

# NEWSLINE

## WELCOME TO ITASCA-MANTRAP



## Steven Johnson



### ITASCA-MANTRAP'S NEXT CHAPTER: INTRODUCING OUR NEW CEO

The Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative Board of Directors has hired Steven Johnson as its new President & Chief Executive Officer. Johnson's duties as CEO will begin December 2, 2024. He will be replacing Christine Fox, who is retiring after 10 years with the cooperative. The board's national search resulted in a large number of candidates, and an extensive round of interviews concluded that Johnson was the best person to lead the cooperative forward.

Johnson has been in the electric cooperative industry for over 25 years having served most recently as the CEO for the Yampa Valley Electric Cooperative in Steamboat Springs, CO. Prior to that, he was the Chief Operations Officer for Yampa Valley and the Operations Manager for Meeker Cooperative in Litchfield, Minnesota. Steve became familiar with Itasca-Mantrap through his work for Star Energy in Alexandria, Minnesota. **Cont. on page 2**

## Member Appreciation Open House!

Friday, December 6  
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate another great year in our cooperative history that wouldn't be possible without you!

Register to win door prizes and receive an attendance gift.

## You're invited to a retirement party honoring Christine Fox

Drop in for lunch with Chris:

Friday, December 13

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

@ Itasca-Mantrap

16930 County 6, Park Rapids



ITASCA-MANTRAP  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE





## CEO UPDATE

BY CHRISTINE FOX, PRESIDENT-CEO

As I sit down to write my final Itasca-Mantrap newsletter article, I find myself filled with gratitude. I truly feel blessed to have served as your CEO over these past six years.

At this point, I feel like a high school graduate. While I am looking forward to new adventures, I am reluctant to leave the old and familiar behind. Just as any graduate does, I look at the people I have met along the way and those who have touched my life. I am sad that they will no longer be a part of my everyday life. Yet, my excitement over the future brings comfort and joy.

The members and team members of Itasca-Mantrap have certainly been a high point in a lengthy career. With the common mission of serving our members, the team has exceeded my expectations and, hopefully, yours as well. And the support I have received from all of you has made my job easy.

My final thought is: THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO SERVE YOU!!! – I am truly blessed.

### ITASCA-MANTRAP'S NEXT CHAPTER CONT.

Steve holds a bachelor's degree in natural resources management and policy from the University of Minnesota Crookston. Regarding his appointment as CEO, Steve said, "I'm excited to be joining the team at Itasca-Mantrap and relocating back to my home state of Minnesota. I'm honored to lead this cooperative into the future and honor the cooperative's reputation. I am humbled to carry this legacy forward."

Brian Behrens, Itasca-Mantrap's Board Chair, stated, "we were incredibly pleased to find a candidate with the experience that matched exactly what we were looking for. Steve will be able to not only continue the success we are having now but also lead us into the future. He has the knowledge and experience to be a great CEO for years to come."

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, September 26, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present..

#### Approved:

- Consent agenda
- August financials, subject to audit
- Donation of Unclaimed Capital Credits to the Operation Round Up Trust

#### Reports heard:

- Operations and Safety
- Financial
- Marketing and Member Services
- CEO
- Meetings summaries

#### Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership
- Great River Energy Power Cost Adjustment detail for August 2024
- Administrative Policy 12 – Workweek, Workday, Overtime Compensation
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Governance video

#### NEXT BOARD MEETING:

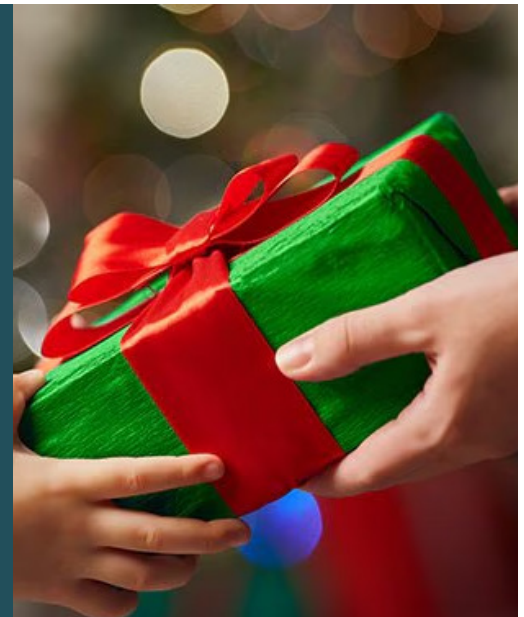
The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.



