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June 24, 2026

Supplement to the Iosco County News-Herald and Oscoda Press

SUMMER GUIDE

78th AuSable River Canoe Marathon slated July 25-26

OSCODA – It's called one of the toughest, fastest paced, most grueling and competitive professional marathon canoe races anywhere.

The 78th Consumers Energy AuSable River Canoe Marathon, set for Saturday and Sunday, July 25-26 – is the middle leg of the prestigious Triple Crown of Canoe Racing.

Last year's race had a record 114 teams and paddlers in this year's race will again cover 120 miles of the AuSable's twists and turns from Grayling to Oscoda, paddling more than 50,000 strokes by the time they reach the finish line. A total of 102 teams were able to finish the grueling race.

Billed as "The World's Toughest Spectator Sports," tens of thousands of devoted fans follow the race in person or online every year.

The Marathon begins Saturday, July 25 in downtown Grayling at 9 p.m. Teams run their canoes down the streets of Grayling in a LeMans-style start, entered the water near the Old AuSable Fly Shop. From there they paddle non-stop for 120 miles until reaching Oscoda the next day, portaging over six dams along the way.

Travis Mecklenburg, 22, of Grayling and Weston Willoughby, 34 of Traverse City, led the 77th Consumers Energy AuSable River Marathon wire-to-wire last year reaching Finish Line Park in Oscoda with a total time of 14 hours, 17 minutes and 7 seconds. They never quite pulled away. They were never seriously threatened, either.

This was just Mecklenburg's fourth start in the race and his best prior finish was fifth. For Willoughby, this was his 12th career attempt at the Marathon; and he has finished as high as second before.

Roughly 40 minutes into the race, Mecklenburg and Willoughby led by nearly 30 seconds at the first checkpoint – Burton's Landing. At Stephan Bridge that lead swelled to 57 seconds. They led by over a minute at every other early checkpoint and by the time their first portage at Mio Dam (about five hours into the race) the lead grew to two minutes, 50 seconds. That margin was trimmed slightly to two minutes, 10 seconds, by the time they reached the final portage at Foote Dam. From there to the finish line though they only added distance behind themselves and the second place canoe, winning by nearly three minutes.

Winning the title in mixed was Michael Schlimmer of Cortland, N.Y. and Eve Chamberland of Shawinigan, Quebec. They finished 15th overall with a time of 15:21:53. They were one spot and seven minutes of the second place mixed team.

This is the third straight mixed division victory for the duo at the Marathon.

As for the women's championship, that honor went to Cecili Bugge of Roscommon and Edith MacHattie of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. They crossed the finish line 32nd overall on a time of 16:01:01; just over an hour of the second place women's team.

Following Mecklenburg and Willoughby in second place was Chris Issendorf and Christophe Proulx (14:20:43), Wes Dean and Logan Mynar (14:31:23), Jorden Wakeley and Matt Gabriel Jr. (14:33:39) and Kyle Mynar and Carlos Linares

(14:45:07).

In sixth was the previous year's championship team, Mike Davis and Guillaume Blais (14:50:27) and in seventh through 10th were Amado Cruz and Cristian Lopez (14:55:08), Louis-Simon Pruneau and Serge Page (14:57:20), Danny Medina and Pete Mead (15:00:56) and Carson Burmeister and Renaud

Flageole (15:03:06).

There was a solid presence of local paddlers in the Marathon as well; with 16 canoes having at least one member with local ties. They found the river to be favorable, as all 16 teams finished the race.

• Canoe 05 – Bruce Barton, Homer, Josie VanderVeen, Tawas City – 84th overall

(17:54:21).

• Canoe 06 – Mickey Kimsel, Bay City, formerly of Oscoda, Ursula Latreille, Curran – 96th overall (18:36:19).

• Canoe 07 – Kyle Stonehouse, Grayling, formerly of East Tawas, Kaitlin Mynar,

Martindale, Texas – 21st overall (15:35:53).

