



MONTHLY NEWS

WORLD-CLASS TECHNOLOGY. UNRIVALED LOCAL SERVICE.

OCTOBER 2021

Top News Inside

- Co-op Month
- 2021 Vernon County Fair
- Mesh Wi-Fi
- From the CEO
- Entertainment News

OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH

Did you know there are more than 29,000 co-ops in the U.S. with about 350 million members? Surprisingly, there are 742 cooperatives in the state of Wisconsin. There are approximately 14 co-ops in Vernon County and 10 are active members of the local Co-op Association. Industries in our area served by cooperatives are: *communications, banking, food, dairy, electricity and more*. A cooperative is a type of organization that is both owned and controlled by its members, and also use the products and services they offer. Cooperatives play an important role in our communities and giving back to our members is a principal of the cooperative. ***VC Co-op will be retiring credits from 2003-2006 in October, totaling 1.4 million. Any active or inactive member with a credit over \$50, will receive a check in the mail. Anything under \$50 will receive a bill credit.***

Vernon Communications Cooperative is commemorating 70 years since the first visionaries met to form the cooperative in 1951. The cooperative was created to give service to local, rural areas that were unserved by telephone communication. Recently CEO Rod Olson, researched and created a thorough timeline of the cooperative so the history isn't forgotten. A graphic timeline was created and displayed at the 2021 Vernon County Fair.

Because October is co-op month, we would like to recognize and thank our members for your continued support throughout the year. Check out our Facebook page for a chance to win prizes each week in October.





FROM THE CEO

A couple weeks ago at the Vernon County Fair, we displayed a timeline of the growth of the cooperative. I don't think many people give a lot of thought to the past until they see something that brings back a memory. Many people admired and read our display from beginning to end.

Last month, I wrote about the first 5 years and how the founders started in the West end of the county, merging companies and acquiring territories. The next five years must have been stressful to say the least. That is when a lot of activity began as they started to be operational. They needed to gather the companies together into one unit. They had to reprimand the attorney for dropping the ball on their REA loan processing. Vernon Electric stepped in to provide financing to keep things going. They also fired their manager for misconduct. New buildings were constructed in Romance and Red Mound for new switching equipment. These buildings are no longer owned by VC Co-op, but still stand today (*see below*). To add to the original 6 companies I mentioned last month, they purchased LaFarge Telephone, Retreat & South-Eastern Telephone, Pleasant Ridge Telephone and Retreat Telephone companies. Readstown and Viola village areas were purchased from La Crosse Telephone. There were disputes with neighboring West Prairie Telephone and Crawford-Vernon Mutual Telephone Companies. It isn't clear what happened to them, but I can't find that they were purchased and much of the area is now part of our cooperative. Viroqua Telephone Co. beat Vernon for a bid for the Brookville Telephone Co.

Imagine a map of the county and every little burg or ridge having a separate telephone company. In the late 1950's, most were run out of a switchboard in the local grocery store or other business. History repeats itself. We are seeing consolidation as the only way to lower overheads and keep up with new technology costs. Higher expenses and smaller margins need to be made by adding more units. The big guys are abandoning low density areas, just as they did in past. We are trying to pick up some of those areas by using grants and loans to grow the cooperative and not leave those customers behind, just like we did 60-70 years ago. *History is once again repeating itself!*



Red Mound Switching Office



Romance Switching Office

VERNON COUNTY FAIR 2021

The 2021 Vernon County Fair is over, but after a year off due to COVID-19, people were ready to get out and enjoy it. There was plenty to do and lots to eat and the weather could not have been more beautiful to take it all in.



Fair Goers signed up to WIN 1 of 4 Amazon Fire TV Sticks from the drawing at the VC Co-op Fair booth.

Winners pictured below:



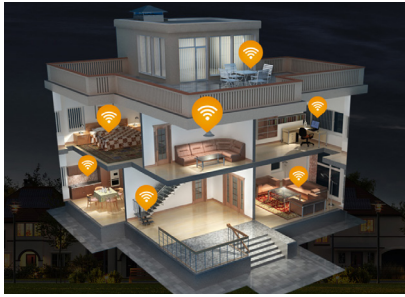
(Janessa Peterson, middle, Peggy Burckhardt, top right, Darlene Haser, bottom right, Kaylee Sanwick, missing)

NOTE: Mandatory 10-Digit Dialing will go into effect on October 24, 2021 for anyone in the 608 area code.

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

What is mesh Wi-Fi?

Mesh Wi-Fi is a wireless system that typically consists of a main router directly connected to your Internet Service Provider and a series of wired or wireless connected Access Points. The main router and each Access Point then broadcast the same SSID and authenticate using the same password, allowing for a near interruption-free roaming experience while offering increased coverage and bandwidth capabilities.



