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SUMMER GUIDE

Tawas to host 18th annual Sunrise Side Triathlon Sept. 6

EAST TAWAS – Back for its 18th year, the 3 Disciplines Sunrise Side Triathlon is set for Saturday, Sept. 6 in East Tawas.

The athletes will compete in one of seven distance events Olympic and Sprint triathlons, Sprint Duathlon Olympic and Sprint Aquabikes, Super Sprint and a Sprint KayaTri, according to Kenny Krell owner of the sponsoring Burton-based 3 Disciplines Racing.

The event begins at 8 a.m. Sept. 6 at East Tawas Harbor Park along the Tawas Bay shoreline. That's when the Olympic athletes will enter Tawas Bay for a 1,500-kilometer swim. They will be followed by the Sprint distance athletes at 8:30 for a 500-meter swim and at 8:50 by Super Sprint distance athletes for a 200-meter swim.

That's if Mother Nature cooperates this year. Last year's triathlon became a duathlon after unseasonable weather cancelled the swim portion of the event. The air temperature combined with the cold Tawas Bay water lead to the potential of hypothermia for the athletes.

Winds and waves may have led to potentially dangerous rip currents in Tawas Bay in the past as three of the last 17 triathlons became a duathlons for the athletes who registered for the event.

The swims will be in the shallow water area of Tawas Bay parallel to the beach at the East Tawas City Park. The athletes will each start at the same point and will eventually head toward the East Tawas State Dock. After the swim, Olympic distance athletes will then bike 40 kilometers and finish with a 10-k run, while Sprint distance athletes will bike 20 kilometers before end-



File photo by John Morris
TO THE FOREST – Olympic distance athlete John Hensler of Clarkston heads out on West State Street to the Huron National Forest for a 40 kilometer bike ride.

ing with a 5-k run. Super Sprint distance athletes will bike 10 kilometers and finish with a one mile run.

“This is one of our favorite courses we have, if not the best one,” Krell said of the bike course through the Huron National Forest.

“If you count 20 cars past the 2-mile mark on the course it will be very rare.

“This is smooth sailing the entire route, nothing rough out there. Pine tree-lined course just about the entire way.”

The transition area between the swim and bike legs as well as between the bike and run portions of the triathlons is in the parking lot along Westover and Main streets.

The running course is through the residential streets of East Tawas.

Last year, Matt Albin, 53, of South Branch, was the overall winner of the Olympic distance duathlon in 2:20.34. He won the event the previous two years, four years ago he finished second and was the winner 12 years ago.

Finishing in second for the distance was Thomas McGuire, 38, of Turner in 2:26.38 while Matthew Lewis, 49, of Elkton, was third in 2:28.41.

The top overall female was Sophie Chong, 20, of

See Triathlon, Page 6



Welcome to Iosco County

Iosco County is home to beautiful sparkling Tawas Bay, where sailboats, fishing craft and jet skis enjoy nature's gift of Lake Huron.

It's home to Oscoda, where salmon and trout fishermen, canoeists and powerboaters take advantage of the local lakes and the famous majestic AuSable River.

And it's home to the western reaches of the county, which host the heart of the Huron National Forest with its pristine woods, rivers, lakes and streams.

Summer is short but sweet in Iosco County and its residents make the best of it. Here you'll find festivals, events and celebrations all summer long with restaurants, taverns, lodging, marinas, golf courses and shopping opportunities that you'll never find at home.

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2025 Summer Tourist Guide

Editor - John Morris
A publication of the Iosco County News-Herald and Oscoda Press

Editor's note: This is the third of three summer publications. The first two were published prior to Memorial Day and Fourth of July.

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SUMMER GUIDE

Autumn at Lumberman’s Monument



ANOTHER VIEW – A short, but scenic side path from the Lumbeman’s Monu-
ment overlook offers another scenic view of Cooke Pond.



LUMBERMAN’S MONUMENT – The 14-foot Lum-
berman’s Monument stands on a high bank with the AuSable River providing a scenic backdrop. The
bronze statue of three lumbermen highlights Mich-
igan’s logging history, which was significant for the
development of the state’s economy in the 1800s. It
was dedicated on July 16, 1932.