• Canoe 11 – Brayden Malak, Logan Lammi, both of Oscoda – 59th overall (16:50:08).

• Canoe 12 – Tad Hill, Mil-
See Paddlers, Page 3A



File photo by Ben Murphy

MARATHON WINNERS – Travis Mecklenburg of Grayling and Weston Willoughby of Traverse City cross the finish line in Oscoda to win the 2025 Consumers Energy AuSable River Canoe Marathon.



File photo by Ben Murphy

MIXED WINNERS – Michael Schlimmer of Cortland, N.Y. and Eve Chamberland of Shawinigan, Quebec celebrate their mixed division championship as they cross the finish line last year.

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SUMMER GUIDE



File photo by Ben Murphy

LEMANS-STYLE START – Teams run with their canoes down the streets of Grayling at the start of last year's Consumers Energy AuSable River Canoe Marathon.

PADDLERS

Continued from Page 2A

ford, Caleb Watson, Oscoda – 33rd overall (16:01:45).

• Canoe 19 – Nate Greeley, St. Johns, Scott Johnston, Lowell, formerly of Oscoda – 64th overall (16:53:42).

• Canoe 32 – Greg Nelson, Marquette, Terry Curley, East Tawas – 102nd overall (18:59:53).

• Canoe 34 – Joey Kimsel, Oscoda, Carrie Montgomery, Mikado- 66th overall (16:55:34).

• Canoe 44 – Drew Compau, Addis, La., formerly of Hale, Flash Marsh, Mio – 54th overall (16:43:55).

• Canoe 49 – Nate Tate, Portage, Josh Cosek, Kalamazoo, both formerly of Oscoda – 47th overall (16:30:12).

• Canoe 54 – Dan Gary, Oscoda, Lynne Witte, Cheboygan – 93rd overall (18:23:11).

• Canoe 57 – Dan Mecklenburg, Columbus, Ohio, Jon Webb, Mio, formerly of Oscoda – 39th overall (16:10:43).

• Canoe 59 – Mari Chandler, East Tawas, Brenda Carlson-Brown, Grayling – 89th overall (18:17:48).

• Canoe 76 – Kevin Ornatowski, Tawas City, Jerry Killingbeck, East Tawas – 80th overall (17:41:07).

• Canoe 89 – Noah VanderVeen, Tawas City, Richard Lauth, Grosse Ile – 25th overall (15:45:33).

• Canoe 104 – Johnny Zacharski, East Lansing, John Zacharski, Marshall, formerly of Tawas City – 95th overall (18:29:30).



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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2026 Summer Tourist Guide

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

Editor's note: This is the second of three summer publications. The remaining one will be published prior to Labor Day.

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SUMMER GUIDE

Blues by the Bay returns for 24th year

EAST TAWAS – A Chicago, Ill. native is this year's headliner for the 24th annual Blues by the Bay music festival.

The festival, set for Aug. 28-30 under the big top at Harbor Park in East Tawas, is put on annually by the Tawas Bay Blues Society.

Mud Morganfield is the main act and will hit the blues stage at about 8 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 29.

Blues by the Bay begins at 6 p.m. Friday, Aug. 28 with the *Brendon Linsley Band* followed at 8 p.m. with *Mississippi Heat*.

Other bands performing on Saturday, Aug. 29 include *Kathleen Murray* at noon, *Tosha Owens & The Stable Dudes* at 2 p.m., *Sunny Bleau and The Moons* at 4 and *Greg Nagy* at 6.

Rounding out the festival on Sunday, Aug. 30 are *DeSoto Drive* at 1 p.m. and *Motor City Josh & The Big 3* at 3 p.m.

