



**NORTH ITASCA
ELECTRIC**

OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

**WATTS
NEWS**

VOL 28 NO. 3

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MARCH 2025

CEO Report

Good morning,

I'm running a little late on my article this month. That's why you got the Watts a little late I suspect. I wanted to write my article after we had the chance to visit the Capitol.

Many of you have heard me before talking about how political my job can be. I take time to consider both sides of an issue, in the end I do my best to do what is best for your Cooperative.

I won't get this right for everyone all the time, there are issues we will disagree on. I am trying to lead with respect and consideration for all. I will cover the issues we discussed with our legislators while we had a

chance to visit them.

I spent time researching and offering information about nuclear power over this summer/fall prior to the legislative session starting. We were able to get our Member-Owners and industry experts to join us for an educational session in Marcell. Senator Hauschild and Representative Igo both joined us for that opportunity to share and learn together.

While we were at the Capitol we continued to discuss the need for nuclear power generation. Carbon Free by 2040 has greatly increased the focus and need for nuclear power generation in Minnesota.



Brad Dolinski, CEO

Nuclear power runs carbon free at roughly 90 percent efficient. This will be vital as the carbon emitting facilities continue to close into the future. We cannot rely solely on intermittent resources like wind and solar. The battery technology simply isn't robust enough to carry us when the wind isn't blowing, and the sun isn't shining. We are working
CEO to p.2>

Member Services Update

by Drew Francisco

Hello again everyone!

I hope all of you are staying warm these last few weeks as northern Minnesota has now shown its true colors compared to last winter. More of a "regular" season has kept me busy with assisting members navigate their billing, equipment needs and potential ways to save on energy consumption

Ready for the expected heat wave to stroll through over the next few weeks; hopefully the fish will start biting!

In January, I attended the member services meeting at Great River Energy. At this meeting a lot of important topics were discussed, but there was one that caught my attention. A company

called Zero Homes

presented their program and what they had to offer.

Zero Homes can provide a virtual energy audit at most

homes. After the audit is completed, they

provide a detailed list of ways to make your home more efficient: through weatherization, high

efficiency equipment or appliances, just to name a few. They then will act as

a project manager to help prioritize and accomplish these recommendations.

Their program is very similar to the things I'm trying to achieve here at

North Itasca Electric. To be honest, at first I was

concerned about how this could affect our local

contractors and suppliers. Bringing in an outside entity with their own resources to get these projects completed, while great for the individual, could have an impact on the local community. So, I wrote down all my questions and concerns and scheduled another meeting between the three entities involved: Zero Homes, Great River Energy and North Itasca Electric.

I am very glad I was able to meet in a

Member to p.2>



Upgrade Your Home, Save on Energy Bills and Stay Comfortable with North Itasca Electric and Zero Homes

Thinking about upgrading your home's heating system? Now is the perfect time!

Great River Energy (GRE) and Zero Homes have teamed up to make it easier than ever for Minnesota homeowners to switch to high-efficiency heat pumps—a smart, cost-effective and energy-saving alternative to traditional heating systems.

Through Electrify Minnesota, North Itasca Electric members can get a free, instant home energy upgrade

assessment using Zero's mobile app. In just a few minutes, you'll receive a customized plan that helps you cut energy costs, improve home comfort, and reduce carbon emissions—all with the support of trusted local contractors.

Why make the switch?

» Lower Energy Bills – Heat pumps are 2-3 x more efficient than gas furnaces.

» Year-Round Comfort – Efficient heating in the winter, cooling in the summer.

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Operation Round-Up Trustees to hold spring grant meeting

Thanks to the generosity of the Members of North Itasca Electric Co-op., the Board of Trustees for Operation Round Up is able to distribute grants 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 **Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 3:30 p.m.** Any postmarks after this date will be disqualified. The Trust Board will meet

on April 10 to make the awards.

There is an application form on the NorthItascaElectric.com website under the Members tab, or you can send an email request to 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 application is complete,

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Scholarships

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Range & Dishwasher sale

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Roxanne's Wisdoms

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Office Hours

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

CEO Report (continued)

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with our legislators to lift the Nuclear Moratorium.

Net metering was the next concern voiced to the group. Minnesota's net metering law is outdated, expensive and inequitable. This law was enacted in the 1980s when solar was in its infancy. Now with Minnesota's carbon free by 2040 legislation, all electricity generated must come from carbon free sources.

The law is also inequitable because it

benefits those who can afford solar systems at the expense of lower income consumers who subsidize these projects in the form of higher electric bills unless it is sized to load as it should be. Generating electricity from solar installed at home costs about twice as much as larger utility scale solar. We are not against solar; we are for reforming the law to make necessary improvements so we don't have cost shifting among members.

Property taxes are always a hot topic. Electric cooperatives in Minnesota have paid property taxes by member count for many years. This legislation has saved you yearly vs. paying taxes on "plant value." Recently the Minnesota Department of Revenue interpreted the law differently, they began to charge electric cooperatives additional taxes we have not been required to pay. We are working with the Department of Revenue with our Governor's office to clarify property tax exemptions. This bipartisan initiative, which faces no opposition, will help improve affordability for cooperative members.

We were able to get our legislators out to a dinner with North Star Electric, Lake Country Power, Arrowhead, Cooperative Light and Power, Mille Lacs, and North Itasca Electric. The house build-

ing is being remodeled at the Capitol so the Capitol building where we usually meet with our legislators wasn't available. We decided to meet over dinner, share a meal and hear from each of our elected officials.

We then gave them our priorities we would be working on; at dinner we had overwhelming support. We had Representatives and Senators from East Grand Forks to Grand Marais and our friend Senator John Hoffman from Champlin.

Thank you to all that made this a successful trip.

*By your side! Miigwech
Brad*

Road conditions:
Call 511 or visit 511mn.org for maps, cameras, weather alerts.

Member Services

>from p.1
smaller setting to get my questions answered. I will be providing Zero Homes with all the information needed to create a localized program. Contact information for local general contractors, electricians and HVAC/plumbing technicians will be provided to send bids, too. The same is said for high efficiency equipment, appliances and building materials. North Itasca Electric's load management programs will be laid out and utilized whenever possible to help with energy costs.

Another great aspect of this is that Great River Energy has secured funds to cover the energy audit costs for North Itasca Electric's membership. Trying to satisfy all parties involved in a particular project may be difficult, but I think our local communities have the infrastructure to accomplish these goals. We just have to organize and prioritize local options as much as possible!



Drew Francisco

This program is in its beginning stages, but I'm excited to explore the possibility. Next steps will be program definition, contractor meetings and other various topics handled behind the scenes.

The end goal is to provide our members with great service and the ability to consume energy as efficiently as possible.

So, stay tuned! There is a lot more to come in the next few weeks and I'm looking forward to it.

As always, please reach out to me if you have any concerns regarding your energy usage. I'm more than happy to do a little investigative work to make sure your home is running as efficiently as possible.

*Until next time,
Drew Francisco*

NorthItascaElectric.com

- pay a bill, download a form
- find out about programs Kids

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(800) 762-4048

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Highlights from the Board Room

NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC CO-OP., INC.
MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
January 23, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the office and electronically through Zoom on January 23, 2025

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

Directors Present via Zoom:

Also Present: CEO Brad Dolinski, Daryl Pederson, Tina Danielson, Drew Francisco, and Gina Vickerman.

