



**NORTH ITASCA  
ELECTRIC**

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**WATTS  
NEWS**

VOL 27 NO. 3

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MARCH 2024

## Remembering Bruce Leino

by Larry Salmela

Bruce Leino served the members of the North Itasca Electric Co-op as a director for 37 years until he died on Monday February 5, 2024. From the co-op's beginning the members of District 7 have always had someone named Leino as their representative on the board. Bruce's father was a director when the co-op was first organized. When her husband died, his mother was appointed to fill the board vacancy; and Bruce was elected at the first opportunity and has served ever since then.

Bruce was a businessman through and through. He understood the value of investing in

his businesses and the fundamental principle that the operation of any business must pay back the investment, which requires operating the business very carefully and paying attention to the details.

He understood that the basic business principles must also apply to a cooperative. His grasp of these principles earned him great respect from his fellow North Itasca Electric directors who selected him to represent the local co-op on the Great River Energy board of directors. Once there, he was selected by his peers on the GRE board

to serve in its leadership positions. He understood the importance of treating his customers with high respect. In the co-op world this is far more important because the customers are members. We heard him at the board table emphasize the importance of respecting the members again and again.

Bruce's business approach could be seen Leino to p.2>



## CEO Report

Good afternoon NIECI, I am saddened by the loss of our Director Bruce Leino. I have had the honor of working with Bruce since I started my career with North Itasca Electric. Bruce was my Great River Energy representative, we spent more time together because of that with meetings and discussions about GRE. This grew into a great friendship and Bruce will always be one of the great foundational influences in my life.

I recently attended two meetings with GRE. The first was our Regional Meeting. Once a year GRE invites all directors to attend the Regional

Meeting. They give us updates from each divisional VP and open the floor for questions. This is the opportunity to share how the previous year turned out and what they are expecting for the year to come.

2023 at GRE was a fantastic year financially. Great River experienced lower than expected costs in several areas. Natural gas was one of the biggest savings. Electricity pricing in the market is directly affected by natural gas pricing. Lower gas price is lower market energy pricing. This

saved GRE substantially over the course of 2023.

We heard from the professionals in the industry what the year looked like and what the outlook is for power supply. The current fleet and power supply portfolio did perform well in 2023. We were able to capitalize on low market

CEO to p.2>

## 2023's overall average temperature was 15.5% warmer over that of 2022

by Jerry Loney  
Despite the cold spell we had in the beginning of November 2023 and again the first part of January 2024, we have

had the warmest winter since I've been keeping records from 2016. The chart below from my records shows the differences each month

in heating degree days and percentage changes. If you are interested in looking this information up yourself, go to: <https://www.degreedays.net/>.

Warm to p.6>

Month	Heating Degree Days							% Change in 2023	
	2016	2017	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
January	1631	1598	1899	1611	1547	1930	1495	-22.53%	warmer
February	1381	1252	1710	1547	1719	1701	1372	-19.36%	warmer
March	979	1206	1324	1129	986	1236	1285	3.93%	Cooler
April	765	685	787	847	753	894	813	-9.07%	warmer
May	355	431	527	449	407	343	251	-26.89%	warmer
June	175	167	206	145	138	150	84	-43.81%	warmer
July	84	115	103	91	103	77	126	63.85%	Cooler
August	112	190	181	118	113	76	104	36.7%	Cooler
September	240	267	305	397	234	264	171	-35.2%	warmer
October	584	627	754	901	482	595	593	-0.3%	warmer
November	804	1205	1256	1010	1037	1059	1003	-5.3%	warmer
December	1600	1736	1553	1449	1497	1593	1081	-32.2%	warmer
Totals	8710	9479	10605	9694	9016	9919	8378	-15.5%	warmer



## Operation Round-Up Trustees to hold spring grant meeting

Thanks to the generosity of nearly 85 percent of the Members of North Itasca Electric Co-op., the Board of Trustees for Operation Round Up will have approximately \$12,000 available to distribute to various communities and organizations in the area. In the Round Up program, Members "round up" their billings to the next dollar, with the difference going to programs benefitting our area.

The deadline for grant applications is **Monday, April 1, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.**

Any postmarks after this date will be disqualified.

There is an application form on the [northitascelectric.com](http://northitascelectric.com) website under the Members tab > Operation Round Up or you can send an email request to [support@nieci.com](mailto:support@nieci.com). If you do not have email access give us a call at (218) 743-3131, and we will mail you an application form.

When completing the grant application, please read and follow the directions closely. Make sure the

Round Up to p.5>

• inside • inside • inside • inside • inside • inside • inside • inside • inside •

**Scholarships**

page 4

*March Refrigerator Sale*

pages 8-9

**Repair tips: fridge won't cool**

page 7

### Office Hours

Monday - Friday  
7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
(218) 743-3131



Brad Dolinski, CEO

### CEO Report (continued)

> from p.1  
pricing when it was available. Our peaking plants ran when called upon in times of need; this also adds to the bottom line in the finances. The contracts executed for power purchases over the past several years were the hedge needed against times of high market pricing.

2023 was a great year for the power portfolio, we are expecting the same in 2024. Jon and his team will continue to explore the best contracts and opportunities to provide the power necessary to keep our lights on.

I get asked from time to time, what can I do to help the future of North Itasca Electric? Yeah, OK, maybe it's not worded quite like that. You have an opportunity to weigh in on something that could help our communities and our power grid out. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is looking for comments on Docket E-999/CI-23-151. We are asking the PUC to consider woody biomass, without limitations, as a qualifying renewable energy source for carbon-free eligible energy technologies. MN Statutes section 216B.1691 subdivision 1(c) lists biomass as a qualifying renewable energy source for eligible energy technologies to generate carbon free electricity. We simply want to include woody biomass in this same section.

Please consider sending an email to consumer.

puc@state.mn.us with your comments. If you have any questions about this, please contact me in the office or send me an email at Bradd@nieci.com.

Minnesota's forests produce an abundance of under-utilized renewable biomass materials in the form of mill residues, treetops/limbs, salvage from fires/insect damage, and under-utilized species. This abundance of renewable woody biomass available in Minnesota provides many benefits in finding uses for these waste materials. Replacing carbon-intensive fossil fuel energy sources, like coal, with renewable biofuels will provide a greater opportunity to reduce carbon emissions. This would be a tool to use to meet our carbon-free by 2040 standard passed last year.

I took a glance at the

forecast this morning. There are more days in the 40s coming. This is the first winter I remember not seeing a steady diet of 20° below zero. I know we will somehow pay for this, but I'm sure enjoying it today. I'm crossing my fingers we don't have extreme fire danger this spring; with a few timely placed rain showers, we won't have a thing to worry about.

We might even get an early golf season! We've been practicing golf on the old Nintendo Wii with my friends Eric and Kelly. Unfortunately the Wii died recently. We're already on the hunt to replace that gem in the garage.

By your side! Miigwech  
Brad



### Director Bruce Leino

>from p.1  
in the way that he was very careful about his personal appearance. He was uncomfortable with the way that business attire, a suit and necktie for a man, has fallen out of fashion in our modern world. He chided his colleagues on our local board on more than one occasion, "A board meeting is a business meeting, and we should dress appropriately." Well, people are much more casual these days. Eventually Bruce came to accept that the argument

wasn't going anywhere, and he reluctantly changed his ways also.

Bruce was a true outdoor sportsman. Being out on the rivers and lakes and in the woods was plainly in his blood. In many ways he served the Squaw Lake community and the broader area of northern Itasca County throughout his entire life. The Leino family legacy of service to the community continues by the efforts of his wife Sandy and his son and daughter and their families.

### Electrical Inspections

Except for minor repair work, all electrical work is required to be inspected by a State Electrical Inspector.

A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit [www.electricity.state.mn.us](http://www.electricity.state.mn.us) for more information. The inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

- **Itasca County** - Steve Bartlett (218) 591-1616
- **Koochiching County** - Curt Collier (218) 966-5070
- **Beltrami, Clearwater counties** - Davis Smid (507) 227-2772

### Are you tax exempt?

If you have a second meter for either Dual Fuel or Storage Space heating to heat your home with electric heat, you qualify for a tax exemption status for the energy consumption by your heating equipment. It is easy to check by adding up all charges on your bill and multiplying them by \$0.07875. If the answer equals that shown on your bill, you are paying tax on your electric heat. You can avoid this tax by going to North Itasca Electric's website [www.northitascaelectric.com](http://www.northitascaelectric.com), then go to the FIND A FORM tab and select Minnesota Sales Tax Exemption form. Complete and send to our office.

