ALWAYS FREE!

# FRESHWATER REPORTER

Fresh community stories from Manistee, Mason, southern Benzie, western Lake and Wexford. Online at: freshwater-reporter.com.

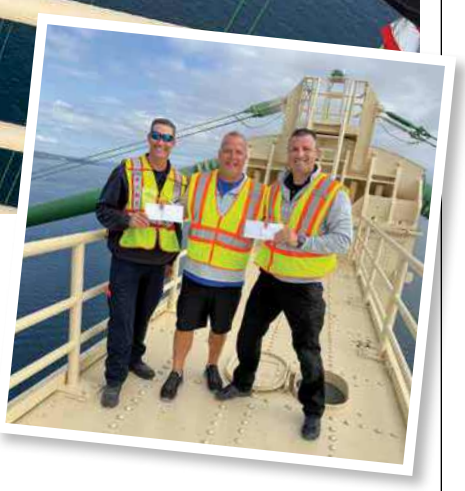
Vol VIII, No. 7 freshwater-reporter.com JULY 2026

**JULY CALENDAR OF EVENTS INSIDE**

*A view from the top*

## Bridging a gap for first responders

Story by **AMY HANSEN**.
Photos by **ERIC HANSEN**.



*Above: Eric Hansen's selfie from the top of the Mackinac Bridge, with the M/V Stewart J. Cort, the only 1,000-foot freighter with the pilot house forward. Right: Eric Hansen presents checks to Mackinaw City Fire Chief John Krueger (left) and St. Ignace Fire Chief Nick Montie (right). The Mackinac Bridge Swim donated $50,000 to each fire department in 2025.*

Arguably, the most breathtaking view in Michigan is found at the top of the Mackinac Bridge. From this lofty perch — suspended high above the four-mile-wide strait, at the exact spot where Lake Michigan meets Lake Huron — an extraordinary panorama unfolds. The Upper and Lower peninsulas stretch out on either side, connected by the iconic green suspension bridge with its ivory towers. Mackinac Island, crowned by its historic fort, rises from the straits alongside several smaller islands. This 360-degree view captures the beauty and scale of the Great Lakes region.

Each year approximately four million vehicles cross the steel-and-concrete bridge. Freighters, ferries and various watercraft travel under the bridge, and a few hundred athletes swim alongside it. Tens of thousands walk across the Mighty Mac each year. Yet few people ever get to experience the western hemisphere's longest suspension bridge from its 550-foot-high vantage point.

"I was in disbelief," said Eric Hansen, splash director of the Mackinac Bridge Swim. "It's the most beautiful view I've ever seen. It didn't feel real to see the Upper Peninsula, Lower Peninsula and Mackinac Island all at once."

Hansen oversees the all-volunteer Mackinac Bridge Swim crew each summer as it guides swimmers across the straits. The swim raises funds for the area's first responders, a mostly volunteer crew themselves. Mackinaw City Fire Chief John Krueger, St. Ignace Fire Chief Nick Montie, and Bryce Tracy, director of the Mackinac County 9-1-1 Emergency Management Office, surprised an emotional Hansen last year with a coveted trip to the top of the Mighty Mac — allowing him to scratch off his No.1 bucket-list item.

"Most people have no clue there's another world beneath the Mackinac Bridge," mused Hansen, who spends a lot of time in waves far below the iconic structure. "If you think the bridge looks big and long from your vehicle, imagine how immense it is looking up from the water. It's HUGE. Then seeing the bridge looking down from the top is hard to put into words."

At the base of one of the towers, Hansen squeezed himself through an impossibly small hatch, then boarded the bridge's original elevator for a 7- to 10-minute

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*Lila and Ron. Photo: Sarah Kuschell.*

## Every dog knows a morning walk is best

By **RON SCHMIDT**

"Wake up, wake up, it's a brand-new day. Time for a morning walk," is what I'm sure my dog, Lila, is saying as she climbs on top of me and licks my ear. I get out of bed and slowly start moving. I get dressed and head to the bathroom, replaying the words of my new favorite song in my head, as I usually do on awakening. Today's song is "Girl and her Dog" sung by Mary Chapin Carpenter.

The first morning walk is the best of the day. The dew is on the grass and all the odors from the night before are sharp to our noses. I am aware of fragrances of plants and blooming flowers, but Lila notices hundreds more. Scientists estimate that a typical dog's nose is 100 thousand to a million times more sensitive than a human's, so there are only a few things that get a dog's tail wagging more than morning smells. I wish I had a dog's superior sense of smell, at least for a little while.

We do not move very fast on this first walk. There are so many stops needed along the way to sniff intensely at the footprints from animals that have been out and about during the night. I know there have been deer in the yard nibbling the grass. Chipmunks, rabbits and squirrels have eaten the sunflower seeds that fall on the ground from my bird feeders and they occasionally raid my green beans. For Lila, there are also scents of many species of birds, sometimes wild turkeys, grazing under the feeders. When I hear our neighborhood gray fox barking

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## Idlewild's Black Eden Brews, 'where coffee and community jive'

By **KEVIN HOWELL**

Opening day for Black Eden Brews was still several weeks away when I stopped by the seasonal Idlewild coffee shop for a visit with Owner and Manager Nicolena Stubbs. The coffee-and-breakfast restaurant is entering its third year, and Stubbs and her crew, Chef Lauren Johnson and all-around helper Zavier Inniss, were cleaning and refreshing the shop after its winter closure.

Stubbs explained that the coffee shop began as a tease among friends.

"I'm an early riser and I'm a coffee fanatic. My nickname is Cocoa, so the joke for friends and neighbors is asking if Cocoa's 'coffee shop' is open, meaning you can pop over (to my residence) at some ridiculous hour in the morning for a cup of coffee," Stubbs said with a ready grin.

The joke about Stubbs' coffee shop became real when friends Blair Evans and Susan Mateus offered Stubbs a space at Morton's Motel. The motel is located east of Baldwin in the middle of Idlewild — a once-thriving Black resort community taking steps to return to its former vibrancy. The coffee bar/restaurant is part of the 16-room historic motel listed in the former "Negro

*(From left) Artist Tabitha "Tab" Rasul, Black Eden Brews Owner/Manager Nicolena Stubbs and an unidentified art lover at the "Lakes and Sacred Places" art opening. Photo courtesy of Nicolena Stubbs.*

Motorist Green Book," updated annually from 1936-66 by Victor Hugo Green. The book was a directory of safe places to travel and stay for Black people during the Jim Crow era of discrimination and segregation.

### Reclaiming the history and energy

Idlewild's residents and summer folk are currently building on their community's cultural past, renovating structures and offering lively activities at its popular beach and lakes. Stubbs and friends Evans and Mateus are board members of the Lake County Merrymakers, a 501(c)(3) organization that works to bring attention to and rejuvenate the area by investing in cultural and community events.

"Now they're working towards teaching people about solidarity in economy and teaching about being a self-sustaining community," Stubbs explained.

Evans and Mateus are also part of the Historic Idlewild Preservation Society (HIPS) which includes other Idlewilders. Evans said in 2011 families pooled their private monies and purchased the motel, which had been in a bank foreclosure with a previous owner who lost possession. HIPS resumed motel operations.

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# Area Events Calendar

**TELL THEM YOU SAW IT IN THE FRESHWATER REPORTER!**

**To be included in our August print edition, submit your announcements by July 18.** Be sure to include the address where the event takes place, for visiting readers. Email your events/press releases to: editor@freshwater-reporter.com. Email any time for our online calendar. Always check with the venue before attending as some event dates may change or be canceled. Despite our best efforts, errors may occur.

## FARMERS MARKETS

**Mondays**

**Scottville Farmers Market**
10am-3pm, Thru mid-September. Every other Monday in West Shore Bank parking lot, 107 W. State St. & along Main Street.

**Honey Bee Market, Beulah**
12-7pm. Thru September 7. A selection of arts, crafts, handmade goods, & homemade health & wellness products & more. On the lawn at St. Ambrose Cellars, 841 S Pioneer Rd.

**Tuesdays**

**Honor Farmers Market**
9am-2pm. Thru August 25. Maley Park, 10579 Main St. (US-31)

**Wednesdays**

**Baldwin's Pure Markette**
3-6pm. Thru September 2. Parking lot behind Jones' Ice Cream, 858 Michigan Ave.

**Thursdays**

**Elberta Farmers Market**
8am-12pm. Thru October 1. Penfold Park, 1098 Lakeside Blvd.

**Fridays**

**Ludington Artisan/Farmers Market**
2-7pm. Thru September 18. Legacy Plaza Pavilion, 112 N James St.

**Saturdays**

**Cadillac Farmers Market**
9am-1pm. July 11 – September. 11978 W Watergate Rd.

**Frankfort Farmers Market**
9am-1pm. Thru October 31. Open Space Park, 800 Main St.

**Manistee Farmers Market**
9am-12pm. Thru October 4. Wagoner Community Center, 260 Saint Mary's Pkwy.

## MUSIC SERIES

**Mondays**

**Concerts in the Park, Onekama**
7-9pm. Free/donations. Thru August 10. Onekama Village Park, 4701 Main St. Rain site: Onekama Schools cafeteria, 5016 Main St. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 6** Schrock Brothers
**July 13** Great Lakes Brass
**July 20** Ashley Wineland
**July 27** Roger That

**Jammin' Mondays on Betsie Bay, Elberta**
7-9:15pm. Free/donations. Thru August 31. Waterfront Amphitheater, Elberta Waterfront Park, 1074 State Hwy. 168. Rain site: Waterfront Park Picnic Pavilion. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 6** The Schleppinbop Kids
**July 13** East Bay Drive
**July 20** The Seth Bernard Quartet
**July 27** The Mighty Thundertones

**The...Clam Lake...Silver Cornet Band, Cadillac**
7pm. Free/donations. Volunteer concert band. Rotary Pavilion, 100 S Lake St. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 6, 13, 20, 27**

**Tuesdays**

**Shoreline Showcase, Manistee**
7-9:15pm, Free/donations. Thru September 1. Rotary Gazebo, First St. Beach, Douglas Park, 100 S Lakeshore Dr. Rain Site: Orchard Beach State Park Shelter House, 2064 Lakeshore Rd. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 7** The Schleppinbop Kids
**July 14** East Bay Drive
**July 21** The Seth Bernard Quartet
**July 28** The Mighty Thundertones

**Friends of Ludington State Park Summer Series, Ludington**
7pm, Free/donations. Amphitheater, Ludington State Park, 8800 West M-116. Bring lawn chair/blanket/bug spray. Rain Venue: Lake Michigan Beach House. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry.
**July 7** Nick Veine
**July 14** Birds of Prey at the Nature Discovery Center
**July 21** Pinter Whitnick
**July 28** Ravon "Steely" Rhoden

**Wednesdays**

**Echo Through the Timber Concert Series, Baldwin**
7-9:15pm. Free/donations. Thru September 2. Wenger Pavilion, 876 Michigan Ave. (behind Jones' Ice Cream). Rain or shine. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 1** Truck Driver Bingo
**July 8** The Greg Nagy Band
**July 15** Northwestern Michigan College Community Big Band
**July 22** Mustang Band
**July 29** Roger That

**LACA Summer Concert Series, Ludington**
7-9pm, Free/donation. Thru early September. Waterfront Park, 1122 S William St. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 1** Rodney Whitaker Ensemble
**July 8** The Schleppinbop Kids
**July 15** East Bay Drive
**July 22** The Seth Bernard Quartet
**July 29** The Fabulous Horndogs

**Thursdays**

**Live in the Plaza Music Series, Ludington**
6-8pm, Free/donations. Thru September 17. Legacy Plaza, 112 N James St. Bring lawn chair.
**July 2** Pocket Change
**July 9** Tim Krause
**July 16** Meg Gunia
**July 23** Jimmy Dodson
**July 30** Third Coast Swing

**Music in the Streets, Beulah**
7-8:30pm. Free/donations. Thru August 13th. Downtown, 273 S Benzie Blvd. Bring lawn chair.
**July 2** Tim Jones & the Up North Get Down
**July 9** Jabo Bihlman
**July 16** Manitou Trucking Company (Grateful Dead tribute)
**July 23** Dig a Pony (Beatles tribute)
**July 30** Bill Frary & The Frequency

**Roots on the River music series, Manistee**
7-9pm. Free/donations. July 9 - August 6. Jaycees riverfront bandshell at Veterans Memorial Park, 117 Memorial Dr. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 9** Eric Engblade
**July 16** Justin Wierenga
**July 23** Serita's Black Rose
**July 30** Jack M. Senff and the Heartland Mission