Absent: Roy Bain and Andy Shaw.

- Pledge of allegiance was recited.
- A motion to adopt the agenda. Seconded; motion carried. A motion was made to consent agenda. Seconded; motion carried.
- A safety discussion was held. Drew talked about the differences between frostnip and frostbite.
- Tina presented the preliminary Operating Report.
- Daryl presented the Line Department report. MREA will be on site for our Annual Safety Sweet in February. Crews have been busy reconducting lines on County Road 172 and County Road 152 in Oteneagen. ROW clearing is currently working Map 60 area in Bowstring.
- Drew gave his Members Service report. Load control audits are continuing. High bill complaints have been on the rise with the decline in temperature. The Bigfork Area Revitalization fund is now open. So far 6 businesses have applied.
- Tina presented the Office Report. The office is working on December month-end and year-end balancing. Audit is scheduled for March 24th-26th.
- Brad presented the CEO report. The list of attendees for upcoming meetings with MREA and GRE was reviewed. He met with GRE, Eaton, Brown County REA, and Lake Country Power concerning the next generation of load control devices.
- Wes Waller gave the MREA report.
- Lloyd gave the GRE report.
- A motion to adjourn. Seconded; motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

To be placed on the board meeting agenda:
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 on the agenda.

Visit your co-op at
www.NorthItascaElectric.com
get updates on Facebook!

Apply to Operation Round Up by April 1

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including an 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 Drew Francisco at North Itasca Electric Cooperative by calling (218) 743-1313, or one of the Trust Board members listed below.

Zero Homes

>from p.1
» Easy, All-in-One Process – From assessment to installation, Zero makes it seamless.

GRE members can explore available rebates and incentives that make the switch more affordable. Don't miss out on this opportunity to future-proof your home!

Get started today at www.zerohomes.io/minnesota, or call us at (720) 505-5877.

Make the smart choice for your home and your wallet—Electrify your home with Zero and GRE!

North Itasca Electric Community Trust Board

District	Trust board member	Area represented	Phone #
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/Inger	218-659-4266
8	Kevin Grenson	Marcell	952-292-7414
9	Lisa Polchow	Deer River	218-246-9680

Energy Forecasts

The Energy Information Administration published short term energy forecasts. Here are some topics from the current data:

Electricity demand:

U.S. electricity consumption grew by 2% in 2024 after nearly two decades of relatively steady demand. EIA forecasts electricity demand to continue growing at that rate in 2025 and 2026, which would be the first three years of consecutive growth in electricity demand since 2005–07. EIA expects electricity demand to grow fastest in the industrial sector—by 2% in 2025 and 3% in 2026—as new semiconductor and battery manufacturing operations come online. In the commercial sector, demand increases by 2% in both 2025 and 2026 as data-center power consumption increases.

Renewable energy:

EIA expects that for the first time, renewable energy sources will contribute one-quarter of electricity generation in the United States in 2025. Renewables contribute 27% of electricity generation in 2026 in EIA's forecasts.

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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, 2025. 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.
822 NE 5th Ave.
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
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Electric co-ops bring unique value to their communities

by Abby Berry

Electric cooperatives stand out from other types of businesses because we are built and led by the communities we serve. As independent, not-for-profit electric utilities, we are owned and governed by our local members—not by outside shareholders or investors. That is a powerful differentiator.

Here are a few ways electric co-ops like North Itasca Electric bring unique value to the local communities they serve:

- We put people before profits. Co-ops are not-for-profit and provide at-cost electric service. Any excess revenue is returned to our consumer-members in the form of capital credits, typically as a bill credit or check.
- Community comes first. We live and work here too, and we care deeply about our local communities. That’s why we engage in development and revitalization projects, sponsor

local students for scholarships and youth programs, and give back to local organizations through Round Up to help our neighbors.

- Affordable, reliable power is our priority. North Itasca Electric purchases electricity from Great River Energy, our wholesale energy partner. GRE is a generation and transmission cooperative formed by a group of electric co-ops in our state/region. This cooperative business structure allows us to pool local resources and provide electricity at a lower cost than if we purchased it from outside sources.

As a new year begins, we’re focused on our members’ energy needs—not only for today but for the long haul. We’re advocating for smarter energy policies that prioritize reliability and affordability for all. We recognize we must be inclusive of all energy sources, which is why we work closely with GRE

to ensure use of a diverse mix of sources to generate the electricity we provide to our members.

North Itasca Electric is working to power a brighter future through innovation that meets tomorrow’s energy needs. Reliable, affordable electricity is more important than ever before, and our focus will continue to be the best interest of the local communities we serve. To learn more about North Itasca Electric, visit NorthItascaElectric.com.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Get outage updates on Facebook!

Roxanne's Sales Talk

by Roxanne Prather, Member Services Representative

"Wow!" is all I can say; as I'm writing this I keep wishing for spring. The last several mornings were very cold -20 , -31 and this morning, it was -34 on my car on the way to work at 5:30 a.m.

It looks like this cold is going to stick around for a while. You know it's cold when you take off in the morning and it feels like you have square tires! I feel sorry for all the animals out there in this cold. Especially my dog. I feel bad when I let her out. It doesn't take long for her feet to freeze.

I want to remind you that we

offer bundling deals. For all you new people moving into the area or people who are just looking to change their appliances. If you purchase three appliances you would get 8% off all of them. Four appliances are 10% and if you need five or more appliances you get 15% off. This adds up to big savings. The more you spend, the more you save!

We also offer financing. If you have been current on your bill with us for at least three consecutive months, you qualify for either 90 days of no interest, or a contract

for up to three years with 4% interest. We ask for a minimum of 20% down. If you're interested in a contract or are wondering what the amounts would be, let me know. I would be happy to figure it out for you.

With the price of everything going up this is very helpful. Whether you're on a fixed income or not, it is nice to have the option to spread the payments out!

Call or stop in and see me if you have questions (218)743-3132 or email roxannep@nieci.com

Roxanne's Wisdoms: Drum on dryer stopped turning

There are a few reasons that your dryer drum will stop turning, let's go through them one at a time, starting with the most common.

1. The dryer belt - The belt goes around the drum to turn the drum. Over time the belt gets worn out and breaks. If this happens, you will most likely have to take the top and front off the dryer to replace the belt.

2. The drum rollers - There are 2 rollers at the bottom of the front of the drum and 2 on the back that the drum rolls on. If the roller is worn out, it will need to be replaced. If you are going to be fixing one you might as well do all of them at the same time.

3. Felt liner - There is a felt liner that goes around the front of the drum that your drum slides against. Sometimes this felt liner gets torn or comes lose and can cause the drum to bind. If you notice this, replace the felt liner.

4. Rear drum bearing - Most dryers have a rear drum bearing in the back of the dryer. If this bearing goes, you will have to replace it, but most of the time you will realize that it is going because it will make a squealing or grinding noise before it goes out.

5. Malfunctioning drive motor - If none of the above will fix your problem, then it is the drive motor. This is normally located at the bottom of the machine towards the back and can be replaced by taking a few bolts out.

If you're not sure how to access the parts on your dryer visit RepairClinic.com and put your model number under repair help. You can watch a how-to video and order parts.

Be Ready for Storm Season: Preparedness is the best defense

Spring is on our doorstep and like many of you, I'm looking forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life. Unfortunately, spring and summer can also create the perfect conditions for severe storms.

