



NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC

OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

WATTS NEWS

VOL. 28 NO. 5

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MAY 2025

CEO Report

Good afternoon NIECI,

I'm still waiting for the beautiful days of spring to hit. It just seems like winter and summer are in a battle for our attention. Many of our members are asking for rain; the lakes do look low this spring. I know Lake of the Woods is about 2-4 feet down from where it typically is in the spring. That will give us a little more room on the islands we fish from, just be careful and watch for hidden obstacles.

April 14th was Lineman's Appreciation Day. I want to thank all our employees for their hard work and commitment to North Itasca Electric.

The linemen are a special part of what we do. They are committed to NIECI and their trade beyond what many know. Willing to jump up in the middle of the night in the nastiest of weather, our

lineman pride themselves on turning the lights back on. These guys are willing to drop everything to help a neighbor out, they even travel to other service territories to assist when Mother Nature takes an ugly turn for the worse. Please help me to thank our line crew! Also, please help me keep them safe, when they are working on the side of the road slow down and move over. Thank you.

We are gearing up for the 85th Annual Meeting of North Itasca Electric, June 12th, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. in Northome at the fairgrounds. This is our opportunity to let you know how 2024 ended financially. We will report on the state of the cooperative and I'll let you know what I see for our industry. I encourage you to attend if you are available. We will also



Brad Dolinski, CEO

attempt to broadcast the annual meeting via Zoom. Your registration card has the meeting ID and Passcode to enter the Zoom Meeting if you are not able to attend in person. We will provide a \$25 bill credit for attending in person or online.

Andrew is working on another event I'm excited to see. We are planning a Member-Owner appreciation event on the 29th of May. Drew is inviting various vendors to showcase their equipment to help us save money on our energy bills.

CEO to p.2>

Member Services Update

by Drew Francisco

Hello again everyone! Hope you all have found a way to enjoy this kind of lull spring we are currently going through. Sounds like over the next few days we will see improvement, but when I open my front door in the morning to head to work, I'm usually not surprised with whatever awaits me; Six inches of snow, 50 degrees and sunny and everything in between.

Over the last month I was able to wrap up the sub meter audit I have been working on. Making sure that our equipment is adequately tracking usage for all the load management programs you may be apart of. I know the Line

Department is also working on the residential meters that may have experienced an estimation or bad reporting as well. As far as metering goes, I feel we are headed in a great direction and will continue to audit these systems. Making our billing cycles as accurate as possible with true

Member to p.2>



Operation Round-Up Awards

The North Itasca Community Trust Board trustees met in April to distribute Operation Round-Up® funds for community-based projects which help Members in the cooperative's service territory. Awards are listed on p. 3.

A total of \$13,000 was distributed to help 30 separate projects for childrens' programs, community meals, township

repairs and more. Since the program began in 2004, Operation Round Up has distributed more than \$460,000.

Operation Round Up is funded through the generosity of Members who choose to round up their bill to the next dollar each month. Those cents add up, so that twice each year awards can be made for community initiatives.



Member Appreciation Day

Burgers & Brats

on the grill

11 a.m.-3 p.m.
(serving food until 2 p.m.)

Thursday, May 29
Headquarters building in Bigfork

● See energy saving equipment from our vendors.

● Check out the appliance floor!

Save the date! Annual meeting Thursday, June 12, 2 p.m. at the Northome Fairgrounds or by Zoom.

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

Falcons return

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May Mother's Day & Range Sale

page 8

Severe weather

page 4

Office Hours

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

CEO Report (continued)

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Roxanne will have some appliances to showcase as well. I will fire up the grill and start serving burgers and brats from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. I hope to see Member-Owners and contractors at the event to share a little information and conversation.

It sounds like I need to take a trip to the SE side of our service territory. The

rights-of-way are being trimmed and looking good before the summer winds hit. Also, we have one of my favorite stops open back up. The old Scenic Pines Restaurant is now Trail Side. The new owner has great food and outstanding service by the sounds of it. I have heard great reports and I'm looking forward to heading that way. This will be a great

opportunity to grab a bite and refreshment when we are out on the ATV trails this spring/summer.

I look forward to seeing you at the events coming up. If I don't catch you there, I'll see you at our local businesses and restaurants! We have a lot to be thankful for in our service territory.

*By your side! Miigwech
Brad*

Member Services

>from p1

KWH readings is best for all parties involved.

I'm excited to announce North Itasca Electric will be hosting a Member Appreciation Day, Thursday May 29th, at our office in Bigfork from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.. Lunch will be provided, and possibly some door prizes as well! I hope everyone can spare some time to come in and visit. I've had the privilege of meeting some of our membership but would like to expand on that. Working on having some great information available on the programs

we offer and vendors here to share the equipment side of things. Hope to see you all there!

I expect things to ramp up for me in the coming weeks. Home evaluations, new construction projects and remodels and expanding our sales floor. Offering more equipment and electrical components to help in anyway we can. Whether it be on bill financing, rebates or possibly different financial avenues to explore. It doesn't hurt to give us a call to see what options may be available for you!



I'm excited to see what the next few weeks bring and if you ever have any questions about anything energy related, please let me know! Here to help in any way I can.

*Until next time,
Drew Francisco*

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.

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WATTS NEWS is published monthly by:
North Itasca Electric Cooperative, Inc.
301 Main Avenue
P.O. Box 227
Bigfork, MN 56628

Subscriptions for Members are included
as part of the annual membership dues.
\$12.00 per year or partial year for non-
members, billed and payable in January
for the following year.

Second class postage paid at Bigfork, MN
56628. USPS 016-849 **POSTMASTER:**
Send address changes to WATTS NEWS,
North Itasca Electric Cooperative, Inc.,
P.O. Box 227, Bigfork, MN 56628-0227

Office Hours: 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Monday-Friday

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advertisements and other correspondence
for WATTS NEWS to the Editor at: P.O.
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Highlights from the Board Room

NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC CO-OP., INC.
MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 27, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the office and electronically through Zoom on March 27, 2025

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

Directors Present via Zoom: W. Waller

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

- Pledge of allegiance was recited.
- Motion to adopt the agenda. Seconded; motion carried. A motion was made to consent agenda. Seconded; motion carried.
- A safety discussion was held. NIECI is now part of the MREA RESAP program. Safety improvements will be anywhere from painting the steps to safety on the trucks. Inspections are done every three years.
- Tina presented the Operating Report. Motion to approve was made. Seconded; motion carried.
- Board Policy 400.30 Confidentiality of Personnel Files and Employee Privacy Rights Objective was reviewed. Motion to review was made. Seconded. No changes needed at this time.
- Daryl presented the Line Department report. Crews have completed both County Rd 14 and County Rd 35 projects and will begin to change out 20 of our Oil Circuit Reclosures with the new Trip Saver electronic Reclosures. Powell Excavating is currently working in the Scenic/Gunn Lake area.
- Drew gave his Members Service report. He is working to add a live inventory on the website for anyone shopping for appliances to see what is in stock. 47 meters were in a failed state and he has visited 22 of them so far. He explained when the customer flips the breaker, it causes the meter to estimate which can overcharge or undercharge the member.
- Tina presented the Office Report. Auditors were here March 24th and a half a day on March 25th. The Nominating Committee meeting will be April 30th at 5:30 p.m. GRE deposited \$34,950.15 into our bank account for the 2025 Capital Credit Retirement. The retirement consists of the following: 2014 MAG for \$16,860.04 and 1996/1997 premerger capital credits for \$18,090.11.
- Brad presented the CEO report. Local legislation to be aware of: HF1012 would seriously threaten ATV/OHV trails in area. GRE is asking for a transmission contract extension. He updated the Board of his recent meeting of Eaton Door Swap Program and asked for a recommendation for the Board to consider a letter of consent to proceed. Moves. Supports; motion carried.