A FALL VIEW AWAITS
– The Wanigan is a repli-
ca of a floating cook
shack that followed the
AuSable River logging
drives, pictured here at
Cooke Pond.

Photos by
John Morris



DOWN THE STEPS –
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SUMMER GUIDE

Labor Day Arts and Crafts Show is set

TAWAS CITY – The Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce will host its annual Labor Day Arts and Crafts Show Saturday, Aug. 30 and Sunday, Aug. 31 at Shoreline Park in Tawas City.

Now in its 34th year, the show traditionally hosts more than 100 booths of handmade arts and crafts. Whatever your interests – from paintings, photography, leather goods, and home décor items to jewelry, clothing, furniture and delicious food items such as salsa, fudge, spices, nuts and kettle corn, you are certain to find it at this year’s show in Tawas City.

Show hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 30 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 31.

Women’s softball tournament is Sept. 6-7

EAST TAWAS – The 54th annual Tawas Women’s Invitational Softball Tournament will be held Sept. 6-7, the weekend after Labor Day.

Also known as the Bill Walsh Memorial Tournament, it will be held at Dewey Durant Park in East Tawas. Using a double elimination format, the event is an Amateur Softball Association open-class tournament and has attracted teams from not only Michigan, but the Great Lakes area and Canada. Proceeds from concessions go toward Special Olympics.

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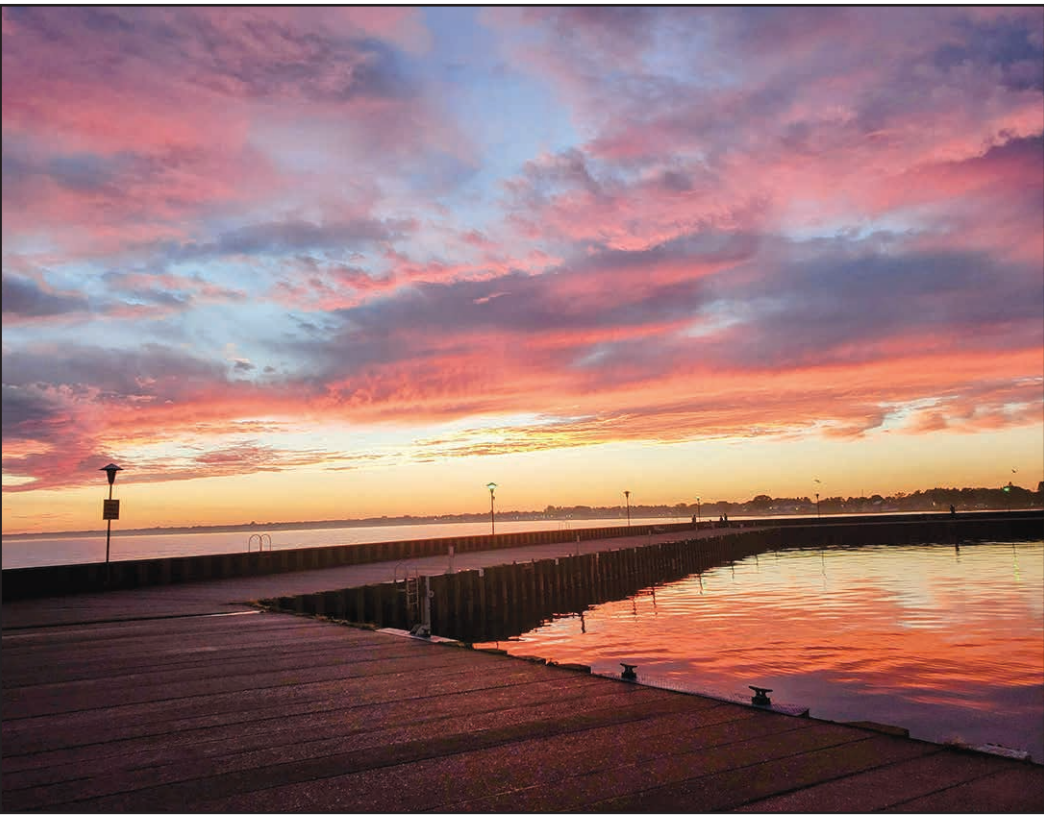
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File photo by John Morris

NATURE'S PALETTE – Although our region is called the Sunrise Side, we have some pretty awesome sunsets too! This photo was taken during a recent spectacular October evening while fishing for walleye on the East Tawas State Dock.



