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# Welcome to the shoreline

Situated on the sandy shore of Lake Michigan, beaches from Ludington to the White Lake area have become part of many a family's summer vacation stop for generations.

**West Michigan** greets the visitor with the allure of warm sand, sunny beaches, world-class sunsets, fascinating people and an array of fun activities.

museums in Hart, Pentwater, Mears, at Historic White Pine Village just south of Ludington and the new Port of Ludington Maritime Museum.

As for outdoor recreation, this portion of the Lake Michigan coastline is second to none in opportunities for big or small-lake fishing, a world-class trout stream in the Pere Marquette River and the White River in Hesperia and great stream fishing in other rivers. Take a charter, or fish from shore on a breakwater at inland lake or river access site.

Our state parks are diverse. Ludington State Park at more than 5,300 acres offers miles of hiking trails, access to Lake Michigan and Hamlin Lake, tubing on the Big Sable River and a beautiful beach with an iconic reconstructed beach house.

The Friends of Ludington State Park sponsors a concert/nature series at the park in summer that is free.

The William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park was the state's first linear park. Silver Lake State Park's dunes are beautiful and open to dune buggies, walking and all-terrain vehicles.

Four lighthouses along the shore are open to visit and to climb on their tours. White River Light Station, Little Point

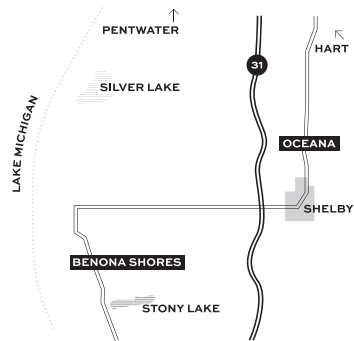
Sable, Ludington North Breakwater and Big Point Sable lighthouses are icons of our shorelines and favorite subjects of photographers.

The Manistee National Forest offers a variety of other activities, from off-road motorcycle trails, to wilderness camping and hiking at Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area north of Ludington, camping, hiking, hunting and fishing. The North Country Trail winds through the region.

There are plenty of other activities to keep you busy. Rent a canoe and traverse Michigan's first canoe trail at Ludington State Park. Feed elk at Amber Elk Ranch. Visit a dairy farm with great ice cream and cheese at Country Dairy in New Era. Ride or watch the National Historic Landmark SS Badger as it sails daily from mid-May through mid-October between Ludington and Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Try parasailing, charter fishing, or shop our visitor-friendly downtowns.

Want more information? Pick up the local newspapers, Ludington Daily News, Oceana's Herald-Journal or White Lake Beacon to see what's happening when you visit. Or visit their websites, [www.ludingtondailynews.com](http://www.ludingtondailynews.com), [www.oceana-heraldjournal.com](http://www.oceana-heraldjournal.com) or [www.whitelakebeacon.com](http://www.whitelakebeacon.com)

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# Ludington Area Events

## June

- 01** **PORT** of Ludington Maritime Museum opens for season
- 02** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 03** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Third Coast Djypsy Jazz, Downtown Ludington
- 07** **MESSY** Monday - Kitchen Utensil Painting, Sandcastles Children's Museum, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 09** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 10** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Adam Knudsen, Downtown Ludington
- 12** **LAKESTRIDE** 5K/10K, 1/2 Marathon, [www.ludingtonlakestride.com](http://www.ludingtonlakestride.com)
- 11** **SS** Badger begins Double Sailing
- 12** **SS** Badger shoreline cruise, 1-800-841-4243
- 14** **MESSY** Monday - Fathers Day craft, Sandcastles, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 16** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 17** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Jason Hargreaves, Downtown Ludington
- 19** **WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club antique tractor pull, 10 a.m.
- 21** **MESSY** Monday - Shaving cream marbling, Sandcastles Children's Museum, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 23** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 26** **WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club garden tractor dead-boat pull, 10 a.m., transfer-sled pull, 1 p.m.
- 26** **BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12-5pm @ LSP, 845-7417, [splka.org](http://splka.org)
- 26** **BLESSING** of the Boats, Ludington waterfront, [splka.org](http://splka.org)

