

MONTHLY NEWS

March 2025



Connecting our members with exceptional communication solutions with ease and integrity.

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2025 Annual Meeting

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Call Diggers Hotline

2025 Virtual Annual Meeting

April 15, 2025

1:00 PM



2024 VernonCom Board of Directors. Bottom left: David Dregne (District 2), Brad Gabrielson (District 5), Garin Mayer, CEO, Dan Nelson (District 7). Top left, Trudy Wallin (District 4), Steve Woodhouse (District 1), Mark Cade (District 6) and Daren Matthes (District 3).

Save The Date - VernonCom's Annual Meeting will be held virtually on April 15, 2025 at 1:00 pm.

Pre-registration for this meeting is required, no later than noon on April 14, 2025.

Go to: www.vernoncom.coop to pre-register for the meeting. Information required to pre-register for the meeting is: *Member's name, account number, email address and contact number.*

Once you have been vetted and approved you will receive a link to attend the meeting. Late registrations will not be accepted. A reminder will be sent to your email before the meeting begins. Members who pre-register and attend the meeting will receive a \$25.00 credit per household on their VernonCom statement in May. This meeting will give operational updates from 2024, the financial statement, secretary's report, and ten 2025 scholarship recipients will be presented. The 2025 director elections will also be announced for District 5 - La Farge/Cashton and District 7 - City of Westby. We hope you can attend this Annual Meeting for the cooperative.



As the ground begins to thaw, the season for yard work and summer outdoor projects begin. It is very important to call Diggers Hotline **(811 or 800-242-8511)** three business days, before you do any kind of digging. A cut fiber can turn a small project into a very expensive mistake.

Here is the information you will need to call Diggers Hotline:

Contact Information

- Your name, phone & email
- Address, Street, City, State, Zip code
- Field contact and phone number
- Who is the work being done for





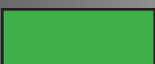
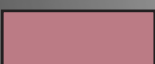

Dig Site Location

- City/place and County
- Address of the dig site
- Side of the street
- Nearest intersecting road

Dig Site Information

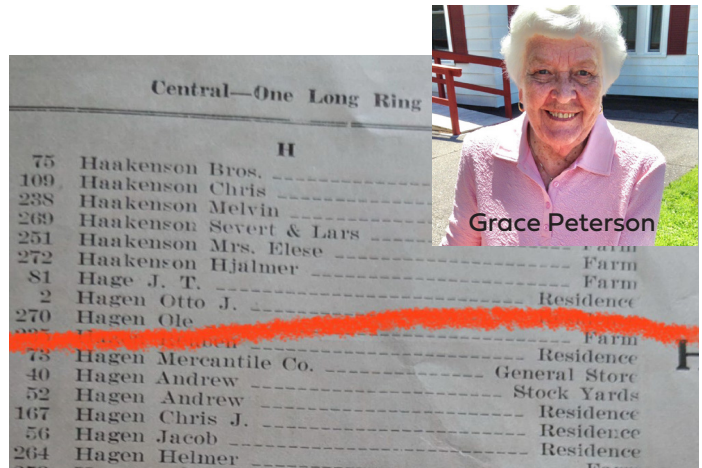
- Start date
- Work type
- Marking instructions

Once Diggers Hotline has been called and the utility companies have marked your property, their lines are indicated with flags. The flags are color coded with the respective utility as follows:

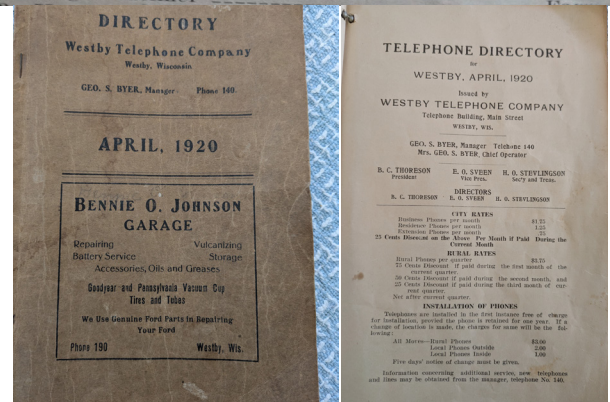
	Electric
	Gas, Oil, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
	Communication, Cable TV, Alarm or Signal
	Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines
	Sewer and Drain Lines
	Temporary Survey Markings
	Proposed Excavation

It is important to get a permit or consult your local municipality for regulations about controlled burns. Make sure there are no hand holes in ditches and never leave a burn unmanaged.

Westby's Historic Phone Numbers



Grace Peterson



Grace Peterson's family home was one of VernonCom's first phone numbers issued by the cooperative. Grace has recently passed and her son Carl Peterson has given us information about the home. The home was built by his great grandfather Otto J. Hagen in 1903 and his phone number was 2! L. M. Grimsrud, the village president of Westby at that time was number 1. While still a senior in high school, Carl's dad was drafted into the Navy during WWII. They asked for his phone number and he answered 2. Then, they asked for the rest of the number and when he said 2 again, they didn't believe him! While the home's phone number had changed many years ago, the story behind it is captivating. Ellie Brye of Coon Valley owns a 1920 Westby Telephone Directory (pictured above). This directory, with its period advertisements and information, differs significantly from today's modern versions. However, its historical value is immense, as it represented a means of direct communication and was an informational book for family homes at that time.

Network Change



NBCU is discontinuing **Universal Kids (channel 108)** on **March 5, 2025** and this channel will no longer be available.

Cyber Security - KnowB4

While your home may seem safe from cyberattacks, it's important to remain cautious while working from home. It may be easy to get comfortable at home and forget about security precautions, but cybercriminals can use this opportunity to target you, your co-workers, and your organization. It's up to you to prevent cybercrime from happening to your organization, even while working from home.

