



NEWSLINE



December 2022

Apps & Amps at Stompin' Grounds

Itasca-Mantrap hosted 31 members at Stompin' Grounds during our Apps & Amps event on Thursday, October 20. Attendees enjoyed an evening of mingling, socializing, appetizers, and getting their questions answered by Itasca-Mantrap team members and board members. Load management was the main topic of the evening, but there were conversations about Itasca-Mantrap in general as well.

Thank you to everyone who came out and enjoyed an evening of socializing with us!



Member Appreciation Open House

Friday, December 9
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate YOU!

Register to win door prizes
Receive an attendance gift

Salvation Army will be
available for donations.



CEO Update - *By Christine Fox, President-CEO*

As the holidays draw near, we find ourselves busy with the hustle and bustle that comes with the season. This is true for Itasca-Mantrap

as well. This time of year is teeming with planning and preparing for the future. It all starts with our strategic plan which provides a general roadmap for the next three to five years.

With the intent of updating our 2018 strategic plan, Itasca-Mantrap hosted several strategic planning sessions in 2022. Our finalized plan has five objectives:

1. **Safety:** Everyone works safe, no one gets hurt.
2. **Member Communication and Education:** Further our reputation as a recognized trusted energy advisor. To power our community and empower our members.
3. **Technology:** Implement and utilize proven technologies that add value and move the cooperative forward.
4. **Team Members:** Foster an environment that attracts and retains exemplary Team Members. Promote a culture of mutual respect and trust through open and honest communication. Provide opportunities for Team Members to do their best through clear direction, education, training, cross-functional learning, and teamwork.

5. **Positioning for the Future:** Ensure the ongoing viability and value of the cooperative.

For each of these objectives, we developed several specific and measurable initiatives.

The strategic plan is the guiding tool for our work plan, capital plan, marketing plan and finally, our budget.

The work plan is developed by our engineer with input from our operations team. This winter, we will establish long range (ten-year) and short range (three-year) plans. These plans will determine our summer construction projects and identify any substation upgrades/additions that need to be done.

Our capital plan is typically short-term (one year). However, with the long lead times we have been experiencing lately, we must plan beyond one year. The capital plan identifies the capital investment needed to accomplish the work plan and the strategic plan. The amount earmarked for capital investment for the year not only affects the budget by increasing depreciation expense but also cash management. The amount invested in capital will determine if and when we will need to borrow, creating another impact to the budget in the form of interest expense.

The annual marketing plan encompasses everything we do to promote Itasca-Mantrap and engage our members. Marketing initiatives in the strategic plan are included in the Marketing plan.

All these plans – work plans, capital plan, marketing plan – are then synthesized into an annual budget. Preparing the 2023 budget has been particularly challenging. The inflation figures we see in the headlines (seems like every day) have reached your cooperative. We have seen significant increases on all construction materials – up to 100 percent for some items. And just recently, we learned our wholesale power cost will increase six and a half percent. Wholesale power makes up 65 percent of our costs. The impact of this increase will have a significant effect on our budget. But, even with that news, we have reasons to be optimistic. Our kilowatt hour sales in 2022 increased over 30 percent giving us more revenue to offset fixed costs. We are still putting together the 2023 budget but remain tentatively hopeful that we will be able to keep rates flat.

Finally, the planning process requires a great deal of collaboration on the part of the Itasca-Mantrap team. I would be remiss if I did not give a shout out to them. They are top notch!!

Thank you for allowing me to serve you!!

Red Flags Rule - For your Protection

As many as nine million Americans have their identities stolen each year. As a result, the Federal Trade Commission implemented a regulation called the "Red Flags Rule." The Red Flags Rule requires businesses to develop a program to detect, prevent and minimize the damage that could result from identity theft.

As an Itasca-Mantrap Member, you may be asked to provide additional information and identification when you make inquiries on your account, such as verifying the last four digits of your social security number. While these practices may seem intrusive, please understand that these procedures are in place to protect your Member data and prevent the occurrence of identity theft.

Operation Round Up® Awards \$58,280

Thanks to the generosity of Itasca-Mantrap Members, the Itasca-Mantrap Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently awarded \$58,280 in Operation Round Up grants for 78 civic projects in the Itasca-Mantrap and surrounding area.

Operation Round Up, a charitable program unique to electric co-ops, provides 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.

