

# FORGE YOUR ADVENTURE

## FEATURED STORIES

- RRC Certification Pg. 4
- Downtown Enhancement Project Pg. 6
- Historic Vista Theater Funding Pg. 20

**Welcome to “Irontown, USA”**

**2023 Year In Review**

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# WHAT'S INSIDE

Introduction	3
RRC Certification	4
Downtown Enhancement Project	6
USDA Phase 1 Water Project	8
LaCombe Softball Field Complex	13
Art in the Park	14
U.P. Construction Council: Farmers Market	14
Great Lakes Recovery Centers	16
Negaunee Schools Sports Complex	18
Historic Vista Theater Funding	20
Hidden Gem Restorative	22
Unity Human Performance	23
West End Gymnastics	26
Lake Effect Jiu-Jitsu	27
U.S. 41 Corridor:	28-31
RG Design	
Edward Jones	
Munson Retirement Solutions	
Modern Drift Boutique	
Jasper Hill Photography	
U.P. Fun with Friends	34
Negaunee Elks	35



The City of Negaunee has experienced some exciting and incredible changes since the adoption of its five-year Moving Forward economic development plan in 2019. This third issue of our community magazine brings you an overview of our recent achievements, current and upcoming projects, and general information about our city.

Starting in 2024, we will be updating our Economic Development Strategic Plan. A newly-formed advisory committee will help work through the process. Our goal is to evolve the city's prior plan, known as "Moving Forward," into "Forge Your Adventure," which we believe better embodies both the spirit of the pioneers that settled our great city and reflects today's environment and possibilities. Whether you're here to raise a family, open a business, enjoy the area's recreational opportunities or participating in our many events, Negaunee is the place where you can truly Forge Your Adventure!

Sincerely,

**Nate Heffron**  
City Manager of Negaunee



## PARTNERS





# THE IMPACT OF REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES (RRC) CERTIFICATION

Charting a Path for Investment, Innovation, and Inclusive Growth

The Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) program is a state-wide certification program that supports communities to become development ready and competitive in today's economy.

The MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities program helps communities like Negaunee become well-positioned for private investment and improved economic development opportunities.

RRC Objectives:

1. Identify opportunities for economic development in the community.
2. Identify barriers that may be inhibiting economic development.
3. Provide a written report and recommendations to the City Council.



The MEDC is thrilled to announce that Negaunee has been awarded the Redevelopment Ready Communities certification. This designation signals to local and regional stakeholders that Negaunee has removed traditional barriers for prospective investors. It signifies the commitment to a strong planning, zoning and economic development foundation, backed by local support and the capacity to support investment.

What does this entail? Negaunee's diligent staff has updated essential planning documents—like the master plan, economic development strategy, and zoning permits—making them readily accessible online to the public. Achieving RRC certification isn't the endpoint; it's a commitment to annually update and maintain these documents using the RRC toolkit. This ongoing effort ensures transparency and demonstrates the staff's unwavering dedication to serving the public.

Why does this matter? Active public involvement is pivotal for a thriving community. However, not everyone can attend every meeting or engagement forum. Public engagement, a cornerstone of the RRC toolkit, ensures inclusive community input through various means, such as surveys, farmers market stands, or local gatherings. This certification equips the community with tools to gather and incorporate public feedback effectively. This is essential to giving local officials the tools needed to make decisions that will impact the community in the future.

Who benefits? This certification is invaluable for the local municipality, officials, residents, business owners, developers, and regional partners. It empowers local officials with updated documents crucial for informed decision-making. For residents, business owners, and developers, it means easy access to vital information online and city staff that are ready and willing to help—be it acquiring permits, starting a business, or seeking city assistance for a project.

Any added perks? Beyond the certification, the community will gain access to the Redevelopment Services Team expertise, focusing on proactive redevelopment at identified priority sites. Additionally, certified communities can access ongoing technical assistance funding, apply for Match on Main grants, and opt in to exclusive programs like tourism assessments, resiliency initiatives, and community storytelling—a testament to the community's commitment to continued growth.

This certification marks just the beginning of the journey toward long-term success in Negaunee. The MEDC looks forward to building upon its relationship with the city and supporting local economic development efforts.



MICHELLE PARKKONEN  
Michigan Economic Development Corporation





## REVITALIZING NEGAUNEE: A NEW DAWN FOR DOWNTOWN

Transforming the City's Core for Economic Renewal and Community Vibrancy

The Downtown Enhancement Project is more than a face-lift; it is instrumental in reshaping Negaunee's long-term economic future. Funded in part by USDA Rural Development Funding, MDOT Small Urban Development Funds, and a Michigan Economic Development Corporation Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) grant, the project combines public infrastructure, streetscape improvements, placemaking components, and pedestrian amenities which are designed to create a downtown that offers walkability, pedestrian amenities, diverse businesses, and a unique environment that is an essential component of the City's economic future. The project goal is to promote business growth and sustainability, create outdoor social gathering opportunities, increase walkability and connectivity, and improve the community's overall image.

The project's first component took place this summer with upgrades to public infrastructure on Iron Street by replacing aged water mains, electrical systems, sidewalks, and roadways - all of which are critical components

to help sustain businesses and residents in or adjacent to downtown. Secure and reliable infrastructure is vital to supporting business and attracting new private investment. Tying the water improvement project in with other public improvements make sense. This summer, the project also included new sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, and the realignment of the Iron-Pioneer Street intersection.

