



## PRESS RELEASE

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### LUDINGTON AREA WELCOMES BACK VISITORS THIS SUMMER WITH EVENTS RESUMING, INCLUDING FREEDOM FESTIVAL, PLUS NEW ATTRACTIONS AND RESTAURANTS

***Favorite Attractions Re-Opening such as Sandcastles Children’s Museum and Lighthouses;  
New Attractions include Outside Social District, Legacy Plaza, Museum Exhibits and Restaurants***

LUDINGTON, Mich. – May 26, 2021 – This summer is shaping up to be a busy travel season for Michigan driving vacation destinations like Ludington, and the [Ludington Area Convention & Visitors Bureau](#) (Pure Ludington) encourages visitors to make travel plans *now* for summer. As an added enticement, Ludington’s summer events are returning – including its popular Freedom Festival – and new attractions are opening.

“After the most atypical year in Ludington’s history as a tourist destination due to a global pandemic, 2021 is looking much more like ‘business as usual,’ with favorite events returning and attractions reopening, plus some new draws to the area,” said Brandy Miller, executive director of Pure Ludington. “There is pent-up demand to travel again, and Ludington makes a perfect drive destination. But make plans now, as lodging is booking up fast this summer.”

Ludington will host most of its summer events in 2021, including one of the year’s most popular – the [Ludington Area Jaycees Freedom Festival](#) – July 4 with a parade at 2 p.m. and fireworks at dusk. It also is adding new events such as [Final Friday Experience](#), a summer event series replacing Friday Night Live, the last Friday June through September, and [Odyssey SwimRun Ludington](#) Oct. 3.

Area attractions also are open in 2021, including [Sandcastles Children’s Museum](#) and [Big Sable Point](#) and [Ludington North Breakwater](#) Light tower climbs, which were closed in 2020 due to the pandemic.

“Sandcastles has always been an important part of visitors’ vacation experiences in Ludington, and we are thrilled to reopen this year and welcome everyone back,” said Kristin Korendyke, executive director of Sandcastles Children’s Museum. “And our new Water Safety Exhibit is a wonderful community collaboration intended to keep visiting families safe on our shore.”

### 2021 Events/Attractions

Below is a list of Ludington’s events and attractions, including notes about any known modifications due to COVID-19. [Click here](#) for a full list of events, and check event websites directly before making travel plans.

#### ***Events/Attractions (some with COVID-related modifications) – in order by date***

- [Mason County Historical Society](#) properties – [Historic White Pine Village](#) opened May 1 for the season – Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through October; [Port of Ludington Maritime Museum](#) opened May 1 for the season – Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through October
- [Lighthouses/tower climbs open](#) (May 10 for Big Sable Point Light, May 28 for Ludington North Breakwater Light) – Tower climbs resuming after 2020 hiatus
- [S.S. Badger](#) (May 20) – Sailing season begins
- **NEW** - [Harbor Run 5K & 10K](#) (May 22) – Celebrating National Maritime Day and start of S.S. Badger sailing season
- [Live In the Plaza music series](#) – Live music at Legacy Plaza (Thursdays 5-8 p.m., June 24 through Sept. 2)

- [Ludington Farmer's Market](#) (Fridays 3-7 p.m., June 11 through Sept. 24) – *Initially located at open lot near Loomis and Robert streets; will move to Legacy Plaza upon completion*
- **NEW - Final Friday Experience** (June 25, July 30, Aug. 27, Sept. 24) – *Replacing Friday Night Live, this new series the last Friday of the month features food, live music and activities spread throughout the new [Ludington Outdoor Social District](#) (LOSD) that provides outdoor space to enjoy a beverage*
- [Sandcastles Children's Museum](#) – *Opening June 1 for season after 2020 closure, including new Water Safety Exhibit*
- [S.S. Badger Shoreline Cruises](#) (June 12, July 4, July 31, Aug. 21)
- [Ludington Offshore Classic & Big Boys Tournament](#) (July 12-18) – *Drive-through fish weigh-in for anglers (no on-site public watch event/beer garden), but weigh-in and award program can be seen on Facebook Live*
- [Ludington Area Center for the Arts](#) Summer Concert Series (June 23 - Sept. 1)
- [Sunset Beach Bonfires](#) (June 24, July 22, Aug. 26)
- [Coast-to-Coast Gravel Grinder + 100-Mile Bicycle Race](#) (June 26-27)
- [Big Sable Point Light Bus Days](#) (June 26, July 8 & 22, Aug. 5 & 19, Sept. 11)
- [West Shore Art Fair](#) (July 3-4)
- [Ludington Area Jaycees Freedom Festival](#) (July 4)
- [West Shore Bank Rhythm & Dunes concerts](#) (July 24 and 31)
- [Run The Beach 5K](#) (Aug. 7)
- [Gold Coast Artisan Fair](#) (Aug. 14-15)
- [Suds on the Shore](#) (Aug. 21)
- [Downtown Ludington Sidewalk Sales](#) (July 30-Aug. 1)
- **NEW - Odyssey SwimRun Ludington** (Oct. 3) – *Inspired by Sweden's [Otillo](#) swimrun race series, this U.S. swimrun sport has two-person teams who run and swim along a marked nature course; Ludington is new to the U.S. series*

