to the blight. Since the first Darling 58s matured, they have been cross-pollinated with the backcross trees which now are considered 15/16ths American chestnut (if you're interested, look up backcrossing to learn how it works). The next step will be to release them in the wild. But there are problems with this.

After Monsanto introduced plants engineered to be immune to Roundup, transgenic plants have become controversial and have faced resistance in the US and other countries. The USDA has tight guidelines and has required much study on the environmental impact of the transgenic American Chestnut. According to officials at the American Chestnut Society, FDA approval for this tree is on track to be given in 2023.

There are many ways we can assist in the efforts to bring back the chestnut to the woods of Virgil.

1. Finding trees – Once a tree is identified as American chestnut, nuts can be collected. Then they can be distributed to research plantations and the College of Environmental Science and Forestry.
2. Planting trees –gather the nuts, germinate them in the fridge and raise them as seedlings and plant them in the spring. Yes, they're not blight resistant but it's possible in a few years they may be pollinated by a blight-resistant tree and produce blight-resistant offspring.
3. Become informed – check out the websites <https://acf.org/ny/contacts/> and <http://www.esf.edu/chestnut/> Here is information on DISTRICT 7 – Broome, Cayuga,

Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego, Tioga, & Tompkins Counties

4. Help other underdogs - the work done and knowledge accumulated will help other cases of invasive species such as Dutch Elm disease, Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock Adelgid, Butternut Canker, Red Pine Sirex Wood Wasp, Sudden Oak Death, etc.

5. Get involved with planting small orchards (8-10 trees) of American Chestnuts, with a plan to place a precious trans-genic seedling in the middle of the orchard once they are FDA approved. This way, half of the nuts on the middle tree will be blight-resistant. Then put on your Johnny Appleseed pot and start spreading them in your forests.

Do any woods-walkers know where stands of chestnuts still exist in Virgil? If so, please email Val Ross at Valerie.ross49@gmail.com

The Virgil Historical Society presented a program on the efforts to revive the tree on March 17 at 7pm at the Virgil Town Hall.

Val will also be presented at the Virgil Town Board meeting on April 14, 2022 at 6:30 PM. Contact Val if you wish to learn more about the American Chestnut tree.



Young ladies standing under an American Chestnut tree,

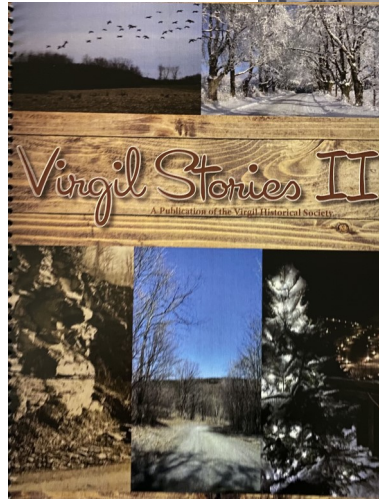
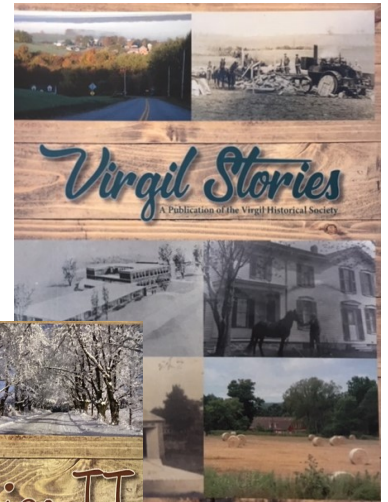
Virgil Rural Cemetery

The peaceful cemetery at the edge of the village is the final resting spot for the greater Virgil residents from early 1800's to present day. The cemetery is a nonprofit organization that relies on income from burials, lot sales, investments and donations for its day-to-day operations. The cemetery board is looking forward to improved lawn mowing and trimming with the contract of a new service. Please take note of the October deadline for picking up summer flowers and make sure your decorations are sturdy enough to withstand the Virgil winds. Last summer a group of talented and generous people met most Monday mornings at 8:00 am to work on various improvement projects. Feel free to join the group to help with the upkeep of the cemetery.



Virgil Stories Volume I and II

Did you know that there was a prison in Virgil, and that there was a World War II spotter station in Virgil or that there is a clown buried in the Virgil Rural Cemetery? The Virgil Historical Society has published two books filled with many stories from the early pioneers to present day about the people and places in Virgil. The books are available for purchase at the town hall. Volume I is \$20 and volume II is \$25.



Cortland County Legislator

By: Sandy Price

Resolutions were unanimously approved for a total of \$1.6 million in federal pandemic stimulus funds. Allocations were for \$1 million for courthouse repairs, \$200,000 to CAPCO for a child care center, \$175,000 for building repairs and equipment for a central senior center and \$200,000 for body and vehicle cameras for sheriff officers.