The summer of 2024 will bring the second component of the project. It will include street furnishings, a welcome sign, landscaping, and improvements to several strategically identified City-owned sites adjacent to Iron Street. Specifically, those projects are redesigning Ericson Parkway and Chiri Park, and creating Iron Street Plaza, Tobin Place, Rail Street Lookout, and Firefighter's Square. Design elements will link to our industrial past using iron and weathered steel in many of the features.

A refresh of Ericson Parkway, which serves as a pedestrian connector between Jackson and Iron Streets, will include new landscaping, lighting, and

public seating. It will also integrate the restoration and reuse of old cemetery gates as a design feature. Chiri Park is a central site downtown and has historically been simply an underutilized grassy clearing. This project will reinvent the space into a central gathering area with new landscaping, public seating, bike amenities, and infrastructure to support the Negaunee Farmers Market. The creation of Iron Street Plaza re-purposes part of Marquette Street into a walkable public square that will also serve as a connector between parking areas and Iron Street. The plaza will serve as a public gathering place with furnishings and plantings and features which include custom light poles created by local firm U.P. Fabricating. The site will be a venue for street events and festivals.

The Rail Street Lookout will create an overlook and plaza on the unused land above the Silver Street underpass and steps from the Iron Ore Heritage Trail. It will provide a unique outdoor gathering space featuring a deck, lightscaping, gas fire pits, seating for socializing and dining, and bike parking. Tobin Street



**THIS PROJECT IS MORE THAN A REIMAGING OF DOWNTOWN; IT WILL HELP SPAWN A NEW ERA OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY BY TRANSFORMING THE DOWNTOWN INTO AN ACTIVE CITY CORE.**

improvements include landscaping and public seating to enhance the connection between Iron Street and the adjacent Jackson Mine Park and the Iron Heritage Trail. Finally, the creation of Firefighter's Square will highlight our historic fire station, which is the oldest in-use fire hall in the Upper Peninsula and the second oldest in the state. It will feature a sculpture, interpretive signage and narratives which pay tribute to the history of firefighting in our community.

Downtown reflects the well-being of the entire City and is critical to attracting new investment, businesses, and residents. An active downtown that offers walkability, pedestrian amenities, and a unique environment is essential to the

City's economic strategy. It communicates to our residents, businesses, as well as those in cities and townships across the region that we are a community worth investing time, resources, and talent in. We are more than a community lost to time because of the economic loss of mining - we are survivors. Our future is bright. We are ready for our next chapter.

This transformative project will usher in a new era for residents and change the face of Negaunee for decades to come.





# USDA PHASE 1 WATER PROJECT



**11,000 LINEAR FEET  
WATER MAIN**



**100 LINEAR FEET  
SEWER MAIN**



**100 LINEAR FEET  
STORM SEWER**



**3,550 LINEAR FEET  
SIDEWALK**



**2.3 MILES  
LINEAR FEET OF PAVE-  
MENT**





# NEGAUNEE DOWNTOWN SOCIAL DISTRICT

## COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q: WHERE CAN ALCOHOL BE CONSUMED WITHIN THE DISTRICT?**

A: Only in the “Commons Area.” In Negaunee’s case, this would mean public sidewalks and streets closed for events, public parking lots, and some public parks.

**Q: CAN I BRING MY OWN ALCOHOL DOWNTOWN?**

A: No, you must purchase alcohol from approved, licensed businesses. Carrying an unapproved, open container of alcohol in public is an offense under MCL 257.624 or/and MCL 436.1915.

**Q: WILL THE SOCIAL DISTRICT ONLY BE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS?**

A: No, it will be year-round, Monday-Sunday, from noon to midnight. The current state law does not just cover special events.

**Q: IS THERE A LIMIT ON HOW MUCH ALCOHOL I CAN HAVE AT ONE TIME?**

A: Yes, you may only have a 16-ounce cup at one setting while in the Commons Area. No glass is permitted, only plastic. All cups must be issued by an approved licensed business.

**Q: CAN I TAKE MY APPROVED CUP INTO A BUSINESS OR ANOTHER BAR?**

A: No, you may not take your cup into any other bar or other business within the Social District. The contents of the cup must be consumed within the Commons Area only.

**Q: WHO DETERMINES WHETHER OR NOT THE LAW IS BROKEN WITHIN THE DISTRICT?**

A: The Negaunee Police Department, other police agencies, and the Michigan Liquor Control Commission.

**Q: CAN I CONSUME ALCOHOL ON A PUBLIC STREET?**

A: No, unless the street is closed and is clearly signed, indicating it as part of the Commons Area.

**Q: HOW MANY MICHIGAN COMMUNITIES HAVE CREATED SOCIAL DISTRICTS?**

A: 84.

**Scan the QR code to learn more about Downtown Negaunee Social District.**



## 129TH ANNUAL VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER TOURNAMENT JULY 26-28, 2024



*Mark Balzarini Photography*



# ORE TO SHORE

## 25TH ANNUAL MOUNTAIN BIKE EPIC

### AUGUST 10, 2024



PHOTO CREDIT: ANDY GREGG / MQTPHOTO.COM

VISIT [ORETOSHORE.COM](https://www.oretoshore.com) FOR MORE INFORMATION



## LACOMBE SOFTBALL FIELD COMPLEX

### THE OVERALL PROJECT WILL INCLUDE:

**Universal Access Sidewalks:** Installation of sidewalks designed for Universal Access, connecting the rear to the front of the field, ensuring accessibility for everyone.