Spring Round Up Awards

Applicant	Project Title	Award amount
ISD 317 Music	World Drumming	\$ 500.00
PTKS (King School)	Angel Fund	\$ 500.00
PTKS (King School)	Books for all	\$ 500.00
Northome Community Food Shelf	Donation for food shelf	\$ 500.00
Squaw Lake Fire Department	Take a kid fishing day	\$ 400.00
Effie Rodeo Daze	2025 Effie Rodeo Daze celebration	\$ 350.00
Northome School #363	MCA Prep - Survivor	\$ 500.00
Bigfork High School 10th grade	Hungry Huskie Cupboard	\$ 500.00
Ardenhurst Township	Veteran Memorial Day Luncheon	\$ 250.00
Northome School	Math Facts for Life	\$ 260.00
Northome School (outdoor adventures)	Outdoor adventures- plastic lure making	\$ 531.12
City of Northome - Playground Committee	Playground Appreciation Day	\$ 300.00
Northome First Responders	Portable radio purchase	\$ 531.12
Bigfork Valley Hospital	Slide fit & Smart Wonder Core excercise equipment	\$ 159.96
Bigfork Youth Sports Association (Bigfork Baseball)	Addition of batting cage	\$ 531.12
Northland Progressive Inc.	Northome Main Street beautification project	\$ 300.00
Bigfork Youth Sports Association (Girls Basketball)	3-5 grade girls jerseys	\$ 531.12
Elder Circle	SAIL New Locations and Training	\$ 500.00
Bigfork Lions Club	New trp machine house / voice activation system	\$ 531.12
Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center	EODC Enviornmental Education Summer Programmng	\$ 531.12
Marcell Family Center	Spring and Summer Programming	\$ 531.12
American Legion Auxiliary Waldron-Flaat Post 182	Tokens for Transport	\$ 500.00
Deer River Sportsman Club	Youth Day Projects	\$ 500.00
Deer River area Food Shelf	Provide healthy food for those in need	\$ 500.00
318 Bigfork School	Classroom games for social skills	\$ 200.00
Bigfork School K-12 PE	Basketballs for PE class	\$ 300.00
Bigfork Elementary 2nd & 3rd grade	Minnesota Discovery Center field trip	\$ 531.12
Bigfork High School Special Education	College Tour	\$ 200.00
Bigfork Cheerleaders	Funding for cheer camps	\$ 531.08
Bigfork School	Guthrie Field Trip	\$ 500.00

Keep us up-to-date Please keep your contact information current with our office. Please notify North Itasca Electric of any changes in property ownership, mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

- Wes Waller gave the MREA report.
- Lloyd gave the GRE report.
- Round Table discussion was held. Motion to adjourn. Seconded; motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 1:27 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.

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Watch out for severe weather

Spring is a great time to make and practice your emergency plan, refresh your emergency preparedness kit and revisit what to do should you encounter a downed power line. According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota experiences an average of 29 tornadoes per year, with a record of 64 tornadoes occurring in 2021.

Severe weather can damage and knock down power lines and equipment, creating dangerous situations. If you see a downed or sagging power line, here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Keep your distance and call 911 to report it immediately.

Electrical Inspections

Except for minor repair work, all electrical work you do at your home, cabin, or property 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 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

- There is no way to tell if a power line is energized just by looking at it; always assume it can carry electrical current strong enough to kill.

- Never drive over a downed power line if it is blocking your driveway or road. Call 911 to report it and find another route.

- Never touch anything that is also touching a power line, including trees with limbs caught in a power line.

- If a power line falls on your car or otherwise contacts your vehicle, stay in your vehicle. Use your cell phone to call 911 and wait for help to arrive.

- If you must exit your vehicle (due to fire), jump clear of the vehicle without touching it. Land with your feet together and shuffle away

When severe weather causes widespread damage, outages may be extensive and widespread. Great River Energy and its member-owner cooperatives and customers work hard to restore power quickly and safely, first removing any threats to public safety, then following established priorities for making repairs that will restore power to the most members first.



Flood safety

When severe weather comes with heavy rain, be aware of possible flooded roadways. People often underestimate the force and power of water.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that over half of all flood-related drownings occur when a vehicle is driven into hazardous flood water. Many of the deaths occur in cars swept downstream and are preventable. Never drive around the barriers blocking a flooded road. The road may have collapsed under that water.

And it does not take much water to create a hazardous situation. Six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock over an adult, and just 12 inches of rushing water can carry away most cars.

Beyond weather: Key drivers that determine load control events

Members who are enrolled in one of North Itasca Electric's load management programs know that when extremely hot or extremely cold temperatures are in the forecast, it's likely that they will receive a notification of a scheduled control event.

That's because weather, particularly temperature, is the primary determinant for load control dispatch as extreme weather events will drive energy demand due to heating or cooling needs.

North Itasca Electric's and its wholesale power provider Great River Energy utilize load management as a strategy to reduce demand for electricity during high demand periods. These programs encourage members to voluntarily install equipment that stores less expensive off-peak energy or appliances that can be temporarily controlled to reduce energy consumption during times that electricity is most expensive.

But there are days when factors beyond temperature come into play when determining whether to initiate a load control event, including:

Market position: GRE forecasts the demand needs of its member-owner cooperatives on a daily basis and makes purchases from the regional energy market to serve them. Similarly, generation is bid into the market daily, including wind energy. In instances where there is high demand, load management programs can reduce the cooperative's overall market exposure.

High prices: These can be driven by natural gas prices, which are often price setters in the energy market.

Localized outages: Either generation or transmission outages can affect pricing.

Reliability concerns: While not a frequent driver, there are instances where load control is used to help mitigate reliability concerns. During these events, load is reduced so that transmission congestion is brought below a system operating limit.

Monthly events: GRE will often initiate a load control event one time per month for contractual reasons, ensuring that member-owners receive the value from

load management over the billing peak (i.e., the highest demand that is experienced on the system each month).

Using load management as a strategy saves members money by helping Great River Energy mitigate high-cost market purchases that would otherwise need to be paid by its member-owners. Additionally, there are capacity benefits that accrue to members, allowing the cooperative to better position its resources and reduce costs needed to acquire or build more generation.

More than 300,000 devices — from water heaters to air conditioners to irrigation and space heating systems — enrolled across several load management programs can be dispatched when needed by GRE system operators. Members who participate in these programs receive a reduced electric rate.

Contact Drew Francisco at (218) 743-1313 for more information on load management programs and how you can get enrolled.

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Roxanne's Sales Talk

by Roxanne Prather, Member Services Representative

How long does a dishwasher last?

I get asked a lot how long a dishwasher normally lasts. Manufacturers will tell you that your dishwasher should last around 10 years. This is kind of a rough guide; it really depends on a lot of things. Do some research before you buy to get the most out of your dishwasher.

