



FINGERS CROSSED FOR GOOD WEATHER!

At the time of this writing, we did not have any major storms to report since the last ones. We weathered some pretty good winds and had some foul weather stay well to the south of us. This has allowed us to get back to trimming trees and taking down danger trees as well as work on the day-to-day items that storm damage takes us away from. Of course, just printing this probably puts us in line for a doozy!

One project we are hoping to make some progress on is the installation of two of three EV chargers, one at the cooperative and one at Schoolhouse Beach. The one at Schoolhouse Beach will be part of the installation of the small cell with Nsight and will include public Wi-Fi as well as an emergency phone for use at the beach. Contrary to rumor, these chargers will not be free use. You may have noticed where we saw cut the road in order to install a 10-inch sleeve that we can run conduit through. In addition, this will allow us to remove the overhead lines going to the parking lot.

Congratulations!

TO THE WASHINGTON ISLAND CLASS OF 2023



Left to right: Spencer Johnson, Aidan Purinton, Joseph Lux, Breanna McGrane and Jake Kooiker (photo by Hannah Dusek)

The cooperative board approved a \$1,000 scholarship for each of the graduates who applied and is pursuing further education, including trades. As I am sure all our members do, we wish them all the best in their future endeavors and are proud of their accomplishments to date!

GOVERNOR EVERS VISITS COOPERATIVE

We received word on Friday May 12 that Governor Tony Evers wanted to visit the cooperative to see our fiber project and talk about the success that we have had with the help of the Public Service Commission's grant programs. After some back and forth, this visit was scheduled for Thursday May, 18. Unfortunately, the deadline to get these pages in (and I stretch Mary Erickson's patience every month on this

deadline) was no later than Wednesday, May 17. While I am sure that we will post some details of the visit on our webpage/Facebook, and WECA plans to attend the visit as well so you can check out their sites, you will have to wait until the July issue for more details of how the visit went, what was discussed, and what the future holds. Rural broadband installation in the State of Wisconsin is problematic to say the

least, and population density makes it mostly impossible without grants to help offset the cost. We feel that it does not get much more rural than an Island, reachable by ferry, and we are making it happen, so it is nice when the powers that be recognize it! With federal funding coming, but delayed as the programs develop, it is important that the State of Wisconsin continue its efforts and we hope to emphasize that. More to come!

A MUCH MORE IMPORTANT VISIT

More important and certainly more entertaining than the governor's visit (don't tell him we said that) was a visit by this year's kindergarten class. Although some may compare politicians and kindergartners, we think quite highly of our kindergarten class! They received a bit of cooperative swag, a safety message regarding our lines, a brief tour of the engine room and, if they dared, a trip up in the bucket truck. We were impressed with how attentive and well behaved they were and we hope they had as much fun with the visit as we did!

Thanks to students Caden, Clara, Cohen, Dakota, Lucia, Odin, Joslyn, Julian, and Ryker, and to teachers Kaitlyn Stoller, Kirsten Foss, and Marlee Curry for the photos.



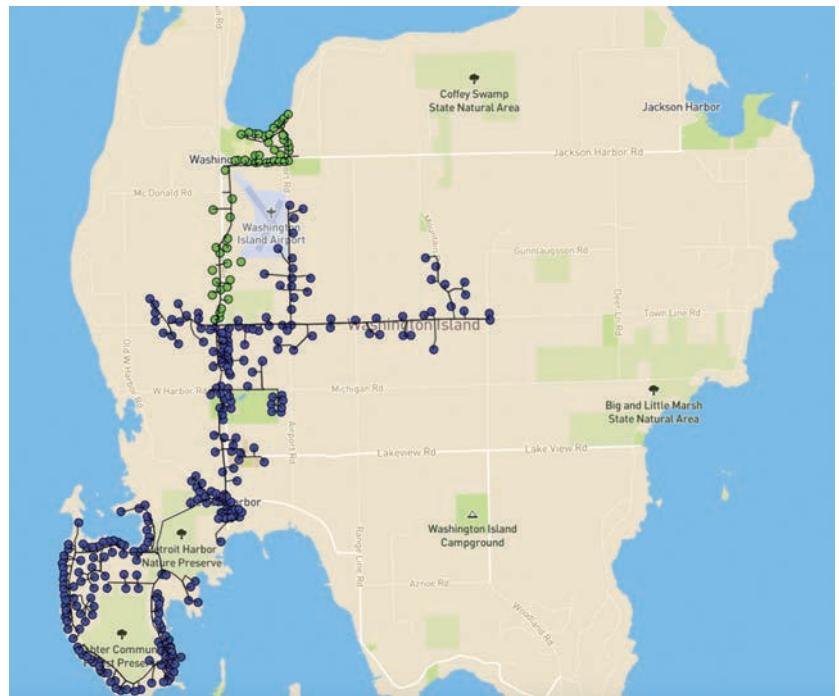


INTERNET UPDATE: *No home or business will be left behind*

We want to give you a few important reminders in addition to updating you as to progress. First, the two maps included in last month's issue were put there so members could understand where we are currently working and where we are going next. The maps apparently caused some confusion and incorrect rumors.

