

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- C.O.V.E Ski & Snow Board Club
- Chicken Law?
- Election Day
- This month's Historical spotlight: World War II Spotters in Virgil?
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- Towns Budget Hearing Scheduled

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Town of Virgil News

VOLUME VII ISSUE III

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Chicken Law in Virgil?

Many times, when people speak of the Town of Virgil's Chicken law, there are a few chuckles. Virgil being predominantly rural with a strong farming history, makes one wonder why we even need such a law known as the "Chicken Law." Many things have changed due to COVID and with the current raise in inflation, many folks in town are resorting to raising chickens. The proposed Law has brought on much discussion and some misunderstanding. Some folks think that Virgil's elected Officials are trying to make it more difficult to own chickens, when, in fact they are trying to make it easier. According to the current Zoning Law, you are not allowed to keep chickens anywhere in the Town of Virgil unless you own at least five acres. This doesn't mean you can't keep chickens on less than five acres, but it does mean that unless you petition the Virgil Zoning Board for an area variance, you are not in compliance. The fee to appear before the Zoning Board is \$275.00. Many folks were upset to learn that they were out of compliance, especially if they live in a neighborhood residential area. The new proposed Local Law, named the "Keeping of Chickens" is intended to allow many residents the ability to keep chickens within the town, without having to go through the variance process. This is provided they follow the rules of the Local Law. This law has been discussed at many town board meetings and there have been public hearings held. The Town board will potentially be voting on the proposed law at the next board meeting to be held on Nov. 10, 2022, 6:30 PM at the Virgil Town Hall. If you wish to view the proposed Local Law visit the Town Board's page at www.virgilny.org



Virgil C.O.V.E

The Virgil Community Organized Events organization has been busy these last few months. Their mission is to strengthen the Virgil Community by providing programs and events that supports all ages in our community. This summer they hosted a series of Summer concerts at the Virgil Gazebo. They had Tribal Revival, Molly and the Ringwald's, People People and Cherry Holler. The concerts were held on Wednesday evenings and food was available to purchase from Smash Me 607. Look for the concert lineup for next year.

Virgil C.O.V.E. organized a family fun Day at Hope lake park on June 11th. They had a food truck Fire Dawgz BBQ, DJ Matt Sherman, a bounce house, face painting, games and a fishing derby. This event was enjoyed by all who attended.

C.O.V.E. has also organized many play date evenings at the Virgil Playground as well as a field trip to a football game. The next event they have scheduled will be on Oct. 29th at the Virgil Fire station. They will be hosting a Halloween Fun Night From 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. DJ Matt Sherman will be there. There will

be dancing, games and snacks. Look for the C.O.V.E. Page on facebook.

HALLOWEEN FUN AT THE FIREHOUSE

Friday October 28th
6:30pm -8:30pm
Ages 12 & under

FAMILY FUN W/
DJ MATT SHERMAN

DANCING



GAMES
SNACKS



Text My Gov Approved

The Virgil Town Board has approved "Text My Gov" for one more year. "Text My Gov" is a simple way for citizens to communicate with the town using a mobile phone's regular messaging service. The service allows anyone to quickly find links, documents or to receive text answers to questions. There is no download or app required. The smart texting technology works around the clock providing assistance any time day or night 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You will be able to connect to the town from anywhere, using text messaging saving you time and money. Please consider signing up and pass on the word to your friends and neighbors. Feel free to call or Text Alane Van Donsel with any questions. 607-749-0038



Message From The Codes Office

The Virgil Codes office would like to send out a message to all Virgil residents. Many of us are very proud to live in Virgil. Thank you to all those who keep their property neat and tidy. The Code and Zoning Department is struggling with some folks who are not keeping their property maintained and those who have junk cars. If you fall into this category, please consider cleaning up your property soon. The Code and Zoning Officers will begin the process of sending compliance notices soon. They would much rather have you come in compliance by keeping your property maintained. Please call the Virgil Codes office at 607-835-6174 Ext. 3. If no one answers please leave a message and one of our officers will call you back shortly. Thank you so much for your attention to this matter.

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“The board has done an amazing job at keeping the towns portion of the budget low. Town Taxes will be going up by a slight percent in 2023”

A New — and Faster — Way to Request a Social Security Card



Do you need to apply for an original or replacement Social Security Number card? The Social Security office now has a new — and faster — way for you to start online. When you go to the Social Security Number and Card webpage, they now ask you a series of questions to determine whether you can:

Complete the application process online. Start the application process online, then bring any required documents to your local office to complete the application, typically in less time.

Once you complete your application (online or in-person), they will mail the card after they process the application. Please understand that they don't issue cards at their offices.

World War II Spotters in Virgil?

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the government established a civilian airplane spotter program, referred to as the 'Aircraft Warning System'. The worry was that the advancement in aircraft capability meant enemy planes could fly from Europe to our country.

