

# ***East Tawas News***

## **Issue #4**

This issue #4 of my Tawas News combines a review of two issues of the Iosco County News – Harald, July 20 and July 27. More to observe! More to report!

Keep in mind that, in many ways, Tawas is a summer town. Things quiet down enormously after Memorial Day. There is deer hunting season in the fall, glorious fall colors in the forest, and cross country skiing across miles of US forest service land. Hockey, a sport that was ignored when I was a kid, is now a big deal. We will see how things develop.

### **Iosco County News Herald July 20, 2022, East Tawas, Michigan.**

A huge annual event is the Curley Memorial Canoe Race in Oscoda, which readers know is about 12 miles north of Tawas. A couple of guys from Grayling won the multi-mile race, including portages over two dams, with a respectable time of 2 hours, 34 minutes, and 49 seconds. The times for all 57 teams were included in the newspaper. Finishing 40<sup>th</sup> was a two man team that included Terry Curley, age 62, of East Tawas. Last place was taken by a team to which I can relate, as they are ages 71 and 74.

These communities have firefighters, but depend on volunteer firefighters enormously. Oscoda is wrestling with the amount to pay volunteer firefighters and were unable to come to a decision at the regular July 11 meeting. In that same meeting, however, they were successful in approving the sale of a Starcraft boat for \$750.

The Tawas Point Lighthouse is famous among lighthouse aficionados. It is about to be upgraded with some important repairs. Thousands visit this lighthouse every year.

It was reported that over 25 women, “uterus owners and abortion supporters” sat on the side of the road with pro-choice signs.

A “Native American” trail marker in Iosco County is featured. A 200 year old oak tree was to be demolished in 1961 to allow for road widening. These trail marker trees exist throughout North America. The article indicates that “Native Americans intentionally shaped (them) with distinctive characteristics” to make them useful as trail markers. The article includes a photograph of “Chief Thundercloud explaining the tree and it’s history to his son, “Little Thundercloud” in 1961.

The sentencing summary presents no real surprises with many individuals sentenced for operating while intoxicated (OWI), firearm possessions, drug possessions, and resisting arrest. Firearm possession, sometimes by a convicted felon, is also a recurrent theme. The Tawas community is by no means immune to the scourge of amphetamine and related use, assaulting countless small communities across America.

Good news is that the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Iosco County Fair of 2022 took place between July 25

and July 30. The theme was "Let's Get Wild." The fair included the Comedy Farm Magic Reviews, a "Night of Destruction," and Agricultural Day on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Cow Pie Bingo attracted many participants.

There are ongoing efforts to raise \$12,000 to buy new jerseys for the Tawas area football team. Fundraising efforts including the sale of shirts, raffles, donations, and a "lift-a-thon" at the high school football field, but "there is still a ways to go to reach their goal." For a sense of perspective, a new athletic center was built at the Palo Alto High School in 2017 or 2018. The price tag was between \$36 million and \$40 million, with one family contributing \$24 million. Guess how many families have this kind of money in East Tawas!

Fishing Report: A few largemouth bass, bluegill and catfish were caught in the Tawas River with crawlers and casting spinners, plastics and body baits. The Tawas area Chamber of Commerce sponsored installation of a "fishing board" at a boat lodge and in the park to "help anglers display their catches and encourage other fishermen to visit the area."

Tawas Area Middle School and High School Honor Roll Students for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter were all named in the newspaper.

I counted 13 "Help Wanted" ads, some offering multiple positions

## **Iosco County News Herald July 27, 2022, East Tawas, Michigan**

The big news this time of year focuses on canoe races. There is the Ausable River Canoe Marathon, above all. This is a 120 race that starts in Grayling and ends in Oscoda, all along the beautiful, unspoiled Ausable River. Last year, a team of guys from Grayling, Michigan, and South Bend Indiana won with a record time. That team is back, along with 95 other teams. Competitors from across the nation participate. Entrance includes individuals from Alaska, Texas, Massachusetts, New York, and many other states. Canadians include participants from Quebec, Manitoba, and other provinces. In the world of Canoe races, this is one of the best in the world.

This past summer, I was fortunate to kayak on the Ausable river, where we spotted bald eagles, swans, families of ducks and geese, a muskrat, turtles, deer, and countless fish visible in the pristine water. Here is my photo, taken by my friend, Marci.

You won't want to miss my next edition of the Tawas news where I will report on the winners of the marathon canoe race and their times!

It is also election time in Iosco County. Republicans rule, so there are no viable candidates who are democrats or independents. Second amendment advocates are strong. The Trump impact is easily visible, with some candidates taking positions that duplicate his. I knew one candidate when I was a kid. His campaign posters say "Pro God, Pro Life, Pro Guns, Committed to Liberty." We will see how this plays out in the upcoming election for county commissioner.

The newspaper is remarkable in its coverage of local elections for county commissioner and the state senate and state assembly. Reporters asked all of them detailed questions to which lengthy responses are included in the newspaper. Photos are included.

One interesting response came from a candidate for county commissioner in response to a question about services provided in the Township. He spoke of Iosco County as a “microcosm of all that is good with our country.” Another candidate, the one I knew as a child, warned that “lies” explain why residents feel like their voices are not being heard. He said “People ought to try some news sources other than those in our own nation.”

Australian shepherd puppies, \$300 - \$600 each. Can you imagine what these would cost in our San Francisco Bay Area? Letters to the editor focused on wind turbines and their impact on the environment, one calling on individuals to treat their children as well as they treat their pets, and about the need to increase the “operating millage” (property taxes) to more adequately fund the prosecuting attorney office. There is no discussion about police reform, bail, and sentencing guidelines in this rather homogeneous community.

Speaking of kayaking, an individual convicted of 13 counts of criminal sexual conduct against a minor escaped capture for 11 days. Turns out he was on Lake Huron where he kayaked from East Tawas to Alpena, a distance of almost 65 miles. He was sentenced to 39 - 80 years in prison, the maximum allowed by state law.

*I Love Lucy*, a play that does not resort “to low-brow or vulgar humor” was presented by the Tawas players. Tickets are \$11.

The family theater, where I saw movies as a child for either 15 cents or 25 cents a show, is still on Newman Street. It now has two small seating areas. It is a tribute to the owners that it still exists. Tickets are \$8 or \$9 for each show.

It was in the small concession area of the family theater where I had my last fight. It was against a guy one year younger, so I reasoned that I should win the fight. The problem was that he was bigger than me. I did not win the fight. Thank goodness we stopped hitting each other and it ended with mutual headlocks where I conceded.

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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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