Admission to Blues by the Bay last year was a \$40 souvenir button, good for all three days of the festival. Ticket prices this year is yet to be determined, according to the Blues by the Bay website. Food and drinks are available. While some picnic



File photo by Kaitlyn Campbell
BLUES HEADLINER – Eliza Neals, pictured above, was the 2025 headliner for Blues by the Bay, which takes place at Harbor Park in East Tawas. She showcased her powerful voice and great stage presence. Her blues music has a more unique, modern style with elements of rock, soul and Detroit sounds.

tables are available on the festival grounds, most people attending the festival bring their

own chairs.

For more information, visit www.bluesbythebaytawas.org.

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SUMMER GUIDE

Art on the Beach celebrates 42 years

OSCODA – A popular tradition in Oscoda continues to flourish as a “must see” event and unique shopping experience for residents and visitors, at the Oscoda Beach Park on the shores of Lake Huron.

Art and Antiques on the Beach celebrates its 42nd year June 27-28. Show hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 27 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 28.

Numerous artisans display and sell their handmade arts, crafts, and hobbies at the Oscoda Beach Park, at the end of River Road in downtown Oscoda, overlooking the sandy shores of beautiful Lake Huron.

Artists from across the area and the state will be displaying and selling their handmade arts, crafts and hobbies. Artists come to sell a wide variety of handmade crafts and works of art.

Art on the Beach is open to both professional and amateur artists who have created original work. Original means a unique work created by the artist using their own skills and imagination, which they are entitled to copyright.

Last year, more than 70 artisans and crafters filled the Oscoda Beach Park with hand-



File photo by Kaitlyn Campbell

FORTY-TWO YEARS AND COUNTING – Art on the Beach returned to Oscoda for its 41st year in 2025 at Oscoda Beach Park. More than 70 vendors participated in the event, and many shoppers came out to purchase a variety of art pieces.

made items, including watercolor paintings, metal garden art, flat board intarsia, decorative cement leaves, cedar birdhouses, doll furniture, epoxied wood laser-engraved products, original photography, T-shirts and sweatshirts, jewelry, fudge, dips, seasonings, handmade pet jacket harnesses, suncatchers, stained glass, rock and peddle art, crocheted and knitted items, hats and more.



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

AWARD-WINNING WINES – Volunteers Kelly and Nina O'Loughlin, pictured here from left, served a delightful variety of sweet wines from the St. Julian Winery in PawPaw to attendees of the 16th annual Tawas Uncork'd Wine, Ale & Food Festival.

Uncork'd Wine, Ale and Food Festival is Aug. 1

EAST TAWAS – The Tawas Uncork'd Wine, Ale and Food Festival is set to celebrate its 17th annual run Saturday, Aug. 1.

Presented by the nonprofit Friends of the East Tawas Library, it will again be hosted at East Tawas Harbor Park, located at the foot of Newman Street at the US-23 intersection.

From noon to 5 p.m., attendees can enjoy Michigan-made food and beverages from dozens of different vendors, kick back while listening to live music and have a shot at some raffle prizes, all while situated near the sandy Lake Huron shoreline.

Attendees can pay for their entry at the gate the day of the event. Event goers are also able to enjoy a bottle of wine with their food, which can be purchased from the headquarters' table.

Tawas Uncork'd Wine, Ale and Food Festival began as a fundraiser for the construction of a new library, which was built in 2016 and is adjoined to the East Tawas Community Center on Newman Street.

The events held since then have been used to help with a range of other needs, such as furnishing and sustaining the library and supporting literacy in the local area.

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SUMMER GUIDE



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

SUMMERFEST 2025 CAR CRUISE – More than 150 car cruise enthusiasts drove their cars and trucks from Dean Arbour Ford in Tawas City through the streets of Tawas City and East Tawas last year. Appreciative onlookers cheered as the vehicles passed by.

Summerfest opens 2026 rendition in Tawas

EAST TAWAS – The two-day Tawas Bay Summerfest kicks off its 19th annual rendition in July.