- 24** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Eric Engblade, Downtown Ludington
- 24** **SUNSET** Beach Bonfire, 8-10pm @ Stearns Park Beach, 845-5430
- 25** **DOWNTOWN** Ludington Final Friday, 3-9 p.m. - farmers market, live music, safe activities, shopping, scavenger hunts, more
- 28** **MESSY** Monday - Fourth of July craft, Sandcastles Children's Museum, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 29** **SCOTTVILLE** Clown Band Patriotic Concert
- 30** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 01** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Cheryl Wolfram, Downtown Ludington
- 02** **THE** Artists of Epworth, Ludington Area Center for the Arts
- 03** **WEST** Shore Art Fair @ Rotary Park, 845-2787
- 03** **LUDINGTON** Area Jaycees Freedom Festival Children & Pet Parade, 6 pm at Loomis/Ferry Streets, 233-2319
- 04** **LUDINGTON** Area Jaycees Freedom Festival Grand Parade, 2 pm in downtown Ludington, 233-2319
- 04** **LUDINGTON** Area Jaycees Freedom Festival Fireworks, Dusk over Lake Michigan, 233-2319
- 04** **FOURTH** of July Badger Shoreline Cruise, 1-800-841-4243
- 05** **MESSY** Monday - Fluffy slime, Sandcastles Children's Museum, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 07** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 07** **NIGHT** at the Lights Music at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse, Rough and Tumble, 7 - 8:30 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org)

## July

# Ludington Area Events continued

- 08** **BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12-5pm @LSP, 845-7417
- 08** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Tom Zatarga, downtown Ludington
- 10** **MASON** County PAWS Art Auction, 6-9 p.m., Stearns Hotel, Grand Ballroom, 212 E. Ludington Ave., Ludington. \$25 Search Mason County Paws on Facebook for more information
- 14** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 14** **NIGHT** at the Lights Music at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse, Steel Doin It, 7 to 8:30 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org)
- 15** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Merchant & Miller, downtown Ludington
- 12** **LUDINGTON** Offshore Classic Fishing Tournament & BIG BOYS Tournament, [www.ludingtontournament.com](http://www.ludingtontournament.com)
- 17** **WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club antique tractor pull, 10 a.m.
- 21** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 22** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Brad Lee, Downtown Ludington
- 22** **BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12 to 5 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org)
- 24** **MUDDY** Fox Trot 5K Mud Run & Obstacle Course, West Shore Community College, 9 a.m. to noon
- 24** **WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club garden tractor dead-boat pull, 10 a.m.; transfer sled pull, 1 p.m.
- 24** **WEST** Shore Bank's Rhythm & Dunes Concert, 6pm @ Waterfront Park - Beach Party, [westshorebank.com/rhythm-and-dunes](http://westshorebank.com/rhythm-and-dunes)
- 22** **SUNSET** Beach Bonfire, 8-10pm @ Stearns Park Beach, 845-5430
- 28** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 28** **NIGHT** at the Lights Music at Little Sable Point Lighthouse, Olivia Manville and the Aquatic Troupe, 7 to 8:30 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org)
- 29** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Canopy Space, Downtown Ludington
- 30** **FINAL** Friday in Downtown Ludington, 3-9 p.m. - farmers market, live music, safe activities, shopping, scavenger hunts, more
- 30** **AUG. 1** Downtown Ludington Sidewalk Sales, 845-6237
- 31** **WEST** Shore Bank's Rhythm & Dunes Concert, 6pm @ Waterfront Park - Retro '80s, [westshorebank.com/rhythm-and-dunes](http://westshorebank.com/rhythm-and-dunes)
- 31** **SS** Badger shoreline cruise, 1-800-841-4243
- 05** **WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club Old Engine & Tractor Show, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; antique tractor pull, 10 a.m.
- 05** **BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12 to 5 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org), music by Chris Kennedy & Eric Michaels, 1 to 3 p.m.
- 05** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Road Less Traveled, downtown Ludington
- 06** **U.S. 10 & 31** Celebration, Scottville
- 07** **RUN** The Beach 5K, 845-6237
- 10** **WESTERN** Michigan Fair @ Mason County Fairgrounds, [masoncountytairgrounds.com](http://masoncountytairgrounds.com)
- 11** **EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787
- 12** **LIVE** in the Plaza, Bret Maynard, downtown Ludington
- 14** **GOLD** Coast Artisan Fair in Rotary Park, 845-0324