**ADA Ramps:** Installation of ramps to provide Universal Access to the field at grade level.

**Sidewalk Improvements:** Upgrades to sidewalks for Universal Access to key facilities including the concession stand, bathrooms, stands, and the new Universal Access dugouts.

**Parking Expansion:** Addition of two parking spaces, clearly marked and signed for accessibility.

**Accessible Dugouts:** Construction of two dugouts that are ADA-accessible, enhancing inclusivity and accessibility for all participants.

Partnerships make all the difference, especially when it comes to community projects. The Negaunee Little League and the City of Negaunee partnered to improve LaCombe Softball Field Complex access.

The Little League's main concern was to provide shelter to players by constructing two dugouts.

The city wanted to provide better access to restrooms, concessions and the stands as well as improve the pathway between the edge of the outfield and the football stadium where spectators park.

After sitting down, both parties agreed to work together to obtain funding to meet their objectives.

Both organizations began a joint fundraising campaign through a crowdfunding grant opportunity, uti-

lizing services provided by Patronicity.

According to the Patronicity website, the program empowers local place-making projects through crowdfunding, access to matching grants, and hands-on project coaching.

This partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) allowed our community to raise funding for this project.

Generous donors throughout the area helped to raise \$50k for the project. MEDC and Patronicity added another \$50k for a total of \$100,000. None of this would have been possible without the support of our incredible community!

Work on this project began in early fall 2023. The project is expected to be completed in 2024.





## Art in the Park

### Uniting the Community Through Student Murals

Jackson Mine Park, along the scenic Iron Range Heritage Trail, now boasts an artistic flair, thanks to the 'Art in the Park' initiative. This program, a collaboration between Honor Credit Union, local high school students, and the city, transforms the park into a dynamic art gallery.

The murals are born from student creativity and vetted by their teacher, Honor Credit Union, and the city, and displayed on kiosks crafted by the Negaunee High School shop class. These structures, designed with protective roofs and plexiglass, shield the art from moisture and vandalism. Each double-sided kiosk showcases up to two murals, ensuring a continuous display of fresh talent.

Set to be refreshed every two years with new student work, these murals symbolize a revolving canvas of community spirit and youthful imagination. The success of this program has led to discussions about expanding the number of kiosks in 2025.

'Art in the Park' is more than an art display; it's a testament to community collaboration, blending local talent with civic pride. As visitors make their way through Jackson Mine Park, they're not just viewing murals; they're experiencing a vibrant story of creativity and community unity.



Works! and one of our education partners. Once selected, students participate in a financial literacy workshop and safety training through MIOSHA.

The first camp was held during the summer of 2022 in Gladstone at the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades Local 1011 Joint apprenticeship Training Center. In addition to that location, students also trained at the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324 and United Association of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 111 training centers.

In 2023, we held the Building Trades Summer Camp in Negaunee at the Carpenters and Millwrights Local 1510 Training Center, as well as the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 906 and Sheet Metal Workers Local 7 training centers. This camp served students within the Marquette County area. We made improvements in 2023 which included a community service project and the transition to a five-day camp where we instituted Fieldtrip Fridays in partnership with MiSTEM to facilitate teacher externships.

Two community service projects were selected this summer. We partnered with Nate Heffron and the City of Negaunee to construct two farmers

market stands to be used at their farmers market during the summer months. Students learned framing, decking, sheeting, custom barn door construction, metal roofing and soffit installation, finishing and painting. Our second project was organized and led by Adam Saari, Business Agent, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local 2, in partnership with Tim Stein, Instructor, Laborers Local 1329. The project was to form, pour, and finish a 16'X40' concrete pad to be used as a batting cage at Lions Field in Trowbridge Park, maintained by Marquette Township. Just like those skilled craftspeople in the union construction industry, students will now be able to admire their work while visiting the projects they completed.

On Fieldtrip Fridays, we visited many of our industry partners sites such as the Eagle Mine-Humboldt Facility, City of Marquette-Wastewater treatment, Water Filtration, & Department of Public Works, Potlatch-Deltic, Superior Extrusion, Billerud Escanaba, and Cleveland-Cliffs Tilden Mine.

Twenty-five students from Gladstone and Escanaba participated and graduated from our first camp, and of those graduates 50% signed up for CTE classes the following school year. Twenty-eight students from Marquette par-

ticipated and graduated from our 2023 camp, and nearly 30% of graduates were female students.

Graduation was well attended by students' families, contractors, trades representatives, U.P. Michigan Works, and education leaders. In addition, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was the keynote speaker and participated in both ceremonies. This program has been identified by the state Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity as a best practice, and we hope it is replicated across the state.

Professional union building trades participating in the Building Trades Summer Camp include Laborers International Union of North America Local 1329, International Union of Painters & Allied Trades Local 1011, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324, Sheet Metal Workers Local 7, UA Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 111, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 906, Carpenters & Millwrights Local 1510, Iron Workers Local 8, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local 2, and Boilermakers Local 169.

In the summer of 2024 we will hold our Building Trades Summer Camp in Iron Mountain.

