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It's hard to beat a person who never gives up.

~ George Herman "Babe" Ruth

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Aarwood Bridge Walk 2025

By Tina Norris Fields

RAPID CITY, MI – We couldn’t agree on exactly how many years the Aarwood Bridge Walk had been taking place. So, this reporter went back into the archives to find out.

In May of 2012, the old, no longer safe, Aarwood Bridge was taken out so it could be replaced with a new, safer bridge. That whole summer traffic that would normally go down Aarwwood Road to get to the shore of Torch Lake had to be rerouted down West Plum Valley Road. And what was normally a two-mile ride to Torch Lake for Aarwood Road and Aarwood Trail residents, living just south of Rapid River, became a five-mile annoyance – driving down Aarwood to Rapid City Road, then north to either West Plum Valley Road or Crystal Beach Road, grumbling all the way.

The work was completed in August, and our beautiful new bridge just seemed to beg for something to commemorate its rebirth, so to speak. Fortuitously, the always thwarted desire of several local residents to journey up to make the Labor Day Mackinac Bridge Walk, revealed the perfect way for us to celebrate our new bridge. With the leadership of Nora and Joe Mariage, the annual Aarwood Bridge Walk was launched, christening our freshly rebuilt bridge with the first walk on Labor Day, Monday, September 3, 2012.

So, Norma, you were right, this was the fourteenth time we held our Aarwood Bridge Walk!



May 2012, the Aarwood Road Bridge was completely removed, to be replaced with a new, safe bridge that would meet code. The work went on through that summer, being completed in August, just in time to inspire a fitting way for the community to celebrate our new, modern, bridge.

The summer traffic ordeal was finally over and the new bridge was a welcome addition to the community.

Early to the bridge, Monday morning, this group who come from Bay City every year to be part of the Aarwood Bridge Walk.

They warmed up here as the official marching kazoo ban with a rendition of the famous chorus from Sousa’s famous Stars and Stripes Forever.

Later, they led the parade across the bridge to the tune of the Star Spangled Banner.



September 1, 2025 - those who have been part of this bridge walk every year, as well as those who just learned about it this year, gathered for a celebratory group photo- with smiles, dogs, a bicycle, and lots of smiles. There followed a number of different holiday traditions, including breakfast pizzas and some creative Bloody Mary creations.

News flash for our online friends: The Voice website is about to undergo some changes. You will notice some design changes, but we will do our best to keep the site at least as easy to navigate as it is now, and we hope to actually improve it. We are still working on developing the new look for the website. Things always take a bit longer than we expect, but the secret to success is to never, ever, give up.

COMMUNITY

INTERNATIONAL FIREWORKS CHAMPIONSHIP SET TO DAZZLE THIS FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

Traverse City, Mich. — Six fireworks teams from around the world are coming to Traverse City this week to compete in the third-annual International Fireworks Championship at Turtle Creek Stadium. The teams hope to walk away with bragging rights as some of the best fireworks displays in the world. To qualify, the teams had to have won a previous fireworks competition.

While some group and premium seats have been sold out, a limited number of tickets are available for both shows. Teams from Poland, Canada, China, Portugal, Serbia, and the USA will compete.

Interviews and insights into all the teams are available at the International Fireworks Championship website.

The teams will have up to 15 minutes to present a magnificent display choreographed to music. A finale on Friday will be presented

by last year's winners from the UK. Saturday's finale is designed by a panel of pyrotechnic judges.

"This promises to be another unforgettable year for the International Fireworks Championship," said Trevor Tkach, President of Traverse City Tourism. "There is nothing else like this anywhere in the country. You give the best of the best fireworks teams a level playing field and see who comes out on top."

Each night, the audience votes on which team gets the "Best of Show" award. On the final night, a group of pyrotechnic experts uses the choreography, synchronization to music, and the overall experience to present a championship award for the top team.

Tickets are available here: <https://traversecityifc.saffire.com/p/tickets>.

The presenting sponsor is GFL Environmental. Other sponsors include Priority Health, The

Carrithers Family, Up North Live News, Blast! Events, TVC Airport, Fox Grand Traverse, tru north Convenience Stores, OAV, 4Front Credit Union, and Showtime FX. The show is organized by Traverse City Tourism.

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About Traverse City Tourism

Traverse City Tourism is an independent, not-for-profit destination organization that promotes the greater Traverse City area as a leisure and business destination with an excellent quality-of-life. Through the impact of travel, Traverse City Tourism helps strengthen the local economy and supports a thriving entrepreneurial community. Details of the regions lodging, attractions and area events are available at www.TraverseCity.com

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Native Plant Sale

Thursday, September 18
2:00 - 6:00 pm

at the Kalkaska Conservation District
406 S Cedar St, Kalkaska (sidewalk sale)

kalkaskaconservation.org/events/25nativeplant
231-258-3307

