



PRESS RELEASE

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LUDINGTON KICKS OFF SUMMER SEASON WITH “LOVE LUDINGTON” WEEKEND JUNE 11

Highlights Include World’s Longest Ice Cream Dessert Attempt, Lakestride Half Marathon, Craft Show, Pirate-Themed Shoreline Cruise and Sunset Beach Bonfire

LUDINGTON, Mich. – *May 5, 2016* – While the first official day of summer isn’t for a few more weeks, the city of Ludington is celebrating it early as it declares June 11-12 a “Love Ludington” weekend full of summertime festivals and activities to get residents and visitors in the spirit of summer.

The weekend will feature favorite annual traditions like the Ludington Lakestride Half Marathon and Pirates of the Caribbean Shoreline Cruise on the S.S. Badger, plus incorporate new traditions like a Guinness World Record attempt for the Longest Ice Cream Dessert, sunset beach bonfire on Lake Michigan and craft show at Historic White Pine Village.

“June is a special time to visit Ludington because it’s early enough in the season that it’s not too crowded and you can more easily book a hotel room or enjoy a table at a restaurant, yet the weather is usually warm and beautiful,” said Kathy Maclean, executive director of the Ludington Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. “We encourage travelers to kick off their summer plans with a trip to Ludington.”

June 11-12 also is being dubbed a “[Love Ludington](#)” weekend as part of the Love Ludington grassroots community movement that highlights and promotes what people love about the area and its residents. It also champions projects and awards mini grants each year. Past Love Ludington activities include installing a downtown community garden and painting wall murals near it, launching sunset beach bonfires, and taking an aerial photo of hundreds of people grouped into a heart shape on the west end of Ludington Avenue.

“This weekend really gets us in the spirit of celebrating both the start of summer and what Ludington is known for,” said Julie Schrader, chair of the Love Ludington committee. “It’s going to be a giant community celebration uniting Ludington residents and visitors to celebrate all that we love about this truly special community.”

Following is a rundown of weekend events in order by occurrence.

Friday, June 10

Ludington Lakestride “Fun Run” (6 p.m. start)

The 36-year running event tradition of Ludington Lakestride opens Friday evening with a one-mile family fun run departing from the west end of Ludington Avenue in a half mile out-and-back run to the Marina Park Playground. The event is free, and families can show up that evening to participate (no pre-registration necessary).

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Saturday, June 11

Ludington Lakestride (8 a.m. start)

This 36-year tradition provides runners a beautiful running race near Lake Michigan, with options for a 5K, 10K and half marathon. Races begin at 8 a.m. starting at 612 N. Lakeshore Dr. (Nader's Lakeshore Motor Lodge) and finishing at Stearns Beach on Lake Michigan. The half marathon passes through Ludington State Park featuring a run down a sand dune plus return route with views of the dunes and Lake Michigan. Registration fees range from \$32 for the 5K to \$42 for the half marathon. A free children's "fun run" also is available Friday night (see above). Packet pick-up and late registration is available Friday June 10, 5 to 8 p.m. at Lakestride Race Central at the center of Stearns Park Beach, and Saturday June 11, 7 to 8 a.m. at the same location. LudingtonLakestride.com.

Historic White Pine Village Craft Show/Mason County Day (10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

Historic White Pine Village is debuting a new handmade craft show from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during Mason County Day. The craft show will feature hand-made items including jewelry, clothing, pottery, food, wooden and leather items, painting and drawing, and textiles. Additional events throughout the day include the Ludington Mariners Old Time Base Ball Team Open House from 1 to 3 p.m. and Blessing of the Vintage Cars at 1:30 p.m. Admission to Historic White Pine Village is \$9 for adults 18 and older, \$6 for youth ages 6-17 years, and \$25 for a family rate for two adults and dependent children 17 and under. Children ages 5 and under are free. Mason County residents get in free June 11 for Mason County Day, and Manistee, Lake, and Oceana County residents receive \$1 off adult admission and \$2 off family admission. historicwhitepinevillage.org.

