

# IRONWOOD

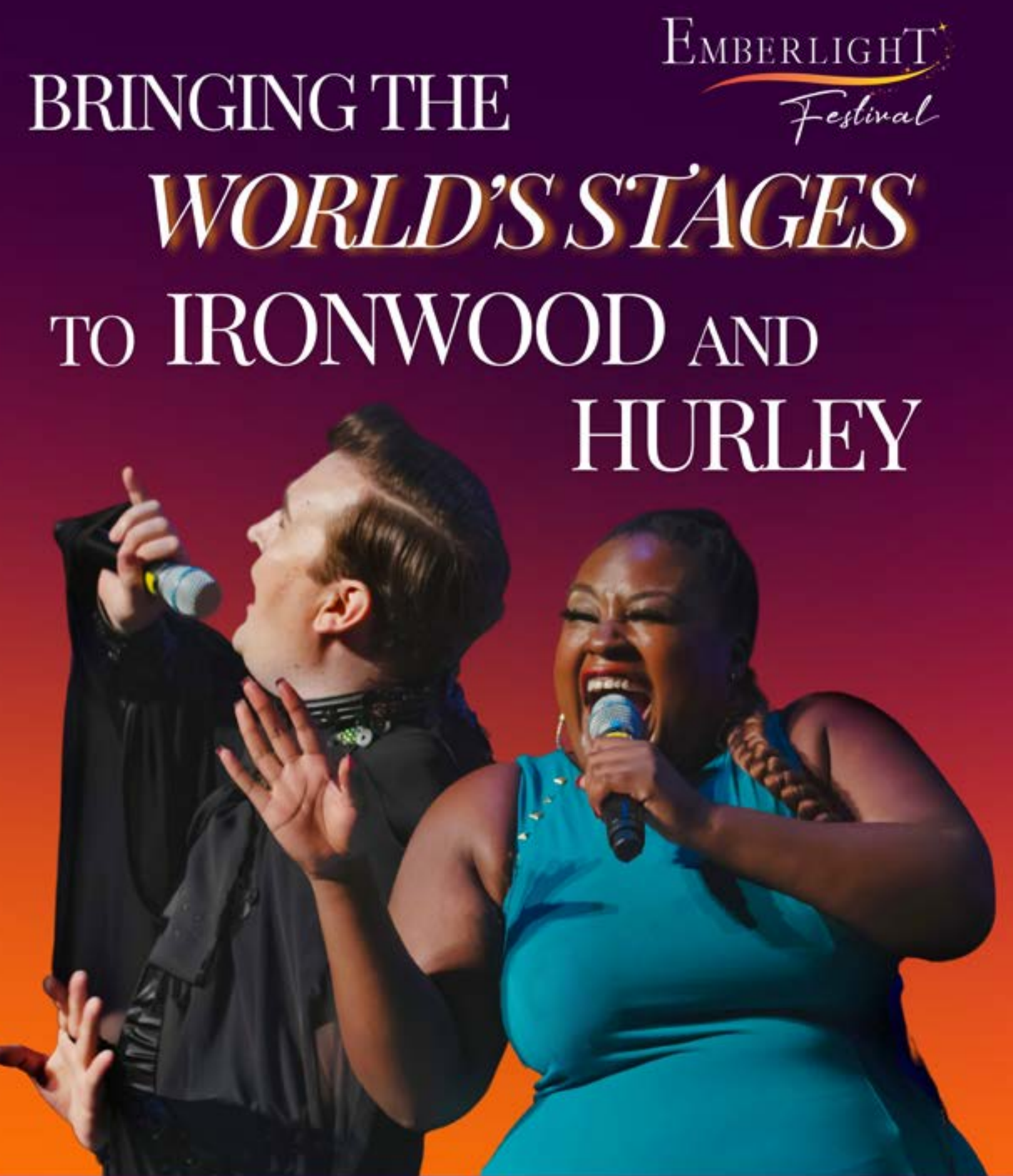
## MICHIGAN

### Destination Guide



[IRONWOODCHAMBER.ORG](http://IRONWOODCHAMBER.ORG)





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The Ironwood Chamber of Commerce and its more than 240 member businesses and organizations welcome and invite you to Ironwood to experience first-hand our spectacular natural landscape and outstanding community cultural activities. Whatever your personal life passions—hiking, fishing, artisan crafting, snowshoeing, skiing, golf, music making, painting, team and individual sports, or community theatre—the Ironwood, Michigan area is a gloriously perfect place for their exercise and fulfillment, whether as a visitor or a new resident.

This Guide offers a printed pictorial and narrative overview of the Ironwood area. It is also available online at the Chamber of Commerce website, [ironwoodchamber.org](http://ironwoodchamber.org). From our website, you can watch our Depot Park and Ironwood's Mt. Zion webcams, link to our Facebook page, find a listing of all our Chamber members, access to community resources, and also link to our all-event community calendar website, [felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org). Fe is the chemical symbol for Iron, and Ironwood sits atop the great, historic Gogebic Iron Ore Range.

Publication of our Guide is made 100% possible by the advertisements placed herein by our Chamber members, so please stop in and patronize them when you come to town. Don't forget to stop in at Depot Park (150 North Lowell Street) and visit the Chamber office in the Historic 1893 Ironwood C&NW Train Depot and Historical Museum.

Welcome to Ironwood! The U.P. is the place to be!



Cover photo: Black River Harbor, MI

Historic Ironwood Depot Museum

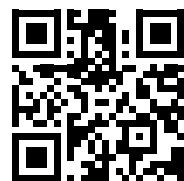


# LIFE on the IRON(Fe) RANGE



Planning a trip to Ironwood and the Western Upper Peninsula? Whether you fly in on Denver Air for a weekend or come up to camp or condo for a longer adventure, the best way to find out about our area happenings is to visit the [felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org) website. Fe is the chemical symbol for iron, and since both Gogebic County, Michigan and neighboring Iron County, Wisconsin are located atop the great Gogebic Iron Range, this is an appropriate name for an area event website. Using *FeLiveLife*, you can *mine* the calendar dates of festivals and gathering activities that you would like to attend. The calendar's listings are by year, month, week, and day—with each event posting containing web links and phone numbers to the event organizers. At the top of the home page, there is a banner loop which highlights upcoming featured events. There is also a Facebook page that you can follow [facebook.com/FeLiveLife](https://facebook.com/FeLiveLife).

And, there's more! You can become an email subscriber to *FeLiveLife* weekly updates. These are emailed out each Thursday—perfect for planning that weekend U.P. North. Scroll to the bottom of the *FeLiveLife* home page and enter your email address in the *subscribe to weekly updates* box. Once you subscribe (it's FREE!) be sure to open your newsletter each week in order to keep it coming to your inbox.



Michael Meyer, Ironwood Chamber Director



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Biking the Iron Belle Trail

# WELCOME TO IRONWOOD

Nestled amidst the hills of the Western Upper Peninsula, the City of Ironwood offers outstanding educational and business opportunities coupled with a vibrant community life. Ironwood's cultural richness in sport, music, dance, theatre, and the visual arts combines with an unmatched outdoor recreational landscape. From summer biking on the paved Iron Belle trail and area mountain biking trails to winter snowshoe, ski, and snowmobile action, Ironwood has year-round outdoor recreation possibilities that include the Porcupine Mountains, the Ottawa National Forest, Lake Superior, Little Girls Point, Copper Peak, the Miners Memorial Heritage Park, and the Black River Scenic Byway.