North Itasca Electric crews are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit www.ready.gov for additional resources.

• Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food,

including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).

• Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.

• Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.

• Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.

• Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges and will also help prevent overloading circuits during

power restoration. Leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check North Itasca Electric's Facebook page for restoration updates.

Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

We can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At North Itasca Electric, we recommend that you make a plan today—because storm preparedness is always our best defense.

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Preparation pays off during cold snap

While member-consumers experienced temperatures as low as 35 below zero in early January, their electric service remained dependable.

The region's grid operator, MISO, implemented conservative operations Jan. 17-22, which required MISO members such as Great River Energy to delay non-essential maintenance. It also signaled that grid conditions may require special attention in the event of a demand spike or unplanned outage. With plenty of surplus capacity available, the MISO system experienced no emergencies despite the widespread cold.

"The transmission system fared well during the cold snap," said Great River Energy System Operations Director Mark Peterson, who shared that the only sustained outage was due to a broken conductor on a neighboring utility's transmission line that affected four member distribution substations.

Peterson said cold weather doesn't typically cause too many transmission problems, but conductor breaks, low



gas pressure in circuit breakers and low oil alarms do occur. Great River Energy specifies circuit breakers to be rated to 50 degrees below zero.

Electricity demand reached 107 gigawatts (GW) across the footprint of the region's grid operator between Jan. 19-22, exceeding its forecasted winter peak of 100 GW and nearing its all-time winter peak of 109 GW, set in 2014.

Across the MISO footprint, electricity demand reached 107 gigawatts (GW), exceeding its forecasted winter peak of 100 GW and nearing its all-time winter peak of 109 GW, set in 2014.

With natural gas needed for home heating and extreme prices for natural gas supply, Great River Energy offered its peaking plant resources into the

MISO market using fuel oil. While dispatchable generation is critical to ensuring reliability, consumers' energy needs during the event were largely supplied by baseload resources and remarkable output from wind resources.

"Our peakers were not called on to generate energy, but we earned revenue for being ready to run on short notice which provides MISO with standby reserves," said GRE Minnesota Generation Strategy Director Nathan Domyahn.

GRE can offer plants as standby reserve resources because of their fuel security and ability to begin powering the grid in minutes.

GRE's wind resources are equipped with specialized equipment allowing them to generate

Helping one another: It's the cooperative way

When electric cooperatives work together, success isn't just possible — it's inevitable.

"Cooperation among cooperatives" is one of the seven guiding principles that provide the foundation for North Itasca Electric's business model. This principle fosters the way we work together to address everyday challenges as well as larger issues that impact the entire energy industry.

Cooperation locally

North Itasca Electric is one of 26 distribution cooperatives that collectively own Great River Energy, our wholesale power provider. These cooperatives meet regularly to share ideas and best practices, solve problems and exchange information.

We are also a member of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), a statewide association that represents electric cooperatives by actively engaging legislators and policymakers to educate them about our business model and the critical role we play in the state's economy.

Representation in Washington

Similar to our relationship with MREA, we are also a member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) whose mission

is to promote, support and protect the community and business interests of electric cooperatives. NRECA advocates on behalf of us and our members in Washington, D.C.

Stepping up in a crisis

The times when cooperatives shine brightest, though, is when we are helping each other through difficult situations — even from across the country.

When Hurricane Helene hit several electric cooperatives in the southeastern United States last fall, a call was made for mutual aid to help restore power after the storm left more than 1.25 million members without electricity.

Coordinated efforts between MREA and South Carolina's statewide association resulted in 80 lineworkers representing 18 Minnesota cooperatives hitting the road within a day of the initial call for help.

"As electric cooperatives, we follow seven principles, one of which is 'cooperation,'" said MREA Chief Executive Officer Darrick Moe. "Co-ops support one another. Combine that with the principle of 'concern for community,' our co-ops and lineworkers are quick to help others and the communities they serve."

at temperatures lower than 20 degrees below zero. This cold weather capability enabled wind resources to run at 50-60% capacity factor and provide significant energy

for our members. Demand response resources helped reduce energy purchases while market prices were elevated. Interruptible water heating and dual fuel programs were dispatched Jan. 19-22 for market benefit, while other programs were ready to respond to any changes in market conditions.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.

GRE, Apex Clean Energy close deal for wind project

Great River Energy and a key project as we finalized a power purchase agreement and surplus interconnection service agreement with Apex Clean Energy for the 300-megawatt Big Bend Wind project in southern Minnesota.

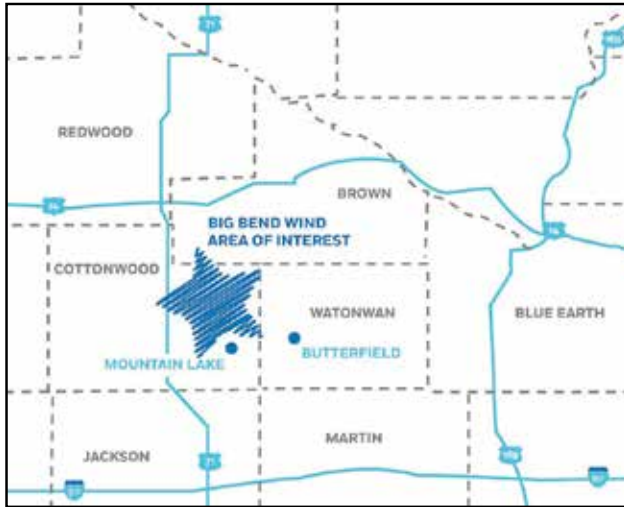
This deal employs a groundbreaking strategy that uses GRE's existing injection rights with the region's grid operator, MISO, to bypass traditional interconnection challenges and accelerate development of the project.

"Big Bend Wind project is an integral piece of our resource portfolio

and we work toward meeting Minnesota's carbon-free standard," said GRE Director of Resource Planning Zac Ruzycski. "This project will deliver a significant amount of renewable electricity and will be a tremendous value to our member-owners."

Located in Cottonwood, Watonwan and Martin counties, Big Bend will help GRE meet its 2035 targets to reach 90% carbon-free retail electric sales and reduce its emissions by more than 90% from 2005 base levels.

Apex Clean Energy



predicts Big Bend Wind revenue, 300 jobs during construction, and up to 14 economic benefits for the surrounding area, including approximately \$38 million in new tax

Scholarships

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are members of North Itasca Electric can apply for a college scholarship through the Northome High School scholarship committee.

The deadline for application is Friday, April 25. Information will be available on the Northome School counselor's web page at www.northome.k12.mn.us/scholarship-information-links or by emailing the school counselor at clundin@northome.k12.mn.us.

Applications are available online (see above), at schools in the service area or at the North Itasca Electric office.

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.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Be cautious of fraudulent websites pretending to be an electric utility. Scammers often create look-alike sites to steal your personal or payment information. Always type your utility's official web address directly into your browser instead of clicking email or text links. Watch for signs of a secure website, such as "https://" in the address bar and a padlock icon. If you're ever unsure, call your utility company using the official phone number listed on your bill to verify payment or account details. Stay vigilant to protect yourself from utility fraud.

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March Range & Dishwasher Sale

LDFN4542W \$721.50 SALE \$ 649.35

LG, White, 24" Front control dishwasher, 48 dBA, Easy rack plus, 3rd rack, QuadWash system, stainless steel inside, dynamic dry.