### TIP OF THE MONTH: **ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

If you're planning to purchase electronic gifts this holiday season, look for the ENERGY STAR® label, which indicates higher energy efficiency performance. Electronics that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating are up to 25% more efficient than standard products. This holiday season, give the gift of energy savings with ENERGY STAR®-rated electronics and equipment.

Source: energystar.gov



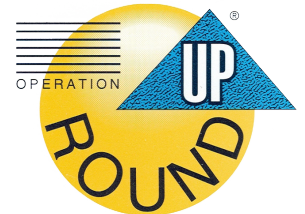
## Operation Round Up Update!

Operation Round Up (ORU), a charitable program unique to electric co-ops, is designed to provide financial assistance to non-profit or community-based organizations that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in the local area served by Itasca-Mantrap.

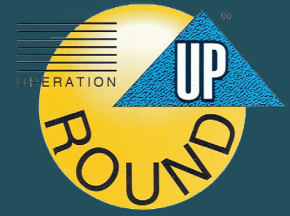
The Itasca-Mantrap Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently awarded \$37,670 in Operation Round Up grants for 72 civic projects in the Itasca-Mantrap and surrounding area. While ORU received applications for more grants, all requests

could not be granted due to limited funding. Since the program's inception in 2006, Operation Round Up has awarded over \$1.3 million to local organizations, thanks to the generosity of Itasca-Mantrap members.

The Operation Round Up Trust Board meets twice a year to select grant recipients from the applications received. The next application deadline is Monday, March 17, 2025. To apply, download the most recent application from the Itasca-Mantrap website.