Combining this indoor and outdoor activity landscape, Ironwood's unique living environment has much to offer singles, families, entrepreneurs, and retirees. Our historic downtown, with its small shops and restored 1927 theatre, joins together with expanding national and regional stores along Ironwood's U.S. Highway 2 corridor to provide a comprehensive retail environment. In relocating to Ironwood, you will discover that small-town living does not mean giving up accustomed amenities.

Whether taking in the unique deep-blue color of the northern sky and night-time Aurora Borealis or watching and listening to the cascade of water over our many back country waterfalls, hunting for *Yooperlites* on the Lake Superior shore at Little Girls Point, biking the Iron Belle trail as it passes through the forest or ice-fishing on Lake Gogebic, you will find that living is good, in Ironwood!



Polar Bear Hockey Team



Snow sledding with friends



Iron Belle Trail repair crew



Arts & crafts fun at Depot Park

# BUILDING COMMUNITY

Ironwood civic life is typified by educational opportunity, a health and wellness activity focus, a strong volunteer ethic, and supportive businesses and organizations.

The city of Ironwood's Community Development Department [ironwoodmi.gov/community-development](http://ironwoodmi.gov/community-development) working along with the Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, and non-profit organizations, have as their common goal the fostering of a connected and inclusive community: a safe space where vision, talent, and energy can thrive. Major community festivals, such as July's Festival Ironwood, August's Emberlight Festival, and December's Jack Frost Festival are augmented by a host of other community happenings that occur throughout the year. Examples are Downtown Ironwood's monthly First Friday, and the Gogebic Range Farmer's Market, where local skills and talents are showcased.

Ironwood has a strong civic participation spirit, where dozens of organizations covering, health, sport, recreation, theatre, and the arts utilize volunteers to grow their missions and enhance their activities. For folks who choose to relocate to Ironwood, you will find an amazing variety of opportunities for both youth and adults to become involved in every aspect of community life, from outdoor recreation to service and cultural groups. Volunteers maintain the Iron Belle, ski and mountain biking trails. They participate in all sorts of activities at the school, the theatres, the ice rink, the library, the Miner's Park, the City, society, and service clubs. You can find those opportunities here: [ironwoodchamber.org/volunteer-opportunities](http://ironwoodchamber.org/volunteer-opportunities) Ironwood is an outstanding community in which to live!



# HISTORY: THE WAY WE WERE

**I**ronwood’s name originates with Mr. James Wood, an early 19th century mineral explorer. Jim’s nickname of *Iron* Wood was given to him by fellow explorers on account of his talent for discovering the area’s iron ore deposits. When the first town dwellings were built, the settlement name suggested was “Iron-Wood” out of respect for Jim Wood’s exploratory efforts.

Immigrants, logging, and iron mining went hand-in-hand, creating a classic early 20<sup>th</sup> century “boom town.” The mines expanded rapidly, with Ironwood reaching a population of 20,000 during the 1920’s. It had its own symphony orchestra, theatrical companies, national clubs, and saw the erection of some truly landmark buildings, including the 1927 Ironwood Theatre and the 1923 Memorial Building—both of which are today must-sees for visitors. Educationally, the strikingly beautiful 1924 Luther L. Wright school still continues its educational mission, as does Gogebic Community College, founded in 1927.

Today, the mines and their buildings are gone, the old growth forests cut down, and, while the entire railroad infrastructure is gone too, the present-day Iron Belle walking/biking trail sits atop the old C&NW railroad grade, enabling one to follow the old route eastwards over historic bridges to Ramsay, MI. Various kiosks offer historical context, and the forest regrowth gives one a real sense of how *things usta was* in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Other Ironwood historic sites to visit include the 1902 Carnegie Library and the 1893 C&NW Depot. Stop in at the Depot and pick up a copy of the Ironwood Historical Downtown Walking Tour brochure, which guides you to explanatory plaques on existing structures. Check in from time-to-time online at [facebook.com/IronwoodAreaHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/IronwoodAreaHistoricalSociety)



Downtown Ironwood, MI, ca 1920



Recruits leaving for war in Ironwood, MI, ca 1922



Aurora St. downtown Ironwood, MI, ca 1954



Municipal Memorial Building, Ironwood ca. 1923



Pabst Mine, Ironwood, MI, ca 1918

# ENTERPRISE & GROWTH

**T**wenty-first century Ironwood is active, inclusive, forward-looking, and utilizes its natural and built environments as vital components in the creation of sustainable development. Given emerging national environmental and livelihood trends, Ironwood is ideally placed to enter into a positive and sustainable future, where valued small-town cultural attributes are merged with new enterprise forms.

Ironwood is home to several large manufacturing enterprises, including Ironwood Plastics (a Berkshire-Hathaway company), Burton Electronic Manufacturing Services, and Jacquart Fabric Products, whose made-in-Ironwood Stormy Kromer caps are sold nation-wide (and whose factory here offers daily tours).

Commercial growth can be seen through such recent openings or expansions of Copper Cup Coffee, The White Rabbit Wine Bar, Downtown Bodega, Lake Effect Books, Don and GG’s, Suffolk Street Eatery, Northwind Natural Foods, Contrast Coffee, and Cold Iron Brewing—to name but a few. North Ironwood’s U.S. 2 highway corridor offers such recognized brands as Kwik Trip, Shoe Sensation, Marshalls, Ollies, Tractor Supply, and Super One Foods—as well as our recent cannabis dispensary additions: Levels, High Profile, Rize, The Fire Station, and Higher Love.

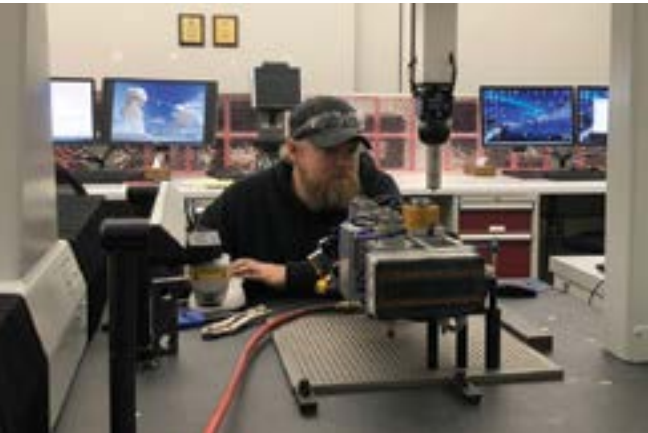
The Gogebic-Iron Airport offers Denver Air daily flights to Chicago and Minneapolis, allowing excellent business/visitor connections to these major hubs. Other important amenities not often found in a town of Ironwood’s size include Gogebic Community College and the recently-enlarged Aspirus Ironwood Hospital.