**Summer Sounds Music Series, Thompsonville**
7-9pm, $15 ADV, $20 DOS, 15 & under Free. ¼ mile hike to amphitheater. Bring a chair pad/lawn chair/blanket. Michigan Legacy Art Park, Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr. Rain site: inside the resort. Tickets: **https://tinyurl.com/53sxyedy**
**July 2** Elizabeth Landry Trio
**July 9** Blue Water Ramblers
**July 16** Full Tilt Comedy
**July 23** Rebekah Jon

**Sunset Beach Bonfire Series, Ludington**
8-10pm, Free/donations. Bonfire & music. Stearns Park Beach, 420 N Lakeshore Dr. Bring chair/blanket.
**July 30** Ravon – vocals & steel drum

**Upbeat Cadillac Music Series, Cadillac**
7-9:15pm. Free/donations. Thru Aug. 27. Rotary Performing Arts Pavilion, 100 S Lake St. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 2** Rodney Whitaker Group
**July 9** The Schleppinbop Kids
**July 16** East Bay Drive
**July 23** The Seth Bernard Quartet
**July 30** the Fabulous Horndogs

**Fridays**

**Live in the Plaza Music Series, Ludington**
6-8pm, Free/donations. Thru September 18. Legacy Plaza, 112 N James St. Bring lawn chair.
**July 3** American Ages Band
**July 10** Justin Wierenga
**July 17** Twyce the Band
**July 24** Ravon
**July 31** Bent Carrot

**Folk Fridays Music Series, Baldwin**
7pm. Free/donations. July 31 - August 21. Lake County Historical Museum, 915 N Michigan Ave. Bring lawn chair.
**July 31** Chris Vallillo "Power of Song in Democracy"

**Live at the Garden Summer Concert Series, Frankfort**
7:30pm. $25. The Garden Theater, 301 Main St. Tickets: **https://tinyurl.com/3dn45jcz**
**July 10** Mason Via

OLIVER ART CENTER FRANKFORT
COASTAL CARAVAN ART FAIR
JULY 25TH 10AM - 4PM
UNIQUE MICHIGAN ARTISTS' BOOTHS
OAC BLOODY MARY BAR
LIVE MUSIC by:
THE NEPHEWS @ 11am
CHRIS SKELLENGER @ 1pm
RED TOP HOT DOGS FOOD TRUCK
KIDS' ART TENT · CERAMICS DEMOS · OPEN HOUSE
AT THE END OF 2ND STREET IN FRANKFORT
MUSIC, ART, AND FUN ON THE SHORES OF BETSIE BAY
132 COAST GUARD RD, FRANKFORT - OLIVERART.ORG

**Saturdays**

**Sounds from the Forest Music Series, Baldwin**
7-9:15pm. Free/donations. Thru August 5. Wenger Pavilion, 876 Michigan Ave. (behind Jones' Ice Cream). Rain or shine. Bring lawn chair/blanket.
**July 4** Rodney Whitaker Group
**July 11** The Schleppinbop Kids
**July 18** East Bay Drive
**July 25** The Seth Bernard Quartet

**Friends of Ludington State Park Summer Series, Ludington**
7pm, Free/donations. Amphitheater, Ludington State Park, 8800 West M-116. Bring lawn chair/blanket/bug spray. Rain venue: Lake Mich Beach House. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry.
**July 11** Salt City Dixie Jazz Band
**July 18** Rin Tarsy
**July 25** Nimkee-Mukwa Anishinaabe drummers & dancers

## ONGOING EVENTS

**Thru July 10**

**Summer Member Art Exhibition, Frankfort**
Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Opening reception June 6, 5-7pm.

**Thru July 24**

**Saved from the Bin Art Exhibition, Manistee**
Free. Artworks made from recycled/upcycled materials. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St.

**Thru July 31**

**Jubilee! Ode to the Michigan Cherry, Frankfort**
Free. Art exhibition celebrating all things cherry. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

**Thru Sep 11**

**Summer Art Show, Arcadia**
Free. Arcadia Community Center, 3586 Glovers Lake Rd.

**July 10-31**

**Abstract & Nature Art Exhibition, Ludington**
Free. A retrospective by Julie Strabel. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St. Opening reception July 10, 4-7pm.

**Seasons of the Pond Art Exhibition, Ludington**
Free. Works by Judy Peters. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St. Reception July 10, 4-7pm.

**July 11-Aug 7**

**Local Critters Art Exhibition, Frankfort**
Free. Works by Patrick Clagett. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

**July 18-Aug 14**

**Woods, Waves, Ways: A Local Artist Paints the Ludington State Park, Ludington**
Free. Pastel paintings by Marie Marfia. Timeless Picture Framing and Gallery, 103 E Ludington Ave. Opening reception Sat., July 18, 4-7 p.m.

**July 18-Aug 21**

**Nancy Foster Retrospective Art Exhibition, Frankfort**
Free. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Opening reception Sat., July 18, 5-7pm.

**July 23, 25** @ 7pm.
**30, Aug 1** @ 1 & 7pm.
**Lakeside Shakespeare Festival: "A Midsummer Night's Dream", Frankfort**
Pay-what-you-can tickets. Suggested prices: $30/adults, $10/12 & under at event. Pro actors from Chicago. Tank Hill, 188 Park Ave. Parking avail far side of Park Ave. & at St. Ann's Catholic Church. No parking along dirt road leading to/at performance space. No turnaround. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

**July 24, 26** @ 7pm.
**July 29, 31** @ 1 & 7pm.
**Lakeside Shakespeare Festival presents "MacBeth", Frankfort**
Pay-what-you-can tickets. Suggested prices: $30/adults, $10/12 & under at event. Pro actors from Chicago. Tank Hill, 188 Park Ave. Parking avail far side of Park Ave. & at St. Ann's Catholic Church. No parking along dirt road leading to/at performance space. No turnaround. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

**July 5, 12, 19, 26**

**Idlewild Float the Lake Sundays, Idlewild**
1pm. Free. Join the local community to float the lake in canoes, kayaks, row boats, weather permitting. Idlewild Lake.

## DAILY EVENTS

**July 1-4**

**Fourth of July Medallion Hunt, Frankfort**
Find a single, custom medallion somewhere in the Frankfort city limits & win $150 cash. New clue posted at 10am at the Chamber Office, 1311 Forest Ave. (July 1–4). Follow clues & be the 1st to find the medallion.

**July 1-5**

**90th Annual Manistee National Forest Festival, Manistee**
Parade, arts and crafts, carnival rides, vendor marketplace, kids talent show, food, fireworks, more. Info/schedule: **manisteeforestfestival.com**

**July 2**

**Food Pantry, Bear Lake**
9-11am. Eligibility: Must need emergency food, participate in income-based programs (like SNAP, WIC, or CSFP), or fall below the federal poverty level. Bear Lake United Methodist Church, 7861 Main St. info: 231.864.3680

**In concert: General Assembly Big Band, Ludington**
7-9pm. Free. Rotary Park (City Park), 500 W Ludington Ave. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

**In concert: Kanin Wren's "Taylor Swift Experience," Manistee**
7:30-9:30pm. $10-40. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: **ramsdelltheatre.org**

**Open Mic with Myron Elkins, Cadillac**
8pm. Coyote Crossing Resort, 8593 S 13 Rd. Info/tickets: **coyotecrossingresort.com**

**July 2-5**

**Luther Days, Luther**
Annual family-friendly festival. Live music, carnival, food, rodeo, street dance, parade, artists, crafters, vendors, youth fishing derby, lumberjack competition, lip-sync contest, 4th fireworks. On Facebook **@lutherloggingdays**.

**Cadillac Freedom Festival, Cadillac**
Car+motorcycle show, kids+pets parade, Independence Day parade, 5k, drone show, craft/vendor show, donkey rides, live music, family activities, fireworks & more. Info: **cadillacfreedomfestival.com**

**July 3**

**Used Book Sale, Manistee**
10am-3pm. On lawn of Manistee County Library, 95 Maple St.

**Freedom Festival Children and Pet Parade, Ludington**
6:00pm. Free. Line up starts at the corner of Ferry and Loomis Streets with the parade heading east to Waterfront Park, 300 S William St.

**Fireworks over Lake Mich., Manistee**
10:30pm. West on First Street to the beach.

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# ‘Manistee Fringe’ to take the stage

From staff reports

Two comedic acts calling themselves the “Manistee Fringe” are scheduled to appear at 7 p.m., July 11, at the Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. in Manistee. Admission to the event is free, with donations accepted at the door.

The performers include sisters Avi and Amelia Gorman, who spent time with their grandparents in the area and whose parents live in Manistee, and Brendon Lemon, a Detroit resident whose parents also live in Manistee.

Lemon will open the show with a stand-up routine, followed by the sisters performing an original play they wrote and directed called, “The Spectacular Vermin Sisters: Taking Back What’s Ratfully Ours.” An after-party will be held in Hardy Hall.

“This show is a celebration of sisterhood, and of those who crave the limelight,” reads a statement in the press announcement. “We were drawn to the idea of having a double — whether it be a rat version of you that lives under your floorboards or a sister who contains the best and worst parts of you.”

Both acts will perform later this summer at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. According to the Edinburgh Fringe website, the festival was founded by some who were not invited to perform at the 1947 Edinburgh International Festival, but who decided to share their acts “on the fringe” of the venerable festival anyway. The “fringe” idea took off and has been celebrated with performances each year since.

*Photo courtesy of SteveArveyMusic.com.*

# Festival of cigar box guitar performers returns

By **SUE OSELAND**

*Photo courtesy of SteveArveyMusic.com.*

CUSTER, Mich. – Heads up, Mason County and beyond. The second annual U.S. 10 Cigar Box Guitar Festival will take place noon-10 p.m., July 11, at the VFW Gold Bar Post 5096, 2022 U.S. Highway 10.

Admission is free and donations are appreciated.

Never heard of a cigar box guitar? This is the place to find out what all the rage and fun is about. The festival is a family-friendly event that includes performances by the cigar box guitar musicians — plus food, vendors and lots of music.

To learn more about these traditionally do-it-yourself guitars, go to an informational website operated by the Delta Star brand of cigar box guitars at: cigarbox-guitars.com.

The festival is a benefit for the Lakeshore Animal Friends of Ludington, a spay/neuter organization also offering foster care for abandoned dogs and cats, some with medical needs. The group will have a table at the event.

The cigar box guitar performers appear as follows:

**Noon**, Cigar Box Scott; **1 p.m.**, In the Key of Kiersi; 2 p.m., Devin C. Williams; 3 p.m., Steve Arvey; **4 p.m.**, John Mary GoRound, **5p.m.**, Nate Ellsworth; **6 p.m.**, Travis Bowlin; **7:15** p.m., Cody & the Chameleons; **8:30** p.m., Memphis Lightning and the Lightning Bug.

For festival updates and short videos of the performers, follow the festival on Facebook@people/US-10-Cigar-Box-Guitar-Festival/61571224544785/

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*Sue Oseland will be a vendor (WUWU radio) at the upcoming U.S. 10 Cigar Box Guitar Festival. She lives in Elberta.*

*Photo: Ryker Johnson.*

# Add to your cache at the Ludington Coin and Stamp Show

By **SUE OSELAND**

The Ludington Coin Club will host its annual coin and stamp show from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, July 25, at Hamlin Township Hall, 3775 N. Jebavy Dr., north of Ludington.

I recently spoke with the show’s chairperson, Ryker Johnson, about the event. He said the local show has been held in most years since 1967 and is a great family-friendly event, with much to enjoy and learn from attending.

The coin dealers, each of whom will host a vendor table, come from all over the state. Lots of interesting coinages, from contemporary to historical, will be displayed and available for purchase.

Johnson said there will also be a stamp dealer whose vending table is usually surrounded by inquisitive attendees.

An information table at the front entrance of the hall will be staffed to answer any questions attendees may have.

In addition, there will be a raffle with hourly prizes, as well as a grand prize.

For more information about the show or the local club’s monthly meetings, call or text Ryker Johnson at (231) 655-2451.

As a newbie collector, I have a lot of fun looking at different coins and various shapes of precious metals. I hope you will take a little time out of your day and drive to Hamlin Township to check out all the amazing coins and stamps these vendors will be bringing to the area.

