



THE ELEVENTH HOUR OF THE ELEVENTH DAY OF THE ELEVENTH MONTH

November 11, Veterans Day, is the day we honor all veterans living and deceased. It was originally known as "Armistice Day," for the armistice treaty ending World War I, which was signed and took effect at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918. If you see a veteran thank them for their service.

We hope you enjoy reading Mary Erickson's writing of Dick Sheehy's experience being shot down during bombing raids on the Ploesti Oil refineries during World War II. Many of us remember him telling the story of not only Operation Halyard but of his previous two bombing missions. This article is part of the magazine that goes to the rest of the cooperatives in addition to us. There is a video in the archives of Dick telling Steve Waldron's class the story. If you have an opportunity to see it, it is

A group of Island veterans pose in front of the newly restored War Memorial. (Jim Morris Photo)



worth the effort. We are proud to have known Dick and heard his story firsthand and are proud that his story is being shared with others outside of the community via this magazine.



Dick Purinton

This month we again asked Dick Purinton to contribute to the pages with a special nod to veterans, particularly the Island's two surviving World War II veterans, Dewey Jacobsen and LeRoy Bass.

Washington Island has but two living WWII veterans. Both Rev. Leroy Bass and Duane Lionel Jacobsen enlisted in the Army toward the end of the war, and served a short hitch before being discharged. Their story of service for their country follows:

Lionel Duane (Dewey) Jacobsen lives on Jackson Harbor Road, on the same land where Dewey, and his father before him, farmed for many years.



Dick Purinton Photo

Dewey was drafted May 16, 1945, in Milwaukee, and he was discharged December 8, 1946, at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. Much of his active duty was served as a barracks chief, monitoring and training "replacement troops" for Europe. After his tour in the U.S. Army, Dewey returned to Washington Island where he

continued a life of farming. In addition, he was an active participant in town government. He served as a town supervisor for eight years, and also as town assessor for 16 years. Dewey has been a member of the American Legion for 70 years, having joined while still on active duty. Dewey noted that he will be "98 by Christmas!"

Rev. Leroy Bass was inducted into the U. S. Army Feb. 14, 1945, and he was separated December 8, 1946. As Leroy crossed the Red Sea on a troop ship headed to Southeast Asia, atom bombs were dropped on Japan, bringing a close to the war in the Pacific. As sergeant, he served in China, Burma, and India. Then, following his military service, he and Marjorie, a physician, became missionaries. They later settled on Washington Island, when Dr. Bass became practitioner at the Island Clinic for 16 years. The Bass



Dick Purinton Photo

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LOBDELL POINT ROAD PROJECT UPDATE

Poles risers installed; individual connections to begin soon

The Lobdell Point Road Project to bypass Arni's swamp continues. You have probably noticed Don and Mike out putting the final touches on the cabinet terminations and installing pole risers at the various ending points for the underground work. You will also have seen them installing some new poles between Death's Door Fuel and Main Road.

These poles are being installed to both accommodate the clearances needed for the fiber project, but also so that an overhead phase can be added to feed the new underground. Hopefully by the time you are reading this article, there will have been a number of scheduled outages so that existing conductor can be swung to the new poles and new conductor can be added for the additional required phase.

There are two separate phases running across Arni's swamp, with the North (C) phase serving North Green Bay Road and the South (B) phase serving the ferry dock and South Green Bay Road.

Great care and testing were required to ensure that the phasing remained consistent from cabinet to cabinet and that the pole risers feeding the phases were properly matched.

Once the underground is energized, work will begin to connect individual homes and businesses to the pad-mount transformers installed along the way. Until we are ready to make the final connections, these pad-mount transformers are not energized and are grounded and their corresponding connections are in insulated stand-offs. A brief outage will be required to transfer service over to the underground at each home and then once all the homes have been connected, we will de-energize the overhead service and begin removing it.



You have probably noticed the stacks of cable reels outside the cooperative as you drive by. These arrived along with additional hardware on a semi that was unloaded with the help of Eric DeJardin from Mann's Mercantile. Those reels are the support strand that the fiber, which has already arrived, will be lashed to. Other hardware that arrived ranged from bolts to guy anchors and NIDs (Network Interface Devices) to splice cases.



Eric DeJardin helps unload pallets of material.



Using the digger derrick to unload reels of cable.



Left: Eric Dejardin helps unload reels. Right: A reel on its way to the pile.

In addition to material arriving, the last of the work on Plum Island is now complete. Nsight's contractor, QOS Fiber from Pulaski, made the trek to Plum Island via special ferry along with Robert Cornell and Tom Jordan. While on the Island they blew 96-strand fiber through the conduit/duct installed in 2018 as part of the cable replacement project and spliced it to the 24-strand fiber in the submarine cable on the south end of the Island. Prior to splicing in the 36-strand independent fiber that was run in 2019 and then run over by the USCG buoy sinker (see April edition of this magazine), the conduit was tested. It tested well and was then spliced to the cable. This means we now have a direct fiber link from the mainland to the Island and it is ready for the next steps.



