



## MONTHLY NEWS

WORLD-CLASS TECHNOLOGY. UNRIVALED LOCAL SERVICE.

### JULY 2021

#### Top News Inside

- Community Square
- Letter from the CEO
- What to look for when purchasing a new router
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- What's new on HBO Max

The space located next to the VC Co-op office has been a work in progress since 2017. The space has been transformed into a community space which means, ***"Felleskap Square"*** in Norwegian. The property was previously owned by Bruce Brye, Corner Mechanics. The space became available and VC Co-op purchased it. After contemplating what the space could be used for, Rod Olson came up with the idea for the space to be used by the community. A couple of years later, a place for people to sit and enjoy the beautiful outdoors in the heart of downtown Westby came into fruition.

Feedback was given by the community on how to design the space and most felt the Norwegian Heritage should be incorporated into the look of the space. "The Mighty Thor", as we call it at VC Co-op is a Norwegian style gazebo constructed out of solid Douglas Fir and depicts the look of Norway. The space is equipped with picnic tables for people to sit and eat or just enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. Judy Rehbein, a local outdoor landscape designer and gardener, came up with a design and planted, flowers, shrubs and plants that could survive our winter climate and salt from the street.

The idea proved to be a big hit, as it has already been used for *Walkabout Westby*, *History Alive* and most recently *Syttende Mai* this spring. Local musicians have used the gazebo when the weather has been inclement. It covered them from the elements, making it ideal for them to perform.

Stop by and see the beauty of the small park and enjoy what Westby has to offer.





Rod Olson, CEO

## FROM THE CEO

We are winding down on the construction phase to place fiber-optics to all of our cooperative members. Construction is complete in the Villages of Genoa and Yuba, along with some cleanup areas in La Farge and the mobile home parks scattered around our serving area. The only area left is Battle Island, near De Soto. **Once complete, our original eight cooperative serving areas will be 100% fiber optic.**

The cooperative has 8,135 members. There are 5,724 members receiving service in the original eight exchanges and 2,411 in Frontier's City of Viroqua and rural areas, as well as CenturyLink's Village of Cashton. VC Co-op will add another 300 members when rural Viroqua and Eagle Mountain (a portion of the Village of Ferryville) are complete. Our hope is to get most of this done in the fall, and finish it in early 2022. We have utilized seven Broadband Expansion Grants from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. The cooperative has been awarded over \$1.9 million in grants for these areas. There is currently another round of grants available this summer. We are being asked to move into other areas, currently served by the large companies. This is by people who are underserved and have little or no broadband services and little hope of getting them from their current provider. They would love to have the same service that our members have had for 5-10 years. VC Co-op's cooperative board has directed us to continue to look for areas to grow the cooperative's footprint and expand our membership by using grants and stimulus money. They have also directed us to be frugal with the members money and not jeopardize the ability to pay back patronage to our loyal members. And that is our plan!



214 N. Main St. Viroqua, (608) 638-2030.



### Secure, Reliable Wi-Fi Experience

**Key Features**  
 Wi-Fi 5 (802.11ac) | 1750 Mb/s  
 2.4 GHz / 5 GHz (Dual-Band)  
 3 x Fixed External Antennas

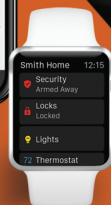
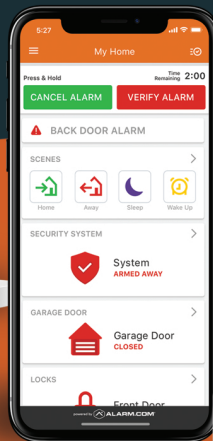
**TP-Link Archer A7 AC1750**  
 Wireless Dual-Band Gigabit Router

MORE ROUTERS AVAILABLE AT VERNON TECH CENTER

**VC Co-op payments can be dropped off at the Vernon Tech Center; however, if you need service, equipment or even if you have questions, please call us at our Westby office (608) 634-3136.**



## Smarter Home & Business Security



www.vernoncom.coop



## TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION



### Wireless Router Technology:

There are many things to consider when selecting the best Wi-Fi router for your home or business. One consideration is the wireless standard that is currently being used. Depending on the age, an older Wi-Fi router may only offer wireless speeds up to 300 Megabits per second (Mbps). A new Wi-Fi router can support speeds over 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps). Keep in mind, you will need a wireless device that supports the latest wireless standards. Having a router with the newest wireless standard is ideal for future proofing your network.