## CONSTRUCTING FUTURES: THE U.P.'S BLUEPRINT FOR TALENT

### BUILDING SKILLS AND COMMUNITIES: INSIDE THE UPPER PENINSULA CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL'S SUMMER CAMP SUCCESS



MIKE SMITH  
Upper Peninsula  
Construction Council

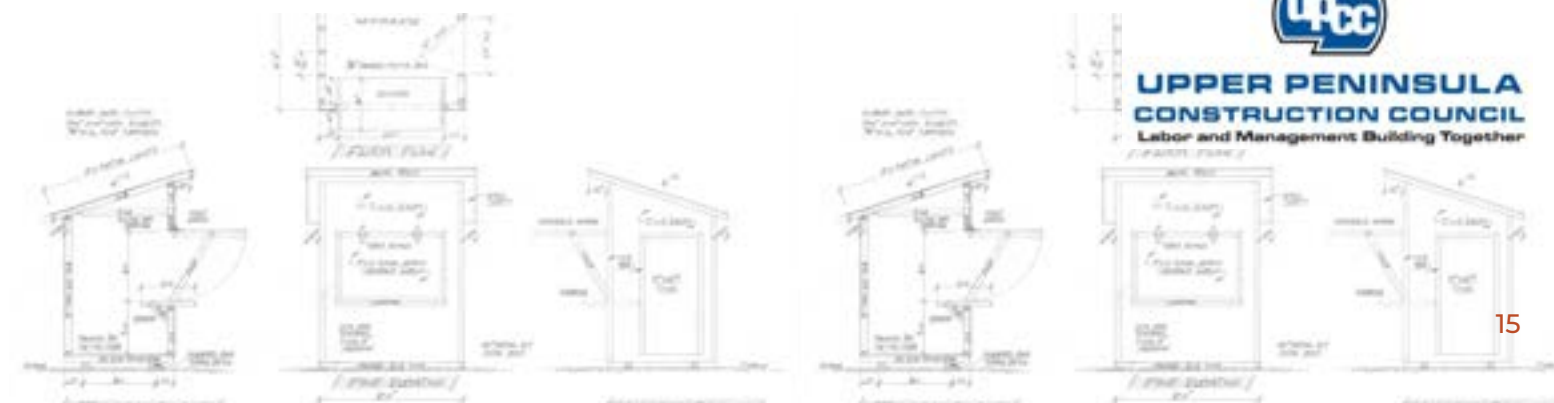
How do we build a more resilient U.P.? The Upper Peninsula Construction Council is committed to identifying, developing, attracting, and retaining talent in the U.P. One of the programs to achieve this is the Building Trades Summer Camp.

The Upper Peninsula Construction Council conceived this program in partnership with the U.P. Building Trades. We formed a committee in 2021 that included U.P. Michigan Works!, Delta-Schoolcraft ISD, Dickinson-Iron ISD, Marquette-Alger RESA, and representatives from our signatory union contractors and trades.

This program is designed to serve as an effective training opportunity by giving qualified students 14-17 years of age an outstanding construction experience in a

controlled environment. We have developed this program to be skill-based, labor and industry-approved, and directly linked to real-world workplace situations. All students participate in the six-week training, which runs Monday through Thursday for four hours each day. Students are paid \$12 an hour with an opportunity to earn a \$200 completion bonus. These wages are only possible through our partnership with U.P. Michigan Works, which manages payroll by accessing Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth funding.

Before any student is accepted into the program, they must attend a resume writing and interview skills workshop facilitated by U.P. Michigan Works. Students are then interviewed by a panel of signatory union contractors & trades, U.P. Michigan



UPCC  
UPPER PENINSULA  
CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL  
Labor and Management Building Together





# GREAT LAKES RECOVERY CENTERS JOHN KIVELA CENTER

In the spring of 2022, Great Lakes Recovery Centers (GLRC) acquired the former Bell Teal Lake Medical Center in Negaunee from UP Health System – Bell with plans to create a behavioral health campus providing expanded, integrated and streamlined behavioral and health care services. With renovations now complete, the state-of-the-art 33,000 square-foot facility will serve individuals on the west end of Marquette County and beyond.

The extensive renovations required to transform this former medical center into a behavioral health campus that offers both outpatient services and residential treatment required just over \$4.2 million. This funding was secured from various sources including a \$300,000 commitment from the West End Health Foundation to be paid over

five years. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services also provided over \$2.8 million for the renovation project.

The John Kivela Center is named in memory of John Kivela. Kivela served as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives from 2013 until his death in 2017. He proudly represented and advocated for the 109th House District, made up of Alger, Luce and Schoolcraft Counties as well as a portion of Marquette County. Kivela was a supporter of GLRC and the services it provided to the community. Naming the new facility after him is a meaningful way to carry on his legacy.

The John Kivela Center is the very definition of GLRC's mission statement, empowering recovery through hope

and change. Whether an individual is recovering from a minor illness, early childhood trauma, psoriasis, social anxiety, or addiction, walking through the doors of the state-of-the-art facility will offer clients hope and the promise of a better tomorrow. GLRC's trained staff empower clients to meet their medical and mental health needs, offering healthy ways of thinking, alternatives to using, and answers to their medical concerns.

The John Kivela Center offers a full array of medical, mental health, and substance use services.

### GLRC Women's Services

The John Kivela Center offers long-term hope to women who suffer from substance use disorder, with a full continu-

um of services from social detox and residential treatment to recovery housing and outpatient counseling. Leaving their children behind could be a barrier for some women seeking treatment. Both Teal Lake Residential and Sue B's House allow women to bring their children with them, giving more mothers the opportunity to access care while continuing to care for their own children.