Here are some things to think about:

1. How's your water, do you have hard water, or rust in your water? Hard water can cause corrosion which in turn will plug lines and holes where the water comes out. If you don't have a water softener or an in-line water filter before the dishwasher you might want to consider installing one.

2. How often do you use

your dishwasher? Most people use their dishwasher once a day. Some people only use it when there is a crowd. You should always run your dishwasher at least once a week to keep the motor seals working properly.

3. Do you do regular maintenance on your dishwasher?

To keep your dishwasher working well and odor-free, you should clean it every 1 to 2 months. To clean your dishwasher, simply remove all the dishes and run a load with vinegar, baking soda or lemon juice through it.

Daily or after every load: Remove visible bits of food from inside the filter well and the bottom of the dishwasher.

Weekly: Wipe down the door edges and gasket to get rid of any

debris and remove and clean the filter. Wipe door and door gasket weekly.

Monthly: Deep-clean the interior with a cleaning cycle.

As needed: Wipe the exterior, edges and interior of drips, spots and film.

To clean your dishwasher with vinegar: place a dishwasher-safe bowl filled with one cup of distilled white vinegar on the top rack and run a pots-and-pans or heavy (hot) cycle without detergent or dishes.

To clean your dishwasher with baking soda for extra freshening: after running the vinegar cycle, sprinkle a cup of baking soda in the bottom of your empty dishwasher and run a short or quick cycle.

Home appliances are more efficient than ever

Ongoing advances in energy-saving technologies have led to significant increases in the energy efficiency of five common home appliances, according to historical data from the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers.

The dramatic improvements in energy efficiency that have taken place over the last three decades translate into significant energy cost savings for American households.

For example, the average refrigerator manufactured in the early 1980s consumed 1,278 kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy per year while those manufactured today consume only 444 kWh of energy per year — a decrease in energy consumption of 65.3%.

Similarly, the average annual energy consumption has declined

by 74.2% for clothes washers, 52.3% for dishwashers, 23.1% for freezers and 30.1% for room air conditioners.

The efficiency of appliances can also be measured by their "energy factors," which are standard industry and government metrics that measure an appliance's overall energy efficiency. The energy factor of many typical home appliances has increased at least 50%, with refrigerators seeing the most dramatic improvement of 217.5% in the past 30 years.

The current refrigerator standards, which took effect in 2014, were updated in 2024. The new standards represent energy savings of about 10-15% relative to the current standards and are expected to go into effect in 2030



for most products.

American consumers have never been more better off when it comes to the standard home appliances. Modern home appliances are cheaper and more energy-efficient than ever before.

Roxanne's Repair Tips: Cleaning oven door glass

Have you ever noticed when you have a nice new stove, that the first time something boils over it always seems to find its way into the vent holes on the top front of the range door and runs right between the two glass panes on the door?

This can be very frustrating, especially for someone who likes to keep everything looking clean and new. So today let's talk about how to clean in between the glass on your oven door.

Each range is a little different and you can find this in your manual, or you can look for your manual online with your model number to find out how to remove the door. Lay a soft towel down on the floor so you can lay the oven door on it once you get it off.

To remove most doors, open the oven door all the way and look at where the hinge is going into the range. Many ovens have a latch that you can flip towards you. After

unlatching the door, close the door but not completely (about a 25-degree angle). Lift on both sides of the door straight up and it will come off. You might want to have someone on each side of the door because it is surprisingly heavy.

Once you get it off, place the door handle-side down on the towel. Take a yard stick and wrap a warm soapy wash rag around the yard stick to secure it using a few rubber bands. Slide the yard stick in the bottom of the door and slide around until the glass is clean. Pull the stick back out and rinse the rag as needed. When you have all stains removed, use some paper towels to wrap around the yard stick to dry your glass.

Once you're done cleaning the glass, work backwards. Get the door in the hinge position and then open the door all the way to flip the latch. Close the oven door and you are as good as new.

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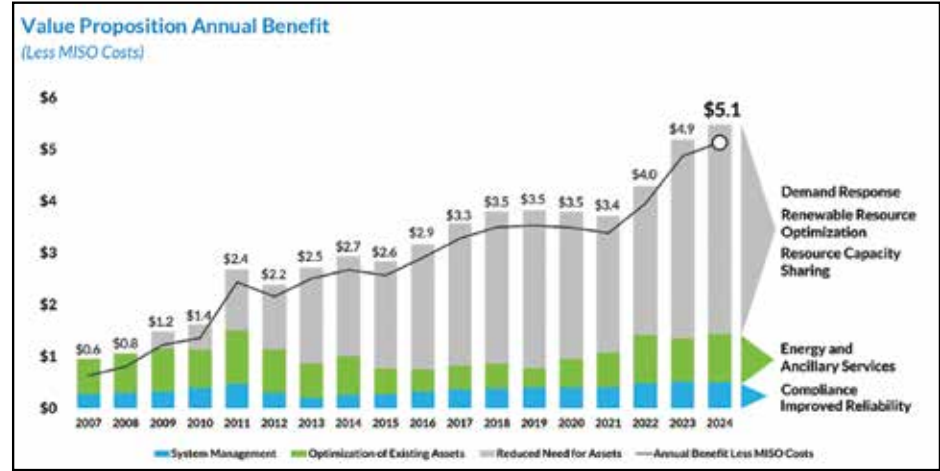
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MISO’s value proposition over \$5 billion in 2024

GRE achieves strong reliability in 2024



The region’s grid operator, MISO, estimates that it delivered more than \$5 billion in benefits in 2024 through its region-wide approach to grid reliability, market operations and regional transmission planning.

“MISO’s continued collaboration with our members and stakeholders has been instrumental to maintaining reliability and adding value for the 45 million people who depend on us,” said MISO President and CEO John Bear. “For every dollar spent on MISO membership, participants realized \$15 in benefits — a testament to the efficiencies gained through regional collaboration.”

The value proposition analysis identifies and quantifies several key value drivers for MISO members, such as Great River Energy. This includes benefits like more efficient use of

resources, improved reliability and compliance, and a reduced need for generation assets.

In 2024, the primary sources of value were:

- Resource capacity sharing: \$2.9 billion to \$3.9 billion. MISO’s large footprint allows energy to be shared more efficiently across the region.
- Energy and ancillary services: \$881 million to \$974 million. Optimized market operations reduce collective production costs and enhance grid flexibility by ensuring the most cost-effective resources are deployed.
- Renewable resource optimization: \$403 million to \$474 million. MISO’s regional planning lowers the overall cost of integrating renewables across the region, reducing overall capacity investment to meet renewable energy goals.

Keeping the lights on is Great River Energy’s core business and the cooperative delivered in every regard in 2024. Great River Energy closely monitors reliability by tracking outages affecting its member-owners’ distribution substations that are triggered by issues on the transmission system.

In 2024, the cooperative recorded its third best year for reliability since it started tracking in 1999.

This data helps identify areas for improvement and supports the ongoing effort to deliver reliable and dependable electric service.

“We are proud of our record of reliability and the excellent electric service we provide to our member-owners,” said GRE’s Vice President and Chief Transmission Officer Priti Patel.