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**Road conditions:**  
Call 511 or visit  
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### North Itasca Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Directors

- Chairman: Larry Salmela, District 3  
 Vice-Chair: Wes Waller, District 2  
 Secretary: Lloyd Kongsjord, District 5  
 Treasurer: Roy Bain, District 9  
 Rep. to GRE Board: Lloyd Kongsjord, District 5
- James White, District 1      Mary Rahier, District 4  
 Todd Christensen, District 6      Pending, District 7  
 Jeff Kilian, District 8

## Highlights from the Board Room

NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC CO-OP., INC.  
MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
January 25, 2024

**Start time: 10:00 a.m.**

**End time: 1:15 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the office and electronically through Zoom on January 25, 2024.

**Directors present:** J. White, W. Waller, L. Kongsjord, J. Kilian, R. Bain, T. Christensen, M. Rahier, and L. Salmela.

**Also Present:** CEO Brad Dolinski, Jerry Loney, Daryl Pederson, Tina Danielson, Andy Shaw and Kim Giesen.

**Absent:** B. Leino.

**Start Regular Board Meeting: 10:10 a.m.**

- o Pledge of allegiance was recited.
- o A motion was made to adopt the agenda. Seconded; motion carried. A motion was made to consent agenda. Seconded; motion carried.
- o A safety discussion was held. Brad discussed slippery road conditions. Todd reminded everyone to follow the guidelines of the frozen lakes you may be driving on. Ice is never safe and this year is not a normal year. It now costs over twice as much to recover vehicles / houses that may go through the ice.
- o Tina reviewed the preliminary Operating Reports. A motion was made to acknowledge receipt of the Preliminary Operating Reports. Seconded; motion carried.
- o A motion was made to show that Board Policy 400.11 Nepotism was reviewed with no changes. Seconded; motion carried.
- o Daryl gave the Line Department report. Jessie Lake transformer project is complete. Powell Excavating has begun the ROW clearing. They are working in the Talmoon area. There is a new chassis in the works for truck #202 the 2000 International. The boom is being reconditioned to put on that chassis. Cost estimated \$175,000 to recondition which will be approximately \$100,000 less than a new one.
- o Jerry Loney gave the Members Services report. Jerry will be continuing his employment here until the end of April 2024. There have been 34 ½ hours of controlling in January so far.
- o Tina gave the Office Report. Audit preparation work is in process. Work is being done to close work orders.
- o Brad gave the CEO report. The meeting with Pete Stauber went very well. The hospital tour after the meeting also went very well. He was able to visit with employees and other community members who were present.
- o Wes Waller gave the MREA report. Wes attended the Board Leadership Class Practical Communications. He shared an explanation of what was presented and

## A balanced team for reliability

by Maura Giles

The winningest basketball teams in history are ones that are consistent and have players with varying abilities. Some are better at shooting three-pointers, some are best at defense. Having a balanced mix of skills makes the team a powerhouse on the court. The way to keep electricity reliable is a bit like that too.

The power team first requires a foundation of consistent sources that can be put in the game any time they're needed. Having enough "always available" fuel sources like natural gas and coal can ensure consistent power generation.

Just like a team needs different players for different situations, our power grid requires multiple sources to keep the grid running. Relying solely on one player to win every game is not an effective strategy—if they get injured, you'll likely lose. Similarly, using a single fuel source for electricity generation poses a significant risk to energy reliability. Natural disasters, geopolitical tensions or unforeseen disruptions can severely impact the supply chain of a particular fuel. A diverse mix of energy sources acts as a safeguard, ensuring that the grid remains operational even in the face of unexpected

challenges. A diverse energy mix also enhances grid flexibility by accommodating the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources like solar and wind. Think of solar power like a team's inconsistent three-point shooter. It's awesome when the sun is shining bright, but what if it's nighttime or a cloudy day? That's where the other players, like wind, hydro, nuclear, natural gas and coal can step up and keep the team scoring.

Diverse fuel sources contribute to the stability and reliability of the electric grid. The different sources have varying characteristics, including generation patterns, responsiveness and storage capabilities. This diversity allows for a more balanced and resilient energy system that can adapt to fluctuating demand and unforeseen circumstances. Having a mix of these energy sources is like having a team with different skills to handle various situations and scenarios.

A diverse set of energy sources is essential, but that's not the only thing we need to have reliable electricity—or a winning team. Basketball teams are always trying out new plays or training rookies to create a versatile lineup. Similarly, electric cooperatives are constantly innovating to

learned. He also attended Board Leadership class Evolution of Electric Cooperative Power Supply.

o Lloyd gave the GRE report. The GRE Annual meeting will move to June 5.

o A motion was made to adjourn. Seconded; motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

*Regular board meetings are generally held the fourth Thursday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact CEO Brad Dolinski at least two weeks in advance to be included*

Just like a team needs different players for different situations, our power grid requires multiple sources to keep the grid running.

maintain reliability for tomorrow. But creating new ways to make our power sources more efficient and reliable takes time, money and advances in technology that aren't necessarily ready yet.

As we continue to work on the innovations of tomorrow, the key to keeping our electricity reliable right now is

ensuring a diverse "team" of fuels. Each one brings something special to the table, and together, they make sure we have the power we need, whenever we need it.

*Maura Giles writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

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# Scholarships

Did you know that high school seniors who are children of North Itasca Electric Members can apply for a college scholarship through the Northome High School scholarship committee?

The deadline for application is in late April. Information will be available on the Northome School counselor's web page in mid-March at [www.northome.k12.mn.us/page/2460](http://www.northome.k12.mn.us/page/2460).

These scholarships are funded through unclaimed capital credits. Children of families who live out of the area but are Members of the cooperative (such as seasonal properties with a meter) are eligible to apply.

# Meter seals

If you or an electrician is performing electrical work at your residence which requires opening meter sockets or load control receivers, you need to contact North Itasca Electric first.

By contacting North Itasca Electric, you can help prevent possible problems which could occur when North Itasca Electric finds that seals have been cut. These problems would mostly be on sub meters where load control meters are installed.

This equipment is owned, controlled and maintained by North Itasca Electric. These seals may only be cut if permission is granted by North Itasca Electric in advance or deemed an emergency by an electrician.

North Itasca Electric does realize that there could be instances where work needs to be done, in such cases; North Itasca Electric still needs to be contacted. If it is determined that loads have not been controlled during load control periods, demand charges could be applied to your billing.

# Cold weather rule & energy assistance program notice

In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between Oct. 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:

- Your household income is at or below 50% of the state median household income. Income may be verified on forms provided by North Itasca Electric Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from North Itasca Electric Cooperative. Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely stop winter disconnects before disconnecting electric service to residential members between Oct. 1 and April 30,

### North Itasca Electric Cooperative must provide:

- A 30-day notice of disconnection;
- A statement of members' rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- Forms on which to request Cold Weather Rule protection; and
- A statement explaining available payment plans and other options to continue service.

### Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 60 percent of the state median income (\$67,764 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2024. To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.

- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance, Kootasca Community Action (218) 999-0800. North Itasca Electric Cooperative exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact Sheila Hafeman at (218) 743-3131 to set up a payment plan.

## Energy assistance

If you cannot pay your winter heating bills, contact one of these locations for energy assistance help.

**KOOTASCA ENERGY ASS'T.**  
201 NW 4th St., Ste 130  
Grand Rapids MN 55744  
218-999-0800  
877-687-1163

**BI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL**  
P.O. Box 579  
Bemidji, MN 56601-0579  
800-332-7161

**ITASCA COUNTY SOCIAL SERV.**  
Itasca County Courthouse  
123 NE 4th St  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218-327-2941

**KOOCHICHING COUNTY FAMILY SERVICES**  
615 4th St  
International Falls, MN 56649  
218-283-8405

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## Be the One!

Great River Energy recently launched a new safety campaign for employees called “Be the One” at the cooperative’s all-employee meeting.

Be the One has a simple but critical message: Any employee has the authority to speak up for safety or to stop work if they have a safety concern. Great River Energy has hundreds of employees who work on power lines and in power plants and warehouses where there are higher risks of injuries. In those positions, speaking up or stopping work at the right time can not only keep employees safe — it could potentially save lives.