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*Sue Oseland is a volunteer board member with WUWU radio (100.1 FM) and the Elberta Labor Heritage Center, both in the village of Elberta.*

# America’s 250th will end with a BOOM, BANG

By **PAT STINSON**

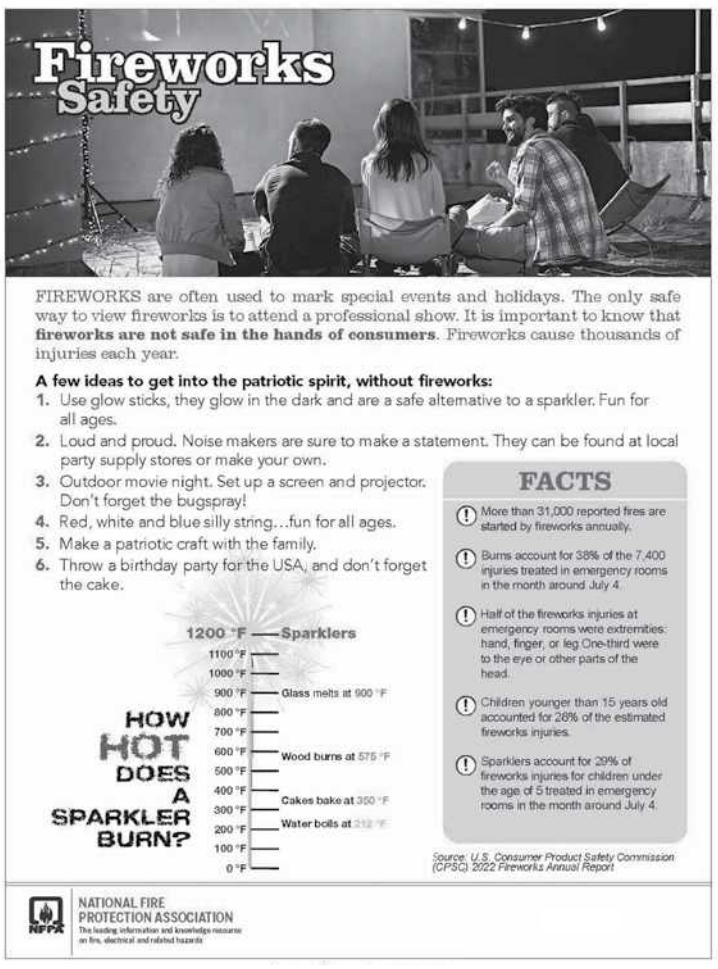
Like many of you, co-editor Mark and I have sought out fireworks displays each fourth of July. As the popularity of these events grows, and traffic and parking issues increase, our enthusiasm for them has waned. One year, the only viewing space left at the waterfront park was near where the fireworks were launched. It rained ash and partially burned paper on our heads. We literally picked pieces of both out of our hair and clothing. The smoke and smell was intense, and the experience was far from pleasant. It made us wonder about the folks putting on the show. Yes, they’re insured, but did they wear protective gear and suit up like hazmat workers? And what about the possibility of explosions? More than one set misfired, causing flashes on the ground. We’ve all heard the reports of deaths and injuries of those lighting the fireworks’ displays. That’s why insurance premiums are so high for events that include them.

Those pretty fireworks we enjoy killed 15 people last year and injured an estimated 13,000, according to the to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The commission’s report added that a majority of those were caused by misuse, misfires and malfunctions.

From kids’ sparklers that reach 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit to firecrackers and professionally launched novelty fireworks, all pyrotechnics involve intense heat and flame that can cause severe injury, even death. The CPSC reports that the injured are mostly 15-24 years old.

But we want our fireworks, regardless, and who really cares anyway? Ask first responders, emergency room personnel, the victims and their loved ones.

What the statistics don’t include are many unreported injuries — superficial burns, hearing loss and psychological trauma that can lead to physical trauma. Specifically, humans experiencing post-traumatic stress (PTSD) and animals responding with a startle reflex can harm themselves trying to escape the noise. The latter is not an insignificant byproduct of this celebratory pastime that used to take place just once or twice a year in the U.S. but now seems to happen during every village festival as well as weddings, birthdays and graduations.




The thing is, fireworks also start fires and create air and water pollution.

Though our awareness of these serious issues has grown, U.S. enthusiasm for fireworks has only increased since COVID-19. According to the American Pyrotechnics Association, consumer spending on fireworks has exploded, from $375 million in 2019 to $650 million in 2025. Revenue for professional fireworks’ displays — even during COVID, when large gatherings were discouraged — continued to increase, rising from $1 billion in 2019 to $2.3 billion last year, as reported by the APA.

The Associated Press ran a story on January 1, 2026, that reported other countries like Cyprus and Greece have adopted the use of silent drones for their night-time light shows. Some U.S. cities have, too, according to a July 4, 2024 report by National Public Radio. However, a number of U.S. counties and states have loosened their fireworks’ rules, opening the way for more use by individuals at times other than July 4 or January 1. In our Manistee Township neighborhood, the “practice” fireworks begin at least a week before the fourth and do not end until the last firecracker has been lit, at some point well beyond the holiday. Summer visitors, as well as residents, increasingly launch fireworks at their vacation homes, inflicting noise and light that extends for blocks in all directions, sometimes for more than an hour.

Professional drone shows are safer (there are crashes) and quieter. Any pollution they create is in their manufacture. Some drone shows do use music, but it is easier to block or reduce loud strains of rock and other music with ear protection. However, let’s not forget that animals do not have this ability.

We all like to celebrate milestones. America’s 250th is a big deal and ought to be celebrated in grand style. Yet, sometimes when we assert our American individualism we lose sight of our effects on others. We know that changing minds about fireworks will not happen overnight. The hope is that we will take another look at some of our traditions, and choose to evolve in our humanity as well as our technology.

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*Pat Stinson is a co-editor of the Freshwater Reporter.*

ELBERTA NEWS

# Heritage center, radio WUWU opener rocks the village

By **CAROL CARLIN, SUE OSELAND AND ARLENE SWEETING**

Downtown Elberta saw plenty of excitement on Saturday, June 13, as approximately 175 friends, neighbors, visitors and supporters gathered along M-22 to celebrate the grand opening of the Elberta Labor Heritage Center and WUWU Community Radio, 100.1 FM.

The event was also a celebration of history, storytelling, music and community and the hardworking volunteers who made the opening possible.

Mark and Carol Carlin led the community in a heartfelt dedication of the WUWU radio studio to the memory of Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, a long-time global peace and justice activist from the Detroit area. Throughout the last five decades, "Tom," as he was known to many, was a frequent visitor to Frankfort and Elberta, seeking respite at his younger brother's condo overlooking Lake Michigan. Fifteen members of the Gumbleton family traveled to Elberta for the occasion, joined by clergy, friends and admirers who came to honor his legacy.

Guests viewed the film "American Prophet" set in 1968 Detroit, one year after the devastating riots that proved to be a turning point in Gumbleton's life. The film's director, Jasmine Rivera, attended and shared reflections on creating the film and the enduring relevance of the bishop's message of compassion, courage and social justice.

Inside the newly opened center, visitors enjoyed "Waterborne," a historical art exhibit curated by Jed Jaworski. The exhibit features photographs and artifacts celebrating the region's rich maritime heritage. Jaworski shared stories and insights as visitors explored the collection and learned more about the people, ships and waterways that helped shape the Benzie County shoreline.

The M22s provided a lively performance, and Bill Ford and the Benzie Buskers added their own blend of local-music charm to the festivities.

Volunteers supplied an impressive spread of food and refreshments, creating the kind of potluck atmosphere that makes small-town gatherings so special.

Following remarks from several speakers, the crowd gathered outside for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony, marking the grand opening of the Elberta Labor Heritage Center and its partnership with WUWU Community Radio.

The Elberta Heritage Center is currently open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Visitors are welcome to tour the building, see the radio station in action and view the Waterborne exhibit, on display through August.

WUWU-LPFM 100.1 (LP stands for Low Power) can be heard in the village and nearby areas and streamed anywhere in the world. Listeners can download the station's app or visit WUWU.org to tune in and learn more about community radio in Benzie County.

*Board members of both the Elberta Labor Heritage Center and WUWU 100.1-FM radio. From left: Sue Oseland, Dave Beaton (president), Mark Carlin (treasurer) and Kay Bond. Photo: Gretchen Carr.*

NORTH SHORE DISPATCH

# Fireflies and dark skies

Story by **MARK BANASZAK**.
Photos by **PEGGY CAMPBELL**.

Imagine you're 10 years old. It's somewhere between late June and late July. You've been sent outside at dusk because it's too nice to be inside. You think about nothing in particular as you run around with an old jar catching fireflies. It is best not to focus on any one thing in the landscape, so you can watch a larger area for flashes. You wait for one to light up — from its hind end. You're close enough to scoop the insect's body into the jar and cover it with your hand before the bug's glow fades. But, if you don't get there in time, you might find yourself squinting in the fading daylight at the darkened beetle as it hovers in the air, just out of reach. Slow-flying insects, fireflies often stay near, but not at, the spot where they last lit up.

As an adult, you are more likely to be sitting on a deck or near a window when you notice the flashes spread across a field. At first, the field seems dark. After you see a few flashes, your eyes begin to adjust to the fading light and can focus on a wider expanse. Now you perceive many pinpricks of light across a large area. The effect is magical — floating winks of light, random and ephemeral, spread across a dark landscape.

How does it work that a creature can make light with its body? Why do they do it? Collecting specimens in jars or watching them from your deck is a fun pastime, but fireflies have significance beyond just being beautiful.

*Dark field with fireflies.*

Fireflies make light, called bioluminescence, through a chemical reaction involving oxygen and other substances. This reaction is described in "How and Why Fireflies Light Up," by Marc Branham, in Scientific American, Sept. 5, 2005. At the time of the article, Branham was an assistant professor in the University of Florida's department of entomology and nematology. He described the resulting light as "cold," that is, not emitting a lot of heat. If the chemical reaction producing the light gave off intense heat, the firefly would die.

Fireflies glow for a number of reasons, according to the same article. In its larval stage, the firefly's light warns predators that they're unpalatable. Adult species have different flash patterns, so they can find one another and discern males and females.

It's important to know that there are many species of fireflies in the world. Two common species in Michigan are big dipper fireflies and spring tree-top flashers.

*Firefly on leaf.*

*Firefly, from below.*

The time of year they appear may overlap a bit, but the tree-top variety tends to be earlier in the spring, is seen high in the tree canopy, and has single, short, amber flashes every two or three seconds. The big dippers have a longer flash about every six seconds and fly upward in a distinct "J" shape. It is generally males you see hovering over fields; the females are usually down in the vegetation, safe from predators, and signal back with shorter, single flashes.

Biodiversity within a single insect family carries real ecological weight. Many species of fireflies naturally control pests and help keep ecosystems resilient. Fireflies eat the worms, slugs and snails, often plaguing gardeners' plants and farmers' crops. Multiple species with similar roles in an ecosystem mean that challenges like disease or climate change are less likely to wipe them out. There are an estimated 24 species of fireflies in Michigan. They have a variety of characteristics and fill a variety of roles — meaning that if one species fails, another may be able to step in and fill the gap.

Biologists widely consider them an indicator species, meaning the presence of fireflies signals a healthy ecosystem, and their absence signals problems. Their complex bioluminescent compounds have even found use in medical research, helping scientists pinpoint where and when specific biological processes are occurring, a kind of natural flare in the lab.

Most importantly, fireflies are vulnerable to change brought about by humans. Increased artificial light at night disrupts the lifecycle of many nighttime creatures, and fireflies are a prime example. They become disoriented by bright artificial lights and may fail to find mates, leading to documented population declines in heavily lit areas.

Some of us humans fled the city, in part to experience the benefits of nature. According to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, more than one-third of the world's human population can no longer see the Milky Way in the night sky, and 80% live with some degree of light pollution. The fix, fortunately, is simple: Turn off lights when you don't need them. The fireflies will appreciate it, and so will your neighbors.

Read more about the importance of darkness at night in the fascinating book, "Night Magic: Adventures Among Glowworms, Moon Gardens and Other Marvels of the Dark," by New York Times bestselling author Leah Ann Henion. (Special thanks to Susan Schankin for loaning copies of the book to community members.)

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*Mark Banaszak has spent more than 30 years as a public-school educator, urban community gardener, and outdoor enthusiast. He transplanted his city life to rural Manistee County. Peggy Campbell is an area photographer. Her work was recently exhibited at Oliver Art Center in Frankfort.*

SUMMER SOUNDS

July 2 - 7-9pm - Liz Landry Trio
July 9 - 7-9 pm - Blue Water Ramblers
July 16 - 7-9pm – Full Tilt Comedy Presents Musical Improv
July 23 - 7-9pm - Rebekah Jon – Psychedelic pop-rock

Outdoor Amphitheater, located at 7300 Mountainside Road, Thompsonville, MI. Advance tickets are $15 for adults. https://michlegacyartpark.org/events/summer-sounds Tickets at the Door are $20 for adults.

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# In celebration of Disability Pride Month

By **GRACE GROGAN**

The Disability Pride Month theme for 2026 is "The World Works Better With Us," selected by The Arc's National Council of Self-Advocates. The Arc was founded in 1953 to advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The organization's statement is about inclusion: People with disabilities have the right to be seen, valued, supported, respected and included at schools, workplaces, healthcare, transportation and in public life. When this happens, the community is better for everyone.