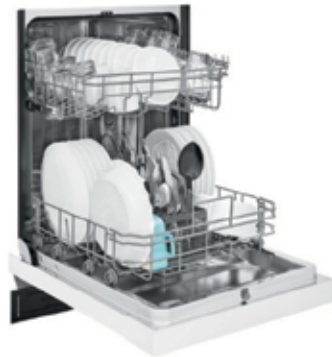
FDPC4221AS \$380.70 SALE \$ 342.63 Frigidaire, stainless

24" built-in dishwasher 62 dBA 2 cycles, twelve place settings. Front console with membrane touch controls. Hard food disposal and removable filter trap. Preset 5 wash levels and 2 wash cycles, Squeeze door latch.



FFBD2420UW \$697.45 SALE \$ 627.70

Frigidaire, white, 24" built-in dishwasher with stainless tub. 52 dBA, six program setting and twelve place setting capacity. Heated dry system. National Sanitation Foundation Certified. Removable, self-cleaning filtration system, Energy Star Certified.



FFBD2420UB \$802.10 SALE \$721.89

(Same as above but black)

FCRG3083AS \$863.30 SALE \$776.97

Frigidaire, stainless, 30" gas range with Air Fry. This range has a storage drawer, electronic clock/timer, sealed burners, self cleaning mode, continuous grates, keep warm function, Sabbath mode, child lock, halogen interior lighting, preheat, temperature display, storage compartment, dishwasher safe component, delay start, delay clean.



If you have questions, please call Roxanne at (218) 743-3132; email roxanne@nieci.com



FCRE3062AW \$787.80 SALE \$ 709.02

Frigidaire, white 30" electric range with EvenTemp®, steam clean, storage drawer, electronic clock & timer, self cleaning, keep warm function, child lock, oven light, temperature display, hot surface indicator light, delay bake, delay clean, steam clean, delay start, control lockout, hidden bake element, expandable elements, EvenTemp Technology.



FGEW3066UFC \$653.43 SALE \$ 588.09

Frigidaire 30" single electric wall oven with air fry, True Convection and self + steam cleaning, fingerprint resistant stainless steel. *Hot buy* sells for \$1,399.00 originally.



MER30S2AW \$763.10 SALE \$686.79

Midea 30" white range with steam clean. 6.3 Cu. Ft. capacity, Flexible 4 element cooktop, convenient preset cooking options, 2 year warranty- double the standard warranty.



FCRE0362AW \$768.30 SALE \$691.47

Frigidaire 30" white electric range with EvenTemp, steam clean, storage drawer, electronic clock & timer, self cleaning mode, keep warm function, child lock, oven light, temperature display, hot surface indicator light, power on indicator light, delay bake, delay clean, control lockout, hidden bake element, EvenTemp Technology.



Piatigorsky Foundation brings concert musicians to Bigfork Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Bigfork Valley Wanigan Cafeteria

Featuring masterpieces performed by Katsuya Yuasa, clarinet and Mary Au, pianist

For over 35 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.

This year, The Foundation returns to Minnesota with a tour continuing its mission to increase awareness and appreciation of classical music in communities throughout the state.

A charismatic and versatile clarinetist, Katsuya Yuasa has been lauded by critics as a "born performer with rare ability to express the beauty and soulfulness of the composer's music" – and toured extensively as a concert soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and orchestral player across the United States, Europe, South America and Asia. Born in Kobe, Japan, Dr. Yuasa is currently the Instructor of Clarinet at the University of Idaho Lionel Hampton School of Music, Acting Principal Clarinet of the Washington Idaho Symphony, and Concert Artist with the Piatigorsky Foundation.

An active educator, he has given masterclasses at various collegiate institutions in the U.S. and abroad. Outside of his studio, Dr. Yuasa has taught at piano Sonoma, Summer in the City Music Camp, Marching 100 Summer Band Camp, and New York Summer Music Festival.

Pianist Mary Au is a much sought after collaborative pianist and chamber musician with worldwide experience. Hailed for her "sensitive and seamless transition between chamber music collaboration and piano accompaniment" (Daniel Cariaga), Ms. Au has collaborated with renowned artists from around the globe, including the legendary opera superstar Christine Brewer and Tchaikovsky Competition Gold Medalist Nathaniel Rosen.

Heralded as one of the "Outstanding Young Women of America", Ms. Au is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and the University of Southern California. Her mentors include Dusi Mura, Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Daniel Pollack, Gordon Green, Brooks Smith, Alice Schoenfeld and Eleonore Schoenfeld.

This special performance will be held in the Bigfork Valley Wanigan Cafeteria, Monday, March 17, at 6 p.m., and will be free of charge. This event is sponsored by: The Edge Center for the Arts, The Bigfork / Edge of the Wilderness AGE to age Initiative, in collaboration with Bigfork Valley.

Please contact Sandra LeBlanc-Boland, at (218) 743-4356 for further information

Classic Movie Series

by Jack Nachbar

Once again, the Classic Movie Series in Bigfork presents a rip roaring Western. And our March movie rips and roars like it's roundup time on the old prairie. The blurb on *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) says, "They were seven . . . and they fought like 700." And, Amigos, they ain't kiddin.

Yul Brynner and Steve McQueen gather five other men, all handy with their guns, to come to the rescue of a small Mexican town being victimized by a gang of baddies led by Eli Wallach. The action in the film made such great viewing that it made stars of McQueen, Charles Bronson, Robert Vaughn, and James Coburn.

Their fighting skills are still so much fun to watch that *The Magnificent Seven* is the second most played

movie on TV, behind only the ever present *The Wizard Of Oz* (1939). To top things off, Elmer Bernstein created one of the most popular original movie scores ever.

The Magnificent Seven will be shown Thursday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Edge Center Theater in Bigfork. FREE!!

Saddle up, Pard. This movie is gonna tickle yer innards.

APRIL CLASSIC MOVIE: It's an April Fool's Month comedy treat. "The first certified crazy person's comedy," *The In-Laws* (1979) will be shown at the Edge at 6:30 p.m. on a date to be announced.

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Name a Snowplow contest results

We're Off To See The Blizzard and Anthony Sledwards join the Minnesota Department of Transportation's snowplow fleet as two of the eight winners in the 2024-25 Name a Snowplow Contest. Nearly 23,500 voters cast a ballot.

The winning names, in order of vote totals, and their future homes are:

- We're Off To See The Blizzard – District 8 (Southwest Minnesota)
- Snowtorious B.I.G. – District 4 (West Central Minnesota)
- Plowabunga! – District 6 (SE Minnesota)
- Anthony Sledwards – Metro District
- You're Welcome – District 2 (NW Minnesota)
- Don'tcha Snow – District 3 (Central Minnesota)
- Skol Plow – District 1 (NE Minnesota)
- I Came, I Thaw, I Conquered – District 7 (South Central Minnesota)

The order of all 50 finalists can be found on MnDOT's Name a Snowplow website, www.dot.state.mn.us/nameasnowplow.



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Fridays with a Forester

Join University of Minnesota Extension foresters to discuss some of the key issues and questions around forest and woodlands facing Minnesota landowners.

These Zoom online sessions will be very informal, open to the public and free of charge. They will include a discussion framed around participant questions on the topic and run from 9 to 10 a.m.