Burton Industries, Ironwood, MI



White Rabbit Tasting Room, Ironwood, MI



Ironwood Plastics, Ironwood, MI



Bratu Hardwood Interiors, Ironwood, MI



# A SENSE OF TRANQUILITY

The Ironwood region is one of unparalleled beauty throughout the four seasons—each of which has its own special magic. For those who live here it is a homeland that truly enters into the soul. For visitors, the forests, waterfalls, Lake Superior beaches, hiking/biking trails and yes, the snow and northern lights all work together to create a felt space that is calming and restorative to the mind. The phrase *find your north* accurately describes the Upper Peninsula experience: a landscape that centers thoughts and re-establishes connections.

The waterfalls along the Black River Scenic Byway, just north of Ironwood, offer the sound and sight of rushing water over rocks within a forest setting. Venturing a few miles north of the falls brings you to Lake Superior's Black River Harbor, home to wide beaches on the Lake Superior shore that offer excellent agate and *Yooperlite* hunting, as well as the ideal spot to just put down a blanket and watch and listen to the waves lap up on the beach, as they have done for thousands of years. Both Black River Harbor and Little Girls Point offer calming respites for young and old alike.

Ironwood is *Mile 0* of Michigan's Iron Belle Trail, a 10-mile paved hiking/biking trail that offers amazing landscape vistas through forests and over historic railroad bridges to the famed Keystone Bridge in Ramsay, MI. Especially in fall, a bike/walking trip on the Iron Belle takes you into a natural world bursting with color. Along the way you will find kiosks that display historic photographs and narrate the logging and mining story of the Iron Range.



Photo: Julie Weza Monville  
Winter aurora skies, Little Girls Point/Lake Superior



Lake Superior Yooperlites



Photo: Ken Wiele  
Lake Superior shoreline, Little Girls Point



Photo: Betsy Vesselhoff  
Interstate Falls

# LEARNING & GROWING

Whether just visiting Ironwood or relocating here, there are many learning experience opportunities. Formal education foundations from Luther L. Wright K-12 school and Gogebic Community College are supplemented by a diverse array of youth and adult organizations for which experiencing new things is key. The 906 Adventure Team introduces youngsters to both the physical aspects of biking and the social aspects of working together in a team setting. Likewise, Gogebic County 4-H (head, heart, hands, and health) brings mentoring adults and youth together to develop real world skills and participate in community service.

The Ironwood area has an amazing number of youth and family directed organizations in addition to 4-H: the SISU Dirt Crew, Theatre North, Polar Bear Hockey, Ice Crystals Figure Skating Club, Awkward Stage Drama Club, Gogebic Range Band, JROTC, the Downtown Art Place, Chamber Singers, and Team Z Ski Team—all offer year-round activities for kids, youth, and adults. Retiring here? Check out Fe University [feuniversity.org](http://feuniversity.org); it's designed for adults aged 50+ but open to all for whom life-long learning is a personal passion.

Vacationing in Ironwood? Ironwood's Miners Memorial Heritage Park offers great opportunity to learn about our mining and logging past. On those occasional rainy days, you can visit the Ironwood Memorial Building or Hurley, Wisconsin's Iron County Historical Museum, whose thematic displays cover Western U.P. life as well. The Erwin Township, Wakefield, Bessemer, and Ironwood museums all have great artifact and narrative displays about regional history as well.



Range Art copper class



St. Maud's Workshop woodworking classes



906 Adventure Team biking



Gogebic County 4H

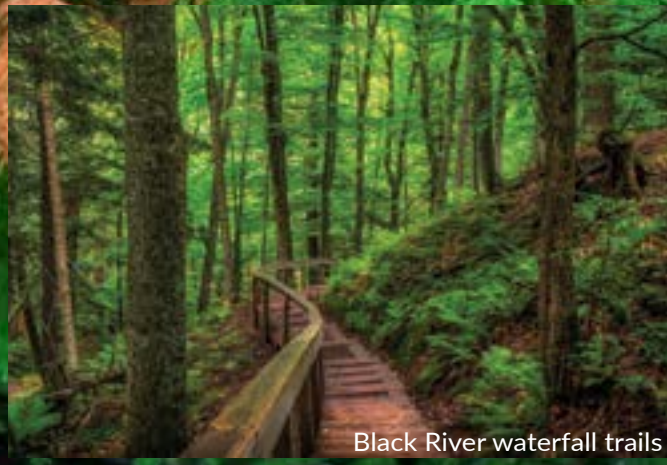




Thousand Island Lake  
Cisco Chain of Lakes  
Photo: Angela Hill



Little Girls Point beach



Black River waterfall trails



Hiking trails at Porcupine Mtns.



Picnic at Little Girls Point Park



Sunset biking at Lake Superior



Fishing on a regional lake

Presque Isle River waterfalls  
Photo: Betsy Wesselhoft





Copper Peak Trails Fest



Range Strikers Soccer Club



Kayaking on Lake Superior



Biking on the Iron Belle Trail

## THE ACTIVE LIFE

Visiting, vacationing, and living in Ironwood's Western Upper Peninsula area allows both individuals and families to give full reign to their active and energetic natures. Surrounding you on all sides and in all seasons lies both a natural and built landscape that calls out for adventure.

Hikers are provided with a varied array of trail types and environments. For the hiker who likes a paved surface, the Iron Belle Trail is perfect. Stretching ten miles from Ironwood to Ramsay, this asphalt-paved trail takes one out into the forest and over historic railroad bridges—it is an amazing experience in full fall color. For the more intrepid hikers, the Miners Park and Copper Peak trails provide groomed surfaces and more integral nature encounters. For the dedicated hiker, the North Country Trail provides the ultimate historic forest voyageur experience.

Snow sport enthusiasts know that *BIG SNOW COUNTRY* is the place to be in wintertime. Area ski resorts offer outstanding downhill skiing, while Wolverine Nordic [wolverinenordic.com](http://wolverinenordic.com) and ABR Trails feature miles and miles of groomed cross-country ski and snowshoe trails. Right inside Ironwood is the Miners Park, a crosscountry ski, snowshoeing and fat tire biking haven.

Thinking of relocating to the Ironwood area? This is the *recreation destination*. Outdoor [erwinheritage.org](http://erwinheritage.org) and indoor pickleball courts are here. Youth soccer, hockey, wrestling, and figure skating clubs, and a summer full of festival action activities, from Gus Macker basketball [macker.com/local/wakefield-mi](http://macker.com/local/wakefield-mi) to the famous Paavo Nurmi marathon [thepaavonurmimathon.com](http://thepaavonurmimathon.com) makes U.P. action fun for all ages.

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# TOGETHER WITH TALENT

While out-of-doors Ironwood has skiing, hiking, biking, rock-collecting, and fishing, INSIDE Ironwood has a 120+ year performing arts history of music, theatre, and dance. With two performing arts theaters, community choir and band, youth and adult community drama organizations, as well as numerous individual performers and popular music bands, Ironwood is the Western Upper Peninsula's center for the performing arts—for locals, visitors, and relocators.

Founded in 1964, Theatre North *theatrenorth.org* is among the three oldest continuously operating community theatres in the United States. It produces 3-4 major plays each year on its home Theatre North stage. The 2024-2025 season included *Plaid Tidings*, *Clue*, and *Proof*. Previous productions run the gamut of such musicals as *The Sound of Music*, and *Oliver!* to plays like *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Second Samuel*. Youth and children's theatre is also a vital part of the Ironwood drama tradition, with the lively stage-struck kids of the Awkward Stage Drama Group bringing performance experience—both acting and stagecraft—to middle and high school students.