## August

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## Ludington Area Events continued

**18 EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA, 845-2787

**19 BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12 to 5 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org)

**19 LIVE** in the Plaza, Gabriel James, downtown Ludington

**21 SUDS** on the Shore Craft Beer & Wine Festival, 1-6pm @ Rotary Park, [sudsontheshore.com](http://sudsontheshore.com)

**21 WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club antique tractor pull, 10 a.m.

**21 SS** Badger shoreline cruise, 1-800-841-4243

**21 HELP** MAD Ride, 8am-3pm, [helpmadride.com](http://helpmadride.com)

**25 EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA,

**26 LIVE** in the Plaza, Nick Veine, Ludington

**26 SUNSET** Beach Bonfire, 8-10pm @ Stearns Park Beach, 845-5430

**27 FINAL** Friday in Downtown Ludington, 3-9 p.m. - farmers market, live music, safe activities, shopping, scavenger hunts, more

**28 SUSAN** Lingg Watercolor Workshop, 1-4 p.m., LACA, 845-2787

**September**

**01 EVENING** music jam session, 6-8 p.m., LACA

**02 LIVE** in the Plaza, Patty Pershayla, downtown Ludington

**06 CLOSING** day for Ludington North Breakwater, Ludington

**06 SS** Badger Double Sailing Ends

**11 BIG** Sable Bus Day, 12 to 5 p.m., [www.splka.org](http://www.splka.org), music by Joe Ireland, 1 to 3 p.m.

**11 SCOTTVILLE** Clown Band Concert

**11 PETUNIA** Pulling Day, [ludingtonpetuniaparade.com](http://ludingtonpetuniaparade.com)

**18 WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club antique tractor pull, 10 a.m.

**20 PETUNIA** Parade Block Captain Dessert/Open House, [ludingtonpetuniaparade.com](http://ludingtonpetuniaparade.com)

**24 FINAL** Friday in Downtown Ludington, 3-9 p.m. - farmers market, live music, safe activities, shopping, scavenger hunts, more

**24 OCTOBERFEST** Pub Crawl, 6-11 p.m., downtown Ludington

**25 WESTERN** Michigan Old Engine Club garden tractor dead-boat pull, 10 a.m.; sled pull, 1 p.m.

**25 OCTOBERFEST** in Downtown Ludington, [downtownludington.org](http://downtownludington.org), 1-6 p.m., James Street Plaza

## Oceana Area Events

*June*

*July*

*August*

*September*

**05 FREE** plant give-away and garden sale 9 a.m. to noon; Friends of Shelby Area District Library; 189 N. Maple St.; Shelby.

**12 PENTWATER** Chamber Golf Outing; 9 a.m.; Lakeside Links.

**12 PENTWATER** Annual Community Garage Sales; various locations throughout Pentwater.

**19-20 PENTWATER** Spring Fest; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday; Pentwater.

**22 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce bike rodeo, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**03 ANNUAL** Pentwater Fireworks display; dusk; Charles Mears State Park beach; Pentwater.

**07-11 VIETNAM** Memorial Traveling Wall; Oceana County Fairgrounds; Hart.

**13 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce features Do You Believe in Magic, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**27 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce mid summer fun, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**10 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce features dog-days of summer, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**12-15 ANNUAL** Pentwater Homecoming; Pentwater.

**24 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce features a carnival, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**28-29 PENTWATER** Sidewalk Sales; Pentwater.

