

MONTHLY NEWS

July 2026



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

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Sign-Up Events

We're excited to share that our team recently hosted two successful sign-up events in newly expanded service areas. These events gave community members the opportunity to learn more about our services, meet some of our team, ask questions, and sign up on the spot. We appreciate everyone who stopped by and helped make these events a success.

As we continue expanding into new communities, we look forward to building relationships, supporting local residents, and bringing our services to even more members in the months ahead.

Wilton Sign-Up Event

FREE POOL PASS!

Come See Us!

Two men, one in a white shirt and cap, the other in a dark shirt, looking at a tablet outdoors.

Ontario Sign-Up Event

Come See Us!

A man in a blue shirt standing next to a white service van with the Vernon logo.



Member Appreciation Picnic

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Member Appreciation Picnic

with Vernon Electric! It was a wonderful day spent connecting with members, enjoying great company, and celebrating the communities we proudly serve. We extend our sincere thanks to Vernon Electric for their partnership and support helping make this event a success. Your support means so much to us, and we are grateful to have you as part of our cooperative family. If you weren't able to attend, we look forward to seeing you at future events. Stay tuned for more opportunities to connect with us!

From The CEO

Greetings!

Happy 4th of July, and happy 250th to the great Constitutional Federal Republic of the United States of America! "Constitutional Federal Republic"? What's that you say? Small civics lesson this month. We elect



representatives, who then vote on laws on our behalf, they "represent" us. Much like you as a member of the cooperative vote for a director, who then in turn votes on the policies that govern the cooperative. It's an amazing system that has governed one of the greatest nations on earth for 250 years!

I hope you enjoy this extra-special 4th of July, and that you'll take a minute to think about how our system works, why it works, and maybe how we can do our part to start it on its way to another 250 years.

Now for a little more local information. As you've read here before, the cooperative is extending services to Norwalk, Ontario, and Wilton, as we've dubbed them the NOW project internally. We're making good progress in these areas and have begun to turn new members up. We're still targeting completion by the end of July for mainline fiber. If you are a new member reading this and have enjoyed your service, please tell a friend in the area, we'd love to add them to the cooperative as well!

We're also continuing to work on our equipment upgrade project. We've completed the conversions in Liberty Pole and Readstown. We're currently working on Westby and will be moving to Viroqua in the third quarter. If you're curious as to what this involves, please go to our website or give us a call. In a nutshell, we're fulfilling our commitment to members by providing the latest and best technology that we can. This new equipment will allow for new features and expanded service offerings once implemented. We're targeting full conversion of the membership to be complete sometime in June or July of 2027. We can complete this even faster if members are willing to reach out and schedule their conversion when they receive notification that we'll be in their area.

We really do need your cooperation in getting this done. Grants, how many times have we discussed them? Well, the State of Wisconsin recently announced another state-funded grant round. So, if you recall, BEAD was the latest federal grant program. That program was just over \$42B in funds, of which, Wisconsin received \$1.05B. After the application rounds, that number was reduced. As of this writing though, not one person has received service through the BEAD grant, a program launched in 2022! This simply isn't good enough to deploy broadband to those areas still in need. This was a factor of course in our launch of the NOW project. The cooperative is reviewing this grant closely to see if it is a good fit for us.

Thank you for being a member of the cooperative.

Garin



VernonCom was proud to sponsor the Vernon County Dairy Breakfast on June 13th at Fleming Farms in Westby. Thank you to all our local farmers for your hard work and dedication to our community!



VernonCom is excited to be part of a new celebration this year, we will be at Wilton Weenie Days for the parade **Sunday, July 12th, at 12:00 PM.**

See you there!

KnowBe4 - Security Tips

Digital Decluttering

If you have a smartphone, you probably use it often, or even every day! Downloading mobile apps for your phone can help you conveniently access the online services that you use the most. But over time, your device can fill up with older apps that you no longer use. While it may seem harmless to leave an old game or shopping app on your phone, digital clutter isn't just a storage issue. It can actually be a security concern.