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SUMMER GUIDE



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

BEST BEARDS – In the tradition of Paul Bunyan, six bearded contestants vied for the honor of “Best Beard” during the 2024 festival. Last year’s winner was Matt Shaughnessy, who is pictured here at right, alongside the contest’s runner up, Jim Spry.

Paul Bunyan Days return to Furtaw Field Sept. 12-14

OSCODA – Furtaw Field in Oscoda is the site for the 2025 Paul Bunyan Days, Sept. 12-14. The Oscoda-AuSable Chamber of Commerce-sponsored event features family fun. It includes a craft show, pie eating contest, car show, carnival rides, food, drink, and lumberjack shows. For more information, call 989-739-7322 or email director@oscodachamber.com.



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

EYE-CATCHING ENTRIES – Car show enthusiasts explored an array of antique cars and trucks, during the third and final day of the latest Paul Bunyan Days Festival.



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

NEW ACTIVITIES – The owners of Native Amusements returned to Oscoda for their third year at Paul Bunyan Days, where they offered up some new activities for both adults and children. The popular carnival company continually upgrades and adds new rides for its family-friendly midway, which is shown here during the festivities at Furtaw Field this past weekend.



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel
CARVER – Earning second place honors for his white pine carving, was Emil Szkipala. Originally from Romania, he now resides in Imlay City.

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SUMMER GUIDE

TRIATHLON

Continued from Page 2

Troy and finished sixth overall in 2:43.09. In second place was Lisa McManaman, 59, of Bad Axe in 3:08.07 and Maria Stapert, 44, of Grand Rapids was third in 3:11.47.

Locally, Joshua Jordan, 40, of National City, finished 15th overall in 2:54.56.

In the Sprint duathlon distance, Micah Zuhl, 46, of Bay City was first in 1:10:02, Cameron Green, 26, of Indianapolis, Ind. was second in 1:11.01 and Jeff Lemmer, 58, of Rockwood was third in 1:17.50.

For the women in the same distance, finishing first was Susan Newmyer, 52, of Gladwin, in 1:20.59 and finished sixth overall,



File photos by John Morris
OLYMPIC WINNERS – Matt Albin of South Branch and Sophie Chong of Troy won their respective Olympic distance events last year.

Corinne Bilacic, 34, of Tawas City finished second in 1:22.28 and Lacey Jordan, 34, of Tawas City was third in 1:24.42.

Brad Kloska, 45, of East Tawas, finished 27th in 1:32.38.

The top three finishers in the Sprint distance were Kevin Moran, 37, of South

Lyon in 1:34.08, Craig McManaman of Bad Axe in 1:42.02 and Pam Munderloh of Saint Louis 1:45:30.

Larry Jones of Howell won the Sprint aquabike in 35:10 and the Sprint Richard Fawaz relay team won the Sprint distance team event in 1:29.15.



File photo by John Morris
INTO THE WATER – Sprint distance female athletes head into Tawas Bay for the 500-kilometer swim portion of their triathlon event.

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SUMMER GUIDE
LIGHTHOUSE

Continued from Page 7

out. The people around me wore camouflage, countless shades of tan and binoculars around their necks.

Some of them walked slowly, but most of them stood still, their necks craned and their eyes peering through spotting scopes or cameras.

With my naked, non-bird-watcher eyes, it was hard to spot any birds nestled in the dense trees. Barely audible whispers, points toward rustles in leaves or a set of wings above, and a few helpful tips from some kind birders on the trail helped me identify a few birds, though.

I learned to identify a magnolia warbler by its yellow belly, a piping plover by the distinct black mark on its forehead, and a double-crested cormorant by its size and matte black appearance. “Monarchs of the Marsh.” Again, I’m not a sign reader, but at the leisurely pace I was traveling, this sign about halfway down the trail seemed like a good place to pause the interruptions my footsteps were causing the birders.

