

MONTHLY NEWS

April 2025



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

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International Women's Day (March 8, 2025) is a global movement highlighting women in the work force. We would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the roles that women fill at VernonCom. There is a variety of valuable contributions these women hold that help make up the team that makes the cooperative a great place to work and support our members.

Member Support



Human Resources



Reception



Marketing



Network Operations



Controller



Member Support



Dispatch



Member Support



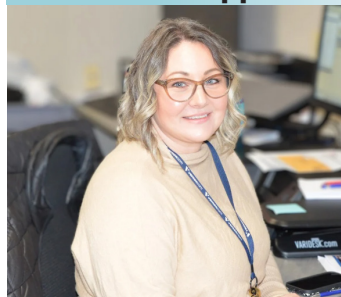
Plant Facilities



Accounting



Member Support



Member Relations



Streaming Class

VernonCom held an informational Streaming class on Wednesday March 12th. Jason Rider, Network Engineer, instructed the class on the different devices that can be used to stream, set up and how to navigate through the streaming process. The class was very well attended and members were receptive to trying some of the devices that were introduced. An additional class will be held on May 8, 2025 at 1:30 pm. You can sign up for the next class by going to our website: www.vernoncom.coop



2025 Annual Meeting

You still have time to register for the VernonCom Annual Meeting on April 15, @ 1:00 pm

Go to: www.vernoncom to register by April 14th and receive a \$25.00 bill credit on your May bill for attending.



Call 811 or (800) 242-8511 if you plan to do any kind of digging.

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.



BROADBAND BUILT TO LAST

Universal Connectivity Must Be Sustained

Keeping rural consumers connected is critical



What is Universal Service Fund

The Federal Universal Service Fund (USF) enables providers to deliver voice and broadband services to rural users that are comparable in price and quality to those in urban areas. It makes services more affordable for low-income families, and supports critical connections for schools, libraries and healthcare facilities in rural communities. Without USF support, it is difficult to make a business case to invest in many rural areas, to sustain networks once they are built, or to keep service rates affordable. Congress is considering reforms to how USF is funded. The NTCA "Broadband Built To Last" campaign is engaging in small community based broadband providers, their employees, communities, policy makers and industry leaders in conversations on the importance of USF to keep rural consumers connected to high quality, affordable services. For more information you can go to: <https://www.ntca.org/advocacy/issues/universal-service-infrastructure>.





Don't Click it!



Cyber thieves try to convince users to invest money or participate in giveaways by sending them direct messages or creating public posts. Followers believe the original user wrote the message or post, and are more likely to believe that the investment or giveaway is legitimate.

- If you receive a login link through email or text message, never click it. Always log in directly to the social media app or website.
- If someone you follow on social media makes a post that seems suspicious, follow up with that person directly instead of replying over social media. Call or text the person to confirm that they sent the message or created the post.



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

Business Spotlight



Hidden Springs Creamery is a local gem nestled in the hills of Westby, Wisconsin. Established 15 years ago by Brenda Johnson, now operated by Amy and Travis Forgues, the creamery has earned a reputation for producing high-quality,

artisan sheep cheeses unique to the Driftless region. After many years at a farming cooperative, the Forgues grew the skills, values, and connections necessary to turn Hidden Springs into the creamery it is today.

Among their impressive selection of products, which offers a unique flavor profile closer to cow milk products than goat, are the Driftless cheeses. These creamy and flavorful cheese spreads quickly became a customer favorite. Another beloved product is their award-winning Farmstead Feta, which took first place in its category at the 2023 ACS Awards. Lastly, Ocooch Mountain is a cave-aged cheese that features a distinct B-linen rind that enhances its rich flavor and texture, further reinforcing Hidden Springs' reputation for quality.

Hidden Springs' commitment to the community is reflected in their work force, including Elmina, a young Amish woman who cares for the lambs, works in the creamery, and makes soaps from the rich sheep milk, adding a creative, sustainable touch to the farm's products. While they aren't certified organic, the creamery strives to follow organic practices, and is working toward organic certification. With a current milking herd of 160 sheep, their focus remains on producing quality products and providing meaningful jobs for the community.

VernonCom is the proud provider of Hidden Springs Creamery's high-speed internet. Our internet assists them with daily operational tasks, order management, and connecting with customers through social media or online. Visits are by appointment only, and products can be found at various local grocery stores.

Go to: <https://vernoncom.coop/spotlight/> for a chance to win a Hidden Springs Creamery cheese basket by April 18, 2025.

KnowB4

More than half of the world's population uses at least one social media platform. Users can post to Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat for all their followers to see. When a friend, family member, or influencer posts to social media, do you ever question whether they actually created the post? Would you trust them if they posted about an investment that helped them earn thousands of dollars? You should consider that they may actually be a cybercriminal who's using social media hijacking to gain your trust and your money.

What Is Social Media Hijacking?

Social media hijacking is when a cybercriminal gains access to another user's social media account. To hijack the account, cybercriminals often send the user an email with a phishing link that brings the user to a fake login page. When the user enters their login credentials, the cybercriminal steals the credentials to log in to the user's account and change their password. Then, the cybercriminals have full control over the user's account.

How Do Cybercriminals Use the Hijacked Account?

After the cybercriminals hijack the account, they can try to convince the user's followers to invest money or participate in a giveaway by sending them direct messages or creating public posts. Because the followers believe the original user wrote the message or post, they are more likely to believe that the investment or giveaway is legitimate. For example, in a recent scam, cybercriminals hi-jacked accounts and tried to convince them to send a video endorsing a Bitcoin scheme. In exchange for the video, the cybercriminals claim they will give the account back to the original user. Instead, the cybercriminals post the video to the user's account to convince more followers to invest in the scam.



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



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Payment Options
Go To: www.vernoncom.coop
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Call (855) 940-3938

(Have your account number)
EFT (Automatic Payment) - Sign
up and get a one time \$5.00 credit.