

# NEWSLINE



## MEMBER APPRECIATION OPEN HOUSE

### IT WAS HOLLY AND JOLLY AT ITASCA-MANTRAP

The holiday season was in full effect at Itasca-Mantrap for the Member Appreciation Open House!

We opened our doors for you to come in and have some hot beverages, snacks and a new mug with our new branding on it! If you stopped in on December 8 between 1-3 PM, you had a chance to win one of four gift baskets from participating local co-op connection businesses!

The winner of our giveaway baskets are:

Ortons- Carol Thuleen

Beagle and Wolf Books and Bindery-

Stephany Sundheim

Bella Caffé- Raylene Emmeck

3rd Street Market- Emmett Lingle

Thank you to the nearly 150 members who came in and spent time with us. We hope this holiday season is a special one for you as we usher in the new year!



## CEO UPDATE

BY CHRISTINE FOX, PRESIDENT-CEO

Happy New Year!!

This time of year is perfect for reflection and accounting for the hard work of the Itasca-Mantrap team. As we continue to focus on our mission to serve our members, I'd like to recap a few of our many accomplishments to that end:

- Our Advance Grid Infrastructure project (one of the largest projects we have encountered at Itasca-Mantrap) is entering its final stages. We have installed over 90% of the meters and approximately 25% of the load management receivers. While we did encounter a few issues this past year, we are well on the way to mitigating them.
- We accomplished all the strategic plan initiatives slated for completion in 2023 and are currently starting work on the 2024 projects.
- We were able to keep rates stable in 2023 and anticipate a continuation of this trend in 2024. This is quite the feat when you consider that nearly all our counterparts have increased rates to their customers/members.
- We worked safely and encountered zero recordable accidents in 2023.
- Our Apps and Amps events have been well attended and phenomenally successful. I always enjoy the conversations that are "sparked" at these events. Our members also enjoyed our EV Ride and Drive event and came armed with great questions. Our End of Summer Social event was also well attended. My favorite part was seeing the smiles on the children's faces as they took bucket rides with one of our crew members.
- We have "upped our game" on social media. Follow us on Facebook and X. You will see what I mean.
- We were able to continue our support for our community in many ways including awarding Operation Round-up grants to area non-profits and providing

economic development loans to KLN and KI Developers for the expansion of the Crystal Brook Senior Living facility.

- Despite record inflation, we finished the year with excess margins. Our positive financial results reflect our philosophy of continuous improvement, efficiency, and cost consciousness. As a result, the Board was able to return \$1.3 million of the excess margins to you in the form of a bill credit and was able to defer revenue of \$1.3 million to hedge against future costs. This should put us in great shape through 2024 and beyond.
- Although our suppliers experienced material shortages and long lead times (sometimes up to two years), we held more inventory so we would have enough materials to finish out the year without compromise. We are also well positioned with our current inventory and supplier commitments to complete our 2024 construction work plan.
- We finished all scheduled work plan projects retiring 6.93 miles of overhead primary line and installing 12.5 miles of new underground primary line.
- Through last November, when this article was written, we had installed 117 new services.
- Also through November, our member services department initiated 143 requests for new services, 64 requests for service alterations and 653 requests to transfer services.

Overall, we have been remarkably busy and have had many accomplishments in 2023. I can surmise by saying Itasca-Mantrap had a great year. We certainly hope that you did too.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative was held on Thursday, October 26, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

### Approved:

- Consent agenda
- September financials, subject to audit
- Long-range & Short-range Construction Work plans
- Board Budget for 2024
- Board meeting calendar for 2024
- Director Kivi to attend the NRECA PowerXchange meeting and serve as voting delegate.
- Director Utke to attend the NRECA Director's Conference.
- Director Utke to participate in NRECA training

### Reports heard:

- Operations and Safety report
- Marketing and Member Services report
- Financial report
- CEO report
- Quarterly reports

### Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership
- Operation Round Up – Fall 2023 Disbursements
- GRE Power Cost Adjustment detail for September 2023

### NEXT BOARD MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, January 25, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