**04 BREWS** and Beats; noon-5 p.m. Pentwater Village Green; Pentwater; changed from May 1.

**10-11 SILVER** Lake Sand Dunes Apple and BBQ Festival, Silver Lake.

**14 NEW** Era Farmers Market, 4-7 p.m. Kids Power of Produce features End of Summer Celebration, 4-5 p.m. New Era.

**23 PENTWATER** Harvest Day; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Pentwater.

**25-26 PENTWATER** Fall Fest; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday; Pentwater Village Green; Pentwater.

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**Ludington Daily News**

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**Oceana's Herald-Journal**

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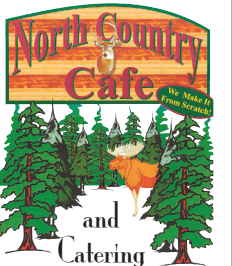
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# CARTIER



**THERE ARE SEVERAL** entry points to the trails of Cartier Park. The trailhead at Rath Avenue and Bryant Road proves handy for many.

# PARK



Cartier Park is hardly a hidden gem — it shines in plain sight of people living in or visiting Ludington.

Its wide, paved 1-mile multi-use trail between Lincoln Lake and residential areas in the city, Pere Marquette Township and Epworth, gets a lot of use but is spacious enough to handle the foot traffic, joggers and bicyclists and still allow for social distancing.

For more adventurous cyclists, Shoreline Cycling Club has designed a separate mountain bike riding trail snaking through the woods of the 68-acre natural area.

The trails are family- and pet-friendly and spacious enough for proper social distancing while enjoying them. Often one can find “Ludington Rocks” painted stones tucked away along the looped trail with spokes to different access points.

The woods are mature with fine many gnarly, personality filled beech, oak, maple, hemlock and pine. There’s an occasional tree identifica-

tion sign. A sign along the northern portion of the trail tells about invasive species control of garlic mustard. The Mason-Lake Conservation District and volunteers from the local environmental group AFFEW in recent summers have done monthly work removing invasive plants from the park.

You’ll likely encounter a lot of people walking dogs which must be on leash. Stations along the way provide plastic bags for owners to clean up after their pets. If you wish to let your dog run free, the Central Bark Park is on the north side of the park. You can either walk to the fenced area or access by vehicle it from Slagle Drive off the north end of Rath Avenue. The parking area there offers a different option to start your walk or bike ride on the trails. A port-a-potty is located here, too.

The Lincoln Lake waterfront also features the old gazebo that City of Ludington, which owns and maintains the park, moved from the James Street plaza and two fishing piers currently bar-

ricaded because the high water partially submerged the walks to the fishing decks at their respective ends. City Manager Mitch Foster said the city has investigated how and intends to repair the structures, but the repairs are on hold because of uncertainty in the wake of current challenges affecting the budget.

Lincoln Lake’s water and shore attracts a variety of birds, waterfowl and often a bald eagle or two.

The western portion of the loop passes along a cattail marsh that also hosts a variety of birds, especially red-winged blackbirds. It’s a veritable blackbird condo development with birds trilling songs in full throat.

It’s not uncommon to see a deer scamper off at times.

One spoke of the trail access goes into Cartier Park Campground, itself a nice walk especially before the campground opens for the season.

Cartier Park proves sometimes you don’t have to go far to go for a nice walk.

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**SABLE POINTS LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS ASSOCIATION** **2021 CALENDAR of events** Find us on