The sentiment of the campaign is nothing new to employees. Great River Energy President and CEO David Saggau is well known for his commitment to safety.

“We have always encouraged employees to speak up and stop work if something doesn’t feel right and I am always proud to hear stories of employees stopping work for safety

reasons,” Saggau said. “There is no project, budget or timeline that is more important than our employees’ safety and this focus on stop work authority illustrates that commitment.”

As an added element to the campaign, employees are being encouraged to support other employees when they speak up or stop work for safety. Employees are also being encouraged to share stories for the cooperative’s employee intranet site of times when they spoke up or stopped work to keep everyone safe.

“This campaign allows employees to celebrate our culture where we are all empowered to speak up and support each other in doing so,” said David Ranallo, Great River Energy’s director of culture, communications & strategy. “The connection is so clear for employees in high-risk positions, but it applies to everyone, regardless of your role or tenure.”

## Clearing the Path to Reliability

by Anne Prince

Trees are majestic, beautiful and good for the soul. But we also know that our members depend on us to deliver reliable power to their homes and businesses. That’s why North Itasca Electric strives to balance maintaining the beautiful surroundings we all cherish with ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree trimming.

### Reliability

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. After all, we’ve seen the whims of Mother Nature during severe weather events with fallen tree limbs taking down power lines and utility poles. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about half of all outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you see North Itasca Electric crews or contractors out in the community trimming trees near power lines. Our trimming crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps

lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.

Plus, we all know it’s more cost-effective to undertake preventative maintenance than it is to make repairs after the fact.

### Safety

Working near power lines can be dangerous, and we care about your safety and that of our lineworkers. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members’ yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can reach those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls across a power line creates a potentially dangerous situation. A proactive approach lessens the chances of fallen trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

### Affordability

As a co-op, North Itasca Electric always strives to keep costs down for our members. If trees and other vegetation are left unchecked, they can become overgrown and expensive to correct. A strategic

vegetation management program helps keep costs down for everyone.

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help too. When planting new trees, make sure they’re planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. Medium-height trees (40 ft. or smaller) should be planted at least 25 ft. from power lines. Taller trees (over 40 ft.) should be planted at least 50 ft. from power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. from the transformer door and 4 ft. from the sides. If your neighborhood has underground lines, remember to contact 811 before you begin any project that requires digging.

Additionally, if you spot an overgrown tree or branch that’s dangerously close to overhead lines, please let us know by contacting us at (218) 743-3131. We have deep roots in our community, and we love our beautiful surroundings. It takes a balanced approach, and our vegetation management program is a crucial tool in ensuring service reliability.

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

## Round Up deadline is April 1

> from p.1

application is completed, including a complete and accurate mailing address. Make sure your IRS tax-exempt letter (if appropriate) is attached. Not following directions or leaving parts of the application blank or incomplete could

cause the application to be disallowed.

If you have any questions on completing the application, please contact Jerry Loney at North Itasca Electric Cooperative by calling (218) 743-1313, or one of the Trust Board members listed below.

### Community Trust Board Members

DIST #	TRUST BOARD MEMBER & AREA REPRESENTED	
1	Linda Dreher, Mizpah	(218) 897-5086
2	Meredie Rounds, Bigfork	(218) 743-3312
3	Bruce Steege, Effie	(218) 743-2649
4	Greg Anselmo, Bigfork	(218) 244-4648
5	Gary Chapman, Marcell	(217) 402-3745
6	Stacy Swedberg, Northome	(218) 239-0220
7	Lisa Peterson, Squaw Lake	(218) 659-4266
8	Keven Grenson, Marcell	(952) 292-7414
9	Lisa Polchow, Deer River	(218) 246-9680

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**Load control during warmer weather**

>from p.1

Even though warmer, Great River Energy (GRE) still needed to control heat loads due to market pricing, billing peaks and capacity. The attached charts show the days and hours GRE controlled in 2023 and so far in 2024.

For some there were a couple of uncomfortable days in January highlighted in yellow where GRE controlled not once but twice in a single day, January 16, and again on January 18. But the reason for being uncomfortable wasn't due to the Dual Fuel program being controlled, it was because the homes did not have the required fossil fuel backup heating sources required to be on the program. In my article last month, I wrote about the requirements needed to be on the Dual Fuel program. Just think if GRE had controlled the maximum amount, they could have up to 12 hours at a time and 400 hours per heating season.

One might ask if the savings are worth it when propane is needed during load control periods. An average sized home has a heat loss of 50,000 Btus. If the home is tight, the infiltration rate might be 0.3 air changes per hour needing to replace 15,000 Btus every hour. With electricity producing 3,412 Btus per kW, 4.36 kWh per hour are needed.

With this information you can decide what is right for you, but here it is anyway. 4.36 kWh per hour x \$0.0673 = \$0.293 cent per hour to heat this home with electric, propane \$0.377 cents per hour, a difference of \$0.084 or \$2.01 per day. With Dual Fuel being controlled 51 hours in 2023 and propane expenses

2023 Dual Fuel Space Heating control				
Date	Program Type	Start (CPT)	Stop (CPT)	Hours
12/18/2023	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:00	5
12/12/2023	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:30	5.5
11/27/2023	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:00	5
11/3/2023	Dual Fuel	5:00	10:00	5
11/2/2023	Dual Fuel	6:00	10:00	4
11/2/2023	Dual Fuel	16:00	21:15	5.25
10/28/2023	Dual Fuel Fall Test	18:00	21:00	3
10/26/2023	Dual Fuel Fall Test	18:00	21:00	3
4/6/2023	Dual Fuel	5:30	9:30	4
3/14/2023	Dual Fuel	5:30	9:00	3.5
2/3/2023	Dual Fuel	5:30	9:00	3.5
1/30/2023	Dual Fuel	16:30	20:45	4.25
				51

2024 Dual Fuel Space Heating control				
Date	Program Type	Start (CPT)	Stop (CPT)	Hours
1/18/2024	Dual Fuel	15:30	20:30	5
1/18/2024	Dual Fuel	6:00	10:30	4.5
1/17/2024	Dual Fuel	15:00	21:00	6
1/16/2024	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:00	5
1/16/2024	Dual Fuel	6:00	10:00	4
1/15/2024	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:00	5
1/14/2024	Dual Fuel	15:00	20:00	5
				34.5

\$2.50 Propane vs. electric heat	
91500 Btu's per gallon propane	
82350 Btu's available at 90% efficiency	
82350 Btu's from propane	
3412 Btu's per kW of electric heat	
24.135 kWh equals one gallon of propane at 90% efficiency	
24.135 kWh	
\$0.0673 Dual Fuel rate	
\$1.624 Electric cost for 90% efficient propane equipment	
\$2.50 propane costs per gallon	
\$1.62 Electric cost on Dual Fuel program	
\$0.88 Saving using electric heat.	

being \$0.084 higher, one would only pay \$4.28 more that year because load control took place.

If you have any questions or would like help figuring out what you can save, I am here to help.

Until next time.



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## Roxanne's Repair Tips:

Why my refrigerator won't cool, but the freezer works!

Did you know the most common reason that this happens is because the refrigerator is overloaded? You see, there are a lot of people who figure that if the door shuts it's good, well this isn't true. Refrigerators have vents which help in circulating the cool and the warm air in both the refrigerator and the freezer. This is one way your produce stays fresh in your appliance.

If you overload the refrigerator, it stops the air flow! This causes a lot of problems like stale food smells, frost build up and excessive condensation. The best way to see if this is your problem is to clean the refrigerator and clean the compartments properly. Unplug the refrigerator while you are cleaning it. I would leave the refrigerator sit open for a few hours so if there is frost build up on the coils it has a chance to thaw. Then plug the refrigerator back in and wait and see if it starts cooling again. If it does, then you know that was the problem, and you don't have to worry about it happening again if you keep it clean so air can circulate.

If that didn't fix the problem, it could be your evaporator fan. With the defrost system, if the defrost heater burns out or the defrost thermostat fails, frost will build up on the evaporator coils. It could also be a damper control, condenser coil or the temperature control board. If you want to troubleshoot any or all of these, you can go to repairClinic.com and look under trouble shooting.