GRE carefully plans and maintains its system to ensure reliability. That said, weather is often the



In 2024, Great River Energy recorded its third best year for reliability since it started tracking in 1999.

biggest factor impacting reliability and 2024 was no exception.

“While the nation experienced numerous severe weather events in 2024, Minnesota largely avoided the worst of these. The year was recorded as the warmest on record and extremely dry, which played a significant role in maintaining strong system reliability,” said GRE’s System Operations Director Mark Peterson.

GRE categorizes the most significant outage events on its system as major outage events. These are events, such as severe storms, that have caused major disruptions in service and are much more significant than day-to-day outages. GRE tracks them separately. For the second year in a row, there were no situations that qualified as major outage events.

“Severe weather is the leading cause of outage time,” Peterson said. “In recent years, we studied Minnesota’s various weather and climate threats and the risks they pose to our assets.

This has helped us better mitigate the impact of severe weather events on our transmission system.”

Beyond weather-related challenges, GRE has implemented a variety of initiatives to further enhance reliability. GRE holds reliability meetings with each of its member-owner cooperatives every other year to understand what challenges each cooperative faces.

Additionally, GRE has incorporated advanced technologies such as partial discharge cameras to detect faulty insulators, which can cause outages. GRE also completed an innovative pilot project that uses existing fiber optic cables as sensors to detect problems on transmission lines, and has installed raptor guards and pole wraps to reduce the risk of outages caused by birds and other animals.

GRE remains focused on maintaining and improving the reliability of its system, ensuring that member-owners enjoy reliable and dependable electricity.

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DNR encourages off-highway vehicle riders to prioritize safety

On the heels of a record number of fatalities in 2024 involving off-highway vehicles, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources urges all riders to prioritize safety wherever they're riding.

Of the 30 incidents last year, which resulted in 32 fatalities, more than three-quarters occurred on roadways or in ditches. The other seven incidents occurred on private property (4), on a trail (2), and on public property (1). Twenty-six of the operators involved did not have ATV safety certification, which is required of anyone born after July 1, 1987, and who is 12 years or older, to operate on public lands or waters, public road rights-of-way, or state grant-in-aid trails.

A list of currently available ATV safety classes can be found on the DNR website, mndnr.gov/safety/vehicle/atv.

"Safety certification isn't just about checking a box – it provides riders the foundational knowledge and skills they need for a lifetime

of safe off-highway vehicle riding," said Bruce Lawrence, DNR Enforcement recreational vehicle coordinator. "While it's not legally required for all riders, we highly recommend it for anyone who plans to ride. Without a doubt, it's the best way to ensure a safe ride."

Among the most common violations conservation officers continue to see is youth riders not wearing helmets. Riders under the age of 18 must wear a DOT-approved helmet, and it's recommended all riders wear one. Other ways riders can help ensure a safe ride include:

- When they're open, ride only on designated trails. Stay to the right and travel at a safe speed.
- Ride sober.
- Remember that riders under age 15 are not allowed to operate Class 2 ATVs.

• Wear protective gear including goggles, long sleeves, long pants, over-the-ankle boots, gloves and a DOT-approved helmet when riding all types of OHVs.

- If an OHV comes with factory installed seatbelts, wear them.

- Avoid riding on paved roads except to cross. Do it safely and ensure it's permitted by law.

- Actively supervise young riders as OHVs aren't toys.

- Complete a safety education course.

For more tips on safe riding, visit the ATV safety page of the DNR web-site (mndnr.gov/ohv/atv-safety.html).

Peregrine falcons return to nest box

Brooklyn and Breezy, a pair of peregrine falcons, have returned to their Great River Energy nesting box for their 11th and 8th consecutive years, respectively. Breeding pairs tend to be monogamous throughout their lifespan and return to the same nesting location year after year.

Since its return, the falcon pair has laid four eggs that are anticipated to hatch at the end of April. Peregrine falcon eggs typically incubate for 33 to 35 days. The female falcon does most of the incubating, but the male will also incubate the eggs for short periods, allowing the female to hunt.

Since 2006, 57 young falcons have fledged from the GRE nesting box. A few of those falcons have been spotted



The falcon pair has laid four eggs that are anticipated to hatch between April 28 and 30.

around Minnesota. The nest box is located on GRE's Elk River campus, which serves as a great spot for a nesting box because it is in a peregrine falcon migratory flyway beside the Mississippi River.

Watch the Great River Energy falcons online at greatriverenergy.com/birdcam.

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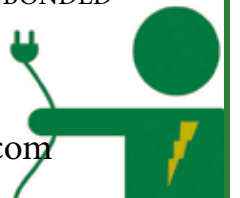
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TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



If you suspect you're dealing with a utility scam, it's crucial to slow down and take your time before taking any action. Scammers will often pressure you to make quick decisions or immediate payments. Instead, take the time to verify the legitimacy of the communication by contacting your utility directly. Use a phone number from a reliable source, such as your bill or the utility's website. Taking this simple step can help protect you from falling victim to utility scams.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams



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FCRE3062AWC- \$778.05 SALE \$700.24

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FCRG3083AS- \$863.30 SALE \$776.97

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Planning underway for Wilderness Days - June 13-15

All roads lead to Bigfork on Wilderness Days. This year the annual celebration will be on Friday - Sunday, June 13 - 15.

There is always something for everyone during Wilderness Days: competitions, vendors of all kinds of food and crafts, music and dancing, raffle drawings and, of course, a Parade.

Some of the Saturday events planned include Pony Rides by the Northwoods Saddle Club, a rubber ducky race hosted by B.I.G. a Kid Zone and Fire Department open house, a bags tournament at the Wilderness and Chuck the Magician entertaining visitors on the street. There will be live music all day on Saturday and Sunday with Garage 19.

Sign up early for the Bloody Mary contest, the parade and the car show. The Bloody Mary contest will be held on Saturday from 9 to 11 am. at Golf on the Edge. Would you like to be a judge? All golf tourney entries include the judging fee, or sign up separately for \$10. Contact Tiffany at (218) 245-5955.

Start planning your float now for the parade on Saturday! The start time will be 4 p.m. and there will be cash prizes: First place \$100, second place \$75 and third place, \$50. There will also be a Pet Parade on Sunday at 1 p.m. Parades are free to enter, just contact Allison at (402) 8873-0165 or Sam at (218) 910-6297.

Need more? How about a Petting Zoo, Medallion Hunt and a Kids Dance on Friday!

There's a large community of vintage car enthusiasts in the area – show off your special ride on Sunday at the car show on Main Street from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Entry fee is \$10, but there are the same cash prizes as the parade. Contact Allison at (402) 8873-0165 or Sam at (218) 910-6297.

Food and craft vendors wanted! Saturday, June 14 there are all day activities and lots of customers. Text a message to Allyssa Pitzen at (513) 283-2730 with questions or to sign up.

It's an important weekend for the community, and sponsors or donations are needed and appreciated! There are four levels of sponsorship starting at \$50: Bronze up to \$250, Silver up to \$500, Gold up to \$750 and Platinum over \$750. All sponsors will get a Facebook shoutout on every post, Silver and up your logo on the banner, Gold a radio shoutout and Platinum free vendor booth rental for the weekend. Contact Allyssa, Allison or Sam to support the event.

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Bigfork Valley Community Foundation makes donations

The Bigfork Valley Community Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to address current and future needs of the Northern Itasca Hospital District and its communities through charitable contributions.