Encompassing music, art, craft, and film, Ironwood's Emberlight Festival *emberlight.org* brings performing artists from across the nation to Ironwood during July and August. Founded by Metropolitan Opera Star and Bessemer, MI native, Miles Mykkanen, Emberlight is a complete performing arts showcase whose offerings attract visitors from all over the United States: and international film festival, photography exhibits, concerts, craft/historic performance events, and Art in the Miners Park all make July and August in Ironwood the artistic place to be!



Theatre North *CLUE* performance



Gogebic Range Band



Awkward Stage Drama Club



Luther L. Wright High School Accent Chior

# A LOOK AT ART

For the visual artist, Western Upper Peninsula visiting and living presents outdoor vistas of amazing scope, from white-water streams and waterfalls to the fall explosion of leaf color across miles of unbroken forest. While centered at Ironwood's Downtown Art Place Gallery and Studios, many artists have country studios as well. The Range Art Association's Studio Tour on the first weekend in August brings artists and art lovers from far and wide to see artists in their studios and view special exhibits *rangeart.org*. For over 70 years, the Range Art Association has held an annual Art Show and Market the third week of August in the historic Ironwood Memorial Building Auditorium, a 100 year old building whose unique stained glass windows and wall murals showcase a visual link to Ironwood's historic art community.

The Emberlight Festival moves art to nature outside with the annual Art in the Miner's Memorial Heritage Park presentations (July through September) where art compositions integrated with the natural landscape become central thematic elements of many Miners Park trails.

Both public and private Ironwood area entities feature art classes, work spaces, and year-round events for folks of all ages. The Carnegie Library; Downtown Art Place; Birch, Please Crafting Studio; Saint Maud's Public Workshop; Ann Marie Batiste, LLC; and other studios and educational organizations feature art learning opportunities for everyone.



Painting classes for all levels



Downtown Art Place pottery



Art in the Park, Miner's Memorial Heritage Park



Range Art Annual Art Show & Art Market , Ironwood





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# ADVENTURE ON THE EDGE

The Western U.P. welcomes people from all over the United States as well as from abroad. While many come to quietly observe and absorb our 4-season landscape vistas, others come to connect with the land and water through swimming in Lake Superior, white water river kayaking, ice fishing, and journeying into the forests on the North Country Trail. Much of the U.P. is remote and free from 21st century tech links (including cell phones), so for those who seek the direct nature adventure encounter, the U.P. is the place to be!

Black River National Forest Scenic Byway (Black River Road) lies just north of Ironwood, and has five awesome waterfalls. There are paved trails from the road side parking areas, with Potawatomi Falls observation landing being barrier-free. At road's end is Black River Harbor, which features a campground, picnic areas, a boat landing, and extensive beach areas. This is the place to see and be with the great Lake Superior.

Ironwood's Miners Memorial Heritage Park [fmmhp.com](http://fmmhp.com) encompasses many of the former iron ore mining locations within the City of Ironwood. Interpretive signs and works of art tell the story of this historic landscape as you walk or bike the extensive non-motorized trail network. Over ten miles of newly crafted mountain biking trails within the park offer outstanding recreation for both novice and experienced riders.

Michigan's Iron Belle Trail begins in Ironwood and follows a ten mile paved trail to the town of Ramsay: a path that offers amazing landscape vistas through forests, over former railroad bridges, and ends—currently—at the Keystone Bridge park in Ramsay, MI. Park your car at Ironwood's Depot Park and begin your hiking and biking adventure on the Iron Belle Trail.

Photo: Ken Wiele





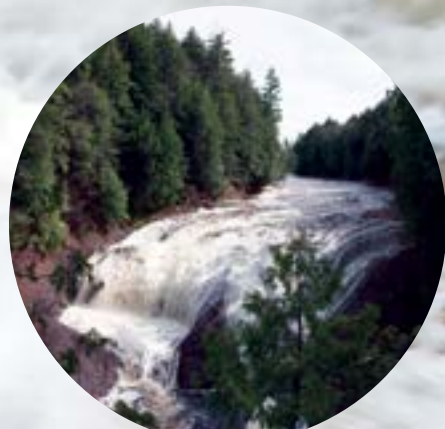
Gorge Falls



Suspension Bridge



North Country Trail



Great Conglomerate Falls

The Black River National Forest Scenic Byway (Black River Road) lies just north of Ironwood, and features five beautiful waterfalls. There are paved trails from the roadside parking areas, with the Potawatomi Falls observation platform being barrier-free. At road's end is Black River Harbor on Lake Superior, with a campground, picnic areas, boat landing, and extensive beach areas—the perfect place to see and enter into the Lake Superior experience.

Originating in northern Wisconsin, the Black River flows north, dropping its elevation to meet up with Lake Superior and creating many waterfalls along its path. The Black River gets its name from its unique water color, which is created from tannin (tannic acids) derived from the river's surrounding hemlock trees. Watching the river as it cascades over the rocks, or walking across the historic CCC constructed suspension bridge which crosses the river at the Harbor, are two easy ways to see this unique water coloration.

Traveling north along the Byway, one also meets Copper Peak, the largest ski jump in the Western Hemisphere. Built in 1969, Copper Peak hosted ski jumping and ski flying events until 1994. Currently, Copper Peak is under major renovation with the goal of returning ski jumping to Ironwood. Attracting thousands of visitors every year, Copper Peak's Adventure Ride gives brave souls a chairlift ride to the top of the hill and elevator ride to the main observation deck, with further steps to the top of the jump which presents the viewer with a truly awesome landscape—a vista that encompasses over 2,500 square miles! No trip to Ironwood is complete without a visit to Copper Peak.

In addition to viewing the Falls and enjoying the Lake Superior beach front, other Byway adventures await! Copper Peak is home to a developing series of mountain biking trails, and these are featured at the annual Copper Peak Trails Fest. If you prefer hiking to biking, our local Ni-Miikanaake (*I make a trail* in Ojibwa) North Country Trail Chapter works to maintain the Byway portion of the NCT trail, which has a trail head at Black River Harbor. The distinctive blue paint markers on selected trail trees help guide you through this section of the Ottawa National Forest. There is no better way to experience the wonder these deep forests engender, than a hike on the North Country Trail.

[copperpeaktrails.org](http://copperpeaktrails.org)

[powderhoundlodge.com](http://powderhoundlodge.com)



## OUTDOOR ADVENTURES on the BLACK RIVER SCENIC BYWAY



[copperpeak.com](http://copperpeak.com)



[blackriverscenicbyway.com](http://blackriverscenicbyway.com)



[rockhoundhideaway.com](http://rockhoundhideaway.com)

[ironwoodvacation.com](http://ironwoodvacation.com)

[northcountrytrail.org/nmk](http://northcountrytrail.org/nmk)





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Ironwood Memorial Building

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# FARTHER AFIELD: BESSEMER, WAKEFIELD & LAKE GOGEBIC



Goldenaires at Wakefield , MI, July 4th parade



Nee-gaw-nee-gaw-bow statue Wakefield, MI



Camping at Lake Gogebic



Bessemer, MI, July 4<sup>th</sup> parade



Lake Gogebic fishing



Bessemer, MI, Pumpkinfest



Wakefield, MI, July 4th fireworks over Sunday Lake

Lake Gogebic is the largest (13,380 acres of water) natural inland lake in the Upper Peninsula and is located within the Ottawa National Forest, sharing parts of two counties (Gogebic and Ontonagon) as well as two time zones (Eastern and Central). It is a true fisherman’s paradise, with walleye, pike, bass, perch, and whitefish.

