

# ***News from Small Town (Tawas)***

## ***Middle America***

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**by Michael Gilfix**

*The Beach at Tawas Bay. Perhaps a bit too exuberant, here I am on the beach that is about one block from the two block downtown of East Tawas. The water is clean, the beach abounds with fine sand, and nightly sunsets perfect the experience.*



**Iosco County News Herald**

### **2022 North American Championship – J/22 Class Sailboats**

The Tawas Bay Yacht Club (yes, Tawas has a yacht club because of many summer residents who inhabit beautiful lake front homes in a private development) hosted this

event. There were 21 teams from 10 states that race in Tawas Bay over three days. The winner was from Pittsford, New York. His boat is named the Honeybadger.

### **Golf Carts on the Streets**

Tawas Bay now allows residents to drive golf carts around town. Given how small the town is, this makes an enormous amount of sense. It is perhaps “one step ahead” of so many California communities where automobile travel is being discouraged and “buying local” is being encouraged.

### **Paul Bunyan Days Were a Hit – Wood Carving, Beards**

Alonzo Montoya has been a chainsaw carver for over 20 years. It took contestants about two days, with Montoya coming in 1<sup>st</sup> place and winning \$800.

What did he carve? “A bench with black bears peeking out of two support logs holding up the seat.”

Chris D. won the “best beard” contest. The judge liked his beard the most because it had “beautiful links (and) was thick and silver and it looked like he ‘owned’ his beard.”

### **100 People Attend Veteran’s Breakfast**

Given the small size of this community, participation by 100 individuals is not insignificant. If similar portions of the population attended a veteran’s event in my community, this would equate to attendance in the area of 2,000 individuals. That would never happen. And this is not because we have a shortage of veterans in our community.

### **Quirky Quilters Quilt Guild Hosts Event**

This wonderful organization hosted a “Harvest of Quilts” show on September 24. Tickets were \$1 each. The girl scouts offered refreshments.

### **Notice of Ordinance to Regulate Marijuana Facilities**

The community already has two or three marijuana distribution sites. Many in the community are worried about this. A voluminous and detailed ordinance has been drafted and was adopted on September 12. This reflects growing concern on the part of so many small communities in Michigan that marijuana facilities are unregulated, out of control, and present dangers to the community.

### **Iosco County Area Football Teams are “Looking to Bounce Back;” Swimming?**

The football season has not gone well for local schools. One team lost 40-0. The other scores were not quite so bad. But optimism prevails!

While many schools in the area have swim teams, Tawas does not. A major reason, no doubt, is that the school does not have a swimming pool.

### **Piping Plovers are Spotted on Lake Huron, “Nearly Threatened”**

Bird watching is big in the area. The local Au Sable Valley Audubon is active, and successful. Kirtland’s Warblers have also been spotted as efforts continue to re-establish their nesting habitats.

## **Fishing Report**

Walleye fishing has been fair and some have had success catching perch, which used to be the most popular fish in the area. Lake trout and Chinook have been snagged with various lures at various depths. Closely related is the newly funded effort to kill sea lamprey larvae in local rivers. These parasitic larvae are particularly dangerous and damaging to many varieties.

In my youth, we fished from the dock with multiple hooks on the line. We sometimes caught 2 perch at a time. I took mine home and, I am embarrassed to admit, gave them to my mother to clean. Pan fried, they were delicious!

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### ***Notes from the Author:***

The Goal of my Tawas News is to educate and amuse you about my home town, East Tawas, Michigan. It is to remind you that small towns still thrive in America, that they are sometimes struggling, often vibrant. It is based on my hometown weekly newspaper, personal memories, and occasional, very personal observations.

The Inspiration: The inspiration was Garrison Keillor's "News from Lake Wobegon" on his NPR show, Prairie Home Companion. Lake Wobegon was fictional, quietly poignant and lol enjoyable.

Tawas is not fictional; it is very real. It is similar to Lake Wobegon in many ways – the farmers, the pastors, the community where everybody knows everybody's business.

The town of East Tawas is located on Lake Huron on the lower peninsula about 110 miles north of Flint, Michigan. The population is around 2,723. It hasn't grown much from my childhood in the 50's and 60's. The adjacent town of Tawas City has a population of about 1,726. Why 2 separate towns? Don't ask.

*So, enjoy, and let me know what you think. Share it with friends and family. I am happy to add anyone to the mailing list, so send me names.*

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