



MONTHLY NEWS

WORLD-CLASS TECHNOLOGY. UNRIVALED LOCAL SERVICE.

SEPTEMBER 2021

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NEW WEBSITE

We have a new website! Go to www.vernoncom.coop to see the new look the cooperative offers. It's easy to navigate and has all the details you need about our products and services. Most likely, the information you need is right at your fingertips. Want to change your services or know how to read your bill? It's on the site.

Here is some information our website offers:

- Products & Services
- Smart Hub Order Management
- Online Directory
- Tutorials
- Support videos
- Pricing
- Forms
- Security

Many times a website is the first impression a consumer sees of any given business. The importance of a website is essential in today's ever changing world. Credibility is one of the main reasons online presence is important. How many times do you need a phone number, address or email for a company or you just want information? The first thing you do is go to your phone or computer to look for the information you need. It's convenient and efficient!

We hope you like the new website and find it useful.



Not only is our directory on our website, but there is a mobile app too. Just go to the App store and search for "Vernon County WI Local Search, to download the **FREE** app. *Call any phone number with a single tap.*



Rod Olson, CEO

FROM THE CEO

After I was hired over twenty years ago, I began the task of organizing and archiving over 50 years of history of the cooperative. Most of the information came from board minutes, and annual meetings, that were not well organized or even kept together. It gave me the opportunity to go through these documents as a part of organizing them.

At that time I started listing major events throughout the 70+ years. I have always had an interest in this as my father, Dan Olson, was one of the early employees of the co-op. As a kid I tagged along when he went out on trouble calls. I spent a lot of hours sitting in a truck or the central office making things out of wire and electric tape. In the next months, I would like to throw out some history about how we got to where we are today. Many of you may not care as we seem to be evolving into a society that only looks forward and has little interest in the past.

We have reached our 70th year as a cooperative! The first meeting was held in Liberty Pole on March 15, 1950, but the cooperative did not become official until the Article of Incorporation were filed with the State of Wisconsin a year and half later on October 11, 1951. It really operated as a group of individual private companies that threw what they had into the cooperative to keep services going. They all knew they could not make it on their own. The original companies were: *Liberty Pole, Romance, Pleasant Ridge, Nash-Ridge, Bad Axe, and Ferryville Telephone Companies.* In the early years, Vernon Electric Cooperative provided financial capital, management services and operational guidance. They helped the co-op obtain REA loans for facility upgrades and to purchase the Genoa and De Soto exchanges from the La Crosse Telephone Company. These exchanges were purchased in January of 1955 for \$29,793.00 and only included the villages and a small rural serving area. In 1956 all the original companies paid for their assets and everything was now completely owned and operated under Vernon Telephone Cooperative. The original headquarters of the cooperative was located in Viroqua. Even though today the cooperative headquarters is in Westby, the co-op's roots are located in the West portion of Vernon County. So much for the first 5 years, more history will come in the future.

At our fair booth this year, we will have a display of the growth and evolution of the Cooperative and how we got to where we are today. My hope is that we can take this information and somehow have it in a form that it can be easily accessed. When I look at our roots, the time, effort and risk those founding people put in was remarkable. They didn't do it for the money. If that were the motive, they would have formed a private company and not a cooperative.

15 YEAR SERVICE AWARD



Bret Halvorson has completed 15 years of service with the cooperative and was recognized on August 19th at an employee meeting. Bret is the Installation & Repair Supervisor and he began his career in 2006. *Congratulations Bret.*



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

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



National Night Out was a night to remember. The weather was perfect and the crowd was ready for some excitement. Excitement is just what they got! There were lots of fun things for kids and adults to do, along with free food for everyone. K-9, vehicle extrications, high voltage power-line safety, a mock crash and an emergency vehicle display, were all demonstrations put on by our local first responders. VC Co-op employees and the 4H were there to grill and serve food. The evening ended with fireworks that did not disappoint. ***A special thank you to our local law enforcement and first responders for putting on such a great event for the community.***

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

The COVID-19 pandemic sparked a digital revolution. The amount of time people have spent online has reached an all time high. Everything from working from home, to shopping, learning and visiting your healthcare provider. Because of the time consumers spend online, cybercrime has skyrocketed. A Data Breach is the intentional or unintentional release of secure or private information to an untrusted environment. *Common sense is the number one way to keep you safe, but even the most technology savvy consumers can be taken.*

Here are some things you can do to prevent Data Breaches:

If you see something strange, in the physical, cyber or human domains, report it immediately.