Teal Lake Residential is a residential treatment program for women with substance use disorder, offering clinically supervised withdrawal management, whole person care and individual treatment plans, including individual therapy, core and life skills group sessions. Sue B's House is a recovery house for women, allowing them to be in a safe, supportive and recovery-oriented environment in their early stages of sobriety. While at Sue B's House, women receive case management, and counseling, and are required to find community employment. Medical treatment is easily accessible at Negaunee Integrated Care Clinic, just down the hall.

### Negaunee Integrated Care Clinic

The Negaunee Integrated Care Clinic (NICC) can be found in the West End Health Foundation Annex portion of the John Kivela Center. The NICC offers all of your behavioral and healthcare needs in one convenient location. GLRC's medical services are staffed by a physician and nurse practitioners who provide both primary and specialty healthcare services for community members and current GLRC clients. Primary care services include family practice, routine physicals, minor injury/illness, and more. Specialty services include dermatology, Hepatitis C treatment, medication-assisted treatment, and ostomy care.

Licensed counselors offer both individual and group counseling for community members and residential cli-

ents. Clinicians help individuals establish goals for both mental health and substance use disorder.

### Child & Adolescent Services

GLRC clinicians offer a variety of services specific to children and adolescents, including mental health, psychiatric and substance use disorder. Clinicians are trained in working with youth and are certified in a variety of evidence-based therapeutic practices to ensure the needs of each individual client are met. In addition to individual therapy sessions, staff also offer assessments, medication management, parent education, consultations, and family therapy.

### Veteran's Services

GLRC provides readjustment counseling services and offers a weekly support group for veterans in Marquette County.

## SERVICES

- Substance use disorder (SUD) services
  - Individual assessments
  - Outpatient counseling
  - Women & Families Services
  - Medication-Assisted Treatment
  - Women's residential treatment, with ability to bring their children
  - Women's recovery housing, with ability to bring their children
  - Onsite childcare for residential clients
- Mental health services
  - Outpatient counseling for mild to moderate mental health concerns
- Psychiatric services
  - Child & Adolescent psychiatric services
  - Adolescent group counseling
- Medical services
  - General medical services
  - Women's specific services
  - Hepatitis C Treatment
  - Ostomy Care
  - Dermatology
  - Whole family care







# NEGAUNEE SCHOOLS SPORTS COMPLEX

## UNITING THROUGH SPORTS AND SPIRIT: HOW NEGAUNEE EMBRACED A MAJOR UPGRADE AMIDST CHALLENGING TIMES

While every day is a great day to be a Miner, August 4, 2020, proved to be an extra special day. Despite being in the midst of a global pandemic, the community of Negaunee cast their votes in strong support of an \$8.5 million bond proposal to provide major upgrades to our school buildings and build a one-of-a-kind, multi-purpose practice facility in the heart of the city next to Miner Stadium. It is the only building of its kind in the Upper Peninsula that is owned by a school district, and the students and community of Negaunee welcomed the addition of this true treasure to our town.

Construction on the new facility be-

gan in May 2021. Integrated Design Incorporated from Marquette was hired as the architectural firm, and Immel Construction out of Green Bay as the general contractor on the huge project. Over 19 months, the 20,000 square foot facility was built, and in November 2022, Negaunee students and the community began using the facility in various ways.

The main surface of the facility is a rubberized "sport court" floor that has painted lines for pickleball and tennis courts, allowing indoor play during all types of weather for those racquet sports. In addition to the rubberized surface, there is a turf system that can

be installed at any time throughout the school year for various activities, including baseball, softball, golf, and dry-land training. The two different floor options offer an incredible opportunity for recreation to our students and the community during our long, snowy winters.

In addition to the floor covering options, there are practice nets and cages that can be electronically lowered from the ceiling so that softball, baseball, and golf can be practiced indoors. This is an extreme benefit to those sports, considering that the Michigan High School Athletic Association typically uses the second Monday in March as the official start day for spring sports. We all know

what is still on the ground in Negaunee in March. It's generally weeks later that spring arrives in on the west end of Marquette County. While waiting for the ground to dry at Wawonowin Country Club - our home course - and the snow to melt off the ball fields and tennis courts, teams can use the facility so they are ready for play once spring finally arrives. Last spring, we typically had five different teams practicing in the facility at one time. The buzz in the building was that of excitement, to be holding practices inside regardless of the weather outside, and that was awesome to witness.

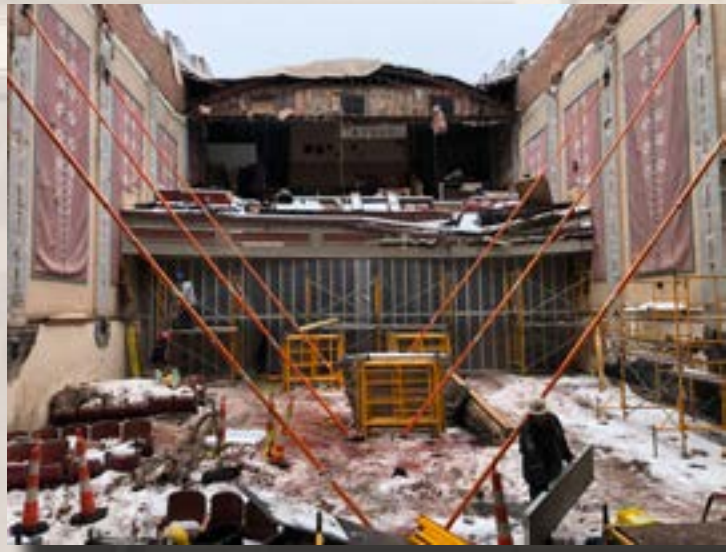
The community has also thoroughly enjoyed using the facility over the past year. The building is open for walkers, free of charge, during the winter months (mid-October-April) from 7:00 - 10:00 a.m., each Monday - Saturday. We typically see 30-40 walkers each day during these times and are thrilled to have so many people using the building for indoor walking. The tennis/pickleball courts and batting/golf cages are also available for our community to rent during designated times throughout the week. There is a minimal reservation fee, and those spaces can be reserved through the Negaunee High School office.