Importantly, we are going to get fiber to every home and business and have engineered for growth. This has been noted numerous times. We are not simply passing homes and businesses; we are actually running drops to your meter location. Once we are there it is up to you whether you subscribe to the service. There is no home or business that will be left out or skipped. In-home installation, if you subscribe, is included while we are working in the area. If you decide not to subscribe and we move on to another area and you later change your mind, the work in your home and the equipment will be billable.

We are not offering service on a seasonal basis. It will be year-round. This is necessary to make the economics of the offering (which are reasonably priced) work. There are lots of things that can be done with service even if you are not present, such as security, webcams, smart home functions and HVAC control. We are certain that more will become apparent once the service is in place. We are including the same maps in this issue as we did in the May edition.



Service area covered under the current grant

The above map illustrates the current grant-covered service area. As we have discussed, this covers all of area 1A (see the next map) as well as part of area 3 (remember, we wanted to get to that small cell location at Schoolhouse Beach). We were awarded just over \$1 million in this area and it is a priority to finish so we can be reimbursed per the grant. Again... the project is not done when the grant area is finished—we are going to serve every member if they want it.

The five engineered service areas: 1a, 1b, 2, 3 and 4



As noted last month, this map shows the five engineered areas as served by different splitter cabinets. The blue lines are main distribution fiber in each area (not the only places we are going).

We currently expect to finish the grant area illustrated in the first map by late summer and hope to have a fair portion of Area 3 done by the end of the year. With the exception of some fill-in time, Karcz is mostly done for the summer because they have obligations elsewhere, but Quantum will continue working steadily towards our goal. Of course, if we are awarded another grant, all bets for timing will be off and it is likely we would have Michels back to work with us in force.

And to reiterate—we will eventually get to every home and business. This is a huge project and it takes time! There will be “make ready” work required on our lines in order to accommodate some of this work, which adds to the work load as well although, in many cases, it is work we would have needed to do regardless.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT WHEN THE FIBER GETS TO YOUR HOME?

Quantum is here Tuesday through Friday of each week and is connecting additional members every day. At the time of this writing, we are approaching 100 services connected and by the time you read this we hope we are well beyond that. With 314 in the grant-funded area, we are feeling pretty good about attaining our goal to have them all (plus some) connected by late summer. Currently we have approximately 20 drops in the grant area yet to run and we have an additional approximately 35 drops in area 3 (see map on page 17), outside the grant area, complete except for fiber splicing.

Once the drop is installed at your meter socket, there are a couple of steps that will need to occur to get you up and running. The drop needs to be terminated at the NID and fiber needs to be run into your home to the location of your choice (within reason and usually near an office-type area or near the television) and terminated there. Either Quantum or the cooperative will call to schedule this work. Two pieces of equipment need to be provisioned for your service and connected and you should be up and running with both ethernet and wireless connections available.

Remember, the Washington Island Electric Cooperative is the internet service provider and we are contracting with Quantum for splicing and installation as well as for expert assistance managing our headend equipment. We have lots of work ahead of us and once the drop is at your house, it will take us time to get you in the queue. We have lots of drops complete at seasonal homes

and expect that as everyone arrives they will want to connect. Bear with us!

Service offered is 100M/100M at \$59.95 per month, 300M/300M at \$69.95 per month, and 1G/1G at \$89.95 per month. As noted, this will be a line item on your monthly electric bill. We are recommending that, unless you absolutely know you will have a need for more, you start with the 100M/100M service and see how it goes. We are betting that it will be more than you need



as an average user who is streaming TV/movies and has multiple individuals in your home using the internet. If you find that it is not adequate, it is a relatively simple matter to upgrade and this can all be done remotely. There is no sense spending more money than you have to.

Once Quantum connects you, they will provide you with some limited instruction on connecting devices, etc. If you have needs that go beyond this such as additional network cable or wireless to far buildings or something similar, you can get on their schedule to complete this work at a later time. This additional work is between you and Quantum and they will bill accordingly. When more people are on the Island, as

we have noted before, we will be holding some classes on internet security, streaming (get rid of that dish and its big monthly bill), home networking, etc., so stay tuned for notices.

We have a customer service agreement with Neonova, a division of NRTC (National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative). If you have a problem with your service, of course you can always call us here at the cooperative, but if we don't answer there is an option to connect with them on the phone system. They are a US-based operation and you should have no difficulty understanding them. They are located in Iowa and we plan to use them for the foreseeable future, at least until we all have our feet on the ground and the project calms down, and then we may transition to Quantum.

Quantum, in partnership with the cooperative, will provide you with land line phone information once you are connected as well.

Existing numbers can be ported and the service change will be pretty seamless. This service will be billed by Quantum with the cooperative getting a cut. We detailed this in last month's edition and by the time you read this, you should have received a boxholder (which we will reprint in future editions). This service is being marketed as Washington Island Voice, a partnership between Quantum and WIEC.

You will be reading this after the fact, but we hope you were able to attend Quantum's Open House at the Brother's Too building on June 1. They will begin manning the facility for your technology needs/repairs this summer at least on a limited basis.

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