Just a quick reminder that North Itasca Electric has Electric bikes! I currently have the Go Express and the Go Cruiser in stock. These bikes are built to last. They reach speeds of 20 mph and will go 18 miles if you are just using electric. They will go 36 miles if you're using pedal assist, all on a single charge.

## Roxanne's Sales Talk

by Roxanne Prather, Member Services Representative

The Go Cruiser is extremely versatile with different modes to select from such as pedal assist, electric throttle, manual pedal, or walk mode. They are made to be comfortable and easy to get on. Both bikes have fat tires which are great for on or off-road riding.

These bikes are built to last. They reach speeds of 20 mph and will go 18 miles if you are just using electric. They will go 36 miles if you're using pedal assist, all on a single charge.

**Sale price on the Go Express \$1335.54**



**Sale price on the Go Cruiser \$1160.25**



I also want to let you know I got a good deal on 1 Microwave oven with a countertop microwave. I have got 6 of them in stock! It is a Danby 5-in-1 Microwave oven with air fry, convection roast/bake/grill. stainless color.

**DDMW1061BSS-6 \$141.70**



The Danby 5-in-1 multifunctional stainless-steel microwave packs a lot into a 1.0 cu. ft. (28 L) microwave: air fry, convection roast/bake, broil/grill, microwave, combination micro/convection or micro/grill, and 1,000 Watts of cooking power.

It can air fry your favorite foods with little to no oil! French fries, onion rings, chicken, seafood, spring rolls, you name it!

On top of its air fry capabilities, this unit has nine convenient menu options, a broil/grill function that can be set anywhere from 5 to 95 minutes, and a combination micro/cooking option. You can also use it as a warming oven perfect for warming plates, making yogurt, raising bread or just keeping food warm.

You can also defrost your meals by weight or by time and deodorize the unit's cavity to help remove unwanted smells. The child/control lock-out option guarantees a safe environment for your child!

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# North Itasca Electric Co-op's March Refrigerator Sale

**GTS22KGNWW - \$838.06 SALE \$754.25**

White GE 33" freestanding top freezer refrigerator with 21.93 cu. ft. total capacity, 3 glass shelves, right hinge with reversible doors, crisper drawer, frost free defrost, adjustable glass shelves, UL certification, spill-proof glass shelves, CSA Certified, garage ready, gallon door storage W-32.75", D-34.5", H-66.375".



**XRS22KGABWW-1056.25 SALE \$950.62**

White Crosley, 33" freestanding top freezer refrigerator with 21.9 cu. ft. total capacity, 2 glass shelves, right hinge, crisper drawer, automatic defrost, ADA Compliant, adjustable glass shelves, adjustable humidity drawers, door storage, LED lighting, movable snack drawer, gallon door storage.



**GTS19KGNBB- \$732.77 SALE \$659.14**

Black GE 30" freestanding top freezer refrigerator with 19.11 cu. ft. total capacity, 3 glass shelves, 5.6 cu. ft. freezer capacity, right hinge with reversible doors, crisper drawer, frost free defrost, UL certification, garage ready, adjustable glass shelves, CSA certified, adjustable door bins, gallon door storage W-29.75", D-34.5", H-66.375".



**FFTR2045VS- \$808.60 SALE \$727.74**

Stainless Frigidaire 20 cu.ft. top freezer refrigerator. Auto defrost, even temp cooling system, full width deli drawer, gallon storage in the door, 2 full width glass refrigerator shelves, and 1 full width freezer shelf. W-30" D-32 H-65 7/8.



**GTS17DTNRWW- \$682.00 SALE \$613.80**

White GE 28" freestanding top freezer refrigerator with 16.63 cu. ft. total capacity, 3 wire shelves, 4.03 cu. ft. freezer capacity, right hinge with reversible doors, crisper drawer, frost free defrost, UL Certification, CSA certified.



**MRF226N6CWE- \$1402.33 SALE \$1262.10**

White Mora 36" wide, 26.6" cu. ft. French door bottom freezer refrigerator, filtered water dispenser inside, full width pantry drawer. Two humidity-controlled drawers, built in icemaker in freezer delivers up to 3 lbs. ice. Gallon door storage.



If you have questions, please call Roxanne at (218) 743-3132; email [roxannep@nieci.com](mailto:roxannep@nieci.com).



**GLF11URDG16- \$490.93 SALE \$441.84**

Red or milkshake white Galanz 11 cu. ft. Convertible Retro upright freezer /refrigerator. Adjustable electronic thermostat control. Frost free, 1 crystal crisper, 1 crisper glass cover, 3 full slide out glass shelves, 4 full door bins, 2 leveling front legs. W-23.6", D-27.7", H-67".



**GLR16FS2K16- \$828.93 SALE \$746.04**

Galanz stainless steel 16-cu. ft. French door refrigerator. Built in icemaker in freezer, split glass shelves in refrigerator, full width plastic freezer drawer, glass shelves, premium LED lighting. Half door gallon bins, electronic temperature controls, half width crisper drawer, Energy Star. W-28.35", H-70", D-31.1"



**DAR11ON1WDD- \$496.17 SALE \$421.17**

Danby, white Designer Series 24" freestanding all refrigerator with 11 cu. ft. capacity, 4 glass shelves, right hinge with reversible doors, crisper drawer, automatic defrost, energy star certified, door storage, adjustable glass shelves, eco-friendly refrigerant. (Has 2 dings on front so priced at 10% over cost.) W-23 7/8", D-26 1/16", H-58 13/16".



**LRFLC2706S- \$2197.21 SALE \$1977.49**

LG stainless steel 36" smart freestanding counter depth French door refrigerator with 26.5 cu. ft, Wi-Fi enabled, 4 glass shelves, 8.7 cu. ft. freezer capacity, internal water dispenser, crisper drawer, automatic defrost, energy star certified, ice maker, spill protector shelves, SmartThinQ Works with Google Assistant/Amazon Alexa, Door Cooling Plus, gallon door bin, SmartPull handle, counter-depth. H-70 1/4", W-35 3/4", D-31 5/8".



**FRSS2623AS- \$1203.33 SALE \$1083.00**

Frigidaire stainless 25.6 c.f. 36" S x S refrigerator. Even cooling temp, gallon door storage, door alarm, LED lighting, auto defrost, temperature and power failure alarm, water dispenser and ice maker. H-69 7/8", W-36 1/8", D-35".



**GRFG235AF3- \$ 2010.91 SALE \$1809.82**

Frigidaire 23 c.f. counter depth non dispenser French door refrigerator with ice, LED lighting, smudge proof, child lock, power failure alarm, water filtration, door stop, adjustable door bin, crisp seal plus. Space wise organization, indoor storage. W-36", D-30 8/10", H-70".



## Local Grief Support Group begins

by Val Conner  
 Thursday, February 8th was the first session on the new grief support group, which will meet weekly at Jesse Lake Lutheran, two miles west of Talmoon on CR 4. This group is open to anyone experiencing grief, recent or long-standing. It meets at 10:00 a.m. every Thursday. The group is designed for people to join or leave as their needs dictate.

If you miss a session, it won't be a matter of having to catch up. While this is a casual, loose-knit group, it will not be a case of "the blind leading the blind." Marion Leimbach, who recently lost her life partner, organized and is leading the group. She has extensive experience in hospice and grief support which she describes as follows:

"I have been involved

with grieving people since 1992. First as a grieving widow and a participant in grief support groups at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids, where I lived. When the opportunity came that I could learn to facilitate grief groups, I began the training and volunteered to lead adult and children's grief groups. When Ivan and I got together sometime after his wife died, having been friends for a long time, we moved to Marcell. Pastor Vicki Taylor suggested that I apply for the Itasca Hospice bereavement coordinator's job in Grand Rapids. This was an enlightening experience, following those people who were the family members of our deceased

hospice patients. Here I would visit people in their homes, lead support groups and keep in touch with them by phone calls or mail if they chose. Now I am again a grieving person with Ivan's death in December 2023. There isn't a group for us locally so I knew I could benefit from sharing with others who are grieving too.

If you think this group may help you, just show up any Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. There is no cost or obligation. For more information, contact Marion Leimbach at (320) 293-5741 or pineloft@bigfork.net.