JUNE/JULY	JULY	JULY	AUGUST
<b>JUNE 26</b> BUS DAY out to the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Buses run from 12 noon to 5 pm. Concert 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm Featuring "ASPARAGRASS"  "Blessing of the Boats". Afternoon and Early Evening Activities Ludington waterfront. <b>JULY 7</b> NIGHT AT THE LIGHTS MUSIC at the Little Sable Points Lighthouse from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. Featuring "ROUGH AND TUMBLE." <b>JULY 8</b> Bus Day out to the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Buses run 12 noon to 5 pm. Music 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm Featuring the "ROUGH AND TUMBLE"	<b>JULY 9</b> CONCERT at the White River Light Station 7 pm to 8:30 pm Featuring "ROUGH AND TUMBLE" <b>JULY 14</b> NIGHT AT THE LIGHTS: Music at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. Featuring "STEEL DOIN IT" <b>JULY 16</b> CONCERT at the White River Light Station 7 pm to 8:30 pm Featuring "CHRIS KENNEDY AND ERIC MICHAELS" <b>JULY 21</b> NIGHT AT THE LIGHTS MUSIC at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. Featuring "MUSTARD'S RETREAT"	<b>JULY 22</b> BUS DAY out to the Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Buses run from 12 noon to 5 pm Special talent greeting all who arrive will be "GORDY THE GRINDER." <b>JULY 24</b> AFTERNOON CONCERT at White River Light Station from 2 pm to 4 pm Featuring local "DULCIMER MUSICIANS." <b>JULY 28</b> NIGHT AT THE LIGHTS MUSIC at the Little Sable Point Lighthouse from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. Featuring "OLIVA MANVILLE AND THE AQUATIC TROUPE." <b>JULY 30</b> CONCERT at the White River Light Station 7 pm to 8:30 pm Featuring "JOE IRLAN"	<b>AUGUST 4</b> Night at the Lights Music at Little Sable Point Lighthouse from 7 pm to 8:30 pm. Featuring "ARK HARBOR" <b>AUGUST 5</b> Bus Day out to the Big Sable Point Lighthouse: Buses run, 12 noon to 5:00 pm. Music at lighthouse from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm; Featuring "CHRIS KENNEDY & ERIC MICHAELS" <b>AUGUST 6</b> CONCERT at the White River Light Station; Featuring "ARK HARBOR" <b>AUGUST 13</b> Music and Beer Event White River Light Station from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm; Featuring "CATFISH AND THE MAN"

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# White Lake Area Events

## June

**02 CLIMB** Muskegon South Pierhead Light, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tours available Mondays, Fridays & Saturdays. muskegon-lights.org

**04 AQUASTAR** Afternoon Cruise

**05 BOOMTOWN** Market Craft Beer & Wine Tastings, every Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Muskegon.

**05 LIVE MUSIC** at Smash Wine Bar Bistro, 8:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. in Muskegon.

**06 SWING** Dancing on the Aquastar, 8:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. in Muskegon.

**08 BACK** to the Bricks Promo Tour, 12 p.m. to 10 p.m. Muskegon.

**10-12 ANTIQUE** Farm Power Club Show, Muskegon County Fairgrounds.

**12-13 FREE FISHING** Weekend, 12:01 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.

**15 FREE SUMMER** Concerts: Serita's Black Rose at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

**16 HERITAGE** Museum FREE Community Days, 11 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## July

**03 WHITE** Lake Area Independence Day Parade, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**03 BOOMTOWN** Market Craft Beer & Wine Tastings, every Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Muskegon.

**05 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

**06 FREE SUMMER** Concerts: Robin Connell Trio with Max Colley III at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

**08 LATIN** Dancing Aboard the Aquastar, 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., Muskegon

**09 LIVE** Music at Smash Wine Bar Bistro, 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. in Muskegon.

**12 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

**13 FREE** Summer Concerts: Earth Radio at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

**15-18 MUSKEGON** Bike Time, a 4 day celebration of motorcycles, Muskegon

**19 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon1.

**20 FREE SUMMER** Concerts: Country Club at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

**26 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon,

**27 FREE** Summer Concerts: Westside Soul Surfers at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

## August

**02 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

**03 FREE** Summer Concerts: The Smiths at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell

**07 BOOMTOWN** Market Craft Beer & Wine Tastings, every Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Muskegon.

**07 ANNUAL** Lighthouse Festival, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Muskegon, MI 49441.

**07 FREE** Summer Concert: The Isaacs, Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference Center.

**09 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

# White Lake Area Events continued

## September

**10 FREE** Summer Concerts: Mark Lavengood at the Montague-Whitehall Rotary Bandshell.

**14 FREE** Summer Concert: The King's Brass, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference Center.

**11-14 UNITY** Christian Music Festival, Heritage Landing.

**16 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

**21 FREE** Concert Series: David Pendelton, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference Center.

**23 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Muskegon.

**28 FREE** Summer Concert Series: Greater Vision, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference Center.

**30 MUSKEGON** South Pierhead Light Storytime, 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**03 MUSKEGON** Polish Festival, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Labor Day weekend, Hackley Park.