There would be little advance notice of their arrival. The military did not have equipment to detect incoming aircraft. Radar was invented in 1935, however, it was not used for military operations until 1944.

Thousands of spotter stations were set up along the east coast and inland to the Appalachian Mountains. The west coast also set up stations from Washington to California. Estimates vary from 750,000 to over one million volunteer participants. The program was popular. Those not in the military found this a way to serve their country.

Virgil established a spotter station on the Merwin Lang farm. By August of 1942, it had moved from part-time, daytime hours only to twenty-four-hour coverage, seven days a week. Over forty-two volunteers took turns reporting all aircraft that flew over.

Spotters received training and instructions. The Coca-Cola Company issued decks of cards to help spotters learn the characteristics of US and enemy planes. The back side of each card depicted a young woman in uniform with a radio headset, holding a bottle of Coke. The front side showed World War II aircraft from Germany, Italy, Japan, Great Britain, and the United States.

Planes were documented. A form was filled in with details including:

- Number of planes (one, few, many)
- Single or multi engine
- Altitude (very low, low, high, very high)
- Seen or heard (at night or in fog - they may have been heard only)
- Direction of aircraft
- Distance from station



The information was called in to a central station.

A story has been told that only once did a German plane enter U.S. airspace. It was near the end of the war when an Air Force crew flew a captured German plane to Florida. The military planned the flight, but the civilian spotters were kept in the dark. Before the plane crossed from water to land, a spotter sent an emergency message identifying it as German and included the correct make and model.

The spotter stations remained active until radar made them unnecessary. Written By: Marsha Powell, Virgil Historian



2023 Town Budget Hearing Scheduled: Nov. 10th

The Town Board has been working hard on completing the Town's 2023 budget. They held a series of workshops that were open to the public. Thank you to all who attended the budget workshops.

The budget determines the tax levy for the coming year. The board has done an amazing job at keeping the towns portion of the budget low. Town Taxes will be going up by a slight percent in 2023. There are copies of the proposed budget available for preview in the Town Clerks office and online at www.VirgilNY.org. A public budget hearing will be held on Nov. 10th at 6:30 PM before the next scheduled Town Board meeting. The board will listen to input from you at the hearing. After the public hearing the board will then vote to adopt the final 2023 budget.



Election Day: Tuesday November 8th

Election Day is just around the corner. Polls will be open at the Virgil Town Hall on November 8th 2022 from 6:00 AM– 9:00 PM. There are several positions up for election this year, these include: NYS Governor, NYS Comptroller, Attorney General, United State Senate, Representative of Congress 19th District, State Senator 5nd District and Member of the Assembly 125th District. There are also two propositions on the ballot this year. Number one is the “Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act 2022” Number Two is a Cortland County Proposition regarding the position of the Treasurer. A Sample Ballot is available on the front page of the Virgil Town Website at www.VirgilNY.org and on the Cortland County Board of Elections website.



Report on the Chestnut Project By Val Ross

On October 8 the New York State Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) convened for its annual meeting at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) in Syracuse. The New York State chapter is spearheading efforts to introduce a blight-resistant, transgenic chestnut tree (the Darling 58, named for Herb Darling, who established the American Chestnut Foundation) back into the forests of the United States. Other states’ chapters are focused more on creating a viable cross with the Chinese Chestnut. Experimental orchards with the Darling 58 tree have been established at ESF, and final approval for release of the tree to the public is expected in August of 2023. The approval process is an arduous one, involving scientific studies and approval by the EPA, the FDA, and the USDA. Those agencies have to make sure the tree poses no risk to water supplies, other trees, animals, people, insects, fungi—the list goes on. If approved, Darling 58 will be the very first transgenic tree approved for release into the wild. So far, everything is on track for final approval this coming August.

The Darling 58 is an American Chestnut tree with a single wheat gene inserted into its DNA. This gene allows the tree to produce oxylate oxidase, which detoxifies the material produced by the blight fungus and allows the tree to fight off blight. Following closely behind the Darling 58 is another transgenic variety called DarWin, which includes a second promoter gene that can turn on and off the oxylate oxidase gene so it’s only produced when it’s needed. The Darling 58 has constant production of the oxylate oxidase. Approval for DarWin will be a future project, largely dependent on Darling 58’s success.