Required redistricting of legislative districts is underway. A legislative committee and a community committee are studying and will make recommendations in the near future. Under discussion are to have 17, 15 or 11 districts. The state has required that there be no more than a 5% difference in the districts. So whichever is chosen the districts will be different as they are presently and not necessarily following town lines. I'll keep you informed as it progresses.

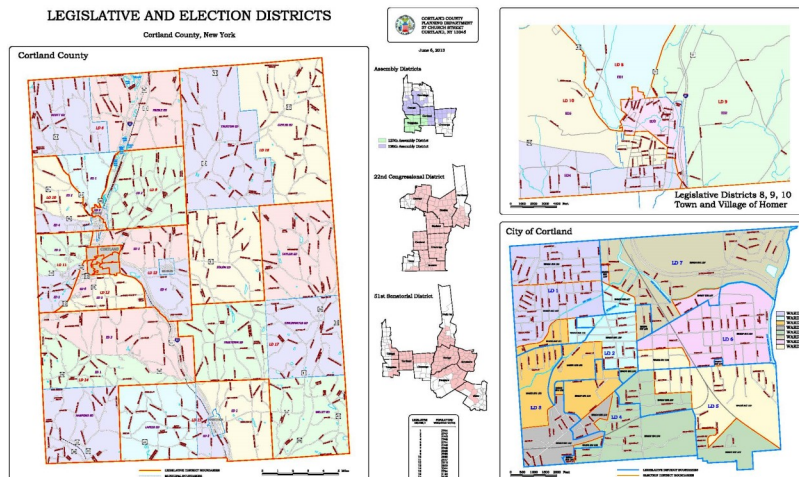
Landfill amnesty credit for municipalities was approved. There is 30 ton limit per municipality of waste other than garbage at no charge. A great way to keep our beautiful countryside beautiful. By the way: The landfill no longer takes tires at their facility.

Is there anything I should be aware of or doing?

Thought for the month:

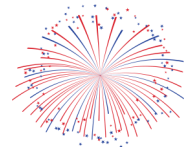
A couple of years from now, everything you're stressing about won't even matter. Keep moving forward.

Current District Map



To the left is a map of the current legislative and election districts. As our Legislator Sandy Price mentioned in the above article there maybe be some changes coming for our district. This map is also available on the Town Board's page on the Virgil website www.virgilny.org and it is also available on the Cortland County Legislator's website.

Virgil July Fireworks



The town of Virgil will once again host Fireworks in July 2022. They will be held on July 2nd at 9:00 PM at Hope Lake Park. We hope many of you can make it to this fun family event.



Town of Virgil

The Virgil Town Hall
1176 Church Street
Virgil, NY 13045

Phone: 607-835-6174

Fax: 607-835-6668

**We're here to serve you. Visit
our website at:
www.Virgilny.org**



Virgil Town Supervisor: John Kaminski
Deputy Supervisor: Jereme Stiles
Town Council Members: Eric Snow
Gary Pelton
Matt Denniston

The Town Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 P.M.

- Town Clerk/Collector: Alane Van Donsel
- Deputy Clerk: Yvonne Terwilliger
- Town's Bookkeeper: Shannon Doubet
- Town Accountant: Colin Cahill
- Town Justice: Mack Cook
- Highway Superintendent: Britt Morse
- Animal Control Officer: Lindsay Kemp
- Town Assessor: Brian Fitts
- Town Attorney: Daniel Ellis II, Esq.
- Code Enforcement: Kevin McMahon
- Zoning Officer Adam Brown
- County Legislator: Sandy Price
- Town Historian: Marsha Powell

Special Olympics NY: 2022 Winter Games



Approximately 500 Special Olympics New York athletes and coaches from throughout the state competed in 6 sports: Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Floor Hockey, Snowboarding and Snowshoe.

This year's Alpine Skiing competitions were held at Greek Peak, Saturday, February 26th. Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports had 19 competitors. The New York State Winter Games will be returning to Greek Peak February 25th 2023 and February 24th 2024.

Check our website in September for details about getting involved; we are always looking for volunteers! <https://www.gpadaptive.org/volunteers>

Special thanks to the Harriet Ford Dickenson Fund of the Community Foundation for South Central New York, Greek Peak Mountain Resort and to all the others who make our program possible.

Respectfully submitted by Ronnie Wade, Virgil resident and humble volunteer



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2022
Monday June 7-Friday Jul 1 9AM-Noon
Virgil United Methodist Church
PreK-Grade 6

Get those creative juices flowing a Spark Studios where imagination is ignited and creativity is awakened. Whether kids are exploring their artistic side in the Bible Study Studio or Crafts Design Center, laying down a track of at the Music Sound stage, or participating at the Missions Workshop, they will learn like King David, to use their talents to bring glory to God.
To volunteer or for more information contact: Gayle Kryger at 607-229-2671
GayleKryger2033@gmail.com
Admission is Free.