

MONTHLY NEWS

February 2026



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

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If you stopped by our office to pick up a 2026 calendar from us, you have seen the beautiful photos we receive from our "Heart of the Driftless" photo contest. We would love to see your photos for the 2026 photo contest. Enter the contest with photos of animals, kids and landmarks or scenic views. The Grand prize winner will receive a \$100.00 VernonCom bill credit! Additional winners will be chosen from each category and awarded a \$50.00 bill credit. Photos are judged by content, visual appeal, clarity, originality, and subject matter. There's so much beauty in our backyard, so please share your photos with us. Go to: www.vernoncom.coop for contest rules and application form. Contest entry deadline is April 3, 2026.

2026 Photo Contest



SEEKING NOMINATIONS

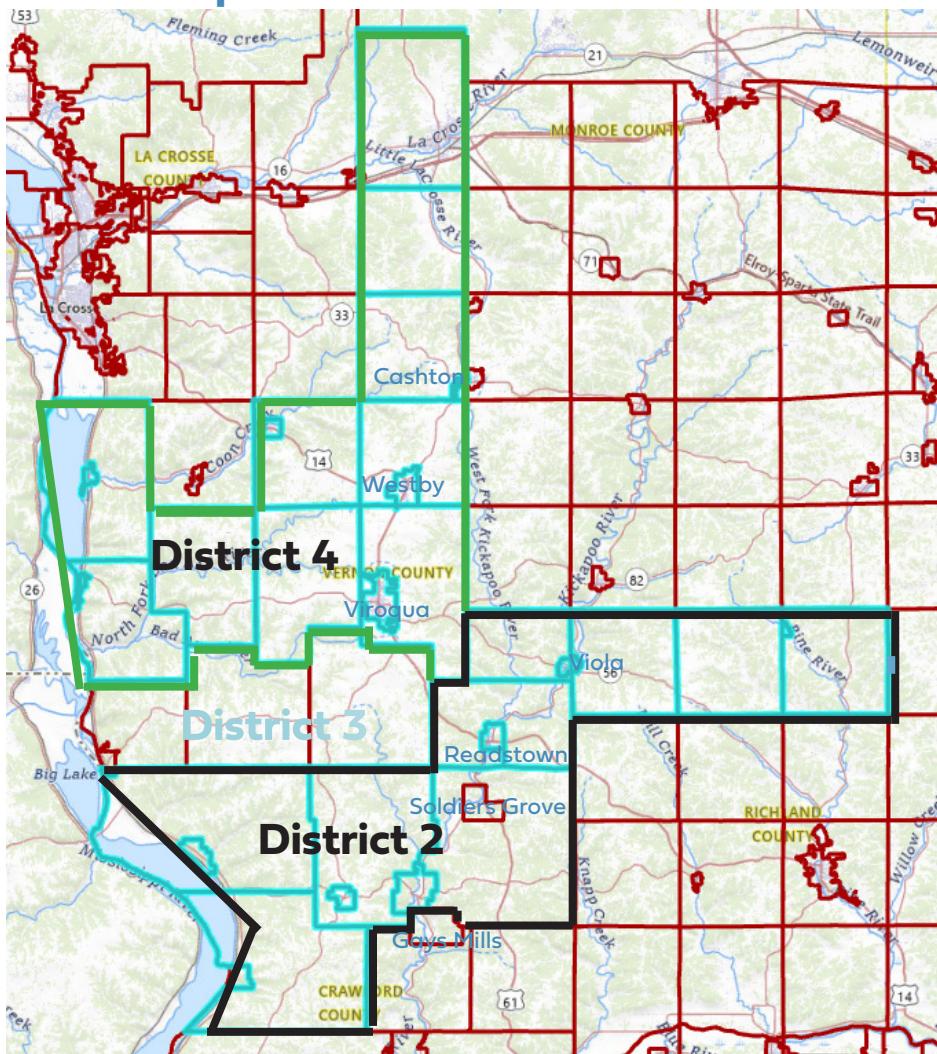
Vernoncom is seeking nominations for Director positions for Districts 2 and 4. Any member wanting to run for one of these board positions should contact VernonCom at (608) 634-3136 for a list of nominating committee members. Members who receive service from VernonCom and reside within the district boundaries may be eligible for nomination of a director seat.