Virgil is participating with TACF and has established two “mother orchards” of chestnut trees,

one at the Town Hall and one on private wooded property. Once the Darling 58 is available, it will be inserted in the middle of the orchards to get pollinated by the surrounding chestnut trees. One might think it would make more sense to just wait until the Darling 58 is available and plant an orchard using all of those; but genetic diversity is desirable, and trees will be much healthier if pollination occurs from many different trees, rather than a single line. Half of the nuts on the fertilized Darling 58 tree in our orchards will be blight-resistant because they will inherit the wheat gene. ESF will be able to tell, by a process in their lab, which nuts have the blight-resistance gene. Once nuts are being produced on the Darling 58 tree, they can be mailed to ESF where they will be tested. The “good ones” will be sent back for planting. In Virgil, that will mean we will eventually have several blight-resistant chestnut trees pollinating each other at the Town Hall! At that point, the nuts can be gathered by Virgilian Johnny Appleseeds and spread all over the forests of Cortland County. Chestnut trees take 7-10 years of growth before they start to flower (even longer in the shady understory of a forest), so this is a long-term project.

Why not just go with the Chinese Chestnut crosses (WalMart sells one called Dunstan)? They don’t seem to do well here in New York. They don’t shed their leaves in the winter, and as a result lose branches during a heavy snow. They are not uniformly blight resistant. They don’t like our extreme cold. In the old days, the chestnut tree ranged from northern Florida to New York, with Cortland County being at the northernmost of its main range. Now, with

warming changes, it is predicted that the main range of the chestnut will be from Tennessee to Canada, with Cortland County being smack dab in the ideal range. The hope is that the original American Chestnut with blight resistance will fare much better in the wild than its Chinese cousin.

Our chapter of TACF has divided New York State into 9 different districts; Virgil is in district 7, with leaders Roy Hopke and Tim Russell. District 7 has a big chestnut orchard in Sherburne (near the Rogers Conservation Center) and will be a major site for growth and development of the Darling 58 trees. There is ample opportunity for volunteers to help with future projects!

If you would be interested in establishing your own chestnut orchard, or want more information on how you can get involved with this project, go to acf.org/ny/ or contact Valerie.ross49@gmail.com Let’s bring back this grand and useful tree!



Special Olympics New York: 2022 Winter

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.

This year’s Adaptive Snowsports season at Greek Peak is over but there is a fundraiser at Cortese Restaurant in Binghamton on Tuesday April 26th from 5-8 p.m. Tickets are \$25 at the door and include dinner and live music. Raffles, scotch tasking, and a cash bar will be available.

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



Town of Virgil

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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 Anderson
- Town Assessor: Brian Fitts
- Town Attorney: Daniel Ellis II
- Code Enforcement: Kevin McMahon
- Zoning Officer: Adam Brown
- County Legislator: Sandy Price
- Town Historian: Marsha Powell



Virgil C.O.V.E Ski & Snowboard Club 2023

Virgil children in grades 3-6 can join the C.O.V.E./ Greek Peak Ski & snowboard Club and the basic program is FREE for Virgil residents. Participants will have their choice to either ski or snowboard. The program will run on Thursdays from 3:30 PM-7:00 PM starting in January 2023 and runs for 6 weeks on the following dates: Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26 and Feb. 2 and 9 weather permitting. A **mandatory** meeting with the Virgil Club coordinator Heather Evanick is scheduled for Thursday Nov. 3rd from 6:30 PM-7:30 at the Virgil Town Hall, 1176 Church Street, Virgil NY. You can contact Heather at heatherevanick@gmail.com

Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports ready to kick off 2023 Season!



Coaches and prospective coaches are invited to our opening meeting and informational session on Saturday, November 5th at 10:00 a.m. at Hope Lake Lodge.

Volunteers: Do you want to make a difference? We are always looking for help in a surprising array of areas. We can always use qualified skiers/snowboarders to help guide or with training/experience to instruct.

Our adaptive family encompasses children and adults with developmental disabilities, visual impairments, paraplegia, amputations, muscle/skeletal issues and an array of other disabilities. We provide adaptive equipment and teaching methods to help make winter fun! Volunteers are needed to assist Special Olympics with the Winter. All coaches will need to complete Special Olympics volunteer course, Safe Sports, and pass a background check.

Training will occur during the first two weekends in December. We welcome and embrace "never-ers!"

Do you like to fundraise or organize events? We need you! GPAS raises its own funding to cover the expenses of insurance, adaptive equipment, heat, hot chocolate (lots of that), and all sorts of other associated expenses.

Are you mechanically inclined? Maybe you would like to help in our equipment room. Mono-skis and outriggers need to be maintained/repared and inventoried. We can use you!

Do you have a strong back? We're talking winter...there is always snow to shovel, mono-skis to carry, sliders to push. Yes, we can use you!

Tell us your skill and we will find a place for you to help!

The first day of our season is January 7th, 2023.

As if the fun was not enough, extremely dedicated volunteers may have the opportunity to earn passes for future skiing.

A super special thanks goes out to the Harriet Ford Dickenson Fund of the Community Foundation for South Central New York and to Greek Peak Mountain Resort who make our program possible.

S k i y o u s o o n !
Ronnie Wade, Virgil Resident and Volunteer
<https://www.gpadaptive.org>