Schedule:

March 14: Climate-ready woodlands: Promoting the resilience of your backyard woodlands - Anna Stockstad

March 21: Expanding Agroforestry Grants and Practices - Gary Wyatt, Tyler Carlson and Caleb Langworthy

March 28: ACORNS: Access, Collection, Organization and Redistribution of Nuts and Seeds - Kira Pollack

April 11: Finding and working with a local woodland service provider - Eli and service provider panel.

April 18: 2025 Participatory Science projects - Angela Gupta

April 25: Forestry for Minnesota Birds – What can the birds tell us? - Jayme Strange

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Thomas Hansen was elected the new Effie city councilor. Photo courtesy of Scenic Range NewsForum.

Itasca Waters hosts Practical Water Wisdom

Register for Itasca Waters' First Thursdays online webinars at itascawaters.org/. Each webinar runs between 12-1 p.m. and is free.

March 6: Lakeshore Development and Natural Shoreline Protection to Preserve Biotic Health with Mike Isensee, the Administrator of the Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District.

Topic: During this discussion, we will present valuable findings from our lakeshore monitoring program and community education initiatives. Understanding the current conditions of our lakes and gaining insight into the knowledge, values, motivations, and concerns of lakeshore property owners are essential first steps for governmental and nonprofit organizations seeking to design impactful outreach and engagement strategies.

March 7: Minnesota Ice-Out Forecast for 2025 with Dr. John Downing, Director of the Sea Grant College Program, a research scientist at the Large Lakes Observatory on Lake Superior and a professor in the Department of Biology at the UMD.

Topic: John Downing of Minnesota Sea Grant will present his 2025 ice-out forecasts and show you how you can win your ice-out pool for your favorite lake.

April 3: Beaver Dams, Ponds and Effects with Emily Fairfax, an Assistant Professor of Geography at the U of M and an affiliate faculty member at the Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory.

Topic: Beavers are powerful ecosystem engineers capable of radically transforming the landscapes they inhabit. From lakes, to rivers, to streams - beaver dam building, tree cutting, and canal digging influence a multitude of biological and physical processes.



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Cabin fever? Look for Treasures!

Saturday, May 3 is the date for the 2025 Treasures Are Fine 60-mile-long garage sale. It's not too early to start getting ready!

Treasures Are Fine on 6, 4 and 29 is an annual community event along county highways 6, 4, 29 and 46 traveling through Bowstring, Talmoon, Spring Lake, Sand Lake, Squaw Lake, Dora Lake and Wirt in northwestern Itasca County.

The route can be accessed from any direction: Deer River, Marcell, Bigfork, Blackduck or Northome, and has a map available before the sale. This year some sales will also be held on May 4.

For more information, visit [Treasures6429](https://www.facebook.com/Treasures6429) on Facebook. Sign up by April 4 to be on the map.

Thank you to Paul Bunyan Communications for being the 2025 major sponsor.

Deadlines approach for fish house removal from ice

As deadlines approach, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources urges fish house owners to remove shelters from the ice

The statutory shelter removal deadline for inland waters in the southern two-thirds of the state is 11:59 p.m. on March 3. The deadline for inland lakes in the northern portion of the state is 11:59 p.m. on March 17. The DNR reminds all fish house owners to pick up and properly dispose of any trash as part of hauling their shelter off the ice.

"After this recent cold snap, we know people will want to take advantage of every day they can to use their ice shelters," said Capt. Cory Palmer, DNR Enforcement Southern Region manager. "However, current conditions don't change the statutory deadlines. That said, people can still use their shelters after the deadline so long as the shelter has the proper identification and licensing and, if it's on the ice between midnight and an hour before sunrise, is occupied or attended."

If shelters aren't removed by the deadline, owners may be prosecuted, and structures may be confiscated and removed or destroyed by a conservation officer. Shelters may not be left at public accesses, and no trash or other materials – including wooden blocking materials – may be left on the ice.

As they venture out, anglers always should keep in mind that ice conditions vary widely, that ice is never 100% safe, and that they should check the ice thickness for themselves.

Exceptions to the removal deadlines are Minnesota-Canada border waters (March 31), Minnesota-South Dakota and North Dakota border waters (March 5), Minnesota-Wisconsin border waters (March 1) and Minnesota-Iowa border waters (Feb. 20).

Happy Birthday!

Happy Birthday to the WATTS!

The first issue of the WATTS News went out to cooperative members in March 1996. Since then we've had the opportunity to share all the interesting things that have happened in the utility industry - new technologies that save energy, trends in legislation, line construction in our service area, local community happenings...

Still, the old-fashioned mission of electric cooperatives is as relevant as always: serving rural America. Our line crews travel across large areas, in all kinds of weather and at all hours to respond to outages. Because of our remote location, we still have an appliance store with a focus on value for our members, and we still see local friendly faces when we walk into the headquarters building.

Through North Itasca Electric, you still have a voice in the future of cooperative power.

We hope we've informed, connected and sometimes delighted you! Thank you for reading your co-op newspaper.



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SAIL classes

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Online 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.

ADULT FITNESS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS:

Register through Community Education at getlearning.org or call the school.

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\$10: all skill levels welcome

DEER RIVER: OPEN VOLLEYBALL
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6:30-9 p.m. in HS East Gym
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DEER RIVER: FITNESS WALKING

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\$2

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Free

Community Education

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

CANDLELIGHT SKI

Date: March 6
Time: 5-7 p.m.
Location: King Elementary, north parking lot
Cost: free
Ski among the luminaries on a half mile groomed trail. Snacks, hot cocoa, a bonfire and s'mores available.

Northome: Call for more information at (218) 897-5275 (ext. 116) Register online at www.northome.k12.mn.us, Community Ed page.

PUZZLE MANIA

Date: Friday, March 21, register by March 7
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Location: Northome School Library
Cost: \$20 per team, includes puzzle.
Teams of 2-4 work on a 500 piece puzzle to finish in 2 hours Prizes. Grade 9 and below accompanied by adult.

Blackduck Register online at blackduck.k12.mn.us/CE. Questions? Call (218) 766-3809 or email mclelland@blackduck.k12.mn.us

STENCIL ART ON LIVE EDGE BOARD

Date: Wednesday, March 12
Time: ~4:15-6:30 p.m.
Location: High School Commons, Door #1
Cost: \$30 includes supplies.
Teams of 2-4 work on a 500 piece puzzle to finish in 2 hours Prizes. Grade 9 and below accompanied by adult.

Defensive Driving

Retired Minnesota State Patrol Trooper Mike Flatley offers a defensive driving class by Zoom for ages 55 and older. A class is scheduled for Tues., March 18, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost is \$15. Preregister at (218) 750-3189 or by email at mnflats@hotmail.com. Early registration is suggested. See mndefensivedriving.blogspot.com for more information.

area bookmobile stops

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

Mondays: No stop in Feb.; Mar. 10, 31
1:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northome; Apartments
3:15 - 4:15 p.m. Alvwood; Hoot-n-Holler
4:30 -5:30 p.m. Squaw Lake; Community Ctr

Tuesdays: Feb. 18; Mar. 11
12:00 - 1 p.m. Bowstring Store
2:30-3:30 p.m. Effie: Country Store
4:00-5:15 p.m. Bigfork: City Hall

Thursdays: Feb. 20; Mar. 13
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Togo: Junction Bar & Grill

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

Marcell: For information, call the Family Center at (218) 832-3444.