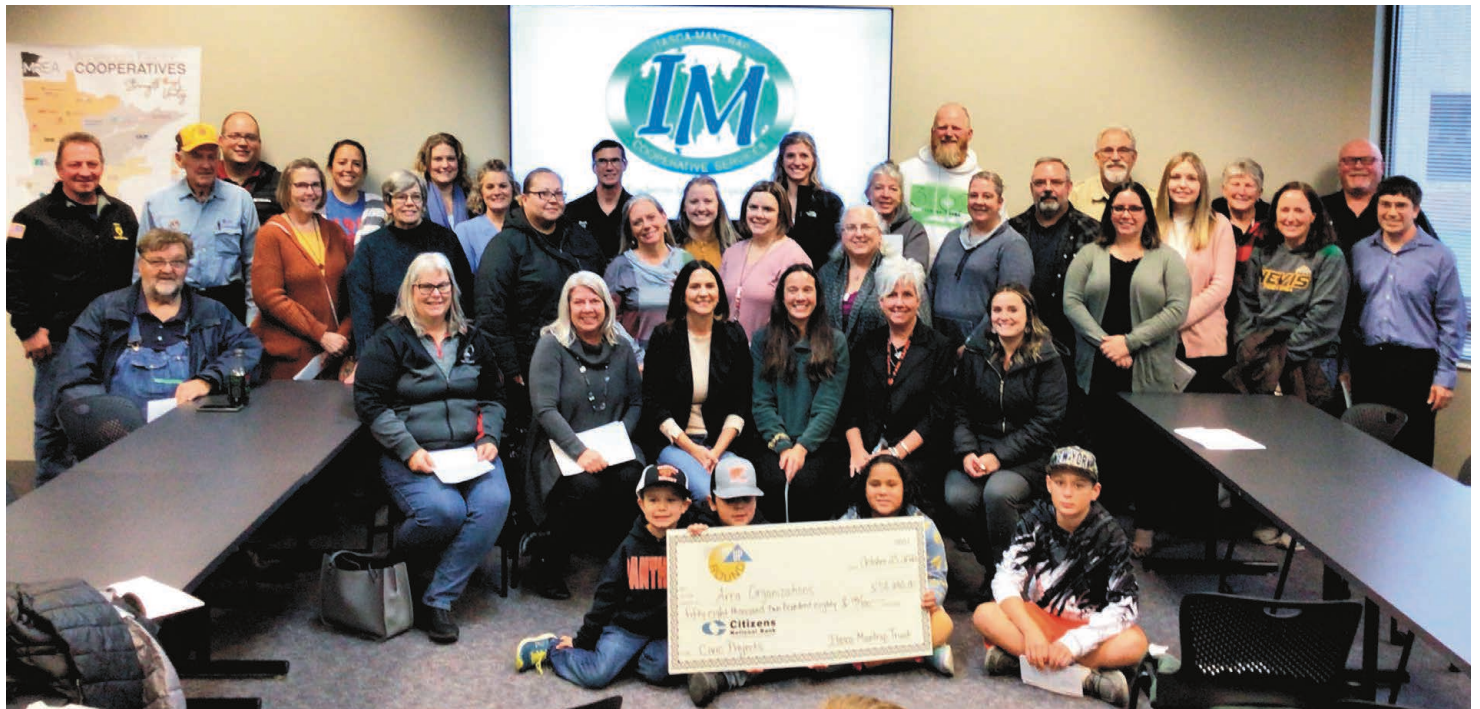
The Operation Round Up Trust Board meets twice a year to select grant recipients, based on applications received. The next application deadline is Wednesday, March 15, 2023. Official grant application forms are available at the Itasca-Mantrap office and at www.itsca-mantrap.com.