Set for July 10-12, activities start on Friday, July 10 with the Summerfest Kickoff Party at Shoreline Park in Tawas City. Bouncy Houses will be open from noon to 9 p.m., a Cornhole Tournament starts at 6 p.m. and a Beach Dance featuring *The Smokie Links* will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The Running Free Summerfest 5K and 10K starts things off on Saturday July 11. The 10K begins at 8:30 a.m. followed by the 5K start at 9. The event

is presented by Tawas Wellness Warriors and Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce.

Paws on the Porch will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, July 11 at Tawas Bay Art Gallery in East Tawas and is repeated on Sunday, July 12 from noon to 3 p.m.

Also on Saturday, July 11 is the Car Cruise, which takes to the streets at 6 p.m., line-up is from 5 to 6 p.m. at Dean Arbour Ford along M-55, Tawas City and ends on Newman Street in downtown East Tawas. A Street Dance will be held from 7 to 10 p.m. on Newman Street featuring *The Smokie Links*. A

Car Cruise After Party will be held from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. at Lake Life Cottages with drink specials, bonfire and S'mores, cornhole and music.

Summerfest wraps up on Sunday, July 12 with the 64th annual Iosco County Airport Fly-In and Breakfast from 8 a.m. to noon. The popular 19th annual Car Show on Newman Street starts with registration from 7 to 10 a.m. and concludes with the awards ceremony at 3 p.m.

For more information, visit tawassummerfest.com.



File photo by Gaylynn Brenoel

READY, SET, GO – More than 150 runners and walkers participated last year in the 5k race/walk which was put on by the Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce and the Tawas Wellness Warriors, and started out from The Collective in East Tawas.

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SUMMER GUIDE



File photos by Kaitlyn Campbell

MIDWAY RIDES AND GAMES – The Midway, brought to last year's fair by Anderson Midways of Standish, saw multiple carnival rides and games, with many children having fun with friends and family alike.

Iosco County Fair returns for 82nd rendition

HALE – For chills, thrills and excitement there's no better place to be than at this year's Iosco County Fair from July 27-Aug. 1 at the fairgrounds in Hale.

Highlighted events this year include the Monday Night Fair Kick-off Party featuring a Glow/Paint/Foam Party on Monday, July 27; Country Music Concert by Tege Holton on Tuesday, July 28; Night of Destruction – featuring School

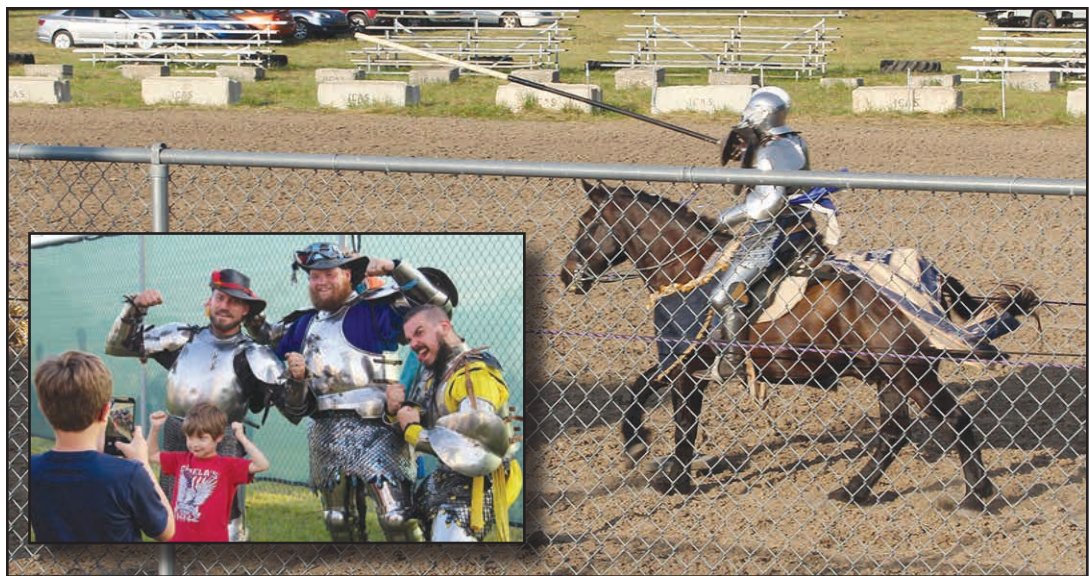
Bus and Tow-Trailer Racing, on Wednesday, July 29; Junior Market Livestock Auction on Thursday, July 30; Off Road - Bump N Run on Friday, July 31; and Flying Star Rodeo Productions Pro Rodeo on Saturday, Aug. 1.