PROCESSING RAW SHEEP FEECE AND NATURAL DYEING

Date: March 29 (register by March 24)
Time: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Location: Marcell Family Center
Cost:\$40
Learn to skirt wash, pick, card and dye. Bring a snack
Raw fleece available for purchase.

WOOL FELTED GNOME

Date: March 8 (register by March 2)
Time: 2-4 p.m.
Location: Marcell Family Center
Cost:\$40, includes wool felting kit
Bring a snack.

WORKING WITH WOOL

Date: March 11 (register by March 21)
Time: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Location: Marcell Family Center
Cost:\$40
Bring a bag lunch. Learn about sheep, shearing, fleeces and local natural dye sources.

BRING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY TO LIFE!

Date: Saturday, March 29 and Saturday April 5
Time: 10 a.m.-12 p.m., register by March 24
Location: Marcell Family Center, Iron Range Resources Center (April 5)
Cost:\$40
Age 14 and up. Pick an ancestor to research!

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.

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.

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

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

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

Resource Centers:

Blackduck: (218) 835-5768
Northome: (218) 897-5952

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

~ **March Calendar** ~

Marcell

The Bigfork / EOW AGE to AGE to age Initiative is hosting a free “Let’s Get Cooking” Pizza class on Thursday, March 6, from 5 – 7 p.m. at the Marcell Family Center. Class size is limited, so please call Nanci to register at (218) 743-8479, or (309) 256-0923. The AGE to age Initiative brings children together with seniors (and all ages in between) for fun, interactive and educational activities.

Squaw Lake

Squaw Lake Fire Department hosts the annual Perch Jerkers Fishing Tournament on Round Lake, ice permitting. Use east access, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (NOTE corrected hours). Food available. Call the city of Squaw Lake to confirm ice conditions (218) 659-4256 MWF 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. \$10 entry fee, kids under 10 free. Cash prizes for top ten fish.

Join a real parade! Decorate a float for St. Urho’s Day in Squaw Lake. Parade crosses the bridge at Leino’s Pub at 5 p.m. A longstanding tradition: Using purple and green, celebrate the driving out of grasshoppers from Ireland, saving the grape crop.

After the March 15 Perch Jerker on Round Lake, lucky winners of the Squaw Lake Fire Department’s Spring Raffle will be drawn. Only 2,000 tickets will be sold: prizes include a Humminbird fish finder system bundle, power auger, spearing decoy & spear, and Winchester Wildcat Rifle 2. Tickets \$20 from local business, must be 18.

Talmoon

Perry-Heide VFW Post 9703 is looking for new members! The post covers northwest Itasca County including Bigfork, Talmoon, Marcell, Jesse Lake, Bowstring and Scenic 7. Meeting: the second Monday of each month, 8 p.m. at the Marcell Family Center. Everyone welcome! More information, Mike at (218) 832-3562.



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.

Area Church Directory

Alvwood Community Church Sun 10:00a 58712 Co. Rd. 131 Blackduck 56630 218-659-4681	First Presbyterian Church, BF Sun 10:15a 109 Ash St. Bigfork 56628 218-743-3783	Old Scenic Community Church Sun 9:00a 25747 Co. Rd. 340 Bigfork 56628 218-743-3953
Balsam Bible Chapel Sun 10:00a 41516 Scenic Hwy 7 Bovey 55709 218-245-1960	Gemmel Community Church Sun 10:00a 10609 Town Rd 34 Gemmel 56660 218-897-5966	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
Bear River Lutheran Church Sun 10:00a 11141 Hwy 22 Cook 55723 218-376-1012	Good Hope Church - Bigfork Sun 10:00a 101 Golf Course Ln. Bigfork, MN 56628 218-556-9856	Sand Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a 55581 Co. Rd 4 Spring Lake 56680 218-659-2872 Church website: www.sandlakealliancechurch.org
Bethesda Lutheran Church Sun 9:00a Mizpah 56660 218-897-5654	Grace Community Church (ELCA) Sun 10:15a 401 State Hwy 38 N Bigfork 56628 218-743-3368	St. Catherine’s Catholic Church Sat 4:00p 52265 State Hwy 46 Squaw Lake 56681 218-743-3255
Bowstring Chapel Sun 10:15a 45114 Co Rd 133 Deer River 56636 218-832-3171	Hope Lutheran Church Sun 10:30 a.m. 12234 Third St. Northome 56661 218-897-5654	St. Michael Catholic Church Sat 7:00p 12026 Lake St Northome 56661 218-743-3255
Calvary Covenant Sun 10:30a 54764 Co. Rd. 31 Northome 56661 218-897-5684	Jehovah’s Witnesses Tu 7:00p., Sun 10:00a Hwy 38 Bigfork 56628 218-743-3275	Suomi Evangelical Lutheran Church Sun 10:30a 42935 Co. Rd. 48 Deer River 56636 218-832-3883
Centennial Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a Hwy 46 Squaw Lake 56681 218-259-0115	Jesse Lake Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a 45834 Co. Rd. 4 Talmoon 56637 218-832-3883	True Life Church Sun 10:00a 45976 Terry Talmoon 56637 218-244-7089
Deer River Bible Church Sun 10:00a 33276 State Highway 6 Deer River 56636 218-246-9570	Marcell Community Church Sun 10:30a 49103 State Hwy 38 Marcell 56657 218-832-3200	Church directory sponsored by North Itasca Electric Cooperative, send changes to editor, sedgwick@paulbunyan.net
Dora Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a 59329 Co Rd 145 Northome 56661 218-659-4551	Northome Community Church Sun 10:00a 12071 Bartlett St. Northome 56661 218-897-5040	
Effie Fredheim Lutheran Church (ELCA) Sun 8:30a Hwy 1 Effie 56639 218-743-3368	Northwoods Chapel Sun 9:00a 50539 Mushgee Rd. (corner of Co. Rd. 622) Deer River 56636 218-659-2784	