### Background

According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are more than 70 million adults in the United States and over 2.3 million adults in Michigan with some type of disability.

July was chosen as Disability Pride Month to coincide with the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed on July 26, 1990. Disability Pride Month honors the history, experiences and achievements of the disability community.

The first Disability Pride Month celebration took place in 1990 in Boston. In 2004, Chicago hosted its first Disability Pride Parade, according to The Arc blog. It was not until July 2015 that the first official celebration of Disability Pride Month took place, marking the 25th anniversary of the ADA, according to the Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center of the Columbia University Medical School.

Acceptance of people with disabilities has been a long journey. For centuries, they were segregated from the public, stripped of their rights, denied education and often institutionalized. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was a landmark federal civil rights law. It was one of the first that prohibited disability-based discrimination. Section 504 of the act prohibited discrimination by federal employers and contractors, and by programs and organizations receiving federal funding. The U.S. government did not implement the law that year, nor for four years following its passage.

In response to the government's inaction, individuals with disabilities staged a protest. The San Francisco 504 Sit-In took place in 1977 at the U.S. Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) Building. At 28 days, it was the longest non-violent occupation of a federal building in U.S. history. The law was finally implemented on April 28, 1977. Protestors left the grounds on April 30 after receiving confirmation that the law was signed.

*The Disability Pride Flag was designed by Ann Magill. Public domain.*

### Disability Pride Flag

Ann Magill, a writer and activist with cerebral palsy, designed the Disability Pride Flag in 2016. The flag's design symbolizes acceptance and honors each person's uniqueness. Her inspiration for the flag followed her attendance at the ADA's 20th anniversary event. The celebration was not public. It took place in the basement and grounds of an independent living center.

Each disability is unique, and Weinberg Palsy Center reports in its July 2023 blog post, "History of the Disability Pride Flag," that the original flag design featured bright, zig-zagging stripes in blue, yellow, white, red, and green on a black background. The zig-zag design represented people with disabilities having to maneuver around barriers in their daily lives. After learning that the flag was triggering symptoms in people with visual disabilities, Magill redesigned it in 2021 with straight lines and muted colors. Each color represents different types of disabilities (red = physical, gold = neurodiversity, white = invisible or undiagnosed, blue = emotional and psychiatric, green = sensory). Magill did not copyright the flag and placed the image in the public domain for use by everyone.

### Emotional and physical barriers

The disability community continues to face day-to-day challenges. According to the CDC, how members of the public perceive and communicate with individuals with disabilities is the key to overcoming negative attitudes and/or stereotypes. Too, physical barriers to mobility and hearing interfere with everyday tasks and enjoyment.

When people are uncomfortable communicating with a person who has a visible disability, they may ignore them, talk to them but avoid eye contact, or talk down to them. The solution is to view each person as an equal, treat people with respect and speak to everyone the way you would want to be spoken to. Remember that acceptance is a challenge for all of us.

Physical barriers are frustrating for those trying to navigate them. When you are out in public, think about how accessible, or inaccessible, the area is to someone in a wheelchair and those using crutches, walkers or other mobility devices. Narrow bathroom stalls, hallways and shopping aisles; tight doorways; steep ramps; and "accessible" parking located far from the entrance all make navigation difficult for those with mobility issues. Does your movie theater use assistive listening devices or captioning for those with hearing impairments? How does the presence of curbs and the silence of electric cars impact people crossing the street who are legally blind? Ask yourself what we can do to remove these challenges and barriers.

For a list of state disability programs and services, go to: michigan.gov/disabilityresources/state-prog.

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*Grace Grogan was born and raised in Michigan. In 2019, she began living and traveling full-time in an RV with her partner, Paul Cannon. In 2025, she settled in Arizona, returning to the beautiful Great Lakes State every summer.*

ADA
Americans with Disabilities Act
36
Celebrate
July 26, 2026

## Show your support for Disability Pride Month

Attend one of the following western Michigan events:

**July 9. Berlin Fair Disability Awareness Day** will host its annual three-hour event at the Berlin Fairgrounds, 2008 Berlin Fair Dr., Marne. Visitors and family members with special needs receive a complimentary lunch and free carnival rides. For information, visit the fair's Facebook event page.

**July 22. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Celebration 2026** will be held 4-7 p.m. at the Special Olympics Michigan Unified Sports & Inclusion Center, 160 68th Street S.W., Grand Rapids. Educational activities, entertainment, and family-friendly fun will mark the anniversary of the ADA signing.

**July 24. Annual ADA Celebration 2026** will be held 11:30-1:30 p.m. at the Kalamazoo Farmers Market, 1204 Bank Street, Kalamazoo. Free event includes entertainment, family-friendly activities, Disability Arts & Crafts Market, food and informational booths.

**Sensory Sunday** is held 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on the second Sunday of every month at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, 272 Pearl St. N.W. Regular museum admission applies. This is a low-sensory experience, with reduced lighting and sound, a low-sensory planetarium and quiet spaces. Fidget tools and headphones are available for checkout.

# Black Eden

continued from Page 1

### Black Eden Brews is born

Zoom in a few years later, and Cocoa's 'coffee shop' found a new home.

"Morton's always had food service in one form or another," Evans said, "from its founding in the 1950s."

He explained that the group wanted to serve food, and Black Eden Brews operates under a restaurant license obtained under the name Bistro 1912.

"It provides a service to the motel guests and to the community at large, plus provides a food entrepreneur a means to build a business," Evans added.

Nicolena Stubbs is the manager. In the spring of 2024, Evans told her she should "really think about" opening the coffee shop because she liked to entertain.

She replied that she knew nothing about running a restaurant.

"I realized he was dead serious, he was fearless about it, and it gave me some fearlessness," Stubbs recalled. "I said, 'You know you're right; it can't hurt to try.'"

*Owner/Manager Nicolena Stubbs, Chef Lauren Johnson, and all-around helper Zavier Inniss outside Black Eden Brews last year. Photo: Kevin Howell.*

Black Eden's menu includes Stubbs' own specialty coffees, like the Pink Flamingo, named after the Flamingo Club, and Blue Moon over Black Eden Affogato. I confess I had to look up the word affogato. According to Wikipedia, it literally means "drowned in coffee" and is an Italian dessert made with a scoop of gelato topped with espresso. In this case, it's Blue Moon ice cream from Jones Homemade Ice Cream in Baldwin.

Except for a few regular offerings, other items on the menu change on a weekly basis. Some items include fresh French toast, Creole shrimp and grits and Billie's brisket and grits, the latter named for a supportive friend.

*A welder, Lavell Winters made the metal hand holding the cup as a gift for Black Eden Coffee Brews' re-opening weekend. Another customer brought Nicolena a beautiful handmade ceramic mug from her son. Photo courtesy of Nicolena Stubbs.*

"We make homemade apple butter that we named after a beloved member of our community, one of our elders, Miss Betty: Betty's Apple Butter, things like that," Stubbs said.

"We have homemade jam; we really keep the menu quite simple," she continued. "We have Idlewild Hot Brown Sandwich, which is a breakfast sandwich on a grilled croissant with an egg your way."

Soups, like Yumbo Gumbo, are a specialty and can be ordered for take-out after the shop is closed.

### A space for multiple uses

The coffee shop has an easy-going, comfortable feel and serves more than one purpose. Besides offering good food and coffee, Black Eden Brews has become an exhibition space for art that shares the history and ambiance of Idlewild. Community members can also meet casually there.

"We certainly saw a need in the community for gathering places for people because Idlewild doesn't have a lot of that."

Folks are free to sit and sip their drink inside, or if the shop is busy, they may wander outside to patio tables and chat with friends or make new ones.

Stubbs is an artist and founded the "Idlewild about Art" program. Works by artists are displayed throughout the community.

"I think it's very uplifting for people to see beauty all around them, and obviously beauty is different to all different people," Stubbs said.

"It gives people something to think about, regardless if you happen to like a particular piece of art, or if you don't it does certainly give you something to talk about or take interest in or take pride in when you see art. It also encourages conservation."

For the second year, Stubbs has invited artists with some tie to Idlewild — either as summer visitors, summer residents or those with a connection to Idlewild — to create art according to a theme and submit it to her to display in the coffee shop. This year's theme is "Sacred Lakes and Places."

"The artists can take whatever adaptation of that they want," she said. "...It doesn't have to a be a firm view of those themes. We want them to be as creative as they like, whatever form that they usually choose. Last year our artists sold over 20 pieces of original artwork right off of our walls," Stubbs said.

Her own ties to Idlewild run deep. Originally from Detroit, she spent summers as a child and time throughout the year at her family's Idlewild property.

### When and where to visit

Black Eden Brews opened this year on June 13, the morning after the artists' reception

*Dale Simmons (wearing cap), a potter from Baldwin, speaks to Kenda Manier (in orange). University of Michigan student Ashley Davis (in pink) is researching the history of Idlewild this summer. Photo courtesy of Nicolena Stubbs.*

*Yates Township Board Trustee Erica Tate checks out the show. This is the first professional exhibition of her photographs. Photo courtesy of Nicolena Stubbs.*

for "Sacred Lakes and Places." Hours of operation are Saturdays and Sundays, 8 a.m.-1p.m., with soups typically available for take-out on Friday evenings. Stubbs said they are considering adding more items on Fridays, since they are there prepping anyway, but no decision had been made at press time.

The kitchen wasn't open when I visited, so I didn't get a chance to sample the food, but I plan to return to sample Chef Lauren's grits, which I hear are most excellent!

Black Eden Brews is located at 6389 Tacoma. Follow Black Eden Brews on Facebook @people/BLACK-EDEN-BREWS-Idlewild-Coffee-Bar/100083292773714. For information, call (231) 880-6604.

Follow the "Idlewild about Art" initiative on Facebook.

Find more online about Morton's Motel at www.experienceidlewild.com/projects/the-morton's-motel. To reserve a room, call (231) 745-7773 or visit mortonsinidlewild.com.

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*Kevin Howell is a freelance writer living in Mason County. He loves the Michigan woods, lakes and Michigan craft beers — not necessarily in that order!*

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| July 13 | **Great Lakes Brass** New Orleans-inspired jazz & pop with Mardi Gras spirit |
| July 20 | **Ashley Wineland** Rising country star; powerhouse vocals & stage presence |
| July 27 | **Roger That** Greatest hits of the 70s, 80s, & beyond |
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# A tour, past and present, of Idlewild, Michigan

Story by **VONNI SAGE**.
Photos by **CHRIS KINGDOM-GRIER**.

*Members of MARJDI listen during a stop on the Idlewild tour.*

*Artifacts from Idlewild's past are displayed.*

Chris Kingdom-Grier is a fountain of knowledge, a waterfall, a fire hose. As I attempted to keep up in my notetaking, my writing started out pretty good, meandered into quick scribbles and ended with barely legible scrawl. My brain, however, was fired up.

I was with about 25 people from the Manistee Area Racial Justice and Diversity Initiative (MARJDI) who traveled southeast for about an hour last month to tour Idlewild with Chris as our docent. When we arrived at the Yates Township Hall, Chris assembled us in a small room full of historical artifacts. It was warm and crowded, full of curious people absorbed in Chris's accounting of Idlewild's history.

"There is no other place I'd like to be or share," Chris declared, before introducing us to the room's treasures. We viewed a collection of "Abhorrent Artifacts" that captured the racial intolerance so visually prevalent from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. These symbols were juxtaposed against the reality of Black life in Idlewild, captured via objects and pictures illustrating reflective words, musical genius, deep faith and joyful celebrations of lake life.

An hour later, we exited the room to a light bonk on the forehead by a golliwog (rag doll) hanging in the doorway, its unnaturally black body a reminder of the inaccuracies embedded in the Jim Crow artifacts we'd just viewed. We were on our way to a delicious lunch planned and prepared by volunteers, including Chris' son. The highlight was a tangy cucumber salad Chris prepared.

After lunch, we piled into a few cars connected by a Zoom call, so we could hear Chris as we toured part of Idlewild's 2,700 acres. Much of the area is wooded, and birdsong accompanied Chris' renderings. Though we were treated to the echoes of voices past, we encountered very few people along the route on this day, except near the beach.

His arm gesturing out the window of the lead car, Chris described places of historical significance, some of which we had to imagine, others that are being restored, and a few regaled in splendor. Always, there were connections among places and people, from ancestors to current residents. Chris followed those threads, weaving them together along the way, describing the impacts people had on one another, the community, and our broader world.

I'd learned of Idlewild's history as Michigan's Black Eden, a safe place for Black folks, including famous musicians, to find respite during the Jim Crow era. What I didn't know was that Idlewild began in 1912 when white developers founded the Idlewild Resort Company (IRC), a 14-member group that homesteaded Idlewild to create a resort town for African American families who had the means for leisure travel. Chris said that at that time most resorts available to Black people were available for rent, providing service by the back door.