## New 2021 Attractions

The Ludington business community recently opened or will open a number of new businesses and attractions to expand offerings to visitors and locals. New 2021 attractions include:

### New Attractions

- [Ludington Outside Social District](#) (LOSD) – *Open now, with restaurants being added.* To give visitors more space to socialize at downtown food and drink establishments, Ludington created an outdoor “social district” allowing patrons to purchase alcoholic beverages in designated cups from businesses with permits. The district’s hours are based on the respective times businesses open through midnight. Participating businesses thus far include Jamesport Brewing, Luciano’s Ristorante, Ludington Bay Brewing, Mitten Bar and Sportsman’s Restaurant. The social district includes portions of Ludington Avenue along the 100 block east and west of James Street, as well as Rath Avenue from Ludington Avenue to the alley behind the businesses. The alley along Ludington Avenue from Rath to the back entrance to Old Hamlin Restaurant also is included. Check for updates at [downtownludington.org/LOSD](http://downtownludington.org/LOSD).
- [Legacy Plaza](#), 112 N. James St. – *Scheduled to open June 2021.* This downtown project will transform the former James Street Plaza into a four-season community and recreational space, featuring a permanent pavilion, new bathroom structure, communal and private seating, fire pit, urban green space, interactive public kiosk, and self-guided walking tour of Ludington’s history acknowledging the maritime and lumbering heritage and honoring the three Native American tribes who first settled the area. The plaza will benefit the community by increasing outdoor, year-round recreational and cultural activities. It also will be the new home of the Ludington Farmers Market.
- [Sandcastles Children's Museum](#) – **Water Safety Exhibit** – *Opening June 1.* In conjunction with the museum’s reopening since COVID-19, Sandcastles features a new Water Safety Exhibit and water safety community outreach program, including a wave table where kids can interact with a crank and paddle wheel to create a wave pattern while using movable sandbars to see how rip currents develop. Kids also can launch a swimmer or drop a ball/object into the water to understand the swift action of dangerous currents, plus try on life jackets and learn how to fit and fasten properly.

