

News from Small Town (Tawas)

Middle America

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by Michael Gilfix

First, take a minute and think about small town living: slower pace, less traffic, independent businesses, and, interestingly, employment opportunities with a much lower cost of living. Small town living, at the same time, means a pace that for some is too slow, too many people knowing your business, and too few shopping options. Bottom line: small town living does not make your life small. Living is what we make of it.

Gilfix House in Tawas

The rental house I grew up in was 24' by 25' (about 600 sq. feet). My parents, my brother and I shared it until I was 16.

Here it is, on Tawas Street, unchanged from about 1950 when we moved in.



Iosco County News Herald September 14, 2022

How do you fail at Window Peeping?

Christopher C. was accused of being a “disorderly person – window peeper.” He ended up pleading guilty to “*attempted* disorderly person/window peeper.”

Fishing Report on Steroids: Sturgeon to be Released

About 100 hatchery-raised sturgeon will be released at three different locations not too far from Tawas. They are astounding animals. They can grow to over 7 feet in length and weigh up to 300 lbs. Watch out anglers!

Fishing Report

In Tawas, Chinook, steelhead and walleye were caught out past the buoy #2. Generally, fishing has not been good in the area.

A Personal Obituary: Polly Roach

Polly died at age 94. I remember her and I remember her son, Randy, with whom I was friends. She had a step-son, Randy, who predeceased her. I once had a memorable fist fight with Randy on the porch to my tiny house in Tawas. Polly was kind, welcoming, and absolutely typical of the moms in East Tawas.

Spaceport Almost Came to this Small Community!

Near Tawas is the long abandoned Wurtsmith Air Force Base, now the Wurtsmith Airport. It was considered in 2019 as a location for a launch site for a spaceport that would be created and approved by the FAA. Alas, small town Michigan will not host the spaceport. The promise of notoriety and thousands of jobs have come to naught. Commented a key individual involved in this project, “unfortunately, the level of hype put Michigan at a laughing stock level. For someone to claim creating 40,000 jobs is like trading cows for magic beans.”

Taking Care of Autistic Kids

A local agency is providing kids on the Autism spectrum with “Carter Kits.” These kits include noise cancelling headphones, fidget tools, and other practical devices to deal with overstimulation.

Up North, Walking the Mackinac Bridge

On Labor Day, about 26,000 walked across the bridge that connects the lower with the upper peninsula. The bridge is a “must see.” Build in 1957, it is the 4th longest suspension bridge in the world. The total span is about five miles.

The first car to cross the bridge was a 1951 Chevrolet Styleine Deluxe owned by Albert Carter.

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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