(right) The Bigfork Valley Community Foundation recently contributed \$400 to the Bigfork Strings program. (l to r) Kristen Anderson, Bigfork Strings Chair, Bill Swanberg, BVCF Board Member.

(below) Bigfork Valley Community Foundation sponsors healthcare supplies for the Itasca Area Schools Collaborative 8th Grade Intro to Career Pathways Day. (l to r) Scott Patrow, IASC NEXT Career Pathways Director, Bill Swanberg, BVCF Board Member.



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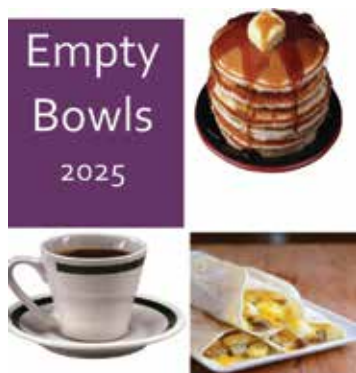
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Bigfork's Empty Bowls May 4

Please join us on Sunday, May 4, 9 a.m.-noon at the Bigfork City Hall for our Empty Bowls Breakfast Fundraiser.

This is the only fundraiser Northern Itasca Emergency Food Shelf holds each year. We will be serving pancakes, sausage, make your own breakfast burrito, coffee and juice.

NIEFS (Bigfork) food shelf serves between 50-60 neighborhood families per month. Your donations help us provide healthy food choices.



Pancake Breakfast May 14 for SLFD

The Squaw Lake Fire Department will hold a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, May 14 from 9-11 a.m. or until it's gone.

There will be bacon, sausage and beverages as well as pancakes, \$10 with ages 10 and under free.



First Thursdays from Itasca Waters

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

May 1: Climate Change Effects on Fisheries with Dr. Hadley Boehm, a fisheries research supervisor at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in Duluth. Dr. Boehm leads a team of fisheries research scientists dedicated to addressing critical questions about Minnesota's aquatic resources. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about the future of Minnesota's fisheries and the science behind conservation efforts. For more details, email info@itascawaters.org.

June 5: Septic Health Check: A Deep Dive into Inspections & Maintenance with Northland Excavating. Watch an actual septic inspection.

Outdoor skills & stewardship webinars

Want to sharpen your outdoor skills over the lunch hour? Try these Department of Natural Resources "Outdoor skills and Stewardship webinars."

Each webinar begins at noon on Wednesdays and lasts less than an hour. More information and to register, visit dnr.state.mn.us/fishwildlife/outreach.

State Fish Hatcheries: May 7

Join Genevieve Furtner, DNR St. Paul fish hatchery supervisor, as we talk fish production and tour the DNR St. Paul fish hatchery to learn more about the important role hatcheries play in fisheries management.

Bearwise: May 14

The month is May, hibernation is over, and bears are out and about. Human-bear conflict is a natural part of a healthy and resilient bear population, but there are some simple tips you can use to coexist with bears and keep your property secure. Join Andrew Tri, DNR bear researcher and Franklin Whittaker, BearWise coordinator, for a discussion about how to be BearWise, keep your property safe and keep bears wild.

Agates in Minnesota: May 21

The Lake Superior Agate is the official state gemstone adopted in 1969 and is beloved and sought after by many. Craig Prudhomme is a retired naturalist and college instructor with a long-time interest in teaching how to Read the Landscape. In this webinar we will explore the fascinating geologic stories that lead to the formation of the agates that make Minnesota and the area southwest of Lake Superior such a hot-spot for collecting. We will look at how agates are formed, some different types, places to explore, special agate events, and what to do with them when you find them.

Otters in Minnesota: May 22

Join NPS Ranger Stephen Walker of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, to learn about river otters and their unique habitat in the floodplain forest. Is flooding good or bad for otters? What are some adaptations these elusive creatures have? And what makes their fur so soft? All these questions and more will be answered, through the lens of their relationship with the Mighty Mississippi River.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Routine maintenance is important to keep your refrigerator running efficiently. Lint and dirt should be cleaned from the refrigerator coils every six months to a year, and more often if there are pets in the home.

When coils are coated with lint, dust or pet hair, your refrigerator works harder than it's designed to, which can prevent the appliance from cooling properly and efficiently. The additional work can increase the energy costs of the refrigerator by as much as 35% and shorten the life of the appliance.

Source: energy.gov

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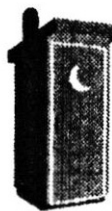
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Arts on the Edge

Call for Entries for Art on the Edge:

19th Annual Juried Art Exhibit
at the Edge Center for the Arts in Bigfork

Are you or is someone you know, a visual artist? Are you ready to enter a Juried Art competition?

What work is most likely to be selected for the show and maybe even win an award? That is entirely up to the juror who is a paid professional from outside this area. Some years the winning art is folk art, sometimes abstract and other times it is realistic. In the past, winners have included paintings, collages, photos, drawings, sculptures, furniture, glass, woodworking and pottery. Any visual media may be entered.

What is the juror usually looking for as he or she selects the work for the exhibit? The most important thing is that the work be original and creative in subject matter, style or materials. Original means that it is not copied from another artist's work, is not a print of an actual artwork, and is fresh and unusual.

Along with that, composition and craftsmanship are carefully considered. For an artist to enhance his or her chance of being chosen, the digital images submitted for consideration need to be of high quality. When the image is blurred or too small, shows reflections from the

glass or photographed from an angle, the juror cannot get an accurate view of the work and will usually remove the work from consideration. After that it may boil down to the personal preferences of a person whose taste reflects their study of thousands of pieces of art during their career. The juror's decisions are final.

Art on the Edge is on exhibit from August 7 to August 30. **The deadline for entries is June 1.** The entries must be submitted on the entry form on www.edgecenterarts.org. Artists will be notified by July 5 about whether their work has been accepted.

There is a \$25 non-refundable fee for up to 3 entries and the work must be created in 2023, 2024 or 2025, and never before shown in the Edge Center Gallery.

Please think about entering this Juried Exhibit, or tell your friends and relatives about this opportunity. Artists must be 16 years or older. There are no geographic limitations.

Check the Gallery page at www.edgecenterarts.org for the prospectus with information and an online application form.

Bigfork Student Art Exhibit

The Edge Gallery Committee invites everyone to stop in and see what our creative youth have been up to!

From May 6 - May 20th we will feature student art projects that include drawings, ceramics, and photography. The industrial arts and language arts classes have also been tapped for submissions, so who knows what other interesting things we might expect?

The students are excited to share their efforts with the community so please come and take a look. We have no doubt that you'll be able to offer some positive feedback in our guestbook as you leave!



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Report fish die-offs to help DNR respond as needed

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources encourages Minnesotans to contact the state duty officer if they see evidence of a fish die-off in a lake, river or stream. Fish die-offs can result from a variety of natural and human causes.

To report fish die-offs, people should call the Minnesota duty officer at (651) 649-5451 or website (mndnr.gov/fisheries/fishkills.html).

officer line is staffed 24 hours per day, seven days a week). An early report facilitates timely water and fish sampling and other response actions, if needed. It's especially helpful to know what sizes and types of fish people see in a fish die-off.

More information on fish die-offs is available on the Minnesota DNR website (mndnr.gov/fisheries/fishkills.html).