We stopped at a stunning beach near the fieldstone Wilson bungalow, with one of several Idlewild historical markers erected in the yard. Herman and Lela Wilson were instrumental in Idlewild's initial development, marking the beginning of Idlewild's growth as a community. They created a clubhouse, grocery, hotel and guest cottages, in addition to the Paradise Club and the Paradise Gardens subdivision. Believing in the power of words, Mrs. Wilson named the roads Patience, Generosity, Kindness, Harmony and Unity Drive, among others.

We learned that Black intellectuals of the time gathered here. Madam C.J. Walker's home hosted a Black Think Tank led by W.E.B. Du Bois. Madam Walker was the first female self-made millionaire in America. Dr. Du Bois was a founder of the NAACP and the first African American to earn a doctorate. From Harvard.

During its heyday, Idlewild was a happening place. After the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the area began its decline because Black people had access to places not previously available to them.

Currently, Idlewild residents and other local folks are restoring buildings and outdoor spaces. One example is The Flamingo Club, displaying vivid murals facing Williams Island and the popular Idlewild Beach that remains a gathering place. We stopped at the beach and met several people who were planting flowers around the building and edging the road.

There is much to celebrate in Idlewild. Juneteenth, Live at Idlewild, the Grier Music Fest, and the Meeks Homecoming Jazz & Blues Festival are key events. The Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center on Broadway Avenue is an important stop. In addition to existing historical markers (find them linked here: https://idlewild-michigan.org), we'll soon see some artistic additions marking historical sights.

I need a new pencil for the next visit.

*A group photo of the tour's happy visitors.*

*Vonni Sage is a creative writer, avid reader, educator, and nature lover. When she's not playing in the mud, she might be found wandering the streets or beaches with a far-off gaze as she adventures in the new worlds she's creating in her head.*

# This Is Your Moment

By Louisa Loveridge Gallas

Ever felt like everything rests
on the wish you make before
blowing out candles on the cake?

You're superstitious enough,
times are hard enough,
enough crows are picking
at remains in the street.

There you are sitting with friends,
the chocolate-cherry layer cake
before you, where a tub of
Hill Top Vanilla Bean
ice cream happily waits
while you hope to blow out
all the little fires.

You inhale.

Everything rides
on this childhood hope.

Take a big breath as if
life depends on it.
You gather all loves
for the flaming world,
your kids, health, dogs, cats,
draw in your breath,
hold inside – deep, deep inside.

Then break loose, WHOOSH,
determined to finish off
every candle. How your
chest, your heart pumps full
blast. The little flames bend
and falter, waver and sway.

Don't give up, No, you keep on
to your last wheeze,
going after the final one
still lit until THERE,
you've done it!

Everyone claps.

Only the black wicks remain.

You've beat them,
sent your full wish
flying into the world.

Your happy pals are ready
for slices of cake as ice-cream
scoops tenderly melt into
the first moist bite.
And now, Revelation!
You fully grasp
the purpose of dessert.

No matter
what hardship,
whatever life
throws at you.

Hey!!
Right now, we are here, together,
a communion, a refuge of companions,
the unguarded oohs and shy ahhhs.

In this moment!
Life is sweet!

*(July is National Ice Cream Month.)*

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*"Off-We-Go" pastel painting by Marie Marfia. Image courtesy of the artist.*

## Local artist presents Ludington State Park paintings

From an announcement

LUDINGTON, Mich. – Marie Marfia, an award-winning, locally based soft pastel artist, will present an exhibition of her work, "Woods, Waves and Ways," at Timeless Picture Framing and Gallery from July 18 to August 14.

An opening reception will be held 4-7 p.m., Saturday, July 18, inside the gallery at 103 E. Ludington Ave (aka U.S. Highway 10). Those interested in attending the reception are asked to R.S.V.P. to marie@mariemarfia.com or call (904) 566-4473.

"I'm hoping to share my 'park scapes' with other people like me who appreciate the beauty of the Ludington State Park and are grateful to be able to enjoy it year 'round," Marfia said.

From dramatic Lake Michigan sunsets to quiet river scenes to stately white pines, the exhibition reflects the natural bounty found in what Marfia considers the "queen" of the Michigan state parks. Her inspiration comes from countless walks along the state park's trails and paths.

An award-winning pastel artist, Marfia is known for painting landscapes, people and skeletons. Through vibrant color and expressive mark making, she hopes to connect with people who love Ludington State Park and spark conversations about this natural resource.

Marfia earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids. Her work has been widely exhibited in galleries and shops throughout the region as well as appearing in numerous juried national shows.

This is the artist's first show at the picture-framing gallery. To view more of her work, visit www.mariemarfia.com and follow MarieMarfiaArt on Facebook and Instagram.

Offering custom, full-service framing, Timeless Picture Framing and Gallery is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., and by appointment. Text/call (231) 233-2221 or email rrandle19@hotmail.com.

*Our newspaper is printed at the Leelanau Enterprise. The paper was published and edited by Fred and Julia Dickinson of Glen Lake from 1943 to 1948. Daughter Grace Dickinson is writing her second history book about Leelanau County. Her books are available at the Cottage Bookshop, Glen Arbor. Photo courtesy of Leelanau Historical Society and Museum, Leland.*

## Watch your birdfeeders!

*A Glen Lake area bear prepares to bite into a bird feeder last month before the homeowner chased it away. Photo: Don Sielaff.*

## Dog

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before dawn, just east of my house, I know its tracks will be a special treat for Lila to sniff, almost as exciting as those of the black bear that crossed my driveway a few years ago.

When we get to the road, there are not as many things to smell. Sometimes we have to give a wide berth to a dead skunk and, happily, we have not yet come upon a porcupine, dead or alive.

The only thing possibly anticipated as much as a morning walk for a Labrador retriever like Lila is food. So, after an hour, we head home for breakfast. As we climb the porch steps, I can't help but sing a verse from "Girl and her Dog":

Now the older I get, the less I need
Just a good old dog underneath the trees
Keeping it simple as it can be
Fitting together like a puzzle piece
Mornings here with a coffee cup
Whistling for him while I'm looking up
If the rain holds off, we'll be in luck
But we're lucky anyway"

Have a good morning walk with your dog whenever you can.

*Ron Schmidt lives in the north woods and enjoys listening to music, reading, taking long walks and smelling the scents of each season. He has authored three children's books and written a memoir.*

# Area Events Calendar

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**July 4**
**Firecracker 5K Run, Beulah**
8am. $25. 7122 Prospect Ave. Info/register: **https://tinyurl.com/y6kb3yv7**

**Firecracker 5K Run/Walk & 1K Fun Run, Manistee**
8-9:30am. $25-$35 depends on race run. Both include T-shirt. Awards for 5K participants. Proceeds to Manistee Area Community Track. Manistee Middle/High School, 525 12th St.

**Fourth of July 5K Fun Run, Thompsonville**
9-10am. $15 thru July 3. $20 July 4. Race begins at Mountain Center Rd. by Kinlochen, Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr. Register: **www.crystalmountain.com**

**Independence Day Celebration, Beulah**
Kids' games in the park, face painting, egg race, pie eating contest, food concessions, fireworks & more.

**Frankfort's Fourth of July Parade**
10am-12pm. Main Street, downtown.

**Independence Day Parade, Manistee**
10am. Free. Downtown. River St. from Division St. west to Armory Youth Project.

**Art In the Park Arts & Crafts Fair, Frankfort**
10am-4pm. Mineral Springs Park, 630 Main St.

**Frankfort-Elberta 4th of July Carnival**
10am-dusk. Parade, sandcastle sculpture contest, arts & crafts fair, rides, carnival food, fireworks & more. Various locations in Frankfort.

**Sandcastle Contest, Frankfort**
12-2pm. Free. Bring buckets, shovels, & ideas to the shores of Lake Mich. Look for regis. tent (with balloons!) at top of Frankfort Beach. Prizes awarded for most creative builds. Frankfort Public Beach, west end Main St.

**Midwest Groove Festival, Idlewild**
12-4pm. Free for spectators. $28.52 to have your classic car blessed. Family-friendly event with vehicle blessing ceremony. (Cars must be 20+ years old), community meet & greet, live music, vendors, food trucks. 6437 S Nelson Rd. Tickets: **https://tinyurl.com/4jps5zw6**

**Red, White & BBQ July 4th Picnic, Manistee**
12-6pm. Food, drinks, live music. American Legion Post 10, 10 Mason St.

**Freedom Festival 1-Mile Dash, Ludington**
12:30pm Regis. 1:35 Race begins. $45. Proceeds to Freedom Festival Fireworks fundraiser, funded 100% by community donations. Run the Grand Parade route prior to the parade, at the intersection of Ludington Ave. & Madison St. Prizes awarded to top male & female runners.

**Grier Music Fest VI, Idlewild**
1-6pm Sat. at Meeks Park. 12-4pm Sunday at Tabernacle African Methodist Episcopal Church, 6466 Idlewild Blvd. Free. Featuring Grier Ensemble, The Collective Metro Soul Band, Gravity Jazz Band & DJ Versatile. Vendors. Bring lawn chair Sat. Info: 616.886.4758.

**Freedom Festival Grand Parade, Ludington**
2pm. Free. Floats, bands, politicians, local residents & Scottville Clown Band. Ludington Ave. from Madison St. to Lakeshore Dr.

**Soul Power Fourth of July Party, Idlewild**
8pm-1am. $20. BYOB. Music by DJ's TNT Entertainment. Mid-Michigan Event Center, 19 Joy Ave. Info: Bobby G. at 248.224.8834 or D. Elliot at 248.797.6961

**S. S. Badger Shoreline Cruise, Ludington**
8:30pm Boarding, 9-11 Cruise. Tickets include food & live entertainment. Cruises sail rain or shine. Info/tickets: **www.ssbadger.com**

**Fourth of July Fireworks, Frankfort**
10:30pm. Free. Frankfort Public Beach.

**Fireworks Over Lake Michigan, Ludington**
10:30pm. Free. Any beach with a view over the lake.

**July 4, 5**
**58th Annual West Shore Art Fair, Ludington**
10am-5pm Saturday, 10am-4pm Sunday. 90 juried artists. Rotary Park (City Park), 500 W Ludington Ave.

**Manistee World of Arts & Crafts Show**
10am-5pm. Armory Youth Project, 555 1st St.

**July 5**
**Manistee Area Public Schools Pancake Fundraiser, Manistee**
8am-1pm. $10. All-you-can-eat pancakes with butter & syrup. Proceeds to MAPS Fine Arts Boosters to send all band, choir & theater students to Disney, April 2027. Manistee Municipal High School Commons, 525 12th St.

**Ludington Auto Club Cars & Coffee Car Meet, Ludington**
10am-1pm. Free. Open to public. Coffee for purchase at the Meraki Coffee Truck, The 10 Spot, 5750 US-10.

**July 5**
**In concert: The Stinks, Ludington**
1pm. Free. At the West Shore Art Fair, Rotary Park, 500 W Ludington Ave.

**July 8**
**Red Solo Cup Party, Free Soil**
4-11pm. Celebrate Toby Keith's birthday with all draft beers $3 in red solo cups. The Hof Bar & Grill, 3220 E Free Soil Rd.

**An Evening with Abigail Adams, Baldwin**
6pm. Free. Acted by Chris Costhwaite. Outdoor program presented from the open doors of the Boat House. Lake County Historical Museum, 915 N Michigan Ave. Bring lawn chair.

**July 9**
**Help remove invasive plants, Free Soil**
9am. Free. Join the US Forest Service Botany team. Meet at Nurnberg Trailhead parking lot (west end of Nurnberg Rd.) for a tailgate safety session. Bring lunch, gloves & plenty of water (at least 2 bottles). Hike for approx. 1 mile to project area. Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes & clothes that can get dirty. Botany program supplies digger tools, trash bags, great views of Lake Mich & brownies.

**Bus Day to Big Point Sable Lighthouse, Ludington**
Bus transportation runs 12-5pm. Free concert, 1-3pm. Big Sable Point Lighthouse in Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry. Bring lawn chair.

**The Civil War Veterans of Amber Township, Scottville**
6-8pm. $45. Discover stories of Civil War veterans who settled in Amber Township & helped shape a thriving community. Guided tour of Towns Cemetery (171 S. Amber Rd.) highlights the lives, struggles & legacies of the men who came to Michigan after the war. Tickets: **https://tinyurl.com/mr3bnbt6**

**In concert: Katarina String Quartet, Frankfort**
7pm. Free. Grand Prize winner of the Fischoff Chamber Music Competition & Graduate Resident String Quartet at The Juilliard School exploring chamber music – from contemporary and canonized works to folk tunes. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Tickets: **oliverart.org**

**Benzonia Academy Lecture Series, Benzonia**
7pm. Free/donations. "The Crystal Story: From Buck Hills Ski Club to Crystal Today and in the Future" presented by Chris MacInnes and Shaun Johnson. Benzie Area Historical Society & Museum, 6941 Traverse Ave.