Bessemer, MI lies a few miles east of Ironwood and is the official Gogebic County seat. Hosting two of our largest regional festivals every year, the Bessemer Blast 4<sup>th</sup> of July week [bessemer4th.com](http://bessemer4th.com) and the September Pumpkinfest, Bessemer also marks the southern entry to the Black River Road Scenic Byway.

A few more miles east takes you to Wakefield, home of Sunday Lake, and the grandest, most spectacular 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks display in the entire U.P. Sunday Lake offers excellent lakeside camping, and is also home to June IWA Watercross racing—an amazing event to see!

THUNDER ON THE MOUNTAIN FIREWORKS  
LIVE MUSIC \* FAMILY EVENTS \* GEOCACHING  
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Box Office Hours: Mon-Fri from 12:00pm - 4:00pm  
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Lupines in springtime



Lake Superior beach



Iron Belle Trail biking



Bond Falls

**I**ronwood area spring and summer time brings the melting of the winter white and the rebirth of our landscape with warmth and amazingly diverse plant colors. Awe inspiring Lake Superior shoreline beaches, forest waterfalls under the uniquely blue U.P. skies, and a wealth of hiking, biking, ORV/ATV riding, camping, and fishing experiences await the visitor.

Ironwood's Gogebic County is home to a large chunk of the million-acre Ottawa National Forest. Check out the Ottawa's website for Black River Harbor campground registrations: [fs.usda.gov/ottawa](https://fs.usda.gov/ottawa) Thinking of coming up this summer to find your north? You can gather information about our county and state parks, as well as register for a campsite by visiting the Gogebic County website [gogebic.gov](https://gogebic.gov)

Are you traveling to the Ironwood area during *the season*? Here are some tips! While the month of April is usually referred to as *mud month*, depending upon temperatures and snow cover, mid-April can bring the most spectacular waterfall flow of the year. A good general guide to locations and access is: [uptravel.com/outdoors-recreation/waterfalls](https://uptravel.com/outdoors-recreation/waterfalls). Waterfalls are normally easier to access in May, but rates of flow may vary, depending upon rain and snow melt. Still, April and May remain the most exciting waterfall flowage months.

*The season* (for locals as well as visitors) really begins on Memorial Day and rapidly advances to Labor Day. Summer displays the full green of forest and the warmth of Lake Superior beaches. It is the ideal time for hiking, biking, camping, fishing, and ATV/ORV riding. For the latter, here is a link to licenses, maps, and information: [explorewesternup.com/outdoor-recreation/orvs-atvs](https://explorewesternup.com/outdoor-recreation/orvs-atvs)

**B**eing so close to Lake Superior allows Ironwood to offer a magically unique fall and winter natural landscape. Nature creates a wonderland in our area forests, with vivid autumn colors followed by a deep and clarifying winter white. As one of the top five places in the United States to experience fall color, the Ironwood area is the *place to be in the U.P.*

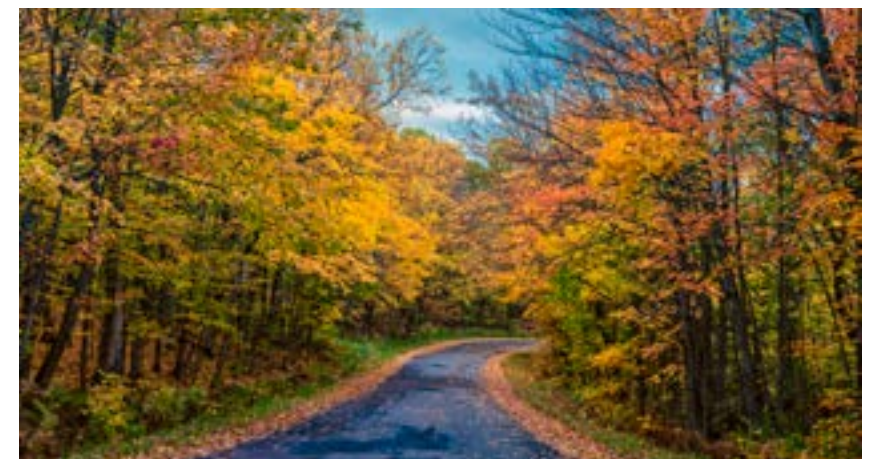
A good tip for all U.P. fall leaf hunters is to make use of the vast number of U.P. webcams to check out how fall leaf color is advancing. The Ironwood Chamber website has eight webcams, displaying views from Saxon Harbor and Mt. Zion, to Ironwood's Depot Park and Wakefield's Snowriver Resort: [ironwoodchamber.org/webcam](https://ironwoodchamber.org/webcam). For up to date general fall U.P. color forecasts—and Northern Lights information—go to [funintheup.com](https://funintheup.com).

Known as *Big Snow Country*, the Western Upper Peninsula is home to several major ski hill resorts where excellent downhill skiing can be found. Cross country ski and snowshoe trails continue their expansion and development, and the SISU Ski Fest [sisuskifest.com](https://sisuskifest.com) and Yooperbeiner [wolverinenordic.com](https://wolverinenordic.com) events are highlights of organized winter fun activities.

Two major Ironwood area downhill ski resorts are Big Powderhorn, just north of Bessemer [bigpowderhorn.net](https://bigpowderhorn.net) and Snowriver Resort, which is north of Wakefield [snowriver.com](https://snowriver.com). Both resorts offer great downhill action, plus food and lodging. Right within the city limits of Ironwood is the Miner's Memorial Heritage Park, which features miles of groomed snowshoe and cross-country ski trails [fmmhp.com](https://fmmhp.com). Check out their website and Facebook page for trail maps and conditions.