- [Port of Ludington Maritime Museum \(PLMM\)](#) – **Armistice Day Exhibit** – *Grand opening June 12*. This permanent exhibit commemorates the Armistice Day Storm Nov. 11, 1940 that killed 154 people on Lake Michigan. It lets visitors experience the storm that converged over Lake Michigan, causing disastrous effects such as swallowing fishing tugs, damaging steamships and sinking three freighters between Little and Big Sable Points. Visitors can explore sunken freighters, see the storm’s power and learn how the National Weather Service adapted its practices as a result.
  - ***NOTE: The PLMM celebrates its fifth anniversary June 12 with a grand opening*** of the Armistice Day exhibit 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., awarding prizes each hour such as a membership, t-shirts, books, etc.
- [Cartier Mansion Carriage House Suites](#), 409 E. Ludington Ave. – *Opening June 2021*. The historic [Cartier Mansion B&B](#) has built out its carriage house into four ADA-accessible guest suites ranging from large and spacious to quaint and comfortable – and all are family- and small dog-friendly. The style and design of each room is unique and true to the character of an early 20th century carriage house, including retaining elements of the horse and cow stall. Each room includes a multi-course breakfast, guest service beverage and snack station, comfy bedding, Beekman 1802 goat milk bath amenities, smart TVs with premium channels, and chocolates. Spacious common areas and wireless Internet available. Reservations can be made for dates starting in June. [cartiermansion.com/Carriage-House](http://cartiermansion.com/Carriage-House)
- **Ludington State Park Canoe/Kayak Enhancements, Hamlin Lake Beach**
  - **Universal Access Kayak Launch** – *Opening June 2021*. Spearheaded by the Friends of Ludington State Park with support from Ludington State Park and Michigan State Parks plus the community, this universal access kayak launch will allow people of all abilities to launch kayaks via an estimated 30-foot sloped gangway, featuring a transfer area where a person in a wheelchair can get out of the chair, onto a platform and into their boat, which they slide into the water with their hands.
  - **Interpretive Canoe Trail, Ludington State Park** – *Scheduled for summer 2021*. The Friends of Ludington State Park is creating a canoe/kayak water trail at Lost Lake with interpretive signs.
- [Ludington Splash Pad](#), Copeyon Park. *Open for first full season in 2021*. This 3,000-square-foot splash pad with non-slip surface overlooking Pere Marquette Lake features 12 ground sprays, six water features, plus a variety of showers, streams and mists at various heights for recreational water play. The free splash pad is adjacent to a playground and picnic grounds and open daily Memorial Day to Labor Day, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. It is connected to the parking lot via an ADA-accessible paved path.
- [Grip N Rip Disc Golf](#), 5770 US-10. – *Opened March 2021*. This one-stop disc golf pro store is a destination for disc golfers as one of the few exclusive disc golf stores in Michigan. The 4,000 square-foot store sells a variety of equipment – discs, baskets, bags, carts, apparel, accessories – plus specialty discs like glow discs, a sustainable hemp line of discs, and discs for kids and dogs. The store plans to carry discs from up to 15 companies and 50 brands, selling 5,000 discs at a time. The store also will feature an indoor practice putting range that can be rented out for 30-60 minutes for 1-6 people.

#### ***New Restaurants***

- [Crown and Cork](#), 502 W. Loomis St. – *Opening Memorial Day Weekend 2021*. Located in the former P.M. Steamers restaurant overlooking Pere Marquette Lake, Crown and Cork is a trendy new restaurant with a relaxed vibe, boasting a one-of-a-kind waterfront view and unique menu items like beer battered cauliflower; salt-roasted beets with fresh honeycomb, goat cheese, and arugula; and jumbo shrimp & grits. The restaurant will serve lunch, dinner and happy hour. The restaurant also will feature live music, from dueling piano players to jazz. [www.crowncork.com](http://www.crowncork.com)
- [Keeper’s Fish Shack](#), 106 N. James St. – *Opening mid-June 2021*. Located at the new Legacy Plaza, this “food truck without wheels” will feature fish and seafood options from fresh and salty waters, serving

Great lakes perch and walleye, plus salmon, shrimp, calamari, North Atlantic cod, mahi-mahi and other specials. Customers will place their orders inside and pick up at the outside takeout window. Most fish can be grilled, blackened or deep-fried. A grab-and-go station will feature fish/seafood dips, pita chips/breadsticks, and salmon jerky. The restaurant will sell pop and water, and it is pursuing a license to sell beer and wine. Open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily except Wednesday.

- **Stix Bar & Park Lanes**, 1963 N. Lakeshore Dr. – *Opening fall 2021*. This iconic bowling alley and restaurant is being refurbished and expanded at its current location, reconstructed as a two-story building that will seat 160 people. A mezzanine is designed so people on the second floor, which also will have a bar, can see a live band on the first floor. [facebook.com/Stixbarforlife](https://www.facebook.com/Stixbarforlife)

### **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 Mason County deliver the perfect combination of unspoiled natural resources and unrivaled outdoor recreation with quaint, small-town charm – all within easy reach located at the intersection of U.S. 31 and U.S. 10. For information on the Ludington area including lodging, events, and other tools to help plan a Ludington getaway, visit [PureLudington.com](https://www.PureLudington.com), [facebook.com/PureLudington](https://www.facebook.com/PureLudington), [@PureLudington](https://www.instagram.com/PureLudington) on Instagram and [@Pure\\_Ludington](https://twitter.com/Pure_Ludington) on Twitter; or call 800-542-4600.*

### **COVID-19 Travel-Related Information**

*For the latest COVID-19 information, including local and national regulations, consult [pureludington.com/covid-19](https://www.pureludington.com/covid-19).*

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