Follow the tips below to maintain a safe work environment at home:

- Protect sensitive information, even when you're not in the office.
- Organize your workspace. When your workspace is organized, you're less likely to misplace important documents and will have a place to put these documents when you aren't using them
- Follow your organization's policy for taking screenshots or pictures of sensitive information. Blur out any personally identifiable information (PII) or other sensitive information
- Be careful when posting company information on social media platforms such as LinkedIn. Even if the information seems harmless, it's better to review your organization's policy before posting

Protect your devices with strong passwords.

- Set up passwords or passcodes to protect your devices. If you don't use passwords, cybercriminals can easily gain access to your devices should you lose them
- Don't use identical or similar passwords for multiple accounts. If you have trouble remembering your passwords, use a password manager to create and manage the passwords for your accounts
- Change the password for your Wi-Fi router. Most routers come with default passwords that can be easily guessed

Use appropriate equipment.

- Follow your organizations policy when using work equipment at home. It's important that you use equipment provided by your organization as it may include important security measures to prevent cyberattacks
- If you're allowed to use personal devices for work, create a separate user profile for work. It's best to separate your personal and work profiles
- Don't download unnecessary applications or software onto your organization's devices. If you have questions about approved applications or software, review your organization's policy or ask your IT department

FREE Streaming Class



Streaming is the delivery of TV shows and movies over the internet. It is a more cost effective way to watch your favorite programs without set-top-boxes. VernonCom is offering an instructional class on "How to Stream TV," on **March 12, 2025 at 1:30 pm** at the VernonCom office (103 N. Main St. Westby). Go to our website, www.vernoncom.coop to sign up for this class and get your questions answered about streaming. This class is **FREE** for VernonCom members only and is limited to 20 people, so sign up to reserve your spot.

Vernoncom offers a "Beginners Guide to Streaming", video on our website for our members to view. Go to our website and see if streaming is the right option for you. You can also stop by our office and get a step by step brochure on how to stream video.

Go Green!



- Easy access to your VernonCom account
- View and pay your bill
- Access billing and payment history
- Update account information
- Go to: vernoncom.smarthub.coop





This month we're shining a light on Furniture, Décor & More in Westby, WI. This family-owned business, which opened its first location in Boscobel, Wisconsin eight years ago, was driven by a shared passion for business and home decorating. Eager to expand, they opened another location in Westby. Located in the heart of downtown, Furniture, Décor & More has become a local favorite for its diverse selection of high-quality furniture and exceptional customer service.

What sets them apart is the wide variety of options they carry, including brands like Flexsteel, BenchCraft, and Signature Design, with reclining furniture and mattresses being a top hit with customers. Beyond furniture, they also offer gift baskets and specialty items perfect for home accents or gifts. Package deals, such as a sofa, loveseat, and area rug bundle, offer significant savings. With free financing, no interest, and no money down if paid off in 12 months, it's clear why the store has a loyal customer base.

Despite challenges like road construction, Furniture, Décor & More has thrived in Westby, thanks to repeat customers and a supportive local community. The family is grateful to host community events, such as Ladies Night, Health & Wellness gatherings, and seasonal open houses, bringing people together while showcasing their products. Looking ahead, they're excited about their upcoming spring event, featuring a new gourmet section and outdoor furniture, as well as a recently completed bedroom section on the second floor. As their business continues to grow, they stay committed to delivering high-quality products, exceptional customer service, and a warm, inviting atmosphere for all.

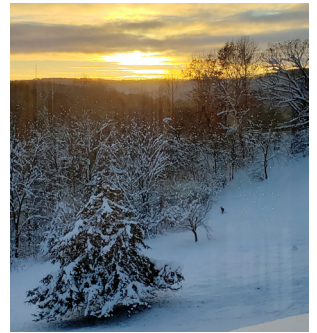
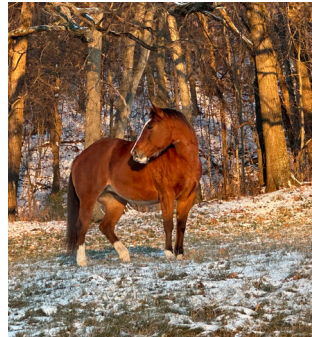
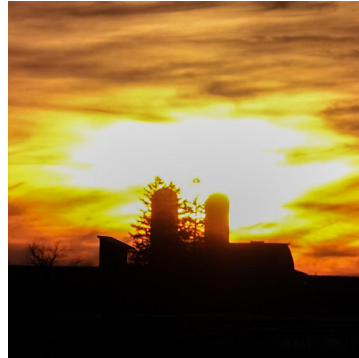
Furniture, Décor & More relies on VernonCom's internet to stay connected with customers online through social media, keeping followers updated on weekly deals. Additionally, VernonCom's internet supports daily operations, including invoicing and Shopify management. Business hours are Monday through Saturday 9 AM to 5 PM, and Sunday 10 AM to 3 PM

Go to: <https://www.vernoncom.coop/spotlight> for a chance to win a \$35 gift certificate to Furniture, Décor & More

Photo Contest

We want to see your photos! Go to our website (www.vernoncom.coop) for details of our "Heart of the Driftless," photo contest. The past ten years, we have seen many amazing, beautiful photos from our members. Here are some photos from 2024.

Photo contest deadline is April 4, 2025.





Lobby Hours:
8:00 am - 4:30 pm (M-F)
(608) 634-3136
www.vernoncom.coop



Payment Options
Go To: www.vernoncom.coop
and click "Pay Now"
Call (844) 827-4766
(Have your account number)
EFT (Automatic Payment) - Sign up and get a one time \$5.00 credit.

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