Please note: District boundaries have changed. See map on the next page.

Save the Date: Vernoncom's Virtual Annual Meeting - **April 14, 2026**



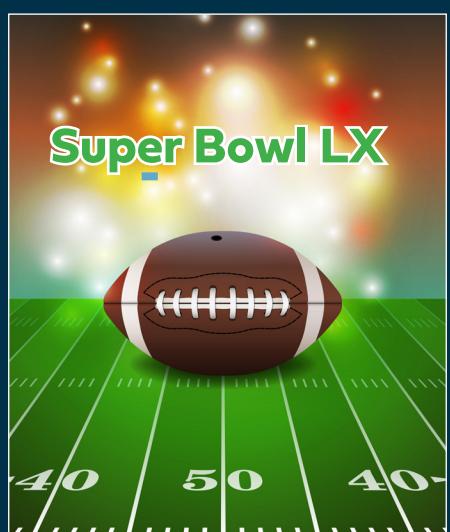
District Map



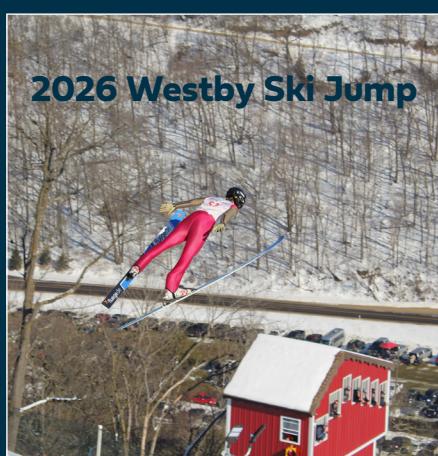
Please note: The cities of Westby and Viroqua are NOT included in District 4, and the villages of Gays Mills and Soldiers Grove are NOT included in District 2.

Safer Internet Day

Tuesday February 10, 2026 is Safer Internet Day and is a day to bring awareness to create a safer internet. This year's theme is, "Together for a better internet", where everyone is encouraged to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively. Keeping your kids safe online is the focus. For FREE resources, go to: <https://saferconnectsafely.org/get-involved/>



Super Bowl LX will be broadcast on NBC on February 8, 2026.



VernonCom is a proud sponsor of the Westby Snowflake Ski tournament. This fascinating event has been going on for 103 years and takes place on February 6 - 7, 2026.



The 2026 Winter Olympics will be held in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy on February 6-22, 2026. You can watch these events on NBC, Peacock, the USA Network and CNBC.

IRS and Tax Scams - KnowB4

Every year, cybercriminals take advantage of taxpayers like you who are filing taxes or patiently waiting for their tax return. During each tax season, the IRS notices increased phishing attempts to steal your money or tax data, so you must be highly alert.

How It Happens: Tax Scams and Malicious Activity

Cybercriminals have several tax-related tricks up their sleeves when it comes to stealing your money and sensitive information. Here are a few common examples of tax scams:

- Scammers send emails posing as tax service organizations by impersonating, or spoofing, actual tax service emails and using stolen logos. If you respond to the email with your personal data or tax information, they can pocket your hard-earned money.
- Like the scam above, cybercriminals send look-alike emails containing hyperlinks that lead to malicious websites or PDF attachments that can download malware or viruses to your computer.
- Tax scams aren't limited to emails! Be on the lookout for scammers calling, posing as IRS representatives, and claiming you owe money that must be paid immediately. These callers typically threaten you with arrests, deportations, or suspension of business or driver's licenses if you don't pay them.

These are only a few examples, so be aware that these scam artists are constantly coming up with new ways to fool you.