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Bigfork received a Certificate of Commendation from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for its operations at the city wastewater plant during 2024.

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., April 14, 5-9 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.

AARP Smart Driver course

The AARP Smart Driver course is the nation's first course specifically designed for drivers age 55 and older. Drivers will benefit from a 10% discount on their auto insurance premium upon completing the course. Drivers learn how to manage and accommodate common age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time as well as safety strategies.

The course will be offered Monday, May 12 from 3:45-8 p.m. at Deer River Community Ed., 101 First Ave. NE, Deer River. Register at (218) 246-8241, ext. 60227.

Cost for the class is \$20 f or AARP members and \$25 for nonmembers. Please arrive 15 minutes early for registration paperwork.

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

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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.

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 B.I.G. meetings 1st Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.
 Crafting Group 3rd Wednesday, 5-7 p.m.

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 Tuesdays: May 13; June 3, 24
 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: May 15; June 5, 26
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Bookmobile or Mail-a-Book information: call Arrowhead Library System at (218) 741-3840

— Community Education —

Bigfork: Register for classes at 743-3444, Ext. 42503, or online at www.getlearning.org,

ASTRONOMY NIGHT IN MARCELL
 Date: Friday, May 9; backup date May 10
 Time: 7:30 p.m.
 Location: Marcell Town Hall
 Cost: Free, but must pre-register with active email
 See the night sky through giant telescopes from The Range Astronomy Club. Snacks. Bring binoculars/ lawn chairs if desired.

DOG TRACKING
 Date: Saturday, May 3
 Time: 9 a.m.
 Location: Bigfork School Forest
 Cost: \$35

Any age or breed of dog can track. Optional, bring a lawn chair. Ages 15 to adult. More info at getlearning.org.

Deer River: Register for classes online at (218) 246-8241, Ext. 60227 or www.getlearning.org
YOUTH CPR CERTIFICATION
 Date: Saturday, May 17
 Time: 10 a.m.
 Location: King Elementary Senior Center
 Cost: \$60

Ages 14-17, perfect for summer camp counselors or babysitters. American Heart Association course that is designed for teens. It teaches the essential first aid, CPR, and AED use skills.

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
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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
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Resource Centers:

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

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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.

Community News

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

Ardenhurst

Ardenhurst Township will provide a Veterans Memorial Day Luncheon for all those veterans who are performing services at local cemeteries.

Bigfork

This year Empty Bowls, the annual Northern Itasca Emergency Food Shelf fundraiser, will be a pancake or burrito breakfast at the Bigfork City Hall starting at 9 a.m. on Sunday, May 4. Stop by and support this needed service!

Blackduck

Update: The Anderson Fabrics Quilt Shop will remain open through May 30 and will be participating in the Shop Hop. Anderson Fabrics has been closed by the parent company, The Shade Store, but its quilt store is for sale.

Talmoon

The Flea Market at the Little Turtle Lake Store will begin on May 15 and on the third Thursday of each month through the summer.

College for Kids

The two week summer program in Grand Rapids at Minnesota North College - Itasca is designed for youth ages 6-12, but there are also preschool clases for 4 and 5 year olds. Legos, woodcarving, cooking, dance, soccer and more - there are lots of options BUT classes fill up fast so call early. Registration opens at 7 a.m. on Thursday, May 15 and closes at noon on Sunday, June 8. Classes are \$30 each. Register online at getlearning.org for Itasca CFK or by phone at (218) 327-5730.



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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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

~ May Calendar ~

- 1 Jesse Lake Lutheran hosts a Grief Support Group at 10 a.m. on Thursday mornings. For more information, call Marion at (320) 293-5741.
- 1 First Thursday “Practical Water Wisdom” online programs over the lunch hour with Itasca Waters. Topic: “Climate Change Effects on Fisheries” with Dr. Hadley Boehm, DNR fisheries research supervisor. Register at itascawaters.org.
- 3 Treasures Are Fine 60 mile long garage sales in northwest Itasca County along Co. Rds. 6, 4 and 29. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. See @Treasures 6429 on Facebook.
- 4 Empty Bowls at Bigfork City Hall. Pancakes, burritos, sausage. 9 a.m.-noon. Benefits Bigfork food shelf.
- 5 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.
- 7 “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.
- 9 Bake Sale at Bowstring Store on State Hwy 6 hosted by the Bowstring Chapel, 2-6 p.m. Pies, breads, cookies, etc.
- 9 Mother’ Day Auction at the Suomi Lutheran Church. on Co Rd. 48, 6:30 p.m. Baked goods homemade items, crafts, etc. will be auctioned off.
- 9-20 Student arts, language arts and industrial arts show at the Edge Center, Bigfork. Open 1-4 p.m., Thurs.-Sat.
- 10 Minnesota Fishing Opener
- 11 Mother’s Day
- 12 No school, King School (Deer River)
- 12 ISD 317 School Board meets at Deer River HS, 6 p.m. Public forum 5:45 p.m.
- 12 Perry Heide VFW Post 9703 meets the second Monday of the month, 7 p.m. at the Marcell Family Center. Everyone is welcome.
- 12 Women of the Woods, 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Comm. Center. Call Lori Dehn, (218) 659-4796.
- 12 Effie City Council meets at Effie Community Center, 6 p.m.
- 13 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.
- 12 Blackduck ISD 32 School Board meets, 6 p.m. in the Media Center.
- 13 Bigfork City Council meets at City Hall, 5:30 p.m.
- 15 Registration opens for College for Kids (ages 4-12). Visit getlearning.org for more info.
- 17 Squaw Lake Fire Department Pancake Breakfast 9-11 a.m or until gone, Community Center. \$10, 10 and under free.
- 19 ISD 318 School Board meeting 6:30 p.m., open forum 6 p.m. Livestream at watchictv.org, 6 p.m. See May 5 entry for more info.
- 20 Free Community Meal at Jesse Lake Lutheran Church, 45834 Co. Rd. 4 in Talmoon 4-6 p.m. Takeout available. Sloppy Joes, chips and dessert.
- 21 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.
- 21 ISD 363 South Koochiching-Rainy River School Board meeting, 7 p.m. at Northome School
- 23 Last day of school Northome School.
- 23 Bigfork School 5th grade hosts a pre-Memorial Day Parade, starting at the Cenex at 1 p.m and traveling south to the Memorial Park on Highway 38.
- 26 Northwoods Quilters meet 4th Tuesday of the month through October at Marcell Town Hall, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Show ‘n Tell and quilting techniques.
- 26 No school, all schools, Memorial Day. North Itasca Electric offices CLOSED. Watch for information on ceremonies at area cemeteries..
- 27 Bigfork Valley Hospital board meets, 9 a.m.
- 29 Bloodmobile at Bigfork Valley Hospital, 12:30-3:45 p.m. Contact Kyle at (218) 743-4147 or kbuckingham@bigforkvalley.org.
- 29 Last day of school, Bigfork, Blackduck schools
- 30 Last day of school, Deer River School
- JUNE
- 1 Deadline for entry in the Edge Center Gallery’s Juried Show: Arts on the Edge. See p. 10.
- 5 Itasca Water First Thursday: Septic Health Check: A Deep Dive into Inspections & Maintenance.