**July 9-11**
**West Michigan RC Expo, Baldwin**
10am-5pm, Free for spectators. Over 100 RC (remote controlled) jets, prop planes & helicopters soar all weekend. Family event. Flight simulator (open to all ages) and a trainer plane. Race an RC car around the track with experienced racers & their cars. Food & beverages avail. Free parking. Baldwin Airport, 7668 M-37. Bring lawn chairs, sunglasses, cooler.

**July 10**
**Pig Roast, Bear Lake**
4:30-6:30pm. By donation. Dinner includes pork, cole slaw, baked beans, drinks, chips, ice cream. Live entertainment. Bear Lake Community Church, 7861 Main St.

**In concert: Outlaw Apostles, Manistee**
7:30-9:30. $10-40. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: **ramsdelltheatre.org**

**July 10-12**
**Bear Lake Days, Bear Lake**
Family-friendly festival includes adults' & kids' fishing contests, pig roast, kids' games, entertainment tent, boat & pontoon parade, classic car show, arts/crafts fair, fun run, bike tour, Sat. night parade & fireworks. Info/schedule: Bear Lake Days on Facebook.

**July 11**
**Hills Have Chains Disc Golf Tournament, Ludington**
8am. $25-55. Singles tournament. 2 rounds. Leviathan Course, 517 N Jebavy Dr. Info/register: **discgolfscene.com**

**Young Eagles Rally, Ludington**
9am-1pm. Families should arrive early. Event fills quickly. Free airplane rides for ages 8-17 at Mason County Airport, 5300 US-10. Kids must be accompanied by parent/guardian. Pilots & ground support personnel donate their time, planes & fuel. Weather back-up day is Sun., July 12, same times. Info: Mary Alway 231.794.0091

**Guided Nature & Birdwatching Hike, Thompsonville**
10-11:30am. Free with Art Park admission ($10 adults, $5 kids over 5 or $20 families) Led by Angie Quinn. Meet at Mich. Legacy Art Park Trailhead, ¼ mile from parking area, rain or shine. Bring binocs if avail. Check Facebook 1 hour prior for severe weather cancellation. Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr.

**July 11**
**Antique Tractor Pulling, Scottville**
10am-2pm. Free for spectators. Western Michigan Old Engine Club sanctions dead weight tractor pulling for antique farm stock tractors. Tractors must be pre-1956. Riverside Park, 700 S Scottville Rd.

**US-10 Cigar Box Guitar Festival, Custer**
12-10pm. Free/donations. Celebration of homemade stringed instruments & festival artists & supporters. 9 bands/performers. Fundraiser for Lakeshore Animal Friends. Live music, food trucks, 50/50 raffle, vendors. Custer VFW Gold Bar Post 5096, 2022 E. State St. Read story, page 3.

**Performance for Veterans-Scottville Clown Band, Custer**
1pm. Wilwin Lodge, 3383 E Hawley Rd.

**Backyard Summer Fest, Manistee**
3-9pm. Tasting (5 tastes, signature glass) + concert event tickets: $25-$30. Valid I.D. required. Concert only, age 13+: Door $15/Adv $10. Ages 12 & under: FREE. At Manistee National Golf & Inn, 4797 Grant Hwy aka US-31. Tasting held in special tent, 3-7pm. Concert in backyard, behind the Inn: 5:30-7pm, Roger That. 7:30-9pm, Cousin Curtiss.

**Manistee Fringe, Manistee**
7pm, Doors 6:30. Free. Opener Brendon Lemon in "An American Comedy Show That Quite Possibly Might Be Funny to the British" followed by Gorman Sisters in "The Spectacular Vermin Sisters: Taking Back What's Ratfully Ours." Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Afterparty in Hardy Hall. Read story, page 3.

**In concert: Kendell Marvel, Joe Stamm, Ben Chapman & Trey Pendley, Cadillac**
8pm. Coyote Crossing Resort, 8593 S 13 Rd. Info/tickets: **coyotecrossingresort.com**

**July 11, 12, 13**
**In concert: Benzie Community Chorus, Benzonia**
7pm. $20. Kids 10 & under free with adult. "Finding Time." Mills Community House auditorium, 891 Michigan Ave. Tickets: **benziechorus.org**

**July 12**
**In concert: Benzie Area Symphony Orchestra, Benzonia**
4pm. $15 suggested donation. Free for vets, active military & kids under 18. "Our Sound, Our Story: America at 250" featuring music by American composers. Benzie Central High School Auditorium, 9222 Homestead Rd.

**BBQ & Backyard Blues with Steve Arvey, Elberta**
4-7pm. $15-20. Arvey is one of the top cigar-box guitar players in the world. Concert to take place in the backyard at 526 Lincoln Ave. Park along street or at Penfold Park. Potluck: Bring a dish to share & lawn chair/blanket. Tickets: **https://givebutter.com/steve-arvey-concert**

**Special screening of "The Untitled Beer Project", Ludington**
8-9pm. $15 ADV, $20 Door. Only 225 tickets available. Filmed in 2019 at Starving Artist Brewery as a television pilot episode. Starving Artist Brewery beer will be offered for purchase. Proceeds benefit Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St. Tickets: at the Art Center or **www.ludingtonartscenter.org**

**July 13**
**The Hidden World of Aquatic Plants, Frankfort**
5:30pm. Free. Kyla Robinson, Aquatic Invasive species Coordinator of Benzie Conservation District will discuss native & invasive aquatic plants with paper models. Benzie Shores District Library, 630 Main St.

**July 14**
**Weed the Park, Ludington**
10am-12pm. Free. Help AFFEW remove invasive plants. Wear closed-toe shoes, long pants, long-sleeved shirts. Bring garden gloves, water. Meet at the gazebo at the end of Rath Ave. by Lincoln Lake. Cartier Park, 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr. **affew.org**

**July 15**
**Start Your Rain Garden Journey, Benzonia**
7pm. Free. Matthew Bertrand, Landscape Architect, will share his journey and inspire you to start your own rain garden installation. The Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave.

**Beach Sweep & Green Drinks, Ludington**
7-8pm, Free. Help clean the beach. Meet at south concession stand at Stearns Park, 420 N. Lakeshore Dr. Gloves/bags provided. Drinks/networking after. BYO. No Glass.

**Open House & Band Concert, Benzonia**
6-7pm, Open house. 7pm, Benzie Community Band concert. Free/donations accepted. At Benzie Area Historical Museum & Research Center, 6941 Traverse Ave. View a seasonal exhibit, "You're A Grand Old Flag," in celebration of America's 250th, and take a tour with a docent or historian. Bring a blanket or lawn chair.

**July 15-18**
**Troutarama, Baldwin**
Annual family-friendly festival. Amusement rides, carnival games, live music, food & beverages, vendors, pony rides, car show, grand parade & more. Schedule: **https://troutarama.com/events/**

**July 16**
**Bus Day to Big Point Sable Lighthouse, Ludington**
Bus transportation avail. 12-5pm. Free concert 1-3pm. Big Sable Point Lighthouse in Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry. Bring lawn chair.

**Food Pantry, Bear Lake**
4-6pm. This evening session coincides with a free Community Table meal. Eligibility: Must need emergency food, participate in income-based programs (like SNAP, WIC, or CSFP), or fall below the federal poverty level. Bear Lake United Methodist Church, 7861 Main St. info: 231.864.3680

**July 16-18**
**58th Annual Cadillac Festival of the Arts, Cadillac**
Colorful kick-off run 6:30pm Thursday. Juried art fair 12-7pm Friday, 10am-5pm Saturday. 100 juried artists. Music, dancing, food & more. 131-199 W Harris St.

**July 16-19**
**The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again], Ludington**
7pm Thursday – Saturday, 2pm Sunday. A hilarious comedy that condenses all of Shakespeare's plays into one fast-paced performance. Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S Harrison St. $23.18 online (stageleftmi.org), $20 door.

**July 17**
**Old Salt Live Music: T. Tucker, Ludington**
6-8pm. Rotary Park (City Park), 500 W Ludington Ave. Bring lawn chair/blanket.

**In concert: Some Like It Yacht, Manistee**
7:30-9:30pm. $10-35. Soft rock music of the late '70s and early '80s. Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: **ramsdelltheatre.org**

**July 17-19**
**Used Book Sale, Ludington**
4-8pm Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, 12-2pm Sun. Ludington Library, 217 E Ludington Ave.

**July 18**
**Baker Classic Disc Golf Tournament, Cadillac**
8am. $51-76. Singles tournament. 2 rounds of 18. Baker College of Cadillac, 9600 E 13th St. Info/register: **discgolfscene.com**

**Annual Muddy Fox Trot, Scottville**
9am. $25 adults. Register by July 17. WSSC students/kids 16 & under Free. 5k mud run & obstacle course. Concessions avail. West Shore Community College, 3000 N Stiles Rd.

**Ludington Area Pride Festival, Ludington**
9am-6pm. Market, vendors, entertainment, artists, baked goods. Rotary (City) Park, 500 W Ludington Ave.

**Idlewild Summer Soul Festival, Idlewild**
12-8pm. Free. Food vendors, raffle, live music with DJ's T-N-T Entertainment, Level Rizon Band, Lady Sax, Kym Brady. Mid-Mich. Idlewilders Event Center, 19 Joy Ave. (corner of Forman Rd.)

**2026 Tour of Homes & Gardens, Manistee**
1-5pm. $20. Biennial event hosted by Lakeside Club of Manistee Co. benefits nonprofits that support the county. Info/tickets: **www.lakesideclubmanistee.org** & buy at 12pm on day of event at Manistee City Marina, 480 River St.

**In concert: Benzie Area Symphony Orchestra, Lake Ann**
2-4pm. Free. Chamber music of small ensembles of orchestra members. Lake Ann Brewing Company, 6535 First St. Food/beverages available to buy onsite.

**Lakeshore Pyrate Heads Buccaneer Bash, Ludington**
4-10pm. $5 at the door, kids 12 & under free. Food trucks, ice cream, live auction, live music, & costume prizes. Proceeds benefit the Alzheimer's Association. Ludington Boat Club, 502 Lake St.

**Public Reception for Woods, Waves, Ways Exhibition, Ludington**
4-7pm. Soft pastel artist Marie Marfia presents painted scenes from Ludington State Park. Timeless Picture Framing & Gallery, 103 E. Ludington Ave. RSVP: marie@mariemarfia.com. See story page 8.

**TJ's Block Party, Manistee**
7-10pm. Free. Live music with Are Friends Electric. Food & drinks avail. In front of TJ's Pub & Ramsdell Inn, River St. at Washington.

**Live in concert: The Wilder Blue, Cadillac**
8pm. Coyote Crossing Resort, 8593 S 13 Rd. Info/tickets: **coyotecrossingresort.com**

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ARCADIA NEWS

# Meet the Arcadia Daze Grand Marshal, Jeanne Sitter

By **KRISTINA STIERHOLZ**

Each year, the Lions of Arcadia select a person who represents the best of Arcadia to be their grand marshal. This year, Jeanne Sitter will be the honoree at the Arcadia Daze parade. Despite her somewhat short tenure (only 12 years!) as a town resident, Sitter has deep roots in Arcadia. Sitter's great-grandparents, grandparents and parents were all village residents, and she visited often while growing up and raising her own children.

*Jeanne Sitter, boating on Portage Lake back in the day. Photo of the original photo: Kristina Stierholz.*

### Her story

Sitter's great-grandparents moved to Arcadia (via Cleveland) from Germany and bought a farm outside of town. Her grandfather worked for the Arcadia Furniture Factory, and, as its business faltered, moved the family to Pontiac for work. Her mother, their only child, finished high school in Pontiac and stayed there to marry and raise her own family.

Born in 1934 at home in Pontiac, Michigan, Garnet Jeanne Blahut was the first of three children in her family, each born six years after the last. Her parents stayed in Pontiac until they retired to Arcadia. Though raised in Pontiac, Sitter spent lots of her youth in Arcadia. Her grandfather worked at the furniture factory, so family roots ran deep. Sitter remembers playing with other kids in town, and when she got older she picked cherries on the Miller Farm for 50 cents a lug, once considered significant spending money. After work, her mother would meet her with a bar of Ivory soap and they'd go to the lake, where Jeanne jumped in to wash off the juice and bugs and twigs, then head home for dinner. On "Free Show' night, which was the social event of the week, movies were shown in an open field next to Finch Park. On the way home, she would get one ice cream cone from the grocery store, finish it, and have another cone from the gas station. Life was simple — no indoor plumbing — and fun. Sitter would also enjoy delicious treats at her aunts' homes in Arcadia, going from one aunt's to another's for their specialties.