- Know how to recognize social engineering attacks via email, on the phone or on social media.
- Never leave your devices unattended. Because our lives are so mobile, be mindful of your tablets and smartphones.
- Check your cards and bank activity regularly and be on the lookout for suspicious activity.



If you suspect you have been breached, there are steps you can take to prevent it from getting out of control.

- Change your credentials immediately. Because it's hard to know what was stolen, you will need to change every account that has the potential to be breached.
- Apply two-factor authentication if available. (This adds an extra layer of security).
- Enroll in free credit monitoring. This ensures constant control of your financial data.
- Sign up for a free credit report. Go to: **AnnualCreditReport.com**. The 3 major credit bureaus are: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.
- Putting a credit freeze on your accounts prevents creditors from being able to pull your file, which means if someone (hacker) tries to open an account in your name, they will be blocked.
- Try fraud alerts. They are free and can last for 90 days.
- Be on the look out of phishing attacks. If a hacker has your information, they can tailor emails that look legitimate. Always think before you click!

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Richland County Meat Animal Sale will be LIVE on September 11, 2021 on Channel 14 at 6:00 p.m.



The **24th Annual Larryfest** was held on August 19 -21st. The traditional Bluegrass Festival had a variety of artists this year and VC Co-op will replay highlights of the weekend on our Local Channel 14 in September and beyond!



Larryfest provides rural Wisconsin exposure to diverse cultural and traditional themes through live music.



RedZone
From NFL NETWORK

24/7, 365, the NFL Network has got you covered with football's best shows, exclusive live games, all the news and analysis you need. Hosted by NFL experts and Hall of Fame talent, the NFL Network provides exclusive live coverage of every event from the NFL Draft to the Super Bowl, with live Thursday Night Football and Preseason games in between. NFL Network is the source for all things NFL year-round.

Attention Sports enthusiasts: There will be a change in TV programming. **ESPN Classic will be replaced with ACC Network, channels 35 SD & 335 HD.** The ACC Network offers 40 football games, 150 men's and women's basketball games and 250 Olympic sports events.

HBO/Cinemax Free Preview (Sept 23 - 27)



Save the Dates

SEPTEMBER 6

Labor Day

Readstown Labor Day Parade



SEPTEMBER 12

Cashton Fall Festival Parade

Grandparents Day



SEPTEMBER 15-19

Vernon County Fair

SEPTEMBER 25

Viola Horse & Colt Parade



**103 N Main Street
Westby, WI 54667**

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

**(608) 634-3136
www.vernoncom.coop**



Apple Cake

1 pkg. (8 oz) cream cheese
2 C. sugar
4 eggs
1 C. Canola oil
2 C. flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. baking soda
2 C. chopped apples
1 C. shredded carrots
1/2 C. chopped pecans

Frosting

1/2 C. brown sugar
1/4 C. cubed butter
2 TBS. milk
1/2 C. powdered sugar
1/2 tsp. vanilla



Instructions:

In small bowl, beat cream cheese and 1/4 C. sugar. Beat in 1 egg. Set aside. In large bowl, beat oil with remaining sugar and eggs. Combine flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, baking soda. Gradually beat into oil mixture. Stir in apples, carrots, and pecans. Transfer 1/2 apple batter to a greased and floured tube pan. Layer with cream cheese mixture, then the rest of the apple batter. Bake at 350 for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick is clean. Cool 10 minute and remove to a wire rack.

Frosting:

In large saucepan, bring brown sugar, butter and milk to a boil. Cook and stir 1 minute. Remove and stir in powdered sugar and vanilla.

STUFF THE BUS CAMPAIGN



Every child deserves to have new school supplies at the start of the school year and the Vernon County Health Department's "Stuff the Bus" campaign makes sure that happens. August 7th was "Stuff the Bus" Saturday at Walmart, when anyone could stop by the store and donate school supplies for those in need. Vernon Communications donated 500 notebooks to be placed in backpacks along with other business's and organizations for those in need.

NOTE: Please pay special attention to the bill insert regarding the Mandatory 10-Digit Dialing Customer Notice, effective October 24, 2021.