Hidden Dangers of Unused Apps

Many mobile apps have permission to access your device's data. They can continue to collect this data in the background, even if you are not using the app. Software developers frequently deploy security updates to newer mobile apps to keep your personal data safe and secure. However, older apps are often not updated as frequently or at all, leaving them vulnerable to security breaches. Cybercriminals can take advantage of this and use outdated apps to try and steal your personal data or even install malware onto your device.

Strengthen Your Security

If you are no longer using an app, uninstall it. This action not only saves storage space but also keeps your device more secure. Be sure to update the remaining software and apps regularly so they have the latest security updates. Remember to download apps only from official app stores, as they are reviewed for safety and security before being posted. Decluttering your apps and performing regular security maintenance helps keep your device and your data safe.

What Can I Do to Stay Safe?

Remember these steps when decluttering and maintaining your devices:

Regularly review the apps on your phone and uninstall any that you haven't used recently.

Be careful when allowing an app to access your phone's camera, microphone, or location. You should disable these permissions for any app that doesn't need them.

You can enable automatic updates for mobile apps in your phone's settings to ensure they always use the latest security patches.

Employee News

One Year Service Award

VernonCom recognizes employment anniversaries and milestones

Olivia Nelson just celebrated her one year employment anniversary with VernonCom. CEO, Garin Mayer, presented her with a service award for this accomplishment. Olivia is part of the marketing team for the cooperative. Congratulations on reaching this milestone!



Wishing Jana a Happy Retirement

After 19 years with the cooperative, we wished Jana Pedretti a happy retirement!

As our Member Relations Manager, Jana has been an important part of our team and has made a lasting impact on both our employees and members throughout the years. Her hard work, kindness, and commitment will be greatly missed around the office.

Thank you, Jana, for everything you've done for our company and community. We wish you the best in this next chapter!



Business Spotlight



Pasture Pride Cheese, a family-owned store and packaging plant in Cashton, Wisconsin. Founded in 2003 by Kevin and Kim Everhart, the business has deep roots in the cheese industry. Kevin, who grew up in Rockbridge, Wisconsin, has had a lifelong connection to cheese-making, having spent his childhood above a cheese factory where he watched his father make cheese daily. Inspired by those formative experiences, he created his own cheese business.

Today, Pasture Pride Cheese remains a family affair with Kevin and Kim's four children actively participating in the operations and now part owners. The plant cuts and packages a wide variety of cheeses, including Pasture Pride Cheddars, Monterey Jack, Pepper Jack, Muenster, Colby, and Co-Jack. They are particularly known for their "Juusto" cheese, a Finnish baked cheese known for its rich buttery flavor, as well as their Muenster cheese curds. Two years ago, the Everharts expanded their business by opening a retail store, where customers can find not only their diverse cheeses but also local meats, candy, maple syrup, jarred goods, and ice cream. They even offer gift boxes that showcase a selection of cheeses, meats, and local products, making for perfect gifts. Additionally, they ship their cheeses and other goods nationwide, allowing more people to enjoy their products. The business employs about 40 people across the retail store and packaging plant and is dedicated to giving back to the community through donations and sponsorships. They take pride in featuring local products in their store and often hold in-store drawings and giveaways, making each visit exciting for customers.

For their operations, Pasture Pride Cheese utilizes VernonCom's internet service, which supports their point-of-sale system, provides guest Wi-Fi for visitors, and connects the machinery in the packaging plant where reliable Wi-Fi is essential for various tasks. The retail store is open Monday through Saturday from 9 AM to 5 PM and Sunday from 10 AM to 3 PM.

Whether you're visiting for a taste of their famous cheeses or picking up local goods, Pasture Pride Cheese is a delightful destination for all.

Check out our website or social media for a chance to win a \$35.00 gift card to Pasture Pride Cheese for the month of July: <https://vernoncom.coop/business-spotlight-contest/>



Our office will be closed on **Friday, July 3rd** for the holiday

Attention MWT Email Subscribers



@mwt.net email services will be discontinued on December 31, 2026. We encourage you to begin preparing for this transition as soon as possible. Before the service ends, please save any important emails, contacts, or files you want to keep before this date.

For more information, go to: <https://vernoncom.coop/mwtemails/>



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