Church directory sponsored by North Itasca Electric Cooperative, send changes to editor, sedgwick@paulbunyan.net

Area Greenhouse Openings

Bigfork

Bigfork Hardware is located just north of the river on Highway 38. Onsite greenhouse open during store hours, Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Phone: (218) 743-3231

Country Gardens Greenhouse is located in the parking lot of Kocian's featuring flowers, heirloom vegetables and hanging baskets. Opening mid-May, hours 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon-Sat. Phone: (218) 743-3343

Jesse Lake Lutheran
Free Community Dinner



Tuesday, May 20
4 - 6 p.m.

Sloppy Joes, chips and dessert

45834 County Rd. 4
(2 miles from Talmoo)


Drawing for a \$25 Spring Lake
Store Gift Certificate!

All are
Welcome!

Take-out
Available



Highway 46,
Squaw Lake



218-659-2131

Happy Hour
Mon-Fri 4-6p
All day Sunday

Meat raffle
every Sat at 6p

Full bar, on/off sale,
pull tabs, e-tabs

Open daily
at 11 a.m.

Full menu
including Broasted Chicken

Kitchen is open
Sun-Thurs until 9p
Fri-Sat until 10p

Blackduck

Grundmeier's Greenery is located at 589 Main St. North, Blackduck. Opening Friday, May 2. Hours are Mon-Sat, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Grundmeier's carries bedding plants, vegetables, a selection of Proven Winners®, hanging baskets and planters. Phone: (218) 368-4282

Effie

Forevergreen Greenhouse and Gifts is located 1 mile east of Effie on Highway 1. Opening Sat., May 3. Bursting at the seams with blooms this year; specialties include patio tomatoes, petunias and geraniums plus a large variety of flowers, baskets and vegetables. There is also an attached gift shop with candles, western primitives, garden art and more. Open 7 days a week, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Phone (218) 743-3358; 218-244-3295 or email forever@bigfork.net, or find us on Facebook at Forevergreen Greenhouse and Gifts.

Poenix Contracting LLC

218-246-2740
poecon@paulbunyan.net

42298 Co Rd. 48
Deer River,
MN 56636



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Marcell

Lloyd's Landscaping is located at the junction of Highways 38 and 286 in Marcell. Bedding plants, shrubs, fruits, perennials, hanging baskets, bagged soil and bulk bin materials like mulch, crushed rock and top soil. Landscaping services available - call with your questions. Hours Mother's Day to June 15 are Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat. & Sun., 9-3 p.m. Phone: (218) 832-2842. Check out our website: www.LandscapeWithLloyd.com.

Mizpah

Mizpah's Local Roots Greenhouse is located at 11354 Pleasant St. in Mizpah. Opening April 25, hours 9 a.m.- 5 p.m., 7 days a week. More of everything and more colors also this year as well as new plants. Large variety of vegetables and flowers: succulents, herbs, perennials and annuals. Strawberry and flower baskets, porch pots of cucumbers, strawberries and tomatoes. Gardening supplies, potatoes and onion sets. This year, we're not going to run out of hanging baskets! Phone: (218) 244-9716. On Facebook under Mizpah's Local Roots Greenhouse.

Northome

Harvest Moon Greenhouse is at 12337 Town Rd. #425. (from Hwy 71, north on Co. Rd. 15, right on Co. Rd. 51, right on Co. Rd. 425) Opening April 25. Hours 8 a.m.-6 p.m., 7 days a week. Custom pots and design, bedding plants, annuals, non-GMO vegetables, baskets. An additional greenhouse this year! Phone: (507) 456-7611, Facebook at Harvest Moon Greenhouse.

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


Cream of Asparagus Soup

1 lb. asparagus, ends trimmed and peeled
6-1/2 cups milk
1 small onion stuck with a clove
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
3 peppercorns
Bouquet garni (2 sprigs parsley 1 bay leaf, 1 small sprig thyme or 1/4 teaspoon dried, tied in cheesecloth)
1/3 cup rice flour, mixed with enough milk to make a smooth paste
2 Tablespoons butter, softened
1/2 cup whipping cream
salt and white pepper to taste

Cut asparagus into quarters lengthwise, chop stalks into small pieces.
Heat mik to boil add onion, salt, pepper and bouquet garni. Gradually whisk in rice flour paste, and whisk constantly until entirely smooth. Simmer over low heat 20 minutes and remove bouquet garni and onion. Put through a fine sieve into large bowl.
Return to saucepan, add asparagus. Cook over medium heat 10 minutes until very tender and sieve. Just before serving, slowly sitr in cream. Stir in butter. Season to taste with salt and white pepper. Garnish if desired. Serves 6.

Swedish Cucumbers

1 large cucumber, peeled and sliced
(score lengthwise with tines of fork)
1/3 cup cider vinegar
5 Tablespoons water
5 Tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
white pepper
1 Tablespoon chopped parsley



Mi all ingredients except parsley, cover and chill several hours. Garnish with parsley.

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.

EARLY DEADLINE
for the JUNE issue: **Monday, May 12**

CLASSIFIEDS

-SERVICES-

Dahlke Dumpsters
218-929-7228
DahlkeDumpsters.com
Flat rates on dumpster rentals!
Flexible rental times!
Great Customer Service!

Lepinski Painting
interior/exterior
Call for free estimate
20 yrs experience
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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

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Available in granite and bronze.
Also do final dating, foundation work and cleaning.
FREE estimates.
Serving your area.
Jerry Pula, sales rep.
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Emails will be answered; if no reply, please resend.

-SERVICES-

Bigfork Mini-Storage
Many sizes
24 hour access.
Located off Hwy 14 just west of Hwy 38
For immediate service, call Keith at
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Dahlke Forestry Services, LLC
218-929-7228
DahlkeForestry@hotmail.com
DahlkeForestry.com
✓ Storm Cleanup
✓ Tree Removal
✓ Trail Development
✓ Habitat Improvement
✓ Private Forest Mgmt.
✓ Firewood processing

-FOUND-

Found: Circular blade on Co. Rd. 134 near Jesse Lake. Text for information: (320) 250-7543 5/25

-HELP WANTED-

Help wanted: Dock boy and cabin cleaner. Call Georgene's Haven (218) 832-3076, please leave name and number.

-FREE-

Free: Top quality adult wheelchair with tie downs for van for sale under Vehicles. Manual Hoyer lift. Shower chair with extra padding. Hospital bed with extra padding. 3 nebulizer machines. Call (218) 897-5923 6/25

-FOR SALE-

For sale: Brand new, still in the box 25 gal. portable gas tank with 10" diam. air-filled rubber wheels plus 10 feet rubber 5/8" hose and nozzle, gravity fed line. Cost \$300, sell for \$225. Call Georgene's Haven (218) 832-3076, please leave name and number.