Free daily entertainment shows this year are Tumbleweed Crossing, an award-winning comedy Wild West Gunfight Stunt Show; and The Amazing Bubble Factory.

Other fun events happening at the 2026 fair are Barnyard Olympics and Cow Pie Bingo on Thursday, July 30; and Games and Contests for all Ages, Corn-hole Tournament and Quilt Raffle on Saturday, Aug. 1.

There will be specials going on for ride-all-day bracelets on the Anderson Midway during the fair.

For more information, visit the fair's website at ioscocountyfair.com.



File photos by Kaitlyn Campbell

KNIGHTS OF THE NEW ORDER – New to the Iosco County Fair last year was the grandstand event on July 22 that featured the Knights of the New Order, a full contact jousting group. They held a jousting competition between four knights, including Sir Edward, Sir Shiloh and Sir Garr, as well as a meet-and-greet, following the show.

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June 18th - August 13th
Rotary of Oscoda "Summer Concert Series"
Thursdays 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Oscoda Beach Park

June 3rd - Sept. 2nd
Dwight Street Live Street Dance
Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Live Music & Dancing

June 24th - August 12th
"Movies by the Pier" Series Begins
Wednesdays at the Oscoda Beach Park

June 26th - 27th
Lakewood Shores Property Owners Association
10th Annual Subdivision Wide Garage Sale

June 27th - 28th
42nd Annual "Art & Antiques on the Beach"
Oscoda Beach Park

July 4th
Stars, Stripes & Future Lights
11 a.m. Parade - Starts at Furtaw Field
proceeds South on US-23 to Mill St. Bridge

July 11th
Annual Veteran's Memorial Park Trunk Craft Show
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

July 26th
AuSable Canoe River Marathon Finish Line Festival

August 1st-2nd
Pirates & Mermaids Festival
Oscoda Beach 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
PiratesandMermaidsFestival.org

August 16th
Battle for the Paddle Golf Outing
Red Hawk Golf Club

August 22nd
Aviation Celebration - KOSC
Free event for children accompanied by parent
Phoenix Flight Services FBO, 4073 E. Van Ettan St., Oscoda

OscodaChamber.com

Information 989-739-7322
4440 N. US-23, Oscoda



SUMMER GUIDE

Curley Memorial set for July 11-12 on the AuSable

OSCODA — While area canoe racing enthusiasts will have to wait until July 25 for the AuSable River Canoe Marathon, there will be plenty of action on the water in the meantime.

Paddlers will take part in the Curley Memorial in Oscoda July 11-12, and battle it out in the Spike's Challenge in Grayling on July 18-19.

Formed in 1994, the event was originally known as the Harry Curley Memorial Canoe Race, in honor of "Mr. AuSable Canoe Race," Harry Curley. The event was renamed in 2003 to the Curley Memorial Canoe Race after the sudden passing of Kevin Curley, a popular Oscoda canoe paddler and avid race organizer.

In the years since, the race has come to honor other members of the Curley family involved with canoe racing, as well as all of the individuals who have contributed to the sport of Michigan canoe racing, whether through race organizing, volunteering, or participating. The Curley Awards Picnic, held annually after the C-2 race, gathers donations for the MCRA Canoe's Memorial Monument fund.