**04 BOOMTOWN** Market Craft Beer & Wine Tastings, every Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Muskegon.

**04 SOUTH** Pierhead Light Autumn Tours, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**11 POST-LABOR** Day Autumn Tours at the Muskegon South Pierhead Light

**12 GREEN** Eggs & Ham, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Greater Muskegon Woman's Club.

**16-19** Michigan Irish Music Festival.

**18 POST-LABOR** Day Autumn Tours at the Muskegon South Pierhead Light.

**25 POST-LABOR** Day Autumn Tours at the Muskegon South Pierhead Light.

**24-25 TASTE** of Muskegon, Hackley Park, Friday 4:30-10:00 pm and Saturday, 11:00 am - 9:00 pm

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# SPLKA anxious to see strong 2021 season

BY STEVE BEGNOCHE

The first keepers of the 2021 season arrived in mid-April to begin preparations for reopening Big Sable Lighthouse for visitors this summer.

While there will be changes to accommodate COVID protocols to keep visitors and volunteers safe, a more normal summer of operations is planned this year following a washout of operations in 2020 due to the pandemic.

"We sure have a pent-up energy," Peter Manting, Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association executive director, said at the time. "People are trying making plans."

This year, all sites will be open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. All will be closed on Mondays to allow for deeper cleaning and for safe move-in/move-out of keepers housed for during their stays.

Admission price was increased, in the hopes of recouping lost revenue due to the closures in 2020. It will cost \$8 for adults and \$5 for children 17 and under to climb the lighthouse towers. Climbers must be at least 40 inches in height.

Over a summer, 420 volunteers are needed to staff the four lights – 220 keepers at Big Sable and 200 among the other three lights.

"We work hard to make sure they feel appreciated and we want them to come back. There are some keepers who have been at Big Sable for 20 years," Manting said.

SPLKA volunteers come from 38 states, which Manting said he finds "pretty cool."

"We will be taking precautions," he said.

Everybody coming in to the lighthouses and towers will be required to wear face masks.

Big and Little Sable — the two tallest towers — will have an 8-to-12-person tower limit and a limit of six people in gift shop at any one time.

Big Sable won't show videos in the room leading to the tower. "We won't ask people to stop there for now," Manting said. Separate entrance and exit doors will be used.

If demand warrants, a time limit will be instituted to give people 20 minutes to climb and take pictures, Manting said.

SPLKA is trying to determine how many to al-

low in the Ludington North Breakwater at one time. A limit of three people at the top will be in place.

Lower Lake Michigan water levels could mean less closings of the North Breakwater Light due to wave action. During the 2019 season water was high and even small waves washed over the breakwater forcing frequent closures.

"We're very excited about that," Manting said of the lower lake level.

"We don't have the water problem at Big Sable either," he said.

Last summer water splashed over the seawall there, ponded up, seeped into the ground, and then into the basement, he said. With the lake down, the sump-pump at Big Sable hasn't ran in several months, Manting said.

The popular bus days at Big Sable also are scheduled to return in 2021 on designated Thursdays and Saturdays. It's about a two mile walk to Big Sable from the parking area next to Ludington State Park's warming shelter either by the lighthouse road or the beach – also broader

so far this spring with lower lake levels.

Ludington Mass Transportation Authority buses again will be used, though capacity will be limited to filling seats only — no standing will be allowed. That means a few more trips each bus day, Manting said.

Musicians also are at the lighthouse on bus days.

Night at the Light concerts also scheduled for Little Sable starting July 7 for five Wednesday evenings.

With water levels down, boardwalks again will be rolled out at Big Sable; last year they were rearranged and didn't extend to the seawall because of the ponding problems. The walks are made of boards purchased by donation of \$100 through the "Leave A Footprint in the Sand" program. The boards are engraved with names or message of up to 50 characters over two lines. Donors, he said, enjoy looking for "their" board since each season boards likely will be in a different place since they are placed out in 10-board sections.