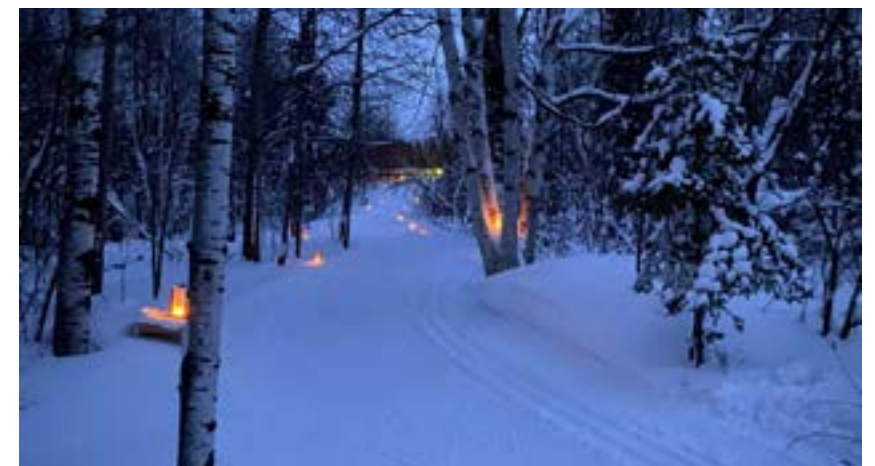
Suspension Bridge over Black River Harbor



Fall color on Black River Scenic Byway



Aurora Borealis over Lake Superior Photo: Julie Weza Monville



Candlelight snowshoe in Miner's Memorial Heritage Park



# RANGE ART

## STUDIO TOUR

*Big Powderhorn to Little Girl's Point*  
Always first weekend in August  
Sat & Sun 10 am - 4 pm  
Ironwood, MI

---

### RANGE ART SHOW & ART MARKET

Always Thurs, Fri, & Sat 3rd week in August  
10 am - 4 pm  
at Ironwood Memorial Building auditorium

See the Studio Tour MAP online.  
Visit **RangeArt.org** for more information.






Range Art Association is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization



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[www.superiorrangesportsmansclub.org](http://www.superiorrangesportsmansclub.org)



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# IRONWOOD



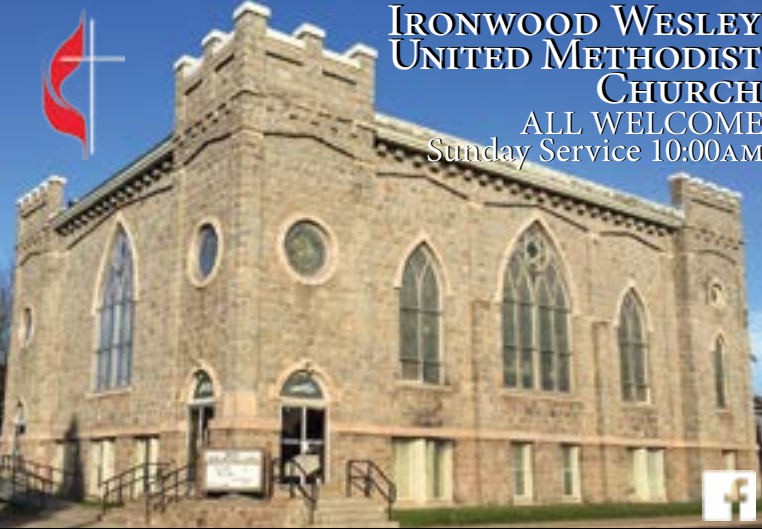



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# INFORMATION PLEASE!

**W**hether you are a tourist, visitor, or someone looking to relocate to the Ironwood area, gathering information about *U.P. Life* is easy to do. For in-person walk up counter service, Ironwood's Michigan Welcome Center on U.S. 2 is open seven days a week from 8am to 4pm (906-932-3330) and has maps and brochures that cover the entire Upper Peninsula [michigan.org/property/ironwood-welcome-center](http://michigan.org/property/ironwood-welcome-center). The Wakefield Visitor Center, located at the junction of U.S. 2 and Michigan Highway 28 (right next to Sunday Lake) provides in-person counter service from Memorial Day to the middle of October. The Ironwood Chamber of Commerce Historic Ironwood Depot office (150 North Lowell Street) is open M-F from 8ish to 2ish, and has a good selection of state and regional maps.

Government offices which handle campground registrations are: City of Wakefield, 906.229.5231 [cityofwakefieldmi.gov](http://cityofwakefieldmi.gov); City of Bessemer, 906.663.4311 [cityofbessemer.org](http://cityofbessemer.org); Gogebic County, 906.667.0411 [gogebic.gov](http://gogebic.gov) and the City of Ironwood, 906.932.5050 [ironwoodmi.gov](http://ironwoodmi.gov). Campground registrations for Black River Harbor are handled through the Ottawa National Forest website: [fs.usda.gov/ottawa](http://fs.usda.gov/ottawa).

Cell phone reception in the Western U.P. is getting better, but sometimes still is mysterious. Travel tip: ALWAYS have paper maps in your vehicle! Don't assume your phone will work everywhere. Here are some important emergency numbers: Aspirus Ironwood Hospital, 906.932.2525; Michigan State Police Wakefield Post, 800.535.5555; Gogebic County Sheriff, 906.667.0203; HOPE Animal Shelter, 906.932.1511; Ironwood Public Safety Department, 906.932.4808 and, for emergencies, 911.

Useful local Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Bureau websites that are chock-full of information include: [ironwoodchamber.org](http://ironwoodchamber.org), [explorewesternup.com](http://explorewesternup.com), [travelironwood.com](http://travelironwood.com) and [lakegogebicarea.com](http://lakegogebicarea.com).



# Annual Area Festivals and Signature Events

The Ironwood area boasts a year-round schedule of community events. From ski racing and fishing tournaments to local community festivals. Both visitors and residents are never at a loss for something to do or see. For a complete updated listing, go to our community all-event calendar, [FeLiveLife.org](http://FeLiveLife.org).

## JANUARY

### SISU NORDIC SKI FESTIVAL - Ironwood, MI.

Join ski folks from all over the Midwest (and beyond) for a fantastic weekend of ski racing! Different race lengths and ability levels. Depot Dash for youngsters at Historic Depot Park. Ski exposition, complete with famous Yooper pasties. [sisuskifest.com](http://sisuskifest.com)



SISU Ski Fest

### SNOWMOBILE OLYMPUS - Ironwood, MI.

Exciting 3-day USSA ProStar Cup Series racing action on the fast and historic race track at the Gogebic County Fairgrounds in Ironwood, Michigan. Family fun for all includes snowmobile expo and vendors. [ironwoodsnowmobileolympus.com](http://ironwoodsnowmobileolympus.com)

## FEBRUARY

### YOOPERBEINER SNOWSHOE RACE/WALK - Ironwood, MI.

A wonderful time for Yoopers to meet up at Wolverine Ski Trails. This one-day 5K snowshoe race/walk event on groomed ski trails provides great ski/snowshoe comradery and active outdoor UP fun with treats and giveaways available post-race in the Chalet. [wolverinenordic.com](http://wolverinenordic.com)

## MARCH

### ICE FISHING DERBY - Lake Gogebic, MI.

Over \$10K in prizes! With divisions including walleye, northern, and perch. The entirety of Lake Gogebic is open for this contest. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes for each category. The Derby runs on Saturday 7am- 4pm. Door prizes, soup and chili for contestants, and live bait is available on site. [gogebiclodge.com](http://gogebiclodge.com)

### GOGEBIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

#### XC SNOWMOBILE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP -

Ironwood, MI.