#### **Another thing to consider is the connection type.**

VC Co-op provides a Fiber Modem, which converts the incoming fiber optic signal into a Ethernet signal. Ensuring

your new Wi-Fi router is Ethernet ready is necessary for use on VC Co-op's Fiber Network.

Security is another factor to consider, with the recommended password encryption type being at least Wi-Fi Protected Access II (WPA2). As always, pick a strong password to keep unauthorized network access from occurring. Many Wi-Fi routers also come with additional security features, such as isolated guest networks and Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS), which can deter unwanted access to your devices and prevent viruses from spreading around your network.

### Wi-Fi router signals:

Wi-Fi routers operate using radio frequencies, like an AM or FM radio. Many Wi-Fi routers now come as dual or tri-band, meaning they have multiple radio frequencies that your devices can connect to. These frequencies have differences which can make or break your Wi-Fi experience. For example, a dual-band router will have a 2.4 Gigahertz (GHz) and a 5 GHz radio. The 2.4 GHz frequency offers greater signal penetration and coverage, but at a slower speed. On the other hand, the 5 GHz frequency offers faster speed and performs better in a high-density environment, but with lower quality signal penetration and coverage. It is possible to split the frequencies into multiple Wi-Fi networks, aka Service Set Identifier (SSID), but it is generally recommended to let the router and your device determine which frequency to use and when. It is worth noting that cheaper, residential Wi-Fi routers may not optimize frequencies and connections as well as an enterprise router.



For questions regarding routers, call the **Vernon Tech Center at (608) 638-2030**. They offer a variety of TP Link routers ranging from \$44.99-\$148.99. Their technicians can answer any questions to help you make an informed decision before you buy!

## ENTERTAINMENT NEWS - HBO MAX



Basketball superstar LeBron James teams up with the Looney Tunes gang to defeat the Goon Squad and save his son.



Eight years after the original website went dark, a new generation of New York private school teenagers are introduced to the social surveillance of Gossip Girl



# Happy 4th of July



**See us at the La Farge  
Independence Day Parade**

*VC Co-op has not participated in a parade since 2019 and we are looking forward to getting out and seeing the people and communities we serve. The La Farge 4th of July Celebration is coming soon. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the camaraderie of the celebration.*

*Look for us at more parades in September.*



**VERNON**  
Communications COOP

103 N Main Street  
Westby, WI 54667

Lobby Hours:  
8:00 am - 4:30 pm (M-F)

(608) 634-3136  
www.vernoncom.coop



## American Truffle

1 Angel Food cake mix  
16 oz. cream cheese  
1 C. sour cream  
1 C. powdered sugar  
1 tsp. almond extract  
2 C. sliced strawberries  
1 C. blueberries  
16 oz. Cool Whip



Bake the Angel Food cake according to package directions.

Cool and rip into small pieces and set aside.

Meanwhile, mix the cream cheese, sour cream, powdered sugar and almond extract. Fold in the Cool Whip and broken pieces of cake.

Begin to layer the ingredients into a truffle bowl beginning with a thin layer of cake. Then add a layer of the blueberries and strawberries and continue to layer, ending with fruit on the top layer.

*Use your creativity and decorate the top layer to depict the US flag.*



**FREE PREVIEW**  
July 21, 2021 through  
September 5, 2021



Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 Olympic Games were postponed and will now occur in 2021 in Tokyo, Japan on NBCUniversal networks. The Olympic Channel FREE preview will give you highlights of events for members that do not currently have the channel. The actual events take place from Friday July 2, 2021, - Sunday August 8, 2021. A schedule of events can be viewed at <https://www.nbcolympics.com/schedule>.

**LAST CHANCE FOR A FREE SLICE OF PIE**



Sign up today for  
automatic bill  
payment and receive  
a coupon for a  
**FREE slice of pie**  
from Borgens Cafe  
in Westby.

**Hurry Ends Soon!**

July 31, 2021

