



*World-Class Technology. Unrivaled Local Service.*

**JANUARY 2021**

## **VERNONTECH** CENTER

**Welcome Vernon Tech Center!** The new technology center opened its doors on December 15th at 214 N. Main St, Viroqua. Leum Technologies and VC Co-op have created a joint venture to serve the community with a one stop technology center at our previous Viroqua location. This is a great opportunity after the closing of our Viroqua office to offer more services and fill a void for the community. Leum Technologies is not new to the area as they have been in business since 2012.

Vernon Tech Center can fulfill all your computer needs. Whether you're looking for a new computer or you would like to repair your old one, Vernon Tech Center can help.

### ***Here is a list of services that are provided at the new Vernon Tech Center:***

- Computer Sales, Service and Repair (Custom Built PC's)
- Cables & Connectors
- Custom Software
- Computer Installation & Setup
- IT Service and Consulting
- Website Design & Hosting
- Off-site Backups
- Home & Business WiFi Sales
- Microsoft Licensing & Management
- Point of Sale and Inventory Management
- Digitize Photos, Videos, Slides and Negatives

**HOURS**  
**Monday-Friday**  
**9 am to 5 pm**



*Employees from left, Gavin Mellem, Dan Phillips, Jenny Leum, Scott Leum, Xana Leum, and Steve Firebaugh*

**SECURITY | INTERNET | PHONE | TELEVISION**

**[www.vernoncom.coop](http://www.vernoncom.coop)**

# Technology & Innovation

**COVID-19 related scams are on the increase and to keep you informed and on alert, here are some tips to keep in mind.**

1. The IRS warns of a COVID-related text message scam stating that you have “received a direct deposit of \$1,200 from COVID-19 TREAS FUND”. Further action is required and a web link is provided that appears to come from a state agency.

The IRS does not send unsolicited texts or emails and if you receive this text, please take a screenshot and send it to *phishing@irs.gov* with the date, time and phone number that received the text.

2. Be on the lookout for antibody testing fraud schemes. Never share your personal or health information to anyone other than known and trusted medical professionals.
3. Be wary of unsolicited telephone calls and emails from individuals claiming to be IRS and Treasury employees. Remember IRS's first form of communication is by mail, not phone.

4. Be on the lookout for telephone calls by individuals posing as government officials or payment facilitators promising CARES Act stimulus payments and asking for personal identifying information (PII). Also be aware of mass-mailing, spam email, or text-message campaigns to perpetrate government-imposter schemes. These forms of communication provide a website, a phone number, or an email address for consumers to contact to arrange for stimulus payments upon payment of an advanced fee or threatening adverse consequences for failure to cooperate with the alleged stimulus-related transaction.

5. Law enforcement has seen fraud schemes using smartphone apps or websites that claim to be a government office associated with CARES Act programs. These fake sites are requesting PII, including banking information to deposit stimulus payments. Perpetrators then will use this information to debit money from the consumers' bank accounts.

***Criminals will likely continue to use new methods to exploit COVID-19 worldwide. Stay alert and stay informed about common fraud schemes related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.***

## 2021 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE



VC Co-op is offering scholarships for the 2021 school year. Our goal is to give back to the members we serve and offering yearly scholarships is one way we give back. Members and dependent children are eligible. ***Scholarship applications are available on our website. Due date is February 12, 2021.***

## DEER PHOTO CONTEST



**Jim Trussoni** was the winner of the **2020 Wisconsin Deer Hunting Photo contest** from VC Co-op. He was selected in a random drawing to win a cooler full of hunting merchandise. We received some great photos of local deer hunters and their harvest. *Pictured below are just a few.*



*Left, Morgan Woodhouse, Hunter Anderson, Jerry Jothen*

***Thank you to everyone who sent in photos.***

## TACO CASSEROLE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1 lb ground beef</b>                                       | <b>½ tsp garlic powder</b>                                   |
| <b>1 (1-oz) package taco seasoning</b>                        | <b>½ tsp onion powder</b>                                    |
| <b>¾ cup water</b>  | <b>8- oz Velveeta cheese cubed</b>                           |
| <b>1 (10.75-oz ) can Cream of Chicken Soup</b>                | <b>1 (12-oz) can Pillsbury Grands Jr Biscuits (10-count)</b> |
| <b>1 (10-oz ) can Rotel Diced Tomatoes with Green Chilies</b> |  |



### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9×13-inch pan with cooking spray. Set aside.

In a large skillet, cook ground beef until no longer pink. Drain fat and return to skillet. Add taco seasoning and water. Simmer 5 minutes.

Stir in soup, Rotel tomatoes, garlic and onion powder. Add Velveeta cheese, cooking until melted. Remove from heat.

Cut biscuits into quarters. Stir into beef and cheese mixture. Pour mixture into prepared 9×13-inch pan.