The point, it turns out, provides a perfect home for monarch butterflies. The fragrant flowers of the common milkweed, which find a home on the marshy point, are the only sources of food for monarchs.

This rugged, sun-bleached sign was the first thing that helped me understand that this mere 200-acre chunk of land is more ecologically important than I ever could have imagined.

It also serves as a refuge for white-tailed deer, red foxes, snakes and countless more creatures that call Michigan home.

By the time I reached the end

of the point, which looked out into the vibrant blue waters of Saginaw Bay, I understood why Tawas Point is nicknamed the Cape Cod of the Midwest.

I also passed at least 300 people who were there just to watch birds. Some of them traveled in groups, some alone, but they rarely talked. They just admired the birds, and I admired them for their commitment.

With each step, I questioned their lifestyle less and less.

Being out on the point was immersive – a brief, indescribable escape from the worries of life. I felt as much a part of nature out there as I’m sure a

cottonwood does. I realized, as I sat on a weathered bench half-way buried in sand, that maybe birdwatching is actually not just about looking at birds. It’s more about feeling connected, whether it be to the birds, to nature or to one another.

“In 2007, Tawas Point was designated by BirdLife International and the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area,” a sign at the end of the trail read.

This small yet mighty piece of land is part of a global network of key sites used to protect bird biodiversity. It’s just a small link in an immense chain of in-

terconnectedness, acting as an important corridor for migrating songbirds, shorebirds and waterfowl each spring.

Around noon, after I had walked the trail back to the lighthouse and done some light cleaning of the lighthouse museum, it was time for the first visitors to arrive and time for me to host my first tour.

My keeper nametag, Tawas Point Lighthouse T-shirt, and walkie-talkie strapped to my waistband let everyone know I was an expert.

All I knew so far, though, was that the lighthouse was built in 1876. The rest of my facts I

would read out of a binder provided by the DNR. However, over the next few days, I was quickly able to answer even the most obscure questions about the lighthouse and point.

I was told in training to expect around 15-20 people per group, that each tour would start on the hour and that the last tour would begin at 4 p.m.

That Wednesday, only eight people came to tour the lighthouse.

They were all birders. Learn more about Tawas Point State Park and Lighthouse at Michigan.gov/TawasPoint.



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Fall in The Tawases

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Free Monarch Program, Tawas State Park Light House
- 6 Country Concert Fundraiser, Tawas Bay Ice Arena
- 7 The Tasty Tour of Tawas, Hosted by Quota of Iosco County
- 11 Develop Iosco Quarterly Meeting, Warrior Pavilion, Oscoda
- 12 Fish Dinner, American Legion
- 13 TC Library Book Sale
- 13 Vintage Market, Brugger’s Plaza
- 16 Michigan’s Haunted Lighthouses, Iosco County Historical Museum
- 20 Murder Mystery Dinner, The Buckhorn Inn
- 20 BBQ Pork Dinner, American Legion
- 27 Murder Mystery Dinner, The Buckhorn Inn

OCTOBER

- 3-4 Customer Appreciation Days, Downtown East Tawas
- 7 Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting
- 10 Chillers & Chuckles, Reader’s Theatre, Buckhorn Inn
- 10-11 Harvest Festival, Tawas Point State Park
- 11 Craft Show, American Legion
- 13 Fall Community Concert Band Concert, Tawas High School
- 18 Harvest Dinner, American Legion
- 25 Pumpkin Carving Event, Downtown East Tawas
- 31 Halloween Parade & Downtown Trick or Treating

NOVEMBER

- 1 Empty Bowls, Tawas Bay Art Gallery
- 8 Tawas Band Bazaar, Tawas High School
- 8 Cider in the Cider, Downtown East Tawas
- 16 Family Fun Fair, The Collective
- 27 Turkey Trot with Tawas Wellness Warriors
- 29 Annual Tree Lighting & Christmas Parade

34th Annual Labor Day Weekend Arts & Craft Show

Shoreline Park, Tawas City
Saturday, August 30th
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday, August 31st
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Outing

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September 18

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