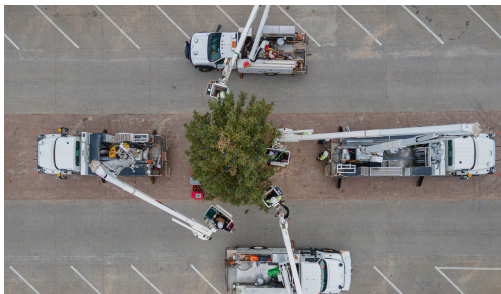
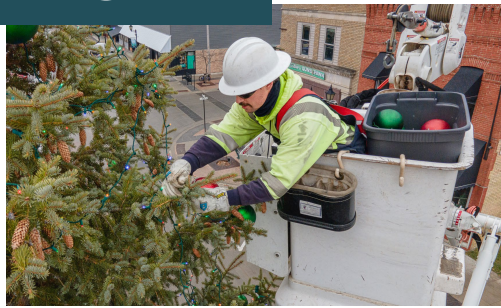
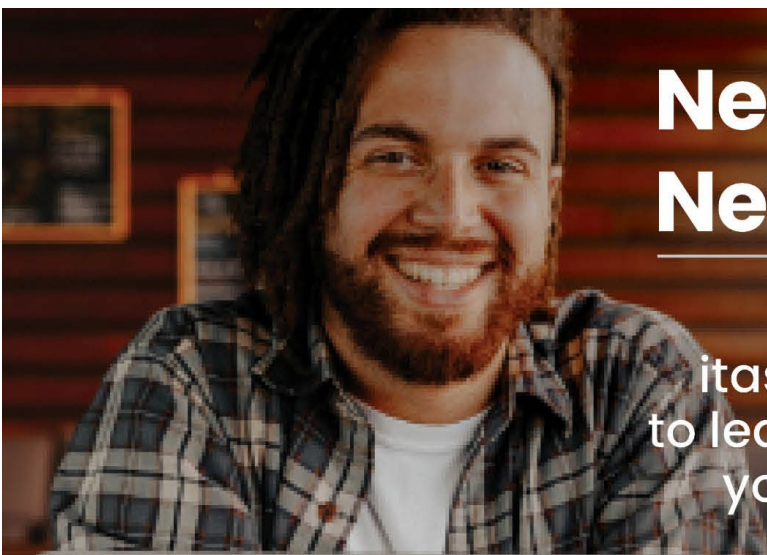


# LIGHTING UP DOWNTOWN


## MERRY AND BRIGHT

Itasca-Mantrap was given the opportunity once again to team up with Minnesota Power and light up the big tree in downtown Park Rapids!

It's thanks to CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care that we are able to work together to brighten up our community during the most wonderful time of the year!

**New Year,  
New Savings.**



Visit our website  
[itasca-mantrap.com/rebates](https://itasca-mantrap.com/rebates)  
to learn about programs to help  
you save energy and money.



# APPS & AMPS

## *OBT Was Energizing*



Apps & Amps took place at OBT in Osage, and the topic of our social event was load management programs and how they operate.

Many of our member-guests were prepared with various questions, and some even seeking to join the program entirely.

And what is an Apps & Amps without some delicious appetizers? Overall, the event was a success, with many of the members enjoying the evening!

Interested in attending our next Apps & Amps? Make sure to stay up-to-date with our socials and newsletter for updates on our next event!

Thank you to everyone who attended, and thank you to OBT for being wonderful hosts for our event.



## The gift of giving back

As we wrap up the holiday season, Itasca-Mantrap has one more gift to give to you, our members.

Despite record inflation, Itasca-Mantrap has maintained a positive financial outlook.

In response to this, the Board of Directors authorized a one-time credit on your bill. Watch for your credit on your January bill.

Thank you for your unwavering support, and happy New Year!





**This could be you!**

**Youth Tour 2024!**

Calling all Itasca-Mantrap Area Sophomores and Juniors!

We are seeking our next Youth Tour delegate for an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C.! Bask in the opportunity to learn about our nation's history and meet various leaders and representatives from Minnesota!

Visit monuments like the World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. See the historic Mount Vernon and explore the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. See all of this and more by applying to be our next Youth Tour delegate!

To qualify, you must be a high school sophomore or junior whose family is a member of Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative. The Youth Tour will take place from June 13-18 and applications are due on March 1, 2024.

You can get an application on our website [itasca-mantrap.com/youth-tour](https://itasca-mantrap.com/youth-tour) or go to your school's counseling center.

Applications must be received by March 1.



2023 Youth Tour winner: Tyler Officer



**TIP OF THE MONTH:  
ENERGY  
EFFICIENCY**

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy





# ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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### OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

(800) 252-1166

www.gopherstateonecall.org

### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

#### DISTRICT 1

Brian Behrens, Chair

#### DISTRICT 2

Patricia Roehl, Director

#### DISTRICT 3

Terrence Cook, Treasurer

#### DISTRICT 4

Al Czczok, Assistant Secretary-  
Treasurer

#### DISTRICT 5

Nancy M. Utke, Director\*

#### DISTRICT 6

Tim Kivi, Secretary

#### DISTRICT 7

Dan Breitbach, Vice Chair

#### PRESIDENT-CEO

Christine Fox

\*Great River Energy Director Representative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative is an  
equal opportunity provider and employer.

## SmartHub Update

The update will affect the website only

SmartHub will be updating its user interface for web users. This update will only impact those who access SmartHub from the website and not those who use the SmartHub app.

The changes to the SmartHub website will occur on January 12 with no action needed. SmartHub will have the same functionality that you have come to know and love.

Your customized settings from the previous version of SmartHub will stay the same in the updated version.



## Itasca-Mantrap Electricity Bill Payment Options

Pay through  
the SmartHub  
app



Setup  
autopay



Pay online  
at our  
website



Mail in  
your  
payment



Pay in  
office



Put your  
payment in  
the drive-up  
drop box