Why do I need mesh Wi-Fi?

As discussed in a previous article, a Mesh Wi-Fi system is needed when a traditional Wi-Fi router doesn't provide adequate coverage. This can occur if the router is not centrally located, the building is large, or if it was built with dense materials that inhibit wireless frequencies. If you struggle to maintain connection or experience poor speeds in certain parts of your residence or workplace, a mesh Wi-Fi system may be the solution you need!

Where can I get mesh Wi-Fi?

Give us a call! Vernon Communications offers leased options for hardwired and wireless ready mesh systems, starting at \$6/month for the main router and \$4/month for each mesh Access Point. If you're interested in purchasing your own mesh Wi-Fi system, Vernon Tech Center sells a fully managed and mesh ready system that is perfect for taking your Wi-Fi experience to the next level.



BUILD A Custom Website That Reflects Your Brand!



- Local Designers & Support
- eCommerce & Online Payments
- Cutting Edge Design
- Increase Traffic
- Maintenance & Hosting
- Build Brand Recognition

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS



Channel 14 is now playing "Music In The Park" featuring Dan Sebranek!

Dan Sebranek is a renowned, local singer, songwriter and musician who started his musical career at the age of 14, with musical roots in bluegrass and rock and roll. In Dan's early days he performed primarily with the duo, Runaway. Currently Dan is performing solo acoustic music. Dan continues to tour as a solo performer, in musical duo's and in the String Ties Bluegrass Band. He enjoys playing at festivals, house concerts and clubs all over. You can also see him at Larry Fest in La Farge.



Western Wisconsin Video Productions, LLC, and VC Co-op recorded Tractor pulls and other events from the 2021 Vernon County Fair. High Mileage (a local band), Antique Farm Modified Truck and Badger State Tractor and Truck pull will be aired on local channel 14.

You can view the "*Little Britches Dairy show*", from the Fair, on local channel 14. Watch our future farmers show off their calves and answer questions from the judge. These little tikes will melt your heart as they parade through the building.



Upcoming Events

OCTOBER 2ND

Retreat 2-Way Parade

OCTOBER 7TH

Walkabout Westby

2nd Annual Westby Chamber
#WALKABOUTWESTBY

Downtown

**Thursday
October 7th
4:30-7:30 p.m.**

Food, vendors and shopping!

Sign up for door prizes at participating businesses.

Facebook.com/westbychamber
or www.westbychamber.com

**LOCAL
Businesses
OPEN Late**

Please be considerate of each business and regard COVID precautions by sanitizing your hands and wearing a mask if they require.

**October 31st
Halloween**



VERNON
Communications CO-OP

103 N Main Street
Westby, WI 54667

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

(608) 634-3136

www.vernoncom.coop



Caramel Apple Bars

Ingredients:

2 C. all-purpose flour
2 C. quick cooking oats
1 1/2 C. packed brown sugar
1 tsp. baking soda
1 1/4 C. melted butter
2 C. sliced apples
1/2 C. chopped walnuts
1 1/2 C. caramel topping
1/2 C. all-purpose flour



Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 15 x 10 jellyroll pan.

CRUST:

In a large bowl, combine the flour, quick oats, brown sugar, and baking soda. Stir in the melted butter. Mix until crumbly. Press 1/2 of this mixture into the prepared baking pan. Bake for 8 minutes.

CARAMEL FILLING:

In a small pan over medium heat, combine the caramel topping and the remaining 1/2 C. flour. Stirring constantly, bring to a boil and cook for 3-5 minutes.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Spread apple slices evenly over the baked crust. Sprinkle the walnuts over the apples. Pour the caramel filling over the apple layer. Crumble the remaining crust mixture over the top of everything. Bake for 20 - 25 minutes until golden brown. Cool before cutting into bars.

Sun outages occur every year in the spring and Fall and last about a week. This fall, sun outages are expected between Oct. 7-12th. The exact time and duration will vary from channel to channel. This is due to channels being received off different

satellites in the arc. Each satellite is affected at a different time as the sun moves across the satellite arc. They can last for approximately 5 - 15 minutes. You may experience a pixelated picture, freezing or audio distortions for a brief period of time.

SUN OUTAGE PREDICTION - FALL 2021

DATE	START TIME	END TIME
October 7	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
October 8	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
October 9	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
October 10	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
October 11	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
October 12	12:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.

CASHTON FALL FESTIVAL



Fall was in the air on September 12th and VC Co-op employees were out to have a good time at the Cashton Fall Festival parade.