## Food Shelf sees increase in need. March Campaign begins!

by Lynne Schleicher  
 Throughout 2023 visits to the Northern Itasca (Bigfork) Food Shelf slowly crept up. All over the state of Minnesota food shelves have seen increased visits during the year. Bigfork food shelf has been able to handle the increase because of the wonderful donors and available grants. With that being said the GMCC/Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign will begin on February 26 and run through April 6. We will be tracking all donated funds and food during this time period. This is a proportional grant that will be distributed to the registered food shelves with a formula for these funds based on money raised plus food donated and the total of individuals served.

take a neighbor through to pick out their groceries. Those volunteers are just a part of what keeps the food shelf humming! Delivery day has a few more stocking the shelves, a few volunteers help provide pet food, along with a couple more behind the scenes paying the bills and keeping the bank statements balanced and reports sent off. Northern Itasca (Bigfork) Emergency Food Shelf is open on Thursday afternoon from 12:30-3 p.m. The third Thursday of each month we are open until 4:30 p.m. We may adjust our days open due to a holiday. If Bigfork School is closed due to weather, we will also be closed. Please watch our Facebook site: Bigfork MN Food Shelf for those changes.

In 2023 Bigfork served 692 households, which contained 1434 individuals, distributing 24,000 pounds of food. This was 88 more household visits than we had in 2022. We are very proud of the fact we have been open EVERY week throughout the start of the pandemic and snow storms! Our volunteers are wonderful and deserve a HUGE thank you for your dedication. If you stop in on a Thursday afternoon, you will see a rotation of 2-3 individuals ready to

We can be contacted via email at bigforkmnfoodshelf@gmail.com or text/call 218-256-4170 mailing address is P. O. Box 152 Bigfork MN 56628 and we are physically located at 200 Main Ave, north end of the City of Bigfork building. Watch for information for our annual Empty Bowls fundraiser which will be held May 5! Pancakes, sausage and breakfast burritos to celebrate Cinco de Mayo! Details to follow.

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# Arts on the Edge

## Piatigorsky musicians | EdgeWild One Acts

The Edge Center for the Arts in Bigfork welcomes Piatigorsky Foundation artists Evan Drachman, cello and Wan-Chi Su, piano. The performance will be on Friday, March 8 at 7 p.m. Admission is \$10; students free.

For over 33 years, The Piatigorsky Foundation's commitment to artistic excellence and public outreach has fascinated many avid concert goers as well as curious first-timers. It is this combination of complimentary access, flamboyant performances, and human warmth that makes Piatigorsky Foundation concerts so appealing to diverse audiences.

Cellist EVAN DRACHMAN has combined musical talent with artistic vision to create a rich and varied career. As Founder and Artistic Director of The Piatigorsky Foundation, he has become one of the most respected authorities on the presentation of live classical music for diverse audiences everywhere. Mr. Drachman studied at the Peabody Conservatory, the New England Conservatory, and received his BMA from the Curtis Institute of Music.

Pianist WAN-CHI SU has performed as a soloist and collaborative artist in Asia, Europe, and the United States in major venues, including Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall and Salle Cortot in Paris. Dr. Su won first prize in both the Taiwan Cultural Cup Invitational Piano Competition and the Taiwan National Student Music Competition in Piano. Dr. Su began piano lessons at the age of four. She earned a bachelor's degree in piano while minoring in French horn at the National Kaohsiung Normal University in Taiwan and has a Master of Music, a Graduate Performance Diploma, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Su currently serves on the faculty at Georgetown University, Loyola University Maryland, and the Park School of Baltimore.

About The Piatigorsky Foundation: Evan Drachman established The Piatigorsky Foundation in 1990 in honor of his grandfather Gregor Piatigorsky. Piatigorsky deeply believed in the healing and inspiration power of classical music. He once said, "Music makes life better. Music is a necessity. It is rich. It is imaginative. It is magnificent. And it is for everyone."

**Note from The EdgeWild Players** - the Edge Center's community theatre group: We like to think we're not only at the Edge of the Wilderness but also on the cutting edge of theatrical experimentation. In April we will be presenting our latest experiment—a number of one act plays each directed by a student director seeking to become a part of a group of directors for future productions. Read more about it next month and mark your calendar for the third week-end in April.

The Edge Center is located at: 101 2nd Ave., Bigfork, MN 56628. For more information call (218) 743-6670 or visit [www.edgecenterarts.org](http://www.edgecenterarts.org).

# Classic Movie Series

by Jack Nachbar

Our March Classic movie, besides being a tense, exciting thriller, is plumb full of historic significance.

*Blackboard Jungle* (1955) is about a troubled NYC vocational high school with a new English teacher (Glenn Ford), and a group of destructive, violent teenagers. Notable is the strong presence of Sidney Poitier as Miller, the only kid showing an ounce of decency. The part was a huge boost to Poitier's career, boosting him into stardom. The opening song, "Rock Around The Clock" by Bill Haley and his Comets, was the first rock and roll song ever in a movie and made Rock and Roll a national sensation. And, perhaps most important, the film reflected a national panic over teen behavior in the fifties present in all the popular culture of the era, and the movie did it in a stronger, more immediate way.

*Blackboard Jungle* will be shown at 6:30 p.m. at the Edge Center Theater in Bigfork on Thursday, March 14. FREE! All are welcome. Come and Rock on.

APRIL CLASSIC MOVIE: It's rude, it's raucous, it's raucous, it's ridiculous. It's Mel Brooks's outrageous Western parody, *Blazing Saddles* (1974). Thursday, April 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the Edge.

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## Tax-Aide available

Tax-Aide is an AARP Foundation program that provides free tax preparation services to Itasca County families and individuals of all ages and backgrounds, with a focus on older adults and those with low-to-moderate incomes. AARP membership is not required.

It is available by appointment only through April 12. For appointments and more information, call (218) 245-9202. There is some limited duration face-to-face contact service.

Volunteers are trained and certified every year by the IRS. ElderCircle is the sponsoring agency. This program is funded through a grant provided by the state of Minnesota.

## Bigfork will install airport security cameras

by Sally Sedgwick

At its Feb. 13 meeting, the Bigfork City Council heard about plans for the community arena from Samantha Olson. Some estimates for the construction have been received, totaling about \$23,000. The arenas would be constructed next to the ball field on city land. Maintenance would be by volunteers. The council agreed that the Community Arena Committee could begin fundraising toward their goal.

Airport security was discussed after private vehicles had left marks on the runway and broken a runway light. Airport



Recent damage to the Bigfork Municipal Airport runway.

vandalism is a serious offense carrying up to a \$10,000 fine and possible jail time. The Bigfork Municipal Airport is used for medical emergency flights as well as private use. Security cameras will be researched.

The March meeting was rescheduled to Tuesday, March 19 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.

*Excerpted from an article in the Scenic Range NewsForum*

## Effie City Council discusses way forward for school demolition

by Sally Sedgwick

The Effie City Council met with County Commissioner Casey Venema on possible additional American Rescue Plan Act funding originally reserved for the canceled Huber project. Remaining funds will be distributed equally among the five commissioner districts for projects for local government or emergency services.

Venema asked about demolition of the old school, but the presence of asbestos prevents a

direct tear down, and the current application for a Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation grant will require a redevelopment plan. Venema suggested applying for a county grant to work with CEDA in developing a plan to establish an RV park at the site.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 11 at 6 p.m. in the Community Center.

*Excerpted from an article in the Scenic Range NewsForum*

## How to use a cell phone

Does your cell phone seem a little...well...mysterious? Sign up for this class, "Cell Phone 101" on Monday, March 25 in the Bigfork Valley Hospital Board Room. iPhones will be covered from 1-2 p.m. and Android phones from 2-3 p.m. The class is free, but class size is limited so register by calling Sandra at (218) 743-4356. Sign up by March 20.

## AARP Defensive Driving

A 48-hour refresher class will be held on Monday, March 18 at the Deer River Community Center next to King School. Cost for the class is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for nonmembers. To register, call (218) 246-8241, ext: 60227. Please arrive 15 minutes early for paperwork.

Contact Peggy Brennan at (651) 895-6465 with any questions. If interested in becoming a Smart Driver instructor, please call Marn Flicker, (763) 291-4411.

## SAIL classes

For more information or to register (required), contact ElderCircle at (218) 999-9233. New attendees may start anytime. Weights are provided but please bring your own water.