Cor PowerSports Championship series 2<sup>nd</sup> March weekend at Gogebic Community College's Mt. Zion. Go to the Cor Powersports link to register, view classes, and race times. [corpowersports.com/schedule/ironwood](http://corpowersports.com/schedule/ironwood)

### HOG-A-THON ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT - Lake Gogebic, MI.

Annual Lake Gogebic Ice Fishing Saturday all-day event. New: women's and kid's divisions for the heaviest perch caught! Food and awards at 5:30pm EST. Hog-a-Thon—over 20 years of great ice fishing excitement. [felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org)

### ANNUAL MUK UP SKI RACE - Wakefield, MI.

Annual Saturday 9am - 4pm fundraising event for youth ski racing that features 2 slalom runs and 2 giant slalom runs for each participant in 11 categories. Music, raffles, and overall merriment. [facebook.com/teamzskiracing](https://facebook.com/teamzskiracing)

## MAY

### MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND ATV RALLY - Hurley, WI.

Largest weekend ATV/UTV rally and parade in the Northland. Friday parade with a full range of Saturday and Sunday events, including a poker run. Miles of trails with scenic views to enjoy. [felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org)

## JUNE

### TOUR DA LAKE - Bergland, MI.

Annual Saturday 39-mile social bike tour around Lake Gogebic, MI. This is a casual group ride around the lake, and there are various refreshment stations along the route. Ride begins at Bergland Township Park. [lakegogebicarea.com](http://lakegogebicarea.com)

### INTERNATIONAL WATERCROSS ASSOC. SUNDAY LAKE RACES - Wakefield, MI.

Snowmobile watercross racing on Wakefield's beautiful Sunday Lake. Picnic at the lake and watch (and listen) as racers from all over the Midwest present the fastest show on H2O. [iwaracing.org](http://iwaracing.org) [felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org)

### ART IN THE PARK - Ironwood, MI.

Presented as part of the Emberlight Festival, Art in the Park runs from June to August, and involves artists from across the Northland who create original outdoor art installations in Ironwood's Historic Miners Memorial Heritage Park, utilizing the greatest canvas of all: Mother Nature! Follow the 1.2 mile Aurora Loop in the park and enjoy a truly unique art/nature experience. [emberlight.org](http://emberlight.org)



Art in the Park - Miners Memorial Heritage Park

## JULY

### WAKEFIELD 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY CELEBRATION - Wakefield, MI.

The most glorious and spectacular fireworks show in the entire Upper Peninsula is held on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bring your chair or blanket, find your spot along the Sunday Lake shoreline, and be amazed as the entire sky lights up with a brilliance that is mirrored on the lake surface below. A truly amazing event! Also: July 4<sup>th</sup> parade, photo contest, Sunday Lake run/walk, softball tournament, Gogebic Range Band concert in the Park, and children's parade. [facebook.com/wakefieldfireworks](https://facebook.com/wakefieldfireworks)

### BESSEMER BLAST 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY - Bessemer, MI.

Starting the last week in June and running to July 4<sup>th</sup>, the Bessemer Blast is a whole week of activities. Follow the link below to get the daily schedule—everything from cornhole, mud run, 3 on 3, live music, street dancing, dart tournament, food, outdoor e-sports gaming, and, of course, the Thunder on the Mountain fireworks display on July 4<sup>th</sup>. [bessemer4th.com](http://bessemer4th.com)

### FESTIVAL IRONWOOD - Ironwood, MI.

An annual 4-day celebration of Ironwood summertime, filled with live music under the Big Top, tournaments (pool, volleyball, cornhole), kids' day, craft show, evening food specials, classic car show, the World's Largest Duck Pick and more. Daily entertainment and activity for everyone can be found downtown at the Historic Depot Park.

[ironwoodchamber.org/festival-ironwood](http://ironwoodchamber.org/festival-ironwood)



Festival Ironwood

### GUS MACKER BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT - Wakefield, MI.

For two days every summer Gus Macker 3 on 3 turns Wakefield streets into a basketball paradise. Follow the link to register your teams. Enjoy basketball, plus halftime competitions, interactive zones, and delicious local treats. [macker.com/local/wakefield-mi](http://macker.com/local/wakefield-mi)

### WISCONSIN'S IRON COUNTY HERITAGE DAYS FESTIVAL

- Hurley, WI.

Celebrate the full heritage of Iron County. Parade, all-class reunion, golf tournaments, classic cars, Paavo Nurmi Marathon, Historical Museum special displays, Iron County Farmer's Market, annual Church Bazaar, and much more. [hurleywi.com/iron-county-heritage-days-festival](http://hurleywi.com/iron-county-heritage-days-festival)

### EMBERLIGHT FESTIVAL - Ironwood, MI.

Every July and August, the world comes to Ironwood for concert musical performances (classical, Broadway, native folk), curated international film festival, performance infusions (craft, history, and music), photography exhibition, Art in the Park—performers and artists from the world over find their way to Michigan's Upper Peninsula for two months of joyful celebration of art and creativity. [emberlight.org/about](http://emberlight.org/about)

### IRON COUNTY FAIR - Saxon, WI.

Four July-August days are filled with traditional County Fair activities: carnival rides, 4-H animal husbandry and showmanship, live music, game tournaments (horseshoe, volleyball), draft horse pulling contest, pie auction, antique tractor parade and pull. The great tradition of the County Fair is alive and well at the Iron County Fair. [ironcountyfairwi.net](http://ironcountyfairwi.net)

## AUGUST

### RANGE ART STUDIO TOUR - Ironwood, MI.

From Big Powderhorn to Little Girls Point, this scenic drive on the first weekend in August will take you to over a dozen art locations and 25+ artists presenting their hand-crafted one-of-a-kind artwork in a variety of mediums: painting, photography, sculpture, printmaking. Visit with artists and food artisans along the way. [rangeart.org](http://rangeart.org)



Range Art Studio Tour

### PORCUPINE MOUNTAIN MUSIC FESTIVAL - Silver City, MI.

A celebration of music, arts, and folk school along the shores of Lake Superior in the Porcupine Mountains State Park (sticker required). Inspiring creativity, lifelong learning, cultural heritage, and appreciation of the natural landscape since 2006. [porkiesfestival.org](http://porkiesfestival.org)



# Annual Area Festivals and Signature Events

## AUGUST

**EMBERLIGHT FESTIVAL** - Ironwood, MI.  
Ironwood's Emberlight Festival continues until the end of August with music, art, craft, photography, and film. From Art in the Park and performance infusions, to a curated International Film Festival, the creative arts are here for you in Ironwood, Michigan.  
[emberlight.org](http://emberlight.org)



Emberlight Festival

**OLD VICTORIA CRAFT FAIR** - Rockland, MI.  
Experience the pattern of life in the early decades of Upper Peninsula European settlement when the town of Victoria was home to early immigrant copper miners from 1899 to 1921. This all-day Sunday event features handmade arts & crafts, tours of original log buildings, kids' games of the historic past, handmade arts and crafts, and baked-in-the-woodstove cinnamon rolls.  
[facebook.com/oldvictoria](https://facebook.com/oldvictoria)

**FESTIVAL ITALIANO** - Hurley, WI.  
Tasty Italian cuisine along with live music, game tournaments, vendors, Kidz Zone, 50/50, and more! Usually the last Saturday in August. Fun, food, and folks from 11am to midnight.  
[hurleywi.com/festival-italiano](http://hurleywi.com/festival-italiano)