The C2 race begins at 9 a.m. at the wall of Cooke Dam on July 11. Teams paddle up river and around a buoy, then voyage back to and portage over Cooke Dam. From there they proceed to Foote Dam where they portage once again, and paddle on to Finish Line Park, near the AuSable Inn in downtown Oscoda.

Winning time is expected to be about two and a half hours.

The C1 race begins at 10 a.m. July 12, and is at the AuSable Children's Park at the corner of Harbor St. and O'Toole Street. In this race, paddlers race two laps around a buoy with a winning time expected to be about one hour.

While the Curley gives paddlers an early look at the river from Cooke Dam to the finish line, the Spike's does the same for the beginning stages of the race. The Spike's race is held the weekend prior to the Consumers Energy AuSable River Canoe Marathon.



File photo

FLY-IN – U.S. Coast Guard personnel landed a helicopter at the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport in 2024 to support the annual Wurtsmith Air Museum (WAM) Fly-In and Pancake Breakfast. More than 300 attendees are treated to a pancake breakfast during the event. This year the WAM Fly-In and Pancake Breakfast is scheduled for Aug. 15.

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Pictured: Tracy Stevelinck

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Summertime in
TAWAS

Schedule of Events

For a complete list of Summer Events please visit www.Tawas.com



- Wed., July 1**
Kids Dance Party with DJ Chase & TWW, Shoreline Park
- Thurs., July 2**
Arts & Crafts with Tawas Bay Art Gallery,
2 shows by Clark the Juggler, Shoreline Park
- Fri., July 3**
Bubble Bash with BPT Entertainment, Lit Boat Parade,
Random Hoax Concert, Shoreline Park
- Sat, July 4**
"Party Like It's 1776!" Parade 11 a.m., Fireworks dusk
Tawas.com
- Fri. - Sun., July 10 - 12**
Summerfest, TawasSummerfest.com
- Fri., July 10**
Kick-off Party & Bounce Houses, Vendors, BPT Entertainment
- Sat., July 11**
5K/10K TWW, Car Cruise
Book Sale, Tawas City Library
- Sun., July 12**
Classic Car Show, Newman St., Dawn Patrol Fly-in &
Pancake Breakfast • TawasSummerfest.com

- Fri. - Sat., July 17 - 18**
Dueling Piano, American Legion
- Mon. - Sat., July 27 - Aug. 1**
Iosco County Fair • IoscoCountyFair.com
- Sat., August 1**
Tawas Uncork'd & Untapped Beer & Wine Festival
Harbor Park
- Fri., August 7**
National Lighthouse Day, Tawas Point State Park
- Fri. - Sun., August 7 - 9**
WE Players, Inc. Shakespeare in the Park,
Dewey Durant Park
- Sat., August 8**
Book Sale, Tawas City Library
- Thurs. - Sat., August 13 - 15**
Sidewalk Sales, Newman Street
- Fri. - Sun., August 28 - 30**
Annual Blues by the Bay, Harbor Park
- Sat. - Sun., September 5 - 6**
Labor Day Arts & Crafts Show, Shoreline Park

All Summer Long

- Saturdays:**
- Farm Market, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Gateway Park, Tawas City
 - Book Sale, 9 a.m.-Noon
Second Saturday of the month
Tawas City Library (June-Sept.)
 - Vintage Market 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Second Saturday of the month
(May-Sept.)
Brugger Plaza, Tawas City

- Mondays:**
Tawas Community Concert Band
7 p.m.
East Tawas City Park
June 16-August 11
- Tuesdays:**
Tuesdays at the Lighthouse
Tawas Point State Park
Live Street Dance, 7 p.m.
Newman St., East Tawas

- Thursdays:**
TWW Free Family 5k, 5:30 p.m.
The Collective, East Tawas
- Fridays**
Shoreline Summer Series, 7 p.m.
Shoreline Park, Tawas City
starts July 4th