Following is the local schedule:

- Virtual via Zoom video conference  
Mondays & Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- Virtual via Zoom video conference  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- In person at:**
- Bigfork Old Scenic Church  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- Bowstring Town Hall  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- Deer River, Bethany Lutheran  
Mondays & Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

## B.I.G. Community Center in Bigfork

Coffee Club Monday-Friday 7-9 a.m.  
Bingo every Thursday 1-3 p.m.

### Northome Food Shelf

12059 Main St  
Bring your own bags.  
1st Mon.: 9 a.m.-noon  
2nd Mon.: 2-5 p.m.  
3rd Mon.: 9 a.m.-noon  
4th Mon.: 2-5 p.m.

**Blackduck Community Library:**  
(218) 835-6600  
Tues: 1-6 p.m..  
Wed: 9 a.m.-noon.  
Thurs:12-5 p.m.  
Fri: 12-5 p.m.  
Sat.: 9 a.m.-noon.

### Resource Centers:

Blackduck:  
(218) 835-5768

### Northern Itasca Emergency Food Shelf

200 Main, Bigfork  
Thursdays  
12:30-3 p.m.  
3rd Thursday  
12:30-4:30 p.m.  
(218) 256-4170

### Northome Library

(218) 897-5952

Mon: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Tues: 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.  
Wed: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Thurs: noon - 6 p.m.  
Fri: 9 a.m.- noon

## — Community Education —

**Blackduck** Register online at [blackduck.k12.mn.us/CE](http://blackduck.k12.mn.us/CE). Questions? Call (218) 835-5206 or email [mcleland@blackduck.k12.mn.us](mailto:mcleland@blackduck.k12.mn.us)

### ADULT VOLLEYBALL

Date: Wednesday nights  
Time: 7-8:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. start time  
Location: High School enter at gym door #3  
Cost:\$3/night

### LEGO NIGHT GRADES 2-6

Date: Tues., March 5  
Time: 4-5:30 p.m.  
Location: Ms. Cleveland's classroom  
Cost:\$5

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY S.T.E.M. ACTIVITIES

Date: Tues., March 12  
Time: 4-5:30 p.m.  
Location: Ms. Cleveland's classroom  
Cost:\$5

Students grades 2-6 will use Science, Technology, Engineering and Math skills to complete several challenges.

**Bigfork:** Register for classes at 743-3444, or online at [www.getlearning.org](http://www.getlearning.org),

### OPEN BASKETBALL

Date: Wednesday nights through March  
Time: 7 - 9 p.m.  
Location: Bigfork School small gym  
Cost:\$10

**Deer River:** Register for classes online at (218) 246-8241, Ext. 60227 or [www.getlearning.org](http://www.getlearning.org)

### OPEN PICKLEBALL

Date: Sundays 1-3 p.m.; Wednesdays 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Location: King School gym  
Cost:\$30, 2/11 through 3/13  
Courts for 3 skill levels, bring own paddle and balls.

Visit your co-op at [www.NorthItascaElectric.com](http://www.NorthItascaElectric.com) get updates on Facebook!

## area bookmobile stops

New to the area? Get your Arrowhead Library Card on the Bookmobile.

Tuesdays: March 19; April 9, 30  
12:00 - 1 p.m. Bowstring Store  
2:30-3:30 p.m. Effie: Effie Cafe  
4:00-5:30 p.m. Bigfork: City Hall

Thursdays: March 21; April 11  
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Togo: Junction Bar & Grill

Mondays: March 18; April 8, 29  
12:30 -1:00 p.m. Gemmel; Community Church  
1:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northome; Apartments  
3:15 - 4:15 p.m. Alvwood; Hoot-n-Holler  
4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Squaw Lake; Community Ctr

Bookmobile or Mail-a-Book information: call Arrowhead Library System at (218) 741-3840

Community News *Email editor at sedgwick@paulbunyan.net,*

~ March Calendar ~

Squaw Lake

St. Urho's Day celebration in Squaw Lake. Parade starts at the condos on the north side of the bridge on State Highway 46 at 4 p.m., ending at Leino's Pub. Finnish theme with grasshoppers and grapes. No reservations needed, just bring your float! More information, call the Pub at (218) 659-2131.

Northome's annual Kids Fishing Derby at Island Lake has been canceled due to expected poor ice conditions. Donations will be held over for next year's event. Thank you for your support! Raffle and lifetime license drawing will be held on Monday, March 11.

General Interest

"Living With Zebra Mussels In Your Lake - A Cautionary Tale" is the March First Thursday online program with Itasca Waters. Join a discussion with four lakeshore owners who have been living with zebra mussels in Minnesota and Iowa. If your lake is infected or threatened, what changes can you expect and what actions might you need to take? Presenters are Megan Weber, Kevin Zahler (Lake Minnewashta, Carver County), Phil Rollins (Bay Lake, Iowa) and Phil Thompson (Bay Lake, NW shoreline of Mille Lacs Lake). Register at itascawaters.org. Free.

Visit your co-op at [www.NorthItascaElectric.com](http://www.NorthItascaElectric.com)  
Get updates on Facebook!



Marcell Family Center

218-832-3444  
49023 State Highway 38 Marcell, MN 56657

MFC hours:

Fitness Center, gymnasium, multi-purpose room, public computer room and WiFi hotspot.

Mon: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 4-7 p.m.  
Tues, Thurs: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 4-7 p.m.  
Fri: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Sat: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

- 4 No school, Northome School Teacher Workshop.
- 5 Presidential Primary Day in Minnesota.
- 6 "The Club I Never Wanted to Join" breast cancer support group meets 3:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church in the chapel, south entrance, Grand Rapids. More info with Lynn (218) 832-3612, [lynn\\_ettl@msn.com](mailto:lynn_ettl@msn.com).
- 7 First Thursday "Practical Water Wisdom" online programs over the lunch hour with Itasca Waters. Topic: "Living With Zebra Mussels In Your Lake." Register at [itascawaters.org](http://itascawaters.org).
- 10 Daylight Savings time begins - move clocks forward one hour.
- 11 Women of the Woods meet at 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Community Center. Call Pat Sievertson at (218) 659-2157.
- 11 ISD 317 School Board meets at Deer River HS, 6 p.m. Public forum 5:45 p.m.
- 11 Effie City Council meets at Effie Community Center, 6 p.m.
- 11 Blackduck ISD 32 School Board meets, 6 p.m. in the Media Center.
- 11 ISD 318 School Board meeting at Educational Services Center Board Room, 601 SW 7th St, Grand Rapids or at [watchictv.org](http://watchictv.org), 6 p.m. Information: [jasmussen@isd318.org](mailto:jasmussen@isd318.org) or call (218) 327-5704. Livestream from board meeting link at [isd318.org](http://isd318.org).
- 12 Township Annual Meeting night.
- 12 Stop & Stitch meets at the Marcell Family Center the 2nd Tuesday of every month, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. More info, call Debbie at (218) 360-1503.
- 13 ISD 363 South Koochiching-Rainy River School Board meeting, 7 p.m.
- 14 Classic Movies at the Edge Center in Bigfork presents *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), 6:30 p.m. Free.
- 16 Perch Jerker on Round Lake, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. \$10 entry fee, cash prizes for 10 largest fish. Use East Landing access. Food available. Call the city of Squaw Lake to confirm ice conditions (218) 659-4256 MWF 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- 16 St. Urho's Day celebration in Squaw Lake. Watch the parade at 4 p.m. More information, call the pub at (218) 659-2131.
- 17 St. Patrick's Day.
- 19 Free community meal at Jesse Lake Lutheran Church, 4-6 p.m. Open to everyone on the third Tuesday of the month. This month enjoy Lasagna Soup.
- 19 Bigfork City Council at City Hall, 5:30 p.m. Note rescheduled date.
- 20 Stitch-n-Bitch meets at the B.I.G. Community Center in Bigfork the 3rd Wednesday of every month, 5-7 p.m. Finish your crafts projects! For more information, call Krista at (218) 410-2258
- 22 No school, Deer River School.
- 23 Bigfork Baseball fundraiser at Golf on the Edge. Breakfast buffet 9 a.m.-12 p.m, silent auction, 11 a.m. ACL injury prevention presentation.