**RANGE ART ASSOCIATION ART SHOW** - Ironwood, MI.  
For over 70 years the Range Art Association art show and market has brought together local and regional artists to display their work in a variety of mediums. Taking place during the third week of August, the week-long show is held in Ironwood's Historic Memorial Building Auditorium. Artist reception, youth art show, art raffle, and more.  
[rangeart.org](http://rangeart.org)

**PAAVO NURMI MARATHON** - Hurley, WI.  
Hurley's Paavo Nurmi celebrates the achievements of the Finnish long-distance runner Paavo Johannes Nurmi. Events include a half-marathon, marathon relay, and a twilight 5K run/walk. Always the second Saturday in August, the Paavo runs on a certified course which is a Boston/NYC marathon qualifying event.  
[thepaavonurmimarathon.com](http://thepaavonurmimarathon.com)

**GOGEBIC COUNTY FAIR** - Ironwood, MI.  
Old-fashioned fun with 4-H animals, carnival, live music, harness racing, and pie-eating contests is what makes the Gogebic County Fair an enduring, 100+ year old tradition. Held during the second week in August at the Gogebic County Fairgrounds in Ironwood, the Fair brings together both locals and visitors from all over to savor the closing days of summer in the U.P. Antique tractor parade, chicken bingo, and kids' pedal tractor pull. The Fair has something for everyone!  
[gogebiccountyfair.com](http://gogebiccountyfair.com)

## SEPTEMBER

**BESSEMER PUMPKINFEST** - Bessemer, MI.  
Thursday through Sunday the last week of September brings out the pumpkins and Fall festivities in Bessemer. Poker run, carnival rides, pumpkin decorating, pumpkin bingo, pumpkin pie eating contest, pumpkin bowling, antique tractor show, craft fair, harvest dinner, and live music—all celebrate the change of seasons in the U.P.  
[facebook.com/bessemerpfest](https://facebook.com/bessemerpfest)

**LAKE GOGEBIC WALLEYE TOURNAMENT** - Bergland, MI.  
Early September, Friday and Saturday, brings an exciting two days of fishing at Lake Gogebic. This annual tournament is open to anglers of all skill levels, with a \$1K prize for the largest walleye caught. Tournament party for all at the close of fishing weigh-in and awarding of prizes.  
[lakegogebicarea.com](http://lakegogebicarea.com)

**COPPER PEAK TRAILS FEST** - Ironwood, MI.  
The first Saturday in September brings the Copper Peak Biking Trails Fest, held on the grounds of Copper Peak on the Black River Scenic Byway north of Ironwood. Two and four stage endurance races, Little Rippers Kids' Race, long and short XC races, and the yummy U.P. pasty table of goodness. Experience mountain biking that is open to riders of all ages and abilities.  
[facebook.com/CopperPeakTrailsFest](https://facebook.com/CopperPeakTrailsFest)



Copper Peak Trails Fest

## OCTOBER

**PLAIDURDAY** - Ironwood, MI.  
Join the hundreds of folks who gather in Downtown Ironwood in front of the Historic Ironwood Theatre for Plaidurday, the Worldwide Celebration of Plaid on this 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in October. Wear your best and most colorful plaid so you will show up well in the group drone photograph, as Aurora Street is closed, and all gather to celebrate Plaidurday as a part of Ironwood's First Friday event series. 6pm is picture time. Live music in City Square, movie at the Historic Ironwood Theatre, Downtown art vendors. Stormy Kromer Prize Giveaway.  
[travelironwood.com/plaidurday](http://travelironwood.com/plaidurday)



Plaidurday downtown Ironwood

**SWEATER WEATHER** - Wakefield, MI.  
It gets chilly U.P. north in October, and Wakefield celebrates this fall change with a full day of fun, food, crafts, and community on this downtown mid-October Saturday, starting at 9am. Baked goods contest, kids' games, cornhole tournament, arts and crafts vendors, raffle baskets, and the best sweater weather ever.  
[felivelife.org](http://felivelife.org)

## NOVEMBER

**JACK FROST FESTIVAL TREE LIGHTING** - Ironwood, MI.  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of November brings folks to Historic Depot Park to gather around the 50' pine tree and celebrate the lighting of its 1,000 lights. This marks the start of Ironwood's Jack Frost Festival of wintertime events.  
[ironwoodchamber.org/jack-frost-festival](http://ironwoodchamber.org/jack-frost-festival)

## DECEMBER

**JACK FROST FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS PARADE** - Ironwood, MI.  
On the first Saturday evening in December, the annual Jack Frost Festival of Lights Parade steps off from the front of the Carnegie Library and travels Aurora Street with over 40 parade units: business and organization floats, lighted snowmobile groomers, Santa and Mrs. Claus, the famous Precision Snow Shovel Drill Team, and a special in-person appearance by Mr. Jack Frost himself. Always an amazing start to the December holiday season.  
[ironwoodchamber.org/jack-frost-festival](http://ironwoodchamber.org/jack-frost-festival)



Jack Frost Parade snow shovel brigade

**HISTORIC IRONWOOD THEATRE CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR** - Ironwood, MI.  
The Jack Frost Festival would not be the same without the Historic Ironwood Theatre Christmas show. On stage with live music and dance, local talent celebrates the wonders of Christmas. Experience the joys of holiday entertainment in this restored 1927 theatre in Downtown Ironwood the second weekend in December.  
[ironwoodtheatre.net](http://ironwoodtheatre.net)

**PRO VINTAGE SNOWMOBILE RACING** - Ironwood, MI.  
Snowmobiles manufactured in 1985 or earlier are eligible for vintage racing. A wide variety of classes and a very wide variety of classic machines from Ski-doo and John Deere to Yamaha and Chaparral are featured. Step back in time with these classic machines as they roar around Ironwood's Gogebic Fairgrounds' ice oval track.  
[provintageracing.com](http://provintageracing.com)





Fall color on Iron Belle Trail



Snowy Owl Photo: Michelle Lutke



Skiing at Snowriver Mtn. Resort



North Country Trail  
Photo: Dirk Wierenga



Black River Harbor Suspension Bridge  
Jacob Valejo UPP Above Photography



Candlelight Snowshoe  
Miners Memorial Heritage Park



Jack Frost Parade downtown Ironwood  
Photo: DuWayne Kosma



Lake Superior icicles



Winter aurora skies  
Little Girls Point/Lake Superior  
Photo: Michelle Lutke



# FESTIVAL IRONWOOD

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*History Museum  
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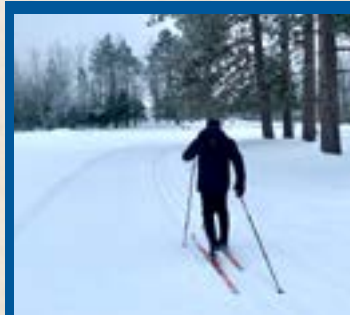
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## CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

*Children's Playground  
Open Summer/Fall*



## HISTORIC TRAIL

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# DISCOVER YOUR **IRONWOOD** MOMENT



## **IRONWOOD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Located inside the Historic Depot Museum

150 N. Lowell St., Ironwood, MI 49938

906-932-1122

email: [chamber@ironwoodchamber.org](mailto:chamber@ironwoodchamber.org)

**IRONWOODCHAMBER.ORG**



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***Community Events Calendar***

***felivelife.org***