- 2 Polar Revue at the Edge, 2 p.m. Annual community talent show: music, skits, dance, comedy... bring your talent and perform on the big stage! For info, call Jayme Rahier at (218) 244-5019.
- 3 ISD 318 School Board meeting at Educational Services Center Board Room, 601 SW 7th St, Grand Rapids 6:30 p.m., open forum 6 p.m. Livestream at watchictv.org, 6 p.m. Information: jrasmussen@isd318.org or call (218) 327-5704.
- 5 “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.
- 6 *Let’s Get Cooking: Pizza!* hosted by Bigfork/EOW AGE to age at Marcell Family Center, 5-7 p.m. Fun for all ages! Free. Call Nanci to register: (218) 743-8479.
- 6 Jesse Lake Lutheran hosts a Grief Support Group at 10 a.m. on Thursday mornings. For more information, call Marion at (320) 293-5741.
- 6 First Thursday “Practical Water Wisdom” online programs over the lunch hour with Itasca Waters. Topic: “Lakeshore Development and Natural Shoreline Protection to Preserve Biotic Health” with Mike Isensee and Tom Langer. Register at itascawaters.org.
- 7 Minnesota Ice-Out Forecast with Dr. John Downing, Director of the Sea Grant College Program with models adaptable for any lake. Register at itascawaters.org for a noon webinar, free.
- 9 16th Annual Kid’s Fishing Derby on Island Lake, ages 15 and under (kids 10 and under must be accompanied by a guardian). Free. Bring a fishing pole and stool. One hole provided per child. Concessions. To donate prizes or volunteer, contact Amanda at True Value (218) 897-5648 or (218) 766-1444.
- 9 Daylight Savings Time begins, set clocks forward one hour.
- 10 Perry Heide VFW Post 9703 meets the second Monday of the month, 7 p.m. at the Marcell Family Center. Everyone is welcome.
- 10 Women of the Woods, 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Comm. Center. Call Lori Dehn, (218) 659-4796.
- 10 Effie City Council meets at Effie Community Center, 6 p.m.
- 10 Blackduck ISD 32 School Board meets, 6 p.m. in the Media Center.
- 10 ISD 317 School Board meets at Deer River HS, 6 p.m. Public forum 5:45 p.m.
- 11 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.
- 11 Bigfork City Council meets at City Hall, 5:30 p.m.
- 11 Township Annual Meeting night.
- 13 Classic Movies presents *The Magnificent Seven (1960)*, with Yul Brynner, Steve McQueen, Charles Bronson, Robert Vaughn, and James Coburn . 6:30 p.m. at the Edge Center. Free.
- 15 Squaw Lake Fire Department hosts the annual Perch Jerkers Fishing Tournament on Round Lake, ice permitting. Use east access, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (NOTE corrected hours). Food available. \$10 entry fee, kids under 10 free. Cash prizes for top ten fish.
- 15 St. Urho’s Day celebration in Squaw Lake at Leino’s Pub. Decorate a float or watch the parade at 5 p.m. More information, call the pub at (218) 659-2131.
- 17 St. Patrick’s Day.

- 17 Piarigorski Foundation presents Katsuya Yuasa, clarinet and Mary Au, pianist in concert at the Bigfork Valley Hospital Wanigan cafeteria, 6 p.m. Free.
- 18 Free Community Meal at Jesse Lake Lutheran Church, 45834 Co. Rd. 4 in Talmoon 4-6 p.m. Takeout available. Rigatoni, salad and dessert.
- 19 Stitch-n-Bitch meets at the B.I.G. Community Center in Bigfork the 3rd Weds of every month, 5-7 p.m. More info, call Krista at (218) 410-2258.
- 19 ISD 363 South Koochiching-Rainy River School Board meeting, 7 p.m. at Indus School, Baudette.
- 21 No school Deer River, Bigfork schools
- 22 Bigfork Fire Dept. Ham Bingo: doors open 11 a.m., bingo starts at noon. Door prizes, raffles, 25 hams, food. Benefits Bigfork Volunteer Fire Dept.
- 24 Women of the Woods meet at 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Community Center. Call Lori Dehn (218) 659-4796.
- 24 ISD 318 School Board meeting 6:30 p.m., open forum 6 p.m. Livestream at watchictv.org, 6 p.m. See March 3 entry for more info.
- 25 Northwoods Quilters meet 4th Tuesday of the months April - October at Marcell Town Hall, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Show ‘n Tell and quilting techniques.
- 25 Bigfork Valley Hospital board meets in public meeting, 9 a.m.
- APRIL 1: **Operation Round Up applications due** at North Itasca Electric headquarters, 3:30 p.m.

DNR seeks public input on local lakes to update management plans

March is the month to connect with Department of Natural Resources fisheries offices across Minnesota about lakes that will have their fisheries management plans updated in 2025.

The list of lakes scheduled for plan updates in 2025 is on the Minnesota DNR website (mndnr.gov/lakemanagement). The DNR encourages people with thoughts on the future management of

a lake scheduled for a 2025 plan update to call or email the area fisheries office listed for that lake **before March 31.**

The DNR hopes to hear comments about experiences, observations, concerns and wishes for the fishery .

People might ask themselves:

- “What kind of fishing experience am I looking for?”
- “Are there fish habitat concerns I’d like to share?”
- “What kinds of fish do I like to catch?”
- “Do I like catching big fish or a lot of fish?”
- “Do I have concerns about the fishery’s draw or popularity among anglers or other social concerns?”

The DNR’s interest in comments includes those from organizations as well as individuals. Based on initial

comments received, management approaches under consideration, and other considerations, area fisheries managers might determine additional public engagement is necessary later in summer or fall before completing their update to a particular plan.

Local lakes scheduled for lake management plan updates in 2025 include:

Itasca: Erskine, Island, Little Splithand, Long, Pughole, Round, Thistledeew

Koochiching: Battle, Dark, Seretha, Silversack, Teufer

Jesse Lake Lutheran Free Community Dinner
Tuesday, March 18
4 - 6 p.m.
Rigatoni, Salad & Dessert
 All are Welcome!
 45834 County Rd. 4 (2 miles from Talmoon)
 Drawing for a \$25 Spring Lake Store Gift Certificate!
 Take-out Available

CANINE CHARISMA
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 204 Main Street
 Bigfork, MN 56628
(218) 743-2721
 caninecharisma@hotmail.com
 www.caninecharisma.com



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

SCS-MN.COM
 35334 HWY 2 Grand Rapids
 218-327-9505

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• recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes • recipes •

Mexican Wedding Cakes
 Thank you to a co-op employee for this recipe!


1 cup butter (softened)
 8 Tablespoons of powdered sugar
 2 cups of flour
 2 cups of chopped walnuts (I use pecans instead)
 ½ teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Mix everything together with a mixer until well blended, roll dough into small round balls. Bake on a cookie sheet for 10 to 12 minutes.

Cool completely then roll over additional powdered sugar.

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.



Kids Play Clay
 Thank you to Steve Fowler for this March recipe!

3 cups flour
 1 cup salt
 2 Tablespoons cornstarch
 1 1/2 cups water
 2 teaspoons cooking oil
 Few drops of food coloring

Sift dry ingredients. Add a few drops of food coloring to your wet ingredients and then add wet ingredients to dry.

You may need to knead with your hands. (Wear gloves or your hands might get dyed.)

If too sticky, add more flour. If too dry, add a little more water.

This can be stored in the fridge for a longer shelf-life, but the sale should act as a preservative for a month or so.

We like this recipe because no heating is required, so kids can help make it.

AD DEADLINE
for the APRIL issue: Friday, March 21

CLASSIFIEDS

-SERVICES-

Gus's Auto and Recycling of Bigfork
Used auto parts, steel, tires and bridge beams.
A buyer of metals.
Snowplowing
Wanted: dead vehicles
Over 30 years experience
(218) 929-7117
Hm: (218) 743-3598
Gus David

Monuments and Markers
Available in granite and bronze.
Also do final dating, foundation work and cleaning.
FREE estimates.
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Jerry Pula, sales rep.
Call (218) 743-3711

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DahlkeForestry.com
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√ Tree Removal
√ Trail Development
√ Habitat Improvement
√ Private Forest Mgmt.
√ Firewood processing

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-SERVICES-

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Call for free estimate
20 yrs experience
218-248-0717

-FOR SALE-

For sale: 11 assorted styles outdoor porchlights. New in box. \$5-\$15 each (60% off retail). Wasson Lake area. Call (218) 331-1220. 4/25

For sale: Upright freezer Approx. 2 3/4 cu. ft. 19"W x 20"D x 33"H. Works great, no longer needed. \$80. Wasson Lake area. Call (763) 331-1220. 4/25