Area Church Directory

**Alvwood Community Church Sun 10:00a**  
58712 Co. Rd. 131  
Blackduck 56630 218-659-4681

**Balsam Bible Chapel Sun 10:00a**  
41516 Scenic Hwy 7  
Bovey 55709 218-245-1960

**Bear River Lutheran Church Sun 10:00a**  
11141 Hwy 22  
Cook 55723 218-376-1012

**Bethesda Lutheran Church Sun 9:00a**  
Mizpah 56660 218-897-5654

**Bowstring Chapel Sun 10:15a**  
45114 Co Rd 133  
Deer River 56636 218-832-3171

**Calvary Covenant Sun 10:30a**  
54764 Co. Rd. 31  
Northome 56661 218-897-5684

**Centennial Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a**  
Hwy 46  
Squaw Lake 56681 218-259-0115

**Deer River Bible Church Sun 10:00a**  
33276 State Highway 6  
Deer River 56636 218-246-9570

**Dora Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a**  
59329 Co Rd 145  
Northome 56661 218-659-4551

**Effie Fredheim Lutheran Church (ELCA) Sun 8:30a**  
Hwy 1  
Effie 56639 218-743-3368

**First Presbyterian Church, BF Sun 10:15a**  
109 Ash St.  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3783

**Gemmel Community Church Sun 10:00a**  
10609 Town Rd 34  
Gemmel 56660 218-897-5966

**Grace Community Church (ELCA) Sun 10:15a**  
401 State Hwy 38 N  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3368

**Hope Lutheran Church Sun 10:30 a.m.**  
12234 Third St.  
Northome 56661 218-897-5654

**Jehovah's Witnesses Tu 7:00p., Sun 10:00a**  
Hwy 38  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3275

**Jesse Lake Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a**  
45834 Co. Rd. 4  
Talmoon 56637 218-832-3883

**Marcell Community Church Sun 10:30a**  
49103 State Hwy 38  
Marcell 56657 218-832-3200

**Northome Community Church Sun 10:00a**  
12071 Bartlett St.  
Northome 56661 218-897-5040

**Northwoods Chapel Sun 9:00a**  
50539 Mushgee Rd. (corner of Co. Rd. 622)  
Deer River 56636 218-659-2784

**Old Scenic Community Church Sun 9:00a**  
25747 Co. Rd. 340  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3953

**Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church Sun 9:00a** Mass also Tu, W, 9:00a.  
320 Golf Course Ln  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3255

**Sand Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a**  
55581 Co. Rd 4  
Spring Lake 56680 218-659-2872  
*Church website: [www.sandlakealliancechurch.org](http://www.sandlakealliancechurch.org)*

**St. Catherine's Catholic Church Sat 4:00p**  
52265 State Hwy 46  
Squaw Lake 56681 218-743-3255

**St. Michael Catholic Church Sat 7:00p**  
12026 Lake St  
Northome 56661 218-743-3255

**Seventh Day Adventist Sun 11:30a**  
12352 Hwy 46  
Northome 56661 218-897-5723

**Suomi Evangelical Lutheran Church Sun 10:30a**  
42935 Co. Rd. 48  
Deer River 56636 218-832-3883

**True Life Church Sun 10:00a**  
45976 Terry  
Talmoon 56637 218-244-7089

**Wilderness Church Sun 9:30a**  
City Hall  
200 Main Ave.  
Bigfork 56628 218-743-3500  
*wildernesschurchMN@gmail.com*

*Church directory sponsored by North Itasca Electric Cooperative, send changes to editor, [sedgwick@paulbunyan.net](mailto:sedgwick@paulbunyan.net)*

- 23 Mizpah Community Easter Egg Hunt. Mizpah Community Center (outside) for ages 12 and under. Easter Bunny photos and free lunch. Register at 10:45 a.m.
- 25 Women of the Woods meet at 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Community Center. Call Pat Sievertson at (218) 659-2157.
- 25 ISD 318 School Board meeting at **Bigfork School**, Edge Center or at [watchictv.org](http://watchictv.org), 6 p.m. Information: [jasmussen@isd318.org](mailto:jasmussen@isd318.org) or call (218) 327-5704.
- 26 Bigfork Valley Hospital board meets in public meeting, 9 a.m. For information on joining the meeting online, call (218) 743-1772.
- 28 No school, Easter break, Bigfork
- 29 No school, Easter break all schools
- 30 American Legion Auxiliary Easter Egg Hunt at Effie Community Center, 11 a.m. Come see the Easter bunny!
- APRIL
- 1 No School, Easter break, all schools
- 1 Operation Round Up applications due at North Itasca Electric headquarters, 3:30 p.m.
- 4 First Thursday "Practical Water Wisdom" online programs over the lunch hour, register at [ItascaWaters.org](http://ItascaWaters.org). "Success Stories on Preventing and Remediating the Spread of AIS."

## Comments sought on fisheries management in local lakes

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will be using comments and suggestions from the public through March 15 as it updates fisheries management plans that identify specific activities planned for designated lakes and streams over the next five to 20 years. Public input helps identify values and concerns and is most useful before plans are

finalized in late March. Request information and share thoughts anytime about fisheries management by contacting the Grand Rapids Area Fisheries Office at: GrandRapids.fisheries@state.mn.us or by phone at (218) 328-8835.

Lake management plans are being updated for the following local area lakes (except where noted, the new plans will have updated fisheries information including

a review of walleye stocking):

- Bowstring – only updating fisheries information, not walleye stocking
- Busties
- Clubhouse – only updating fisheries information, not walleye stocking
- Grave
- Island (near Northome)
- Jessie
- Little Bowstring
- Rush Island

## Community Cafe in Deer River

The Community Cafe is available to anyone who is in need of a meal. Each Monday - Thursday, 4:30 p.m.- 6:30 p.m. (or until gone), a nutritious three-course meal is served. Location: King Elementary School door #9. For more information, visit [communitycafemn.org](http://communitycafemn.org).

### WATTS deadlines

Listed below are upcoming deadlines for the WATTS News for ads and content. The deadline can also be found on this classified page each month. Dates are subject to change.

April	Fri., March 15
May	Weds., April 17
June	Fri., May 17

**Your local Bigfork & Effie council news**  
is in the...  
**Scenic Range NewsForum**  
In local stores every Thursday  
Subscribe in-county for \$29/year

For ads, news tips contact:  
sedgwick@paulbunyan.net  
copy@scenicrangenewsforum.com  
www.ScenicRangeNews.com ∞ (218) 245-1422

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Call-Email-Stop in - for Appointment  
[sixand14repair@yahoo.com](mailto:sixand14repair@yahoo.com)  
43576 Co Rd 14 Bigfork, MN 56628

**LOVDAHL ELECTRIC**  
PH. 218.398.2203  
[Info@lov-elec.com](mailto:Info@lov-elec.com)  
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218-341-8291 (Call or Text)  
JEREMIAH LITTLEHAWK [littlehawkservices@gmail.com](mailto:littlehawkservices@gmail.com)

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## Maple Pecan Refrigerator Cookies

Thank you to Janet Kogler for this special candy recipe!

- 1 cup softened butter
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 Tablespoons real maple syrup
- 1 large egg yolk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon maple extract
- 2 cups flour
- 1 ½ cup chopped pecans

Beat butter for 3 minutes. Beat in sugar gradually. Add syrup, egg yolk and extracts. Beat well. Stir in flour and pecans.

Divide dough in half and shape into logs 2 inches in diameter. Wrap each log in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm. Cut logs into ½ inch thick rounds. Bake until golden, about 15 minutes at 350° F. Makes exactly 40.

**The WATTS News apologizes!** The directions printed for Maple Pecan Refrigerator Candy last month were incorrect. Try this recipe instead! Janet Kogler says “These cookies are my favorite both in how they taste and in ease of making.”

## Beef Log

- 2 beaten eggs
- ¾ cup soft bread crumbs
- ½ cup tomato juice
- 2 Tablespoons parsley
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 8 slices ham
- 6 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 3 slices mozzarella cheese



Combine eggs, bread crumbs, tomato juice, parsley and garlic. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Stir in ground beef and mix well. Pat meat mixture to a 10" x 12" rectangle and arrange ham slices on top (leave margin). Sprinkle with shredded cheese.

Start at short end and roll up. seal. Put in pan seam side down.

Bake at 350° F for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until done. Center will be pink due to ham. Place cheese slices on top and return to oven for 5 minutes. Serves 8.