### Family ties

After high school, Jeanne Blahut met a young law student named Ray Sitter; they got serious, then married. Sitter supported the family while Ray studied law. When his schooling was complete, Ray opened a law practice and Jeanne worked at home. Merrill Lynch moved to town, and Ray switched careers to become a stockbroker, with great success. After their first son was born, Sitter brought him to meet his great-grandfather in Arcadia and maintained the tradition as the boys grew up. For those Arcadia vacations, Sitter would bring her boys to the beach and go fishing. When the boys attended summer camps, she would come up by herself to enjoy Arcadia. The family moved around the country for Ray's work. Sitter's trips to Arcadia became longer, so she could help her mother and grandmother. The last 30 years of Ray's career were spent in Houston. After considering retiring to the West Coast or Southwest, they decided nothing could beat Arcadia. They bought some property and built a house in town, across from the Lions Club.

*Jeanne Sitter today. Photo: Kristina Stierholz.*

### Community service

For years, Sitter has supplied and cared for the flowerpots outside the Lions Club. The flower colors alternate each year — from red, white and blue for the VFW to purple and gold for the Lions. She also began the practice of using an old letterboard sign for township messages: birthdays, greetings to snowbirds, important announcements, etc. When, in her eyes, Arcadia Daze wasn't getting enough press coverage, she drove to the Manistee newspaper's office and insisted that they start giving more attention to Arcadia. She also sat for a radio interview in Manistee to promote Arcadia Daze. Her basement is the supply depot for all holiday event decor.

Sitter is deeply knowledgeable about the history of Arcadia and has been a docent at the Arcadia Historical Museum for all the years of its existence. She has been a steady advocate for the value of the museum as it has gone through difficult leadership transitions.

She saw needs in town and found ways, and continues to find ways, to help.

"Jeanne Sitter exemplifies the Lion's motto: 'We Serve'. Her commitment to improving Arcadia has been an asset for our town," said Steve Hammon, chair of the Arcadia Lions.

Roger Brown, chair of the Arcadia Daze planning committee, echoed Hammon's comment. "Jeanne Sitter has lived a life of service to her Arcadian friends and neighbors."

She has traveled the country and the world, and her love for Arcadia always drew her back. For the positive impact Jeanne Sitter has had on the town, she will be the grand marshal of the Arcadia Daze parade this year, an honor she richly deserves.

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*Kristina Stierholz has been coming to Arcadia for vacations since 1971 and officially moved to Michigan several years ago. She lives on 10 acres and is learning how to drive a small tractor and manage a much larger garden and yard space than she had in her city-living past.*

# Area Events Calendar

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**July 18,19**
**Kaleva Heritage Days, Kaleva**
Family-friendly event. Art & craft show, fireworks, parade, car show, food/beverage vendors & more. Kaleva Roadside Park, 9208 Kauko St.
See schedule, page 12.

**July 19**
**Ludington Auto Club Cars & Coffee Car Meet**
10am-1pm. Free. Open to public. Big Apple Bagels/Hungry Howies, 5485 US-10. Coffee avail. to buy at Meraki Coffee Truck.

**24th Annual Garden Walk, Ludington**
1-5pm. $10. See the city parks maintained by Mason County Garden Club and private gardens. Tickets avail. at Rotary (City) Park, 500 W Ludington Ave. at Lewis St.

**In concert: Deep Blue Water Samba School, Benzonia**
4-6pm. Donations. Concert benefits Benzie Area Community Emergency Fund. Mills Community House, 891 Michigan Ave.

**July 22**
**Congregational Summer Assembly Arts & Crafts Fair & Cottage Treasures Sale, Frankfort**
9am-1pm. Cottage Treasures & rummage sale inside CSA Assembly Building. 9:30am-3pm. Arts & Crafts Fair at Assembly Ball Field, 2128 Pilgrim Hwy.

**Benzie Community Band, Frankfort**
7-8:30pm. At Saint Ann of Frankfort, 508 Crystal Ave.

**July 23**
**Bus Day to Big Point Sable Lighthouse, Ludington**
Bus transportation, 12-5pm. Free concert, 1-3pm. Big Sable Point Lighthouse, Ludington State Park, 8800 M-116. MI Recreation Passport required for vehicle entry. Bring lawn chair.

**Choir in the Cathedral: Manistee Fedstival Chorus, Manistee**
7pm. Free. First Congregational Church, 412 4th St.

**Open Mic with Johnny Mullenax, Cadillac**
8pm. Coyote Crossing Resort, 8593 S 13 Rd. Info/tickets: **coyotecrossingresort.com**

**July 24-26**
**Arcadia Daze, Arcadia**
Theme is Starry Nightz. Parade, 5k run, auto show, pickleball & cornhole tournaments, music, raffle, Scottville Clown Band, art & craft fair, auto show, food, beer tent & more. Finch Park, 17240 5th St. & other venues. See schedule, page 12.

**July 25**
**Mvp Circuit Challenge Disc Golf Tournament, Scottville**
8am. $50. Singles tournament. 2 rounds of 24. West Shore Community College, 3000 N Stiles Rd. Info/register: **discgolfscene.com**

**Arcadia Daze 5K, Arcadia**
9-10am. $35.98. Info/register: **runsignup.com/Race/Events/MI/Arcadia/ArcadiaDaze5K**

**Ludington Coin Club's Coin and Stamp Show, Ludington**
9am-4pm. Hamlin Township Hall, 3775 N Jebavy Dr. Read story, page 3.

**Craft Fair, Manistee**
10am-2pm. Maple Ridge Manor, 1967 Maple Ridge Dr.

**Coastal Caravan Art Fair, Frankfort**
10am-4pm. Outdoor juried art fair featuring 2 live bands, Red Top Gourmet Hot Dogs food truck, the OAC Bloody Mary Bar & beer/wine tent. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd.

**Let's Go Fly a Kite, Frankfort**
3-5pm. Free. Registration at Frankfort Beach at the turnaround. Free kite to first 100 participants. Rain date July 26. Info: 231.352.7251

**Garden Tractor Pulling, Scottville**
6-10pm. Free for spectators. The Western Michigan Old Engine Club sanctions garden tractor pulling for both dead weight sled and transfer sled. Riverside Park, 700 S Scottville Rd.

**S. S. Badger Shoreline Cruise, Ludington**
8:30pm boarding, 9-11pm cruise. Tickets include food & live entertainment. Cruises sail rain or shine. Info/tickets: **www.ssbadger.com**

**West Shore Bank's Rhythm & Dunes Concert, Ludington**
6pm. Free outdoor concert with Mark Blomsteel & The Motor City Drive. Portion of vendor sales go to the music programs at three Mason County schools. Waterfront Park, 391 S William St. Bring lawn chair.

**Run the Pier 5k, 10k, 13.1M, 26.2M, Manistee**
7am. Cost depends on race run. Proceeds to benefit local charities. Race begins & ends at Duffy Park, 250 Duffy Park Dr. Info/registration: **runsignup.com/Race/MI/Manistee/RTP5K**

**Live in concert: Matt Mason, Cadillac**
8pm. Coyote Crossing Resort, 8593 S 13 Rd. Info/tickets: **coyotecrossingresort.com**

**July 27**
**Solstice Ensemble in Concert, Frankfort**
7-8:30pm. $10. Five musicians play everything from baroque to tango using the unusual combination of flute, violin, recorder, cello & piano. Oliver Art Center, 132 Coast Guard Rd. Tickets: **oliverart.org**

**July 28**
**Help remove invasive plants, Free Soil**
9am. Free. Join US Forest Service botanist. Meet at the Nurnberg Trailhead parking lot (west end of Nurnberg Rd.) for a tailgate safety session. Bring lunch, gloves, & plenty of water (at least 2 bottles). Hike approx. 1 mile to project area. Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes & clothes that can get dirty. Digger tools, trash bags, great views of Lake Mich & brownies supplied.

**July 28**
**Weed the Park, Ludington**
6-8pm. Free. Volunteer to help AFFEW remove invasive plants. Wear closed-toe shoes, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Bring garden gloves, water. Meet at gazebo at end of Rath Ave. by Lincoln Lake. Cartier Park, 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr.

**Traverse City Dance Project, Frankfort**
7-9pm. Free. Featuring 7 pro dancers from across the US. New dance work by Jennifer Lott, with music composed by Charlie Millard, performed live by the Charlie Millard Band; NYC-based tap artist Madison Hilligoss; and a premiere by Artistic Director Brent Whitney followed by a Q&A with the artists. The Garden Theater, 301 Main St.

**July 28-Aug 1**
**Manistee County Fair, Onekama**
Family fun at Manistee County Fairgrounds, 7587 1st St. Schedule: **manisteecountyfair.org**

**Legacy Gala, Thompsonville**
6-9pm. $125/person. Dinner, drinks, silent auction. Interlochen Center for the Arts to receive 2026 Legacy Award. Fundraiser to support the Art Park. Crystal Center, Crystal Mountain Resort, 12500 Crystal Mountain Dr. Tickets/sponsorships: **https://tinyurl.com/yruv297w**

**Manistee Community Band, Manistee**
7pm. Free. Performing community band classics. Manistee High School, 525 12th St.

**July 31**
**"Annie", Manistee**
7:30-9:30pm $20-35. Performance by the Manistee Civic Players at Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts, 101 Maple St. Tickets: **ramsdelltheatre.org**

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# Take an Up North 'Book Tour'

Story and photo by **ROSALIND JAFFE**

Where are you reading these days? Reading isn't just for the couch. Enhance your reading experience by getting outside and combining books and Northern Michigan ambiance.

Which outdoor location will add to your reading enjoyment?

**Romance and Rom-Com.** Select a Lake Michigan beach, such as Manistee's well-equipped and expansive Fifth Avenue or First Street Beaches, or the quiet, romantic beaches of Onekama, Pierport and Arcadia. Glance up from the sand-filled page to imagine the lust object of your dreams emerging from the foaming surf. Pack sunscreen, chair, blanket, bonbons and adult beverage of your choice. Romances with water views: Emma Straub's "American Fantasy" or Carley Fortune's "One Golden Summer."

**Horror and Thriller.** Hike the St. Pierre Trail off M-22 on a windy day. Does a scenic stroll through quiet forests promise tranquility? Not after you've experienced the incessant creaking sound of tree branches waiting to fall upon the head of the unsuspecting audiobook fan. Add the shock of a silent, zooming mountain bike sneaking up from behind and the frequent rustling leaves which could be a mouse or something more menacing. Bring water and anti-tick protection. Read outdoor horror in Stephen King's "The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon" or Stephen Graham Jones' "The Buffalo Hunter's Hunter."

**Nature and Ecology.** Don't forget quiet and beautiful Lake Bluff Farms, 75 acres of arboretum and nature on Lake Michigan with a Champion Giant Sequoia. Hike the trails, birdwatch and read on a bench as you relish the lake views. Bring homemade granola bars and kombucha, iNaturalist and Merlin apps, and a plastic bag to carry out your trash. Try Dan Egan's "Death and Life of the Great Lakes" or Heather Shumaker's "Saving Arcadia," (Editor's note: Read "The Hearts that saved the Arcadia Dunes," about the latter in our April 26, 2023, edition, found online.)

**Science Fiction.** Just north of the Manistee-Benzie county line is one of Michigan's mystery spots, Gravity Hill on Putney Road in Blaine Township. Experience rolling uphill in your car, on a skateboard or with a basketball – it's all strange and wonderful. There's a rational explanation for the Gravity Hill phenomenon, but save that for another day. Wear a Star Wars t-shirt, stir up a thermos of Tang and place a favorite sci-fi action figure on the dashboard. Weird sci fi: Octavia Butler's "Dawn" or Jeff Vandermeer's "Annihilation."

**History.** Our area is blessed with history museums, but let's select the Bottle House in Kaleva for distinctive architecture and historical character. After enjoying the Finnish ambience, stroll the Kaleva Centennial Sculpture Walkway. Go Thursday morning and enjoy a Kaleva Lions' Club pasty and be transported back to workplaces and mines of old Michigan with every bite. Michigan History: Bruce Catton's "Waiting for the Morning Train" or Maria Doria Russell's "Women of the Copper Country."

**Mystery.** Head to stunning Arcadia Overlook aka Inspiration Point. Enjoy magnificent views of Lake Michigan in every season and a chance to push someone deserving off the cliffs. Bring your lunch, plastic gloves and alibi. After your meal at the convenient picnic tables, reward yourself with an ice cream treat at the Arcadia Ice House. Mysteries featuring the great outdoors: Agatha Christie's "The Murder on the Links" or Paula Hawkins' "Into the Water."