Bake for 30 minutes. Top with your favorite taco toppings.

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## RECIPIENTS CHOSEN FOR UPLIFTING OUR COMMUNITY



Four recipients of the “Uplifting Our Community” were selected by a committee to receive \$250.00 for the Season of Giving. Out of respect for their privacy, the names will not be released. There were many hardships and it was a difficult decision to pick only four. The Christmas spirit was felt by the employees of VC Co-op, so they pooled together and tripled the donations so everyone who was nominated received a gift!  
***Thank you to everyone who sent in nominations.***

### Headquarters

103 N Main St. Westby  
(8:00 AM - 4:30 PM)

(608) 634-3136



## New Year's Day January 1, 2021

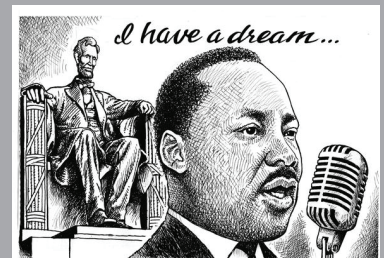


*Leaving behind us an extraordinary year, VC Co-op wishes our members an abundant, healthy and safe 2021!*

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## Martin Luther King Day

January 18, 2021



**Scholarship  
Applications Due**

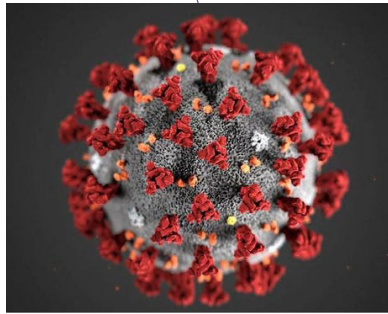
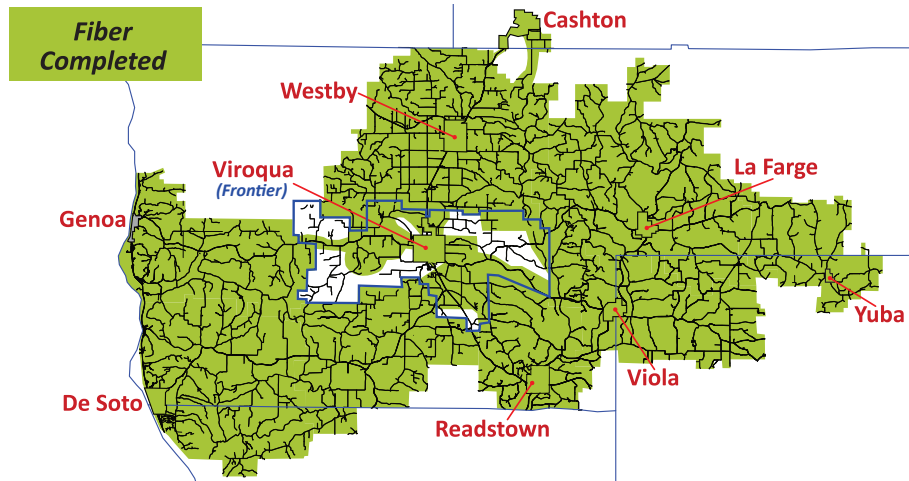
**February 12, 2021**

## A LOOK BACK AT 2020

2020 was a historical year for everyone and will be fresh in our minds for years to come. One thing we know for sure is the need for broadband in a pandemic was essential. *Here is a look back at 2020.*



Fiber construction for the summer was aggressive and we completed areas in De Soto, Readstown and Westby. Because of the vigorous efforts we have taken in construction, we are now over 8000 members!



Due to COVID-19, we doubled our Internet capacity and network upgrades were made to keep up with the needs of our members.



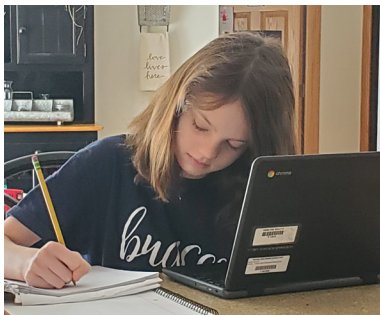
More than ever, the need for donations to local food pantries were essential. VC Co-op donated \$6,000.00 to local pantries. Other donations throughout the year were made to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, Bethel Run/Walk and more.



With the help of Paragon, a webcasting platform, we held the 2020 Annual Meeting virtually for the first time in April.



Masks became a necessity in our office to keep our members and employees safe.



VC Co-op saw the need to keep our children connected to our local schools during the pandemic. With the coordination of local school officials, we provided internet to children who were without.



The one and only parade of the season was the Retreat 2-Way parade. All other parades were cancelled due to COVID-19.



"The Mighty Thor", as we call it (Gazebo) was completed for the City of Westby to use for community events. Above, the Westby Band performs Christmas music.