Guinness World Record Attempt - Longest Ice Cream Dessert (5 p.m. arrival; 6 p.m. start)

Ice cream lovers can belly up to a half-mile long ice cream sundae on Ludington Avenue between Park and Harrison Streets in downtown Ludington and eat House of Flavors ice cream to help Ludington and House of Flavors (official event applicant) win the Guinness World Record for the Longest Ice Cream Dessert. More than 6,000 people are needed to consume two scoops of ice cream each, and eaters should arrive by 5 p.m. at any point along the eight-block stretch to watch construction of the ice cream trough and building of the dessert before they eat at 6 p.m. The trough will be a serving dish from which ice cream will be scooped into individual bowls for consumption. No registration is necessary to eat at the event, but participants can RSVP at the [event Facebook page](#) where they can also follow event details. Those wishing to volunteer as a scooper can register at DowntownLudington.org/icecreamrecord.

Other fun facts (*additional fact sheet also is available*):

- *Length of dessert:* Half mile – 2,640 feet; 31,680 inches; more than eight city blocks
- *Amount of ice cream:* 855 gallons from 285 three-gallon containers served into 12,825+ scoops
- *Toppings and amounts:* 800 pounds of chocolate syrup, 600 cans of whipped cream and 2,000 maraschino cherries from Michigan Cherryworks (aka CherryMan) in Hart, Mich.
- *Container* – A continuous metal trough constructed from seamless house gutter by Superior Seamless Gutter and Square Deal Building Supply in Ludington, Mich.
- *Number of people involved:* 7,500+: 6,400+ to eat ice cream, 550 scoopers and 550 volunteers
- *World Record qualifications:* Dessert must be one continuous food item, entirely edible (and consumed), and have at least one extra topping in addition to ice cream.

Pirates of the Caribbean Shoreline Cruise, S.S. Badger (8:30 - 10:30 p.m.; boarding begins at 7:45)

Passengers can wear pirate costumes and speak in pirate lingo on this festive Lake Michigan cruise along Ludington's shoreline aboard America's last coal-fired steamship. In addition to the two-hour cruise, the ticket price of \$39 includes a Badger Party Buffet with desserts and soft drinks, and live music by "Two Dudes in Flip Flops" featuring guitar, steel pan and vocals. A cash bar also is available with drink specials. Children 5 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased in person at the ticket office or by calling 800-841-4243. ssbadger.com.

Sunset Beach Bonfire with International Pirate Performer Michael Beans (8 - 10 p.m.)

For those who opt to stay on land instead of boarding the S.S. Badger, Ludington will offer its inaugural sunset beach bonfire of the season. on the shores of Lake Michigan at Stearns Beach – also a vantage point to see the S.S. Badger pass by. The first in a series of free community bonfires this summer, this one will offer a special pirate-themed twist in honor of the S.S. Badger's pirate cruise. Part musician, part showman and part sailor, Grand Haven native Michael Beans will take the stage with a pirate-inspired musical performance in a two-hour set he dubs "'Happy Arr'" complete with music, stories, sing-a-longs and audience interaction. PureLudington.com/SunsetBonfire.cfm.

About Ludington

Located on the shores of Lake Michigan with miles of beachfront and water access, Ludington offers a quintessential “Up North” experience close by. Ludington and surrounding Mason County deliver the perfect combination of unspoiled natural resources and unrivaled outdoor recreation with quaint, small-town charm. And it’s all within easy reach, located at the intersection of U.S. 31 and U.S. 10. Come to Pure Ludington – Up North close by. For information on the Ludington area including lodging, events, and other tools to help plan your next Ludington getaway, visit PureLudington.com or call (800) 542-4600.

About “Love Ludington”

Love Ludington is a grassroots community movement that highlights and promotes what people love about the area and its residents. It also champions projects and awards mini grants each year. A Love Ludington Fund was recently established through the Community Foundation for Mason County and accepts donations. Past Love Ludington activities include installing a downtown community garden, painting wall murals near the garden, launching sunset beach bonfires, and taking an aerial photo of hundreds of people grouped into a heart shape on the west end of Ludington Avenue. For more information, visit facebook.com/LoveLudington.

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