For sale: Home generator, PowerMate 208cc OHV model PM0123250. Very low hours. Call 218-246-8664 or (218) 256-6756 6/25

-WATER SPORTS-
-boats, fishing-

For sale: 16 ft. Alumacraft fishing boat 15 hp 4-stroke Mercury outboard motor and trailer. \$3,500. Alumacraft whitewater canoe - aluminum. \$300. Johnson 15 hp flat top outboard motor, \$750 obo. Call 218-246-8664 or (218) 256-6756

For sale: Used Banks-Maxwell pusher prop for air sled or airboat. Has been refurbished, has brass tips and leading edges. 69.5' long, used on a Continental 85 hp engine. Pictures available. \$650. Call (320) 249-0330 5/25

For sale: 16 ft. Grumman aluminum boat, console. 25 hp Evinrude electric start. Trolling motor, depth finder. Brand new tires on trailer. Always kept inside. Very nice condition. Call Doug at (218) 244-1147 5/25

-WATER SPORTS-
-boats, fishing-

For sale: 2014 Grand Island 20 ft. pontoon, 50 hp 4 stroke motor, trailer. \$13,900 obo. Call (218) 246-8531 4/25

For sale: 18' Lund fishing boat, trailer, 30 hp Honda Tilt & Trim. \$4,900. Call (218) 246-8531 4/25

For sale: Fiberglass 14 ft open fishing boat. Needs transom and gunwale work. \$50 obo. Call (763) 331-1220 6/25

For sale: Floe V3000 lb. vertical boat lift. 12 volt electric winch. Motor stop. Pivot bunks. \$1900. Call (218) 256-0381 6/25

For sale: Floe dock sections. 4 ft. by 16 ft. cedar decking, adjustable wheel sections. 5 pieces avail. \$1000 per section. Good condition. Call (218) 256-0381 6/25

For sale: Strike Master Ice Auger. XL 3000. 3 hp 8 inch auger. Good condition. \$50. Call (218) 256-0381 6/25

-VEHICLES-

For sale: 2011 Ford Transit Connect van. 163,000 mi. Handicapped lift in back. \$10,000 (quote from dealer). Top quality adult wheelchair with tie downs for this van, free. Battery powered Hoyer lift, new, \$2,200. Call (218) 897-5923

For sale: 08 Chev impala High mileage Exc, cond, \$2,800. Call (218) 256-6668 6/25

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12244 2nd St
Elderly / Disabled Building
1 Bedroom Available Immediately
Heat, Water, Trash included
On site Laundry
Income Restrictions Apply
Rental assistance program

Call 218-999-9326

-REAL ESTATE-

For sale: 3+ acre wooded lakeshore lot located on Hatch Lake, the driveway and electric are in. 970+ feet of lakeshore with lots of ATV and walking trails. There is culvert access to Turtle Lake from Hatch Lake. \$175,000 mickie1020@yahoo.com or (612) 401-0959 5/25

-FARM-

For sale: Square bales mixed grass. Baled dry, stored dry. \$5 per bale. Call (218) 244-0957 6/25
For sale: Five 1000 lb hay bales, mixed hay. Stored inside. \$40 per. Call (218) 832-3050 5/25

Almost 1,000 private woodland owners join forest inventory program

Last January, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources launched a new enrollment program for private woodland owners to participate in the forest inventory program. Minnesotans responded enthusiastically, with more than 800 private landowners signing up within six months, but more are needed.

"We want to thank all the woodland owners who have participated in our forest inventory program so far," said Keb Guralski, DNR forestry inventory scientist. "This data helps us understand the structure and composition of our forests and how they are changing and provides clues about their overall health."

The information can be used to reduce wildfire risk, improve forest management, and plan for the long-term health and resilience of woodlands across the landscape.

This data has already been collected on all of Minnesota's public lands. With nearly half of the state's woodlands privately owned, private woodland owners are a vital part of creating an accurate picture of Minnesota's forests. Hundreds more plots are needed to create a robust inventory representing all of Minnesota.

Participants will work with professional foresters and receive high-resolution maps and a report detailing the information collected on their woods, all at no cost. This information can help participants better understand their woodlands and guide forest management decisions to improve wildlife habitat, trails, or timber on their property.

Landowners with at least two acres of forested property can visit the DNR website (mndnr.gov/forestry/resource-assessment/forest-inventory.html) to learn more and enroll.

Priority will be given to areas that currently have fewer landowner enrollments. Signing up does not guarantee the land will be selected for data collection.

Funding for the program includes dollars from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

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Spring Lake, MN 56680 or
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or email: sedgwick@paulbunyan.net

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

UAS program continues to expand at Great River Energy

The uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) program at Great River Energy began in 2018 and has since grown to include 15 systems and 16 qualified operators. The program received a Beyond Visual Line of Sight waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration last spring, which allows GRE to fly its UASs up to 20 miles away.

Andy Regnier, UAS program manager at GRE, said the program has grown exponentially in the past couple of years, with visual inspections being the biggest application. For example, a UAS was used to inspect the static line pins on the Cass Lake to Boswell line substantially faster than someone on the ground could do, which also freed up the line technicians to focus on other core duties.

UAS equipment has also been used in storm response, vegetation management and to capture nameplate data that previously would have required an outage.

"UASs have accelerated the process of capturing missing nameplate details on equipment and has allowed us to identify where we do not have spare parts available," said Tyler Tschimperle, GRE's supervising manager of substation apparatus. "Without the use of this technology, it could take several years to obtain the necessary information to

determine if we have an available spare part."

Mapping substations

Regnier is using UASs to create 2D orthomosaics (similar to Google Earth), 3D mesh models and point clouds of all GRE substations. Capturing data only takes about 15 minutes and, after processing, both vertical and horizontal measurements can be obtained from the models, which is helpful for construction pre-planning and inspection.

"Apparatus has found use in the individual photos because of all the detail," Regnier said. "If they have questions about the specific configuration of a transformer, we can easily look it up now."

Tschimperle said the 3D feature has allowed his team to identify problematic

equipment types in substations without having to physically go there.

The images are detailed enough that we identified an oil leak on the transformer at Bear Creek Substation, avoiding a site visit and an outage just to identify what needs to be repaired," Tschimperle said. "Now, we can get the material and contractors lined up before taking the transformer out of service."

Tschimperle said a site visit can last six hours and include eight employees. That work can be eliminated if a site was mapped by a UAS.

Other UAS uses

When preparing for construction on the 6-mile Cedar Lake Tap reroute project, Regnier flew the proposed route with a UAS so they could see what everything looked like.

"We had a snapshot before construction even began and had all this data in less than a day," he said.

While UAS equipment can be expensive, Regnier said there is often a very quick return on investment because contractors also come at a cost.

"We can likely buy



An uncrewed aircraft system was brought in to inspect loose static line pins substantially faster than someone on the ground could do.



The uncrewed aircraft systems program at GRE captures photos and videos in places with accessibility challenges

the specialized equipment we need to try and tackle these things on our own rather than hire a contractor and do the job for less," Regnier said. "We bought a partial discharge camera last year because it was more cost effective than if we hired someone to do it twice."

Spreading the word

Regnier is trying to spread awareness of the UAS program to encourage other GRE employees to think outside the box about ways it could be helpful in other areas of the business. He said the program exists to support any data capture that is needed.

"That's the most fun thing about this job — trying to find a solution to the problems," Regnier said.

The UAS services are also available to GRE's member-owners and customers. Many of them have their own UAS programs but most are only using them for inspections. GRE's advanced UAS technology sets it apart.

"In many aspects, we are a lot further along than most utilities," Regnier said.

Lakeside Lumber & Hardware

Office 218-832-3300 Cell 425-233-1835

Eric Elhardt
Owner

www.lakesidemarcell.com 49208 State Hwy 38
eric@lakesidemarcell.com Marcell, MN 56657

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