Our staff and students are fortunate to be a part of a school district that has always been given amazing support from the community, and our indoor practice facility was made possible because of that loyalty. The traditions that make up the Negaunee community have led to success in so many ways, both in and out of the classroom, and make us all proud to call ourselves Miners.



**DAN SKEWIS**  
Negaunee Public  
Schools Superintendent





## REVIVING A LANDMARK: NEGAUNEE'S VISTA THEATER GETS A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

A \$3 MILLION GRANT AND COMMUNITY EFFORT PAVE THE WAY FOR HISTORIC THEATER'S RESTORATION AND FUTURE

The City of Negaunee has been awarded \$3 million to save the Vista Theater building! WOW! Can you believe that?

In response to this incredible news, the City Council acted swiftly at a special meeting in Spring 2023. They approved two key agreements with the Peninsula Arts Appreciation Council (PAAC). The first agreement is a symbolic gesture, transferring ownership of the Vista Theater Building to the City of Negaunee for just \$1.00, con-

tingent on receiving this competitive grant. The second agreement grants the city access to the site.

But what's next? There's a whole lot more to think about. The city will need to put together a bid, preserving some historical aspects of the building, figuring out who's going to manage the facility once it's operational, and deciding on the types of programs and activities to host. And that's just scratching the surface; there are many more issues to tackle.

The excitement is palpable among Negaunee residents and folks throughout Marquette County. This isn't just about saving a venue for live entertainment; it's about preserving a piece of our history.

The Vista Theater is set to be more than just an entertainment hub. It's poised to make a significant economic and cultural impact, benefiting not just downtown but the whole of Negaunee for generations to come. Revitalizing the Historic Vista Theater offers a chance

for growth, opportunity, development, and cultural enrichment.

In late summer 2023, the City of Negaunee and the Marquette County Land Bank Authority received another boost with a competitive grant from the State Land Bank Authority, amounting to \$435,424.00. This funding will help stabilize the Vista Theater building by constructing a new roof and eliminating internal environmental hazards.

"The Land Bank is thrilled to see these funds coming to Marquette County," Land Bank Director Anne Giroux said. "Working with local governments, like the City of Negaunee, to eliminate blight and

restore key community assets is a core part of our mission. We're extremely proud of our partnership with the city and our successful grant application."

Even though the bids exceeded initial estimates, the city will use a portion of the \$3 million state grant to cover the shortfall.

"We're fortunate to have such great partners like the Marquette County Land Bank Authority," expressed City Manager Nate Hefron. "With the support of our city staff, we're now in a position to save this historic building in downtown Negaunee."

"This wouldn't have been possible

without the support from Governor Whitmer and our U.P. legislative delegation, who backed the \$3 million expenditure to save the Vista," he said.

The Marquette County Land Bank Authority will be in charge of administering these funds and overseeing the project. They've already agreed to contract with an architect/engineering firm familiar with the Vista Theater building.





## HIDDEN GEM RESTORATIVE

Hidden Gem Restorative, a unique boutique healing practice nestled at 327 Iron Street, is pleased to be one of the most recent downtown additions.

Soul Proprietor Kim Nixon Hainstock is a seasoned healer who has over two decades of experience. She welcomes the community to Hidden Gem, where healing arts are available by appointment. These offerings are complemented by a delightful pop-up shop on select days.

Kim moved to Marquette County with her husband in 1990, seeking a different atmosphere and lifestyle to raise their three children. After driving around the Upper Peninsula for ten days, her family settled on Marquette County.

**“IT IS TIME TO CELEBRATE BEING IN A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY WITH A HEALTHY DOWNTOWN DISTRICT SURROUNDED BY OTHER SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS OWNERS AND ESTABLISHMENTS-IT FEELS VIBRANT-AND THE CREATIVE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS.”**

Now a resident of Ishpeming, Kim is well-acquainted with the West End communities. For the past two decades, she has been actively involved in Negaunee and Ishpeming. She has volunteered with the Girl Scouts, served as a substitute teacher, and participated in a variety of west end community events.

Kim pursued her massage education in 2003, at the Institute of Natural Therapies in Hancock. Over the last twenty years, she has been looking for the perfect spot for her business. She worked in various locations between Ishpeming and Marquette. Yet, none truly matched her vision for her business.

“Until now, nothing really fit what I was seeking. I desired a street-level location with windows, in a downtown area. When I learned about Negaunee’s plans for their streetscape, the establishment of their social district, and the various other exciting developments downtown, I was drawn to explore Negaunee,” Nixon said.

“I’m acquainted with several business owners in Negaunee and appreciate their welcoming nature and collaborative spirit, always ready to lend a hand when needed,” she said.

Hidden Gem offers a range of services including bodywork, wellness, aroma therapy, and a selection of retail items. Details about the boutique’s services are available at [massagebook.com](http://massagebook.com). The business operates by appointment, from Monday to Friday. For more information, Contact Kim at (906) 360-5448.