# Fall 2024 Operation Round Up grant recipients!



Akeley Lion's Club.....	\$ 200	Math Manipulatives for Fifth Grade.....	300
Akeley Regional Community Center Emergency Shelter (ARCCES).....	1000	Classroom Social Emotional Support Library.....	300
Carsonville Fire & Rescue.....	1000	Math Manipulatives for the Classroom.....	300
Hackensack Area Fire Rescue Dept.....	500	Sensory Seating.....	500
Heartland Homes, Options in Community Living LLC.....	350	Indigenous Student Book Club.....	250
Helping Hands through Century PTA.....	1000	Middle School Book Club.....	200
Hubbard County Historical Society.....	300	Classroom Art, Reading & Snack Supplies.....	300
Kinship of the Park Rapids Area.....	500	Softball Program Sound System.....	200
Let's Go Fishing - Headwaters Chapter.....	750	Early Literacy Crates.....	350
Living at Home of the Park Rapids Area.....	1000	Life Skills - Cooking in the Classroom.....	150
Lutheran Social Service Hubbard Meals.....	500	Special Olympics - Leisure & Recreation Skills.....	150
Lutheran Social Service Menahga Meals.....	1500	Tactile Science Learning.....	700
Mantrap Valley Conservation Club.....	400	PBIS.....	150
Nevis Tigers PTA.....	300	<b>Park Rapids Area Schools</b>	
Northern Minnesota Robotics Conf. (NMRC).....	300	Second Grade - Snow Shoes.....	120
Park Rapids Amateur Hockey Association.....	500	Spread Kindness 2.0.....	500
Park Rapids Amateur Hockey Association.....	500	Equipping English Language Learners for Success!.....	350
Park Rapids Area Gymnastics.....	800	Back to School Joy.....	200
Park Rapids Fire Department.....	1000	Indian Education Program.....	300
Park Rapids Post Prom.....	700	Park Rapids ALC - Accessing the Community.....	500
Park Rapids Volleyball Program.....	500	Park Rapids ALC - Cooking Matters.....	200
Park Rapids Water Ski Team.....	400	Standing Desks.....	300
United Way of Bemidji Imagination Library.....	500	Business Professionals of America.....	500
Walker Bay Theater.....	300	HS Girls Basketball Program.....	500
Walker Youth Hockey.....	500	Physical Education Equipment.....	750
<b>Heartland Lakes Community School</b>		Physical Education Equipment Renewal.....	750
Outdoor Classroom Tools.....	250	Band Instrument Replacement Project.....	3,420
Birding Station for the Kindergarten Class.....	135	Early Childhood Sensory Room.....	500
Unlocking Creativity: RIWI Building Blocks.....	400	Sensory Playground Equipment.....	500
<b>Nevis Public Schools</b>		Georgia O'Keefe Watercolor Flowers.....	750
3102 Nevis Tech No Tigers.....	400	Sensory Break.....	150
Classroom Library.....	400	<b>Pine Point School</b>	
Hope Squad.....	500	English and Ojibwe Vocab Enrichment.....	750
Math Manipulatives for the Classroom.....	500	Art in the Classroom!.....	450
Decodeable Books Lending Library.....	500	Reading and Math Initiative.....	750
Flexible Seating 3rd Grade.....	500	Mrs. Novak's Classroom Library.....	600
Classroom Social Emotional Support Library.....	695	Kids Closet.....	650
Flexible Classroom Seating.....	350	Goals and How to Make Them Happen.....	400
		<b>Total:</b> .....	<b>\$37,670</b>



## Season's Greetings from Itasca-Mantrap!

*Wishing you a bright and wonderful 2025.*

### Team Member Update!

We would like to announce that Clay Eberhart has completed the Minnesota Rural Electric Association Lineworker Apprenticeship program and was promoted to Journeyman Lineworker!

We asked Clay about his time at Itasca-Mantrap and this is what he had to say: "My time here at Itasca-Mantrap has been a very enjoyable experience. Having opportunities to serve my community is a fulfilling experience.

Earning my Journeyman Certification feels good, however, I feel like I am only scratching the surface as I have a lot to learn still. But I am excited to progress my career with Itasca-Mantrap.

To our membership, the whole crew is dedicated to you. Whether it is a call to turn your power on or installing a service, we will be there for you and that is what I enjoy most about being part of this team."

Clay graduated from Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Wadena with an Electrical Line Worker Technology degree as well as Saint Cloud State University with a degree in Field Biology and Ecology.





# ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

16930 County 6, PO Box 192  
Park Rapids, MN 56470

(218) 732-3377 | (888) 713-3377  
itasca@itasca-mantrap.com  
www.itasca-mantrap.com



### 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, Treasurer

#### DISTRICT 3

Terrence Cook, Vice Chair

#### DISTRICT 4

Al Czczok, Assistant Secretary-  
Treasurer

#### DISTRICT 5

Nancy M. Utke, Director\*

#### DISTRICT 6

Tim Kivi, Secretary

#### DISTRICT 7

Dan Breitbach, Director

#### PRESIDENT-CEO

Christine Fox

\*Great River Energy Director Representative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

# Happy Holidays!



## Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Our office will be closed  
Tuesday, Dec. 24 | Noon-4:30 P.M.

Wednesday, Dec. 25 | All Day

Tuesday, Dec. 31 | Noon-4:30 P.M.

Wednesday, Jan. 1 | All Day

**Attention: Area Sophomores & Juniors  
Application Pool is now open!**

# Seeking Youth Tour '25 applicants!

Win an  
all-expenses-paid  
trip

Visit our website  
[itasca-mantrap.com/  
youth-tour](http://itasca-mantrap.com/youth-tour)  
to apply today!