Please share your recipe with us! If your recipe is chosen, you will receive a \$10 credit on your electric bill from North Itasca Electric Cooperative. Send your recipe to the editor, WATTS NEWS, P.O. Box 43, Spring Lake, MN 56680.

**AD DEADLINE**

for the APRIL issue: Friday, March 15

# CLASSIFIEDS

**-SERVICES-**

**Bigfork Mini-Storage**  
*Many sizes  
 24 hour access.*  
*Located off Hwy 14  
 just west of Hwy 38*  
 For immediate service,  
 call Keith at  
**612-240-2610**

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 FREE estimates.  
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 or **218-743-3613**

**Dahlke Forestry Services, LLC**  
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 DahlkeForestry@hotmail.com  
 DahlkeForestry.com  
 ✓ Storm Cleanup  
 ✓ Tree Removal  
 ✓ Trail Development  
 ✓ Habitat Improvement  
 ✓ Private Forest Mgmt.  
 ✓ Firewood processing

**-SERVICES-**

**Dahlke Dumpsters**  
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 DahlkeForestry@hotmail.com  
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 Flat rates on dumpster rentals!  
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**Gus's Auto and Recycling of Bigfork**  
 Used auto parts, steel, tires and bridge beams.  
 A buyer of metals.  
**Snowplowing**  
*Over 20 years experience*  
 (218) 929-7117  
 Hm: (218) 743-3598  
 Gus David

**-FOR SALE-**

*For sale:* China cabinet, 2 piece. 6 ft high by 4 ft wide, \$100. Older love seat & chair \$225. Old dresser, 3 drawers, good shape, \$100. Coffee table, \$20. Older rocking chair and ottoman, \$40. 2 Heavy Line sleeping bags good for -20°, \$20. Storm Buggy power steam cleaner, \$30. 2-12 ft wood extension ladders \$20. Call (218) 743-3375 eves.  
*For sale:* DISH - portable satellite antenna, receiver and remote Tailgater model. Great for fishhouse or camper. New \$600, sell for \$275 Call (612) 300-7705 4/24

**Notice Oteneagen Township**  
 The annual meeting will be held on March 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., at the Town Hall. In case of inclement weather the annual meeting may be postponed until March 19, 2024. The purpose of this meeting is to transact any township business as required or permitted by law.  
 Sharon Isaacs, Oteneagen town clerk  
 218-246-8119

**Notice of Annual Meeting**  
 Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Ardenhurst Township, County of Itasca, State of Minnesota that the Annual Township Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th, 2024. The Annual Meeting will commence at 7:00 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. Please note immediately following the annual meeting will be the March regular monthly meeting.  
 The Annual Meeting will be held at the following location:  
 Ardenhurst Township Hall  
 66733 State Highway 46  
 Northome, MN 56661

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL DINNER AND MEETING SAND LAKE TOWNSHIP**  
 Notice is hereby given to qualified voters of Sand Lake Township, Itasca County, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Township Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024. In case of inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March 2024.  
 All residents are invited to attend a dinner at the Sand Lake Community Center to start at 5:00 p.m. The Annual Meeting will commence at 6:15 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law.  
 Elaine L. Rasmussen, Clerk

**-FARM-**

*For sale:* Hay, square bales, mixed grass. Baled dry, stored dry. \$5 per bale. Call (218) 244-0957 4/24

**-FREE-**

*Free:* Giveaway new pkgs, 16 ct womens size X-large Prevail daily underwear (pullups) 48-64" lilac color. Many boxes. Call (218) 256-0016 3/24

**-VEHICLES-**

*For sale:* 2002 Toyota Corolla. 248,000 miles. \$2,200. Call (218) 259-5217 4/24

Emails will be answered  
 If no reply, please resend.

**NOTICE**  
**Marcell Township Presidential Primary**  
**Tuesday, March 5**  
 Voting hours: 10 am. - 8 p.m.  
**48705 Town Hall Road**  
**Marcell, MN 56657**

**Notice**  
**Marcell Township Annual Meeting**  
 Notice is hereby given to qualified voters of Marcell Township, County of Itasca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Marcell Town Hall. The meeting can also be heard by remote means via Zoom. In case of inclement weather, the Annual Meeting will be held the following Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6:00 PM. The Annual Town Meeting will conduct all necessary business prescribed by state law.  
 If attending via Zoom, please contact Marcell Township at [marcell.township@yahoo.com](mailto:marcell.township@yahoo.com) or call 218-832-3965 for an invitation.  
 Marcell Township

  
**Easter Brunch**  
**THE TIMBERWOLF INN**  
 MARCH 31, 2024 | 9 AM - 2 PM  
 50021 JACK THE HORSE LAKE ROAD  
 MARCELL, MN  
 CALL FOR RESERVATIONS 218-832-3990

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 Eric Elhardt  
 Owner  
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[eric@lakesidemarcell.com](mailto:eric@lakesidemarcell.com) | Marcell, MN 56657

  
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**Place a Classified Ad Today!**

If you are an individual member of the cooperative, classified ads are free as a service from your cooperative. If you are advertising for a business or are a non-member, please remit \$5 per ad per month.

Run my ad for one month only.

Your ad will run for two months unless you check this box. (Business classifieds are \$5 per insertion.)

Please note: We are as careful as possible, but are not responsible for errors.

Send to: Editor, WATTS NEWS,  
 P.O. Box 43  
 Spring Lake, MN 56680 or  
 call: (218) 659-2779  
 or email: [sedgwick@paulbunyan.net](mailto:sedgwick@paulbunyan.net)

Put WATTS AD in subject line.  
 If no response, please resend.

## Minnesota Outdoor Skills and Stewardship Series

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources invites people interested in wildlife and outdoor skills to check out the spring program schedule for the Minnesota Outdoor Skills and Stewardship Series. Each webinar begins at noon on Wednesdays and lasts less than an hour. Register at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us), search on "outdoor skills." Contact Benji Kohn for more information at [benjamin.kohn@state.mn.us](mailto:benjamin.kohn@state.mn.us).

**March 6: Turkey hunting with youth** featuring Scott Mackenthun, a DNR fisheries supervisor knowledgeable in all sorts of outdoor topics.

**March 13: Prepare for wildfire season** with DNR staff. With warmer temperatures and little snow this winter, it's important to monitor for fire danger and be prepared. DNR staff will share how they plan for spring wildfire season and how you can plan and prepare at home and in your communities.

**March 20: Archery in the schools** with Kraig Kiger, DNR shooting sports specialist and National Archery in the School Program representatives. They will discuss how to get started in the program, equipment needed and what's available; competitions and awards for participants - including college scholarships!

**March 27: Take care when fishing deep.** Barotrauma is physical damage to a fish caused by expanding gases when fish are caught from deeper waters. This program will describe its effects, impacts on fisheries, and tips for anglers to reduce negative impacts from deep water fishing. As a bonus, a few fishing tips and tricks will be included.

## Heat pumps offer benefits for consumers, the environment

Many companies and homeowners are placing an increased emphasis on reducing their use of fossil fuels by looking for new ways to use electricity to help them achieve their goals.

This strategy of replacing direct fossil fuel use with electricity in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs is called "beneficial electrification." It's made possible as utilities, including Great River Energy, continue incorporating more carbon-free sources of energy into their power supply portfolios.

What makes air source heat pumps unique is they can cool your home and also provide heat by moving heat from outdoor air inside, which is an extremely efficient process of transferring heat.

There are many opportunities for beneficial electrification across the residential and commercial sectors, including making the switch to an electric vehicle or an electric heating system — as long as the end-user and environment both benefit from the change.

One home appliance that provides the opportunity to reduce fossil fuel use and replace it with electricity is the heating system. Heat pumps have become increasingly popular as the technology advances to support heating in colder climates.

Like an air conditioner, a heat pump can cool a home. What makes them



unique is that they can also provide heat. Unlike other electric heating options, air source heat pumps (ASHPs) do not use electricity to create heat but instead use it to move heat from outdoor air and transfer it indoors. With today's ASHP technology, this process of moving heat is extremely energy efficient even when it's cold outside.

According to Rewiring America, a nonprofit advocacy group, heat

pumps can achieve more than 300% efficiency, while even the most efficient gas-powered furnaces fall short of 100% efficiency. It is common for homeowners who install an ASHP to save hundreds of dollars per year.

Local electric cooperatives provide incentives for ASHPs throughout the year to help members save energy and money.

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