Boards are also available for Little Sable and

White River Station. Funds help with maintenance of the lights.

Fundraising continues for tower restoration at Big Sable with \$160,000 of the needed \$225,000 in hand or repairing, painting and completing a required historic structure report. If full funding is reached this summer, bidding will begin in fall for work in spring 2022.

SPLKA received grant support from Great Lake Energy's People Fund and the Community Foundation for Oceana County to paint Little Sable tower's interior plaster. That project is about three-fourths completed.

Exposed brick on the interior wasn't painted. "The exposed red brick really stands out and looks really nice," Manting said.

Windows, frames and interior shutters need addressing in a historically correct way with an aim of having the tower in good shape by 2024 which will mark its 150th anniversary.

For those who never visited a SPLKA lighthouse or tower such as Big Sable Lighthouse, Manting explained the allure:

"There are spectacular views at the top of the



PHOTO: STEVE BEGNOCHE

130-foot tower. It's a step back in history to a time gone by. You will meet wonderful keepers who will welcome you and tell you historical stories of lighthouse you visit.

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# ADVENTURE IS CALLING

**GRANT TOWNSHIP** — Tucked into the northwest portion of Mason County in Grant Township is the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area, and with it, a network of challenging trails and access points to Lake Michigan.

The U.S. Forestry Service oversees the area, and there are boxes to collect payment for heading to either trailheads at the end of Nurnburg or West Forest Trail roads. Ordinarily, there is a \$5 day-use fee.

Over the course of three consecutive week-ends, different ways and paths were explored. An easier hike is along Porter Creek at the end of West Forest Trail Road from one portion of the area near the camping to the other side of the creek. This fairly quick hike follows the creek, and the ravine it has carved. Signs are along a portion of the trail to help identify trees.

Access is fairly simple to the shore of Lake Michigan, too. If you're up for a big climb up stairs, there are two observation platforms by the north parking lot.

Those looking for a bit of a challenging hike on a well-marked trail is the Arrowhead Trail, which leads from the south side of Porter

Creek in a triangle. The path runs along a dune ridge overlooking the campgrounds, cuts back toward Lake Michigan, and then you can walk along the Lake Michigan Trail back to the trail-head. It's a quick hike, but does have its climbs.

The Arrowhead Trail is the best-marked trail as sign posts with small arrowheads point the way along the trail.

Another trailhead is near the end of Nurnburg Road, and it, too, has its share of trails. None of these, though, are as well marked as Arrowhead.

These paths have some signs along the way, especially where the trails intersect. The Nipissing Trail leads from Nurnburg Road to Nordhouse Lake along a dune ridge.

From there, it stays along the dune ridge until it meets up with the Arrowhead Trail. The climb up to the ridge can be a bit tough, but the ups and downs aren't too bad.

The Algoma Ridge Trail also has a start at the Nurnburg Road trailhead, and it runs along a ridge to the Lake Michigan Trail. The Lake Michigan Trail runs along the lake, and it showed to be one of the toughest trails with its climbs and falls.

It is easy to mistake a trail, however. One hike that was along the Lake Michigan Trail.

There was an intersection with the Dunes

Edge Trail, but taking that trail didn't seem quite right. It led along the edge of an opening between trees to the trail that leads directly from the Nurnburg Road trailhead to the lake.

That's the biggest word of caution if you're about to head out to those trails: use your phone to take a picture of the trail map(s) before you hike. It will give you a sense of where you're going.

If you're able, you may also want to take a look at some online maps to get an idea of elevation changes, too.

Bear in mind that when you head out on the trail that ticks could be a problem.

Finally, something to think about is the foot brushes that are at the trailheads. It is so you don't bring an invasive species into the wilderness, nor will something come back with you once you call it a day.

But if you're up for a bit of hiking, the trails currently provide some long-distance views over the Manistee National Forest and views of Lake Michigan, too.



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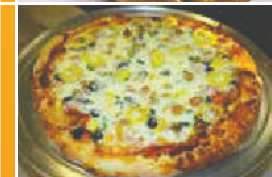
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