For sale: Wayne convertible well pump. 1/2 hp with eep well jet, 110 volt. Marcell area, \$60. Call (612) 961-7337 4/25

For sale: 26 volumes of TimeLife series "The Civil War," \$150. Call (218) 743-3921 4/25

For sale: Floe V3000 lb. vertical boat lift. 12 volt electric winch. Motor stop. Pivot bunks. \$1900. Call (218) 256-0381 4/25

For sale: Skid Pro 72" 2020 year Brush Hog. 4 blades high or low hydraulic skid steer mounted, heavy duty. \$6,500. Call (320) 761-8699 3/25

For sale: 30 inch, 2-stage Ariens snowblower. electric start. Good condition. \$600. Call (218) 256-0381 3/25

Moving Sale: Electric Earthquake log splitter, Cub Cadet self-propelled lawnmower, gas Swisher trim weed whipper, 15 ft. stepladder, Toro gas trimmer, Ryobi blower, pontoon (good condition, \$7,000), 9ft. Sea Eagle raft with trolling motor (218) 832-3363 or cell (218) 360-9798

-WINTER SPORTS-

-fishing, skiing-

For sale: Vexlar Fish Locator. FL18. Black, with screen protector. Good condition \$200. Call (218) 256-0381 4/25

For sale: Fishing jig making supplies. C Palmer Hot Pot lead melter. 4 jig molds for different weights and styles, Lil Mag Midjet, Jimco, C Palmer 560 and Snag hook. Over 500 new

jig hooks, 6 sizes. \$75. Call (612) 961-7337 4/25

For sale: Strike Master Ice Auger. XL 3000. 3 hp 8 inch auger. Good condition. \$50. Call (218) 256-0381 4/25

For sale: Alpine 7 foot cross country skis. poles included. good condition. \$50. Call (218) 256-0381

-POWER SPORTS- accessories-

For sale: Artic cat snowmobiles-2003 Pantera and 1991 Cougar. Both in excellent condition with many extras including helmets and a trailer. \$4,750 for everything. Call (218) 553-0632 4/25

-FARM-

Hay for sale: Square bales, mixed grass. Baled

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 11th, 2025. The Annual Meeting will commence at 7:00 p.m. to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held on the following Tuesday, March 18th. 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

TOWN of CARPENTER ITASCA COUNTY

NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Carpenter Township, County of Itasca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 7:00 PM at Carpenter Town Hall, address 18286 State Highway 1, Togo, MN 55723. In case of inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March (March 18, 2025). The Annual Town Meeting will conduct all necessary business prescribed by state law. All qualified voters of Carpenter Township are encouraged to attend this meeting. The Regular Town Meeting will be held Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

Cheryl Steege, Clerk

Notice of Annual Town Meeting Wirt Township

The Annual Town Meeting for Wirt Township will be Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Wirt Town Hall. In case of inclement weather the Annual Town Meeting will be one week later on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. The 2025 Levy will be approved at this meeting.

Cheryl A. Carrigan, Clerk
Wirt Township

Notice

Oteneagen Township

The annual meeting will be held on March 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., at the Town Hall. In case of inclement weather the annual meeting may be postponed until March 18, 2025. 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

REQUEST FOR ROAD & BRIDGE QUOTES MARCELL TOWNSHIP

Request for quotes for the Road Grading & Summer Maintenance and the Snowplowing & Winter Maintenance contracts for Marcell Township. For details, please contact the Marcell Township at 218-832-3965 (leave message) or email us at marcell.township@yahoo.com.

For consideration, quotes must be received, with the required paperwork, by April 9th, 2025, 5:00 PM. The Board reserves the right to reject any and all quotes.

Quotes must be accompanied by verification of general liability and Workman's Comp.

Quotes can be directed to:
Marcell Township
PO Box 141
Marcell, MN 56657
218-832-3965
marcell.township@yahoo.com

NOTICE

ASSESSMENT NOTICE – MARCELL TOWNSHIP

Important Information Regarding Property Assessments.
This may affect your 2026 property taxes.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization for **Marcell Township** shall meet on **4/24/2025 at 9:30 AM at the Marcell Town Hall**. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor.

If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you disagree with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the local Board of Appeal and Equalization. The Board will review your assessments and may make corrections as needed. Generally, you must appeal to the local board before appealing to the county Board of Appeal and Equalization.

Thank you,
Marcell Township
218-832-3965 – marcell.township@yahoo.com

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 11, 2025 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 18, 2025 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 or call 218-832-3965 for an invitation.

Marcell Township

Pam and Bob York donate painting to Bigfork

by Sally Sedgwick

At the Feb. 11 Bigfork City Council meeting, the city accepted a painting of Chief Busticogan donated by Pam and Bob York. Pam researched and painted the canvas and wrote a short story about his life. She said, "It is our hope that the artwork and accompanying story will both inform and encourage visitors to learn more about him."

The council received two letters of interest in the open council position. After a closed session, Matt Jorgensen was selected and will take a seat at the next meeting.

A four year contract with Attorney Paul Shaffer represent the city with criminal legal services was accepted.

Councilor Samantha Olson presented a request from the Bigfork School Parent Teacher Association to mount 21 flags



A painting of Chief Busticogan was presented to the city by Pam and Bob York. Accepting the painting is Mayor Amy Pifher (l).

on the street lights poles on Main Street honoring senior students between April 7 and May 23. They will then be presented to the students.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.

excerpted from a story in the Scenic Range NewsForum

Kid's Fishing Derby in Northome is March 9

Northome's 16th annual Kid's Fishing Derby is scheduled for **Sunday, March 9** from 12:30-2 p.m. off the Island Lake public access. The event is for kids 15 and under, ages 10 and under must be with an adult parent/guardian.

Each child should bring a fishing pole and seat. There will be a hole for each child plus lots of prizes. A lunch

wagon will be at the derby.

Volunteers are needed to stage the event and run the registration and prize tables. Join the fun!

The Derby is sponsored by Northome True Value. For more information or to donate time, money or prizes, call Amanda at (218) 897-5648 or (218) 766-1444.

Perch Jerker hits the ice March 15

The Squaw Lake Fire Department will host the annual Perch Jerkers Fishing Tournament on Round Lake on Saturday, March 15, ice permitting.

The tournament will run from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contestants and spectators should use the east access to the lake.

Food is available, grilled on the ice. Cash prizes will be awarded for the top ten fish plus special prizes for kids.

After the tourney, winners will be drawn in the fire department's Spring Raffle. Tickets are \$10 from a fireman or at local businesses. Prizes include

fishing equipment and a rifle - must be 18 or older to purchase. Proceeds benefit the fire department.

That's not all! At 5 p.m. the famous St. Urho's Day Parade will come across the bridge with festivities at Leino's Pub. Decorate your float in purple and green to celebrate the legendary driving of the grasshoppers out of Ireland by St. Urho.

Call the city of Squaw Lake to confirm ice conditions (218) 659-4256 MWF 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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Bigfork Fire Department Annual Ham

Bingo

Saturday, March 22

*Please join us at the Bigfork Fire Hall
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Doors open 11 a.m. Bingo starts 12 noon
Door prizes! Raffles and more!

25 hams – Fabulous food
1 game of coverall split the pot

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Dr. Helterbrand graduated from St. Louis University School of Medicine and is a proud U.S. Air Force veteran.

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