See you around northern Michigan with book in hand and earbuds firmly planted.

*Rosalind Jaffe is a retired bookseller and banker. She writes from northern Michigan, where she tends her gardens.*

# Bridge

continued from Page 1

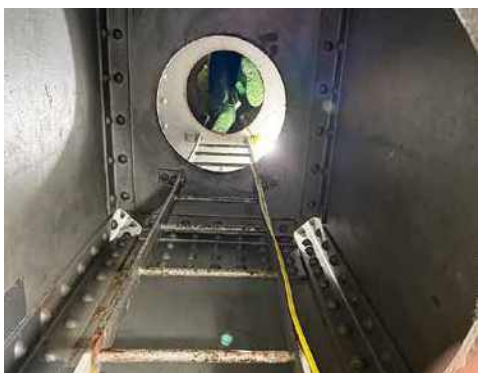
ascent, followed by a 40-foot climb on a ladder to the top. It was a windless day, and though he felt the heat of the sun on his reflective safety vest, he also felt goosebumps rise from the excitement. He and the two fire chiefs with him heard honks from excited drivers hundreds of feet beneath them.

This year will mark Hansen's seventh swim across the straits. He also swam from Mackinaw City to Mackinac Island, from St. Ignace to Mackinac Island, and around the island. Those challenging and powerful swims connect him to the Mighty Mac — for life. The bridge has become inseparable from his story. Hansen started swimming in 2015 and first swam across the straits in 2016. He was initially rejected from the event for lack of experience but reinstated for fullness of heart and determination. He came in last, noticeably low on oxygen, but crossed the finish line — something he's done again and again.

"Every swimmer that crosses the straits has the same emotional connection to the Mighty Mac," Hansen explained. "Everyone falls in love with the bridge. You can't help it."

*Amy Hansen designs each page of the Freshwater Reporter. She lives in Grand Rapids with her husband, Eric, their two cats, and her many beautiful flower blossoms.*

*The hatch in the side of the South Tower. Hansen turned his body sideways just to get in.*



*Climbing the final stretch. The elevators, barely big enough to pack two people together and original to the Bridge, stop short 40 feet from the top.*

*The Mighty Mac from the water, during a Mackinac Bridge Swim.*

## MIGHTY MAC FACTS

**$275,000+**
Donated to the St. Ignace and Mackinaw City fire departments by the Mackinac Bridge Swim swimmers, volunteers and supporters since 2022.

**350**
Athletes swimming the Straits of Mackinac in July. Their finisher medals are cut from decommissioned steel Mackinac Bridge grates.

**26,372'**
Total length of the Bridge — 28 feet short of 5 miles.

**295'**
Water depth at the deepest point beneath the bridge.

**552'**
Height of towers above the water (taller than the Washington Monument).

**42,000**
Miles of wire in the two main cables (enough to travel from Michigan to Australia and back, twice).

**1,000**
Number of years engineers predict the Mighty Mac will last with proper maintenance.

**1888**
The year the concept of a bridge across the straits was first proposed.

**1957**
The year the bridge opened to traffic.

**42**
Number of months to build the bridge (four summer construction seasons with no winter work).

**$3.25**
The amount of the first toll, about $37 in today's dollars. The current toll is $4.

**7**
Years it takes to paint the bridge. When completed, the process begins again.

**5**
Number of men who gave their lives during construction. Their names are permanently memorialized near the bridge.

**2**
Of the best fire chiefs ever.

**1**
Super happy human with a birdseye view of majestic Michigan.

# KALEVA HERITAGE DAYS

KALEVA Art GALLERY

Saturday July 18

Sunday July 19

*4th Annual*

**ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW**

Vendors along Wuoksi Street

Reserve your space until July 12:
Les 231-299-5392

**SATURDAY EVENTS**
Live Music & Food • Softball Games
Classic Car Show • Children's Activities
Fireworks at Dusk • Heritage Days Parade

**SUNDAY EVENTS**
Church in the Park
Chicken Dinner Picnic

Scan Kaleva Art Gallery's QR for more info!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**THANK YOU from all of us at Freshwater Reporter!**

## Kaleva Heritage Days 2026
## Saturday, July 18th & Sunday, July19th

**SATURDAY at Kaleva Park:**
Bounce Houses all day!
Concession stands will support next year's Kaleva Heritage Days
8:00am Co-ed Softball tournament begins. Overflow games will be played at the Community Center field.
11:00-2:00 Kids' Games, Face Painting, Library booth
11:00-2:00 Meet our First Responders- Fire Fighters and Law Enforcement
2:30 Finnish Wife Carrying contest
4:00 Water Ball match featuring local fire departments
7:00 Kaleva Heritage Days parade
After parade- Pie eating contest for kids and adults (Categories: 7 & under, 8-12, 13+)
8:30-midnight Live Music from The Downtowners
FIREWORKS at Dusk!

**SATURDAY Downtown**
9:00-4:00 Arts and Crafts Fair by Kaleva Art Gallery
9:00-3:00 Car Show
After Car Show- Burnout Contest at the Water Tower
9-4:00 Kaleva Art Gallery is open
12-4:00 Depot Museum is open
12-4:00 Bottle House Museum is open
Lunch by Kaleva Lions Club

**SUNDAY at the Lions Club:**
8:00-12:00 Pancake Breakfast

**SUNDAY at Kaleva Park:**
10:00 Worship-In-The-Park hosted by Bethany Lutheran Church featuring the Salt City Dixie Jazz Band.
11:00-2:30 American Picnic Lunch (Fried Chicken) by Community Center Events Committee
11:30-1:30 Live Music by Nick Veine
1:00 Cornhole registration. Bags fly at 2:00. Trophy boards sponsored by Thirlby's

**Sunday Downtown**
11-4:00 Arts and Crafts Fair by Kaleva Art Gallery
12-4:00 Art Gallery is Open
12-4:00 Bottle House Museum is open

Celebrating 45 years – Lions Club Fundraiser

# ARCADIA DAZE 2026 — STARRY NIGHTZ

JULY 24, 25, 26

## EARLY DAZE, TUES/WED/THUR

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5:00 p.m. | - 8:00 p.m. | **(NEW!)** Tuesdaze July 21, "Sharing Star Stories" *by Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore* Planetarium at Arcadia Community Center (ACC). Signup Online. |
| 6:30 p.m. | - 8:30 p.m. | Wednesdaze July 22 Trivia ! Doors open at 6:30, Game at 7:00 pm. ***Sharp!*** ($10 Lions fundraiser) at ACC at 7th & Glovers Lake Rd. |
| 6:00 p.m. | - Closing | Thursdaze July 23, Music at Ketch-22 on M-22, west end of the Marsh |

## FRIDAZE, JULY 24

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | & 3:00 p.m. | PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT (Pre-registration required) at **ACC** on 7th & Glovers Lake Rd. |
| 4:30 p.m. | - 5:00 p.m. | OPENING CEREMONY at Finch Park |
| 5:00 p.m. | | 5K early packet pickup. See ticket booth. |
| 5:00 p.m. | - *Until sold out* | PULLED PORK DINNER ($15) back by popular demand! at Finch Park |
| 5:00 p.m. | - 8:00 p.m. | MUSIC by "Dominic Fortuna" at Finch Park |
| 5:00 p.m. | - *Until gone* | IRON FISH DISTILLERY BEVERAGES at Finch Park |
| 5:00 p.m. | - 1:00 a.m. | BEVERAGE TENT Domestic & Craft Beer, St. Ambrose Cellars at Finch Park |
| 9:00 p.m. | - 1:00 a.m. | DANCE to LIVE MUSIC by "Great Lakes Brass Band" at Finch Park |
| | | FIREWORKS OVER LAKE MICHIGAN (rain date Saturday night). (NEW!) DJ Jay Kruz. Great Lakes Brass Band will lead Dazers back to Finch Park! |

☆ Kids Activities All Weekend ☆

**ALL WEEKEND**
Pop
Beer
Brats
Dogs

## SATURDAZE, JULY 25

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7:30 a.m. | - 8:45 a.m. | 5K REGISTRATION at Finch Park |
| 8:00 a.m. | - Noon | AUTO MUSTER REGISTRATION at 2nd & Lake St. |
| 8:30 a.m. | - 11:00 a.m. | LIONS PANCAKE BREAKFAST **$15** New Time! (Kids<10 Free!) at ACC, 7th & Glovers Lake |
| 9:00 a.m. | Sharp! | 5K RUN Starting Line at Saint Pierre Rd. & Glovers Lake Rd. |
| 9:00 a.m. | - 10:00 a.m. | KIDS' FISHING, ***FREE*** – **Ages 4-12.** Supplies and fishing at Grebe Park fishing pier, First St. |
| 10:00 a.m. | - 5:00 p.m. | KIDSIGHT TRAILER, Free vision screening for Kids. Inside the township hall. |
| 10:00 a.m. | - 5:00 p.m. | ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR on 4th St. |
| 10:30 a.m. | - 1:30 p.m. | FREE KIDS' ACTIVITIES (See back) Visit from Bluey, face paint, dark skies crafts, and more! at Finch Park |
| 11:00 a.m. | - 4:00 p.m. | ARCADIA HISTORY MUSEUM OPEN 3340 Lake St. |
| 11:30 a.m. | - *Until sold out* | HAM & GERMAN POTATO SALAD LUNCH at Trinity Lutheran Church on 3rd & Mill St. |
| Noon | - 1:00 a.m. | BEVERAGE TENT Domestic & Craft Beer, St. Ambrose Cellars at Finch Park |
| 3:00 p.m. | - 3:30 p.m. | AUTO MUSTER AWARDS CEREMONY |
| 4:30 p.m. | - *Until sold out* | BARBEQUE CHICKEN DINNER ($18) at Finch Park – Featuring Miller Poultry since 2021 |
| 5:00 p.m. | - *Until gone* | IRON FISH DISTILLERY BEVERAGES at Finch Park |
| 5:00 p.m. | - 8:00 p.m. | MUSIC by "Barefoot" at Finch Park |
| 9:00 p.m. | - 1:00 a.m. | DANCE to LIVE MUSIC by "Little Dipper Band" at Finch Park |

## SUNDAZE, JULY 26

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8:30 a.m. | - 11:00 a.m. | LIONS PANCAKE BREAKFAST **$15** New Time! (Kids<10 Free!) at ACC, 7th & Glovers Lake |
| 10:00 a.m. | - 2:30 p.m. | ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR on 4th St. |
| 11:00 a.m. | - 3:00 p.m. | BALLOON ARTIST "Twister Joe" at Finch Park. Get your Parade Daze started! |
| 12:30 p.m. | - 1:15 p.m. | PLYMOUTH FIFE & DRUM CONCERT- DRUM MARCH Marina to Finch Park |
| Noon | - 5:00 p.m. | BEVERAGE TENT Domestic & Craft Beer, St. Ambrose Cellars at Finch Park |
| 1:30 p.m. | - 2:30 p.m. | **PARADE** ARCADIA DAZE "Starry Nightz" Jeanne Sitter *Grand Marshal* -Lake St. |
| 2:30 p.m. | - 3:00 p.m. | LIONS RAFFLE DRAWINGS at Finch Park |
| 3:00 p.m. | - 4:30 p.m. | SCOTTVILLE CLOWN BAND CONCERT at Finch Park |

## KIDZ ACTIVITIES
## SATURDAZE, JULY 25

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9:00 a.m. | - 10:00 a.m. | KID'S FISHING, ***FREE*** – **Ages 4-12.** Supplies and fishing at Grebe Park fishing pier, First St. |
| 10:30 a.m. | - 1:30 p.m. | FREE KIDS' ACTIVITIES at the tennis courts at Finch Park VISIT from Bluey, Face Painting, ~~Book Bike (free books!),~~ Money Pool, Photo Booth, Rock Painting, Coloring, Dark Skies Crafts, Sidewalk Chalk, Bean Bag Toss |
| 12:00 p.m. | - *Until done* | **TEAM ACTIVITIES:** 50 yd Dash, Water Balloon Toss, Parachute Games, Tug of War |
| 2:00 p.m. | | **FAMILY ACTIVITY:** Free cornhole |

## SUNDAZE, JULY 26

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 11:00 a.m. | - 3:00 p.m. | BALLOON ARTIST "Twister Joe" at Finch Park. Get your Parade Daze started! |

## 2026 Other Local Festivals

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| July 10 | - July 12 | Bear Lake Days |
| August 6 | - August 10 | Onekama Days |
| Sept 5 | | Minnehaha Brewhaha Music Festival - Arcadia |


# FRESHWATER REPORTER

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