## UNITY HUMAN PERFORMANCE

Principles like gratitude, productivity, integrity and kindness are what Unity Human Performance is built upon.

Locals know the gym, located at 211 Iron Street, in City Center, as Unity. It was once a private gym that had just recently opened to the public.

Unity is unlike any other gym. Not that it has different equipment, but it focuses on individual service in a group setting, — providing a one-on-one environment.

Its payment structure is also unique. The gym operates on a donation-based structure instead of the traditional fee-based service.

“Our business model is 100% supported by donations by patrons,” said Unity owner and operator Connor Ryan.

“I won’t get into how all that works, but obviously it is working. The gym has been around for five years now, not always in Negaunee.”

Ryan, a lower Michigan native, attended Northern Michigan University where he earned a BA in Health and Fitness Management. Ryan also served as Ishpeming High School’s wrestling coach for several years until he decided to open his own business.

“I fell in love with the people of Mar-

quette County. The people here are different. They have great qualities, authenticity, friendliness, honesty, and are hardworking. Many of the same core values my business holds,” Ryan said.

Unity focuses on services for all ages, splitting members into three categories. Teen Club, adult, and older adult. A full schedule of the gym’s offerings can be found at [unity906.com](http://unity906.com).

**“UNITY HELPS PEOPLE FIND FREEDOM AND PEACE THROUGH PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES.”**

Ryan said members who are new to the gym start out with a 30-minute private consultation. The meeting also includes an introduction to the gym, where you can learn about their space, philosophy, and meet the staff.

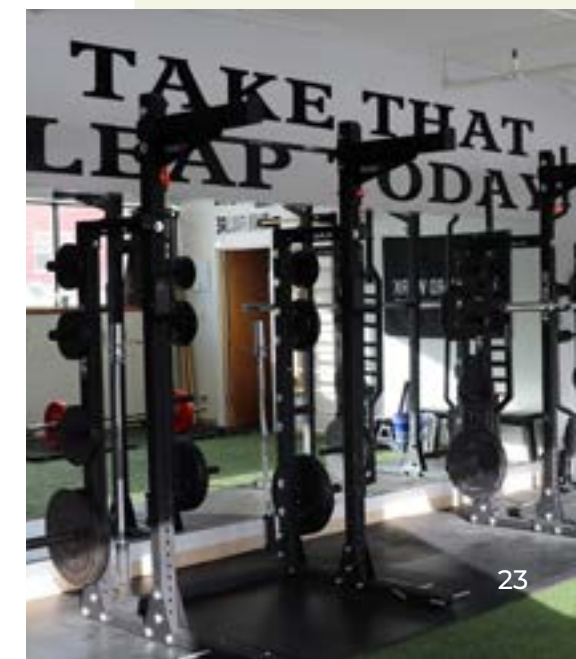
Ryan noted how important it is to fit each gym member with a group that suits their unique training needs.

“I’m here to serve,” Ryan said. “This is my purpose, my drive.”

Ryan sees full classes to support dedicated participants and coaches in our community in Unity’s future. He be-

lieves the City of Negaunee is up-and-coming. He is very optimistic about the improvements downtown.

In the heart of our close-knit community, where every building has its own story, Unity shines like a familiar beacon. Led by the young and spirited Conner, it brings a fresh wave of positivity and a unique approach to business that’s as refreshing as it is rare in our small-town setting. His energy and innovative ideas breathe new life into our quaint downtown, making Unity a standout destination.







**35TH ANNUAL  
LABOR DAY PARADE  
MONDAY, SEPT. 2, 2024**



Laborers' International Union of North America  
**LiUNA!**  
**LOCAL 1329**  
Feel the Power



**SAVE THE DATE**  
AUGUST 24, 2024  
JACKSON MINE PARK  
-TROPHIES FOR 1ST - 3RD  
-BEST OF SHOW  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
FORGENEGAUNEE.COM





## WEST END GYMNASTICS

Bridget Johnson, also known by many as Coach Bridget, may be a little dizzy, but not from somersaults. It's most likely attributed to her success these days, which might feel like a whirlwind.

She's got athletes and novices alike doing flips over the opening of her new business in downtown Negaunee, West End Gymnastics.

Johnson, who has been coaching since she was 14, is best known for her work with schools on the west end of Marquette County, as well as her cheerleading and varsity gymnastics experience in the Marquette Area Public Schools. But her experience in gymnastics goes beyond all the years she has spent coaching.

Over the course of her career, Johnson has discovered that finding appropriate spaces to practice or perform may be a hurdle to those trying to advance the sport in the region.

"The unfortunate situation with gymnastics is that school sports come first for the use of the gyms, which makes total sense. Being a smaller program, we are thankful for any gym access we receive. However, those times can be very challenging for both student and parents' schedules," Johnson said.

Johnson's drive to open her own space came from personal experiences as a kid growing up in Negaunee.

"It was difficult to participate in gymnastic opportunities, most of them are located in Marquette. Nothing really on the west end", Johnson said.

The lack of access for athletes on the west end of Marquette County was exacerbated by the fact that there were no local spaces dedicated to this graceful sport.

Johnson decided the time was now to provide both expert access and dedicated space for her beloved sport in her home community, but that wasn't without a little hesitation.

"I thought this was just an idea," Johnson said. "Let's see what others will say."