Nsight contractor QOS splices cable on the south side of Plum Island.



QOS heads for home.

What are the next steps? Nsight still needs to run the fiber from Gills Rock to Northport. At last discussion, they were still waiting for the pole contact contracts from WPS. From there, Nsight will run the backbone cable from the Island shore landing to the cooperative and then on to the Cellcom Tower. Along with this they will run our backbone, lashed to the same strand. Your crew will run the fiber around Green Bay Road and down ancillary routes off the main backbone, and Quantum PC Services will splice fiber along the way and at the home.

We have been working on modifying what was once the meter shop in the office to be the headend for the project. This is where the internet will be "handed off" by Nsight and then distributed out to the members. We have currently received racking for this installation and once the modifications to the room are complete, we will begin assembling it in preparation for the arrival of the headend equipment.

The work to this point has been documented under the "phase 2" grant we were awarded in partnership with Nsight.



THE BEST FOR LAST

Public Service System awards grant for broadband expansion

By the time you read this, you most likely will have heard that we were successful in our grant application with the Public Service System's ARPA Broadband Expansion Grant. This is the smaller of the two grants we are currently pursuing, although small is probably not a good description. In this grant, we are partnered with the Town of Washington (which is contributing their \$75,000 in ARPA funding to the project). This project will provide drop connectivity to every home in the pilot area (the original grant only provides for 25) and expands the area down Main Road and around to Schoolhouse Beach where Nsight/Cellcom has agreed to install a small cell location, which will make connectivity and 911 service available.

This grant will also cover the headend costs and engineering costs to service the entire Island and, when complete, provide access to service for approximately 30% of the community (currently 314 homes and businesses). The cost of the project is approximately \$1.7 million with the grant contributing \$1,060,000. The bulk of our match will

be in labor and equipment.

This is a "reimbursement grant," which means we will need to spend the money in order to be reimbursed for it. The cooperative will utilize low-interest short-term borrowing to bridge the gap between spending and reimbursement, but remember, this grant means that we will not need to incur \$1,060,000 in long-term debt to accomplish this part of the project and moves things along much faster than they otherwise would have.

In addition to the Island being awarded this grant, because of the work we have already done, the Town of Liberty Grove, in partnership with Nsight, was also awarded a grant to do a pilot fiber to the home project along the route from Gills Rock to Northport.

Keep your fingers crossed on the NTIA grant though! It is probably a much longer shot than the grant we were just awarded, but we have advanced through the eligibility evaluation, and the proposed service areas for potential awardees (us included) have now been put out for comment by incumbent carriers. The grant says that we will hear no sooner than November 29, but I am

expecting that we will not hear much until well into the new year. You will remember this is the "big" \$6,000,000 grant.

Along with the good news associated with the grant award came a bit of good news just related to the general project. A 10-year financial projection by our lender, NRUCFC, confirmed our project is financially feasible and that they would be comfortable lending us money regardless of grant status. Their projection was further confirmation of the internal feasibility study, which was confirmed by the NRTC feasibility study. Obviously, now that we have been awarded the \$1 million grant, our numbers look even better.

All of this, including the assistance to our neighbors in Liberty Grove started with a June 15, 2018, cable failure and one heck of a lot of uncertainty. The disaster aid, budgetary assistance, partnerships developed, previous grant awards, and now this "big little" award proves that sometimes even the worst crap will grow pretty good tomatoes.

Now onward to the daunting task of getting it all lit up.

Island Vets

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retirement home off Range Line Road faces west, on a ridge that overlooks nearby Island fields.

The following are Leroy's words, written for his "story of my life":

On board a troopship departing from NY to cross the Atlantic, we first passed Ellis Island, and I gave a parting salute to Lady Liberty. Our destination was Calcutta, India, and from there to travel through the mountains into Burma to fight the Japanese and drive them back into China.

As we were on the troopship traveling through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea there came down to the troops a broadside (news handout) with the words: "Atom bomb dropped off Hiroshima." The next day another broadside announced the same thing for Nagasaki. The following day, a third broadside: "JAPAN SURRENDERS!"

In India I worked at the King George Docks, helping load ships with American unused military equipment and supplies for return to the states. I became a fork lift driver from the warehouse to the side of the ship. Before my discharge from the Army, I also worked in China.

Robert Cornell, Manager

1157 Main Road, Washington Island, WI 54246

920-847-2541

info@wiecoop.com

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