How Do I Stay Safe?

Always remember the following during tax season and all year long:

- You will always receive a bill in the mail before any phone call from the IRS regarding unpaid taxes.
- A request for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone is a red flag for a scam. Legitimate IRS agents will not ask for payment this way.
- The IRS does not use high-pressure tactics, such as threatening immediate arrest or involving local law enforcement for non-payment.
- Taxpayers always have the right to question or appeal an amount owed before the IRS demands any payment.
- Official IRS correspondence about personal tax matters, such as bills or refunds, will never be initiated through email, text messages, or social media.
- You should always avoid sending sensitive information like passwords, credit card numbers, or your Social Security number via email, as it is not secure and can be easily intercepted.

Employee News



Konner Krause, a Member Service Technician is celebrating 5 years with the cooperative. Konner began his employment just out of high school and has developed the skills needed to become an exceptional employee. In September of 2023, he completed the course for a Broadband Service Technician with Wisconsin Workforce Development through North Woods Technical College. Konner's commitment to excellence is reflected in his record-breaking performance, securing the most member "shout-outs", of any technician for two years in a row!



VernonCom invests in the future of our youth by offering scholarships to students of members who are committed to continuing their education beyond high school. Go to our website: www.vernoncom.coop for details. The application deadline is February 13, 2026.

Business Spotlight - Milk & Honey



At the age of 10, Raegan Davy knew that someday she would open a restaurant. At the age of 14, she became interested in the art of making coffee. Her experience as a barista and baker ignited a passion for the food industry. After high school, she traveled to Florida, and for six months she worked as an intern in Culinary. While working closely with a head chef, she discovered the artistry of plating and the rhythm of a professional kitchen, learning firsthand that true craftsmanship is built on hard work. She also observed the preparation and flavor of sauces, and the chemistry of combining it with certain foods.

Last July, Raegan's dream became reality when she opened Milk and Honey Espresso Bar in Westby. Her profound faith in God has led her to fulfilling her dream. She knew at a very young age her restaurant would be called Milk & Honey, which comes from the bible verse Deuteronomy 26:9. (He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey). Her passion for community is what makes her smile when she sees the connection of friendships come together in her restaurant over a cup of coffee.

Espresso is a different method of brewing coffee, which uses finely ground beans, hot water, and high pressure to create a concentrated shot of rich crema. She uses Bella Goose Coffee and has formed a lasting relationship with the people behind the brand. The most popular coffees are the signature coffees: Honeycomb, Lavender Air, and Dalgona.

Customers of Milk and Honey notice the flavor of sauces that she incorporates into her food menu. The restaurant offers a savory menu for breakfast and lunch served all day. The hours of business are 6 AM - 3 PM Monday - Thursday, and on Fridays, they are open until 9 PM, serving appetizers, tappas, soup and mocktails from 5-9 PM. During this time, they have events such as bingo, euchre, music and more. On Saturday's, they are open from 7 AM - 3 PM. Her customers utilize WiFi from VernonCom over a cup of coffee in a beautifully remodeled atmosphere of relaxation and comfort. As weather permits,

customers can also enjoy outside seating.

Go to: <https://vernoncom.coop/spotlight> for a chance to win a \$35.00 gift card to Milk and Honey in the month of February.

Calix Cutover Is Happening

A faster, more reliable internet connection



This mandatory upgrade is an exciting improvement, and you'll be receiving details soon on how to schedule your appointment

VernonCom is working diligently to get into every member's home to exchange your current modem with the new state-of-the-art Calix ONT. When we are in your area to swap out this equipment, you will be notified to set up a time that is convenient for you to experience this new technology. If you do not have an email on file, please call our office to provide this information. We appreciate your patience while we make this conversion.

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 (855) 940-3938

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

The logo for "smart hub" features the word "smart" in a lowercase, sans-serif font inside a blue circle, and "hub" in a lowercase, sans-serif font inside a yellow circle. The circles are connected by a thin blue line.