Akeley Lions' Club	\$ 400	Nevis Public School	
Central Minnesota Council - Boy Scouts of America	750	American Indian Art Club	400
Faith in Action for Cass County	1,000	American Indian Program	425
Forward Foundation	1,000	Community Education	400
Hackensack Area Fire Rescue Dept	1,600	Middle School Book Club	300
Hackensack Lions Club	2,000	Physical Education: Lacrosse	500
Helping Hands through Century PTA	1,000	Robotics Team 3102	500
Honoring Choices MN of Park Rapids, Walker, and Surrounding Communities	1,000	School Wellness	300
Kinship of the Park Rapids Area	1,500	Special Education Classroom (9th & 10th Grade)	300
Let's Go Fishing-Headwaters Chapter	500	Special Olympics	300
Living at Home of the Park Rapids Area	1,500	Table tennis versions cross curricular	400
Lutheran Social Service Meals – Hubbard County	1,500	Tiger Time	400
Lutheran Social Service Meals – Menahga	1,500	Northwest Service Cooperative	1,250
Mantrap Valley Conservation Club	350	Osage Bait & Tackle Senior Nutrition Meals	2,000
Menahga High School		Park Rapids Amateur Hockey Association	500
CTE Program	480	Park Rapids Area Gymnastics	500
Robotics	1,000	Park Rapids Area High School:	
Nevis Baseball	300	Alternative Learning Center: Driving Permits	600
Nevis Class of 2023	1,000	Alternative Learning Center: Cooking Matters	500
Nevis Elementary		Alternative Learning Center: Parenting Solutions for Students	450
Early Reading Intervention & Support	920	Business Professionals of America	500
Exploring Science in the Classroom	500	Business Program	200
Hands On Science	500	Indian Education Program	600
Kindergarten Flexible Seating	750	Post Prom	1,500
Go-Zen Social Emotional Learning	400	Speech Team	1,000
Social Emotional Learning Across Settings	400	Park Rapids Area Schools	
Sensory Integration/Early Intervention & Support	300	Century PTA	300
Nevis High School		Volleyball Program	600
English Classroom Library	500	Park Rapids Boys Basketball Booster Club	250
Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)	300	Park Rapids Century Elementary School:	
Robotics	500	2nd Grade Healthy Food Café	250
		Art Supplies	200

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Classroom Flexible Seating	300	Pine Point School	
Classroom Supplies, Rewards, and Decorations	300	Flexible Seating for Pine Point 5th and 6th grade	1,000
EBD Program – Sensory	425	Leveled Literacy Black and White Books	750
EBD Program – Technology	210	Pine Point Win Program	1,000
Picnic Table for Elementary Playground	500	Reading/Math Intervention	1,000
Positive Reinforcement	300	Second Step Elementary Social-Emotional Curriculum	3,420
Snowshoes for Learning	500	STEM and STEAM	1,500
Update and Replace Toys in Kindergarten	300	Region 6 Business Professionals of America (North part of state)	200
Park Rapids Century Middle School:		True Friends	750
8th grade Team Building retreat at C4 Character Challenge Course	500	United Way of Bemidji Area	1,000
Bands - Instrument Replacement Project	1,200	Voyageurs Area Council - Boy Scouts of America	750
When Kids Win, We all Win	500		
Park Rapids Fire Department	3,000		
		TOTAL	\$58,280



Pictured Above: Fall 2022 Operation Round Up (ORU) Recipients.

Pictured to the Right: ORU Board.

Top Row (L-R): Ron Ahmann, Rhonda Lageson, Jennifer Magnussen, Carol Winskowski

Bottom Row (L-R): Al Judson, Richard Magaard, Christine Longfors



Board Report: Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, September 29, 2022, 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 abandoned capital credits to the Operation Round Up Trust fund
- Revisions to Board Policy 2.50, Conflicts of Interest, and the rescission of Board Policy 4.40, Conduct and Conflicts of Interest.

Reports Heard:

- Operations and Safety report
- Marketing and Member Services report
- CEO report
- Directors and CEO Fox reported on meetings attended on behalf of the Cooperative

Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership
- Great River Energy PCA detail for August 2022
- 2021 Form 990, 990-T and Minnesota Unrelated Business Income tax returns
- Governance Talk video on the Board's Role in Safety

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, December 22, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Five Ways to Fight the Winter Chill & Save Energy

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Itasca-Mantrap is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. Mind the thermostat. This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to overheat your home when you're away.



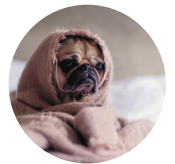
2. Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24-40 percent of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3. Use window coverings wisely. Open your curtains during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.



4. Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

5. Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.



If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see major increases in your bills, give us a call at (218)732-3377. We can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at itasca-mantrap.com for additional energy-saving tips.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in your ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form.

Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: energy.gov



Source: energy.gov

Team Member News

Itasca-Mantrap welcomes Jessa Guggisberg!

Jessa joined Itasca-Mantrap in October as a Member Service Representative. Jessa came to us from the management team at a local restaurant. Her customer service experience and attention to detail have already made her a great addition to our team.

Please welcome Jessa to the Itasca-Mantrap team!



MERRY CHRISTMAS & A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Our Office will be Closed

Friday, Dec. 23 | Noon - 4:30 PM

Monday, Dec. 26 | All Day

Friday, Dec. 30 | Noon - 4:30 PM

Monday, Jan. 2 | All Day

ITASCA-MANTRAP COOPERATIVE

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

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Phone: 218-732-3377 or 888-713-3377
Fax: 218-732-5890
E-mail: itasca@itasca-mantrap.com
www.itasca-mantrap.com



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