



## OCTOBER 2022

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## ROD OLSON, CEO RETIRES

After 23 years of serving Vernon Communications Cooperative, Rod Olson has officially retired as CEO and General Manager.

The communications industry has been in his blood since he was a young boy, following in his father's footsteps who was also in the industry. Prior to VC Co-op, he worked for 22 years for other telephone companies in Sparta and Viroqua. Because of his knowledge and expertise in the industry, his reputation precedes him. His accomplishments are many and this names a few:

During his tenure, Rod has spent countless hours serving the members and employees of the cooperative. He put the members of the cooperative first and led the team to ensure the cooperative delivered the best value of services and technology to this rural region. VC Co-op offers state-of-the-art technology and that is in part due to his leadership. Rod has written several grants through the State of Wisconsin to build fiber in underserved areas, which we have been awarded and are continually working to increase our serving area. VC Co-op is one of 31 telcos that own Wisconsin Independent Network (WIN) Technologies. WIN oversees Airstream, Indatel and Midwest Video Solutions (MVS) providing network, data security and IT services throughout the Midwest. Rod served on the WIN Board and MVS Board helping oversee and grow the company to serve over 25 telcos in 6 states, providing service to over 30,000 video subscribers. This was the first IPTV provider in North America. As CEO, he was never afraid to dig in the trenches, spearhead new ideas and bring them to fruition.

Rod has given presentations at conferences both internationally and across the country (including the White House) about the innovative technology and services that Vernon has been a part of developing. He has been instrumental in forming partnerships and companies to promote these efforts. Along with WIN and MVS, he has also served on several industry and area boards and committees including the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association, Wisconsin Locally Owned Telephone Association, Cooperative Network, Midwest Telnet, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Fortress Bank, Westby Norse Fund, and Westby Coon Prairie Lutheran Church to name a few. He recently served on the Governor's Next Generation Statewide 911 Network committee, developing a new statewide 911 system.

His entrepreneur spirit and leadership will be missed and his legacy with the cooperative will live on for years to come. Congratulations to Rod and we wish him and his family a long and happy retirement.





## MALVERTISING

### What is Malvertising?

KnowB4

Malicious advertising, known as malvertising, is when cybercriminals use ads to spread malware or use ads to trick users into providing sensitive information. When browsing a webpage, if you click on a malicious ad, you may be taken to a phony login page or a fake retail website that will ask for your sensitive information. Some malvertising can even download malicious files onto your system.

### FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO STAY SAFE FROM HARMFUL ADS:

- Think before you click! If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Stay up-to-date with security patches on your device and your browser.
- Install a reputable ad blocker for your browser. Ad blockers help protect you from malvertising by preventing ads from being displayed.

## NEW MURAL IN VIROQUA



A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the new mural in downtown Viroqua, located at 304 South Main Street, sponsored by Viroqua Main Street Chamber. The mural was created by Viroqua residents and artists from left, Anna Kimm, Stella Greendeer, and Natalie Hinahara, known as "The Smockettes". Funding for the mural was coordinated by the Viroqua Area Foundation and Vernon Communications is a supporter of the project.





Check out our new billboard on Hwy. 14 on the North side of Viroqua

## OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH



Cooperatives are member owned, which means the services provided by the co-op benefit and serve the member owners. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our members for your patronage. Your participation is the key to our success. Every Wednesday during the month

of October beginning October 5, 2022, there will be coffee and treats supplied by the Co-op. Stop by our office and enjoy a treat and a small gift on us.

## SUN OUTAGE PREDICTION



Fall 2022	Start Time	End Time
6-Oct	1200	1600
7-Oct	1200	1600
8-Oct	1200	1600
9-Oct	1200	1600
10-Oct	1200	1600
11-Oct	1200	1600
12-Oct	1200	1600

It is that time of the year when we may see signal disruption due to sun outages. Please be aware that during these times we could experience degraded and complete signal loss for our video services as the sun moves through our satellite reception arc.

## THE 7 COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1. VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP
2. DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL
3. MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION
4. AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE
5. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION
6. COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES
7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

### October Dates to Remember

**October 6** - Walk About Westby  
**October 10** - Columbus Day  
**October 22** - Pink Out Day for Breast Cancer Awareness  
**October 31** - Halloween

## VERNON COUNTY FAIR



The Vernon County Fair is all about fun, family and community and Vernon Communications was there to participate. Pictured, are Naomi Peterson and Reggie Nelson working in the VC Co-op booth.

## 4 Reasons To Replace Your Old Router

### 1. Your old router is easier to hack

Your router may be doing a fine job keeping you connected to the internet, but is it keeping you safe? The latest security standard is WPA-3. Any router that uses WPA-2 encryption needs to be replaced.

### 2. You're missing out

When buying a router, you might as well future-proof your network. More and more devices support Wi-Fi 6, but that doesn't mean a thing if your router doesn't. Wi-Fi 6 significantly improves two critical categories: speed and range.

### 3. Your signal is weak in certain spots

Your home should have a consistent, speedy network. A single router works fine for small spaces, but what about multiple rooms and floors?

Mesh networks are more popular and affordable than ever. Rather than relying on one router, a mesh network adds satellite modules around your home, blanketing the entire area with coverage.

These systems usually come in sets of two or more units that work together. As far as your gadgets are concerned, the Wi-Fi mesh is one big continuous network that eliminates poor coverage, dead spots, and buffering.

### 4. Your devices need more juice

How old is your router? Routers that only support 2.4 GHz frequencies are dinosaurs. Single-band routers only utilize the 2.4 GHz band and one wireless signal. Dual-band routers use 2.4 and 5 GHz bands to transmit two simultaneous wireless signals, providing better performance. Tri-band routers typically have 2.4 and 5 GHz bands and an additional 5 or 6 GHz band to transmit three total wireless signals. Single-band routers need to be replaced. A dual-band router that supports 2.4 and 5 GHz will do the job for homes with less than five connected devices. Get a tri-band router that supports three signals for homes with more than five connected devices.

### 5. How to choose a new router

Connect your home and all your devices over Wi-Fi with a wireless home router.

***The bottom line is this: Replacing the router is a must if your connection is spotty, isn't equipped with the latest security standards, or is more than three years old.***

## Gigaspire Wireless Home Router

**\$6 per month**

### Advantages:

- Receives Gigabit broadband data
- High-performance system (Wi-Fi 6)
- 6x6 streams of Wi-Fi



## EMPLOYEE NEWS

### JOHN HICKOK



John has retired after working for the cooperative for 20 years. A celebration was held in his honor on September 9, 2022. John has worked in the Network Operations Center (NOC) as a Level 3 Network Technician. John's knowledge and expertise will be greatly missed. John was our grillmaster! He was always willing to help where needed, and when it came to grilling for events, we knew we could count on him! Congratulations to John for his dedicated service to the cooperative.

### JASON RIDER



Jason is the newest employee at VC Co-op. Jason began his employment on August 29, 2022. His position is Network Technician working in our Network Operations Center. Jason has been in the telecommunications industry for 22 years, so his knowledge is forthcoming. He and his wife Rebekah have 4 children and they live in rural Viroqua. We would like to welcome Jason to the VC Co-op team.

### THERESE FLOCK



Therese (Te) has been employed for 15 years as a Member Support Technician. She was recognized at an employee meeting on September 22, 2022. Her knowledge of our products and services are instrumental to our members and their needs.



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

**Lobby Hours:**

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

**(608) 634-3136 • [www.vernoncom.coop](http://www.vernoncom.coop)**