Like a perfect landing on a balance beam, every corner she turned her idea was welcomed! Her accountant, her bank, even the space. Everything aligned, once an idea, now would soon be her new reality.

Johnson had projected 50-students for her new venture. It turns out those modest estimates were blown away – to date, well over 200 athletes registered.

Johnson says they are working on creating a website, obviously she has her hands full with the influx of students. For now, the hours of operations and classes offered at West End Gymnastics can be found on the business's Facebook page.

She hopes her future brings new opportunities for Negaunee athletes and

novices alike. Maybe that includes additional space where she and coaches like her can expand offerings and teach gymnastics at all levels.

Johnson is excited to be a part of the changes Negaunee is going through, especially in downtown.

"I like how downtown is becoming more family-friendly," she said. "New businesses and activities are very welcoming, we are happy to be part of this movement."

Perhaps the motto on West End Gymnastics' windows says it best. Passersby can see it from Iron Street — "Be Brave, Be Kind, Be Bold."

The three phrases embody something special, not only for this center, but for any business venture in Negaunee's thriving downtown.

A little girl's dream of learning and thriving in the sport of gymnastics turned into a real thriving business, where that dream has come true.

Johnson is not just a coach and a business owner, but a local expert who is providing real opportunities for children growing up on the west end of Marquette County to live and grow.

West End Gymnastics is located at 211 Iron Street upstairs, above 1844 in the City Center.

## LAKE EFFECT JIU-JITSU

Are you looking for a positive change in your life? Something that's designed to improve your health and well-being; something that instills confidence and discipline; something that helps you learn teamwork and all its benefits? Then Lake Effect Jiu-Jitsu could be the place for you.

Lake Effect is located in the City Center building in the heart of downtown Negaunee. Owner Nick Lauer decided to move the business from Marquette to its current location at 211 Iron Street at the tail-end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nick teaches the fundamentals of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. For those of you not familiar with this form of martial art, it is a combat sport based on grappling, ground fighting, and submission holds. Self defense is the focus of the sport. The objective is to take the opponent to the ground, gaining a dominant position and forcing them into submission.

You can find more information on their class schedules and business hours by following Lake Effect on Facebook. The page features images of students at practice and at competitions. According to Lauer, they have to travel to compete, this includes more regional locations such as Wisconsin and the Chicago area, but have traveled as far away as Florida.

How did Lauer get involved with Jiu-Jitsu? Through an in-your-face, tough love approach that changed his life, accord-

ing to Lauer! Lauer jokes he used to be a professional bricklayer and beer drinker. "I used to weigh 300 pounds or so. While on a job site with another worker, a guy in really good shape asked me why I was so gross." Lauer said. "I was taken aback and shocked. I wanted to react with raw anger. I thought about it for a while, then I asked him what he did to get in shape."

Lauer was then introduced to martial arts. "They kicked my butt the very first day, pretty bad, but when I came back, they didn't expect that," Lauer recalls.

"When I first started, I thought I needed to be in Marquette, you know, the more people the greater success. I found that this all changed during COVID. I looked at reopening closer to home, I looked at Downtown Negaunee and have no regrets", Lauer said.

Lake Effect started out with one or two students when it first opened in the Marquette area. The studio grew into an average of 40 students by 2020, and now Lauer has 50 to 60 members, ranging in age from 5 to 50 years old.

"Some are hobbyists, other competitors, some just want to learn self-defense," Lauer said.

Lauer said one of the central goals at Lake Effect is that the experiences at the studio continue to impact his students positively. It's not just a location,

but a place where they achieve personal growth that can be used in their day-to-day lives. His focus is on his students and in the now - not worrying about whether his business will grow out of its current space.







## U.S. 41 CORRIDOR: NEGAUNEE'S THRIVING GATEWAY FOR BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT

Negaunee's charm isn't limited to its downtown events and special initiatives; significant private projects are also making waves in our community.

Take a look at the U.S. 41 corridor. This commercial area stands out as a magnet for developers, often requiring minimal government intervention.

Strategically situated along a key route that links numerous communities across the Upper Peninsula, our com-

mercial district offers businesses exceptional visibility and a competitive edge.

The sites along U.S. 41 present ideal opportunities for diverse entrepreneurial ventures.

In 2023, this bustling corridor welcomed at least three new businesses, marking their investment in the growth and development of Negaunee.

### RG DESIGN

Dax Richer and Jason Gauthier from RG Design Company purchased a building near Miners Park, previously used as a medical office, and moved their business to the west end. The renovations were significant, including the addition of a partial second story. By late fall of 2022, the revamped building began serving as the office and showroom for RG Design Company.

RG Design specializes in architectural and interior design, along with project management services. They also offer custom cabinet designs through Wood Mode Fine Custom Cabinetry, showcased in their showroom.

The decision to set up in Negaunee was influenced by the owners' connections to the west end and their optimism about the area's future prospects. "We think we have an instinct about where things will be going on the west end, we see the west end being the next area for growth," Dax said.

### EDWARD JONES

Negaunee local Ryan LaMere will also operate his business out of the newly renovated RG Design Building. LaMere moved his Edward Jones office from Ishpeming earlier this year.

Edward Jones is a financial services firm that provides financial planning, long-term care insurance, life insurance, and investment services.

LaMere said he's been working to branch off on his own through the Edwards Jones business model.

He said Negaunee is a great place to make that happen.

"I was born and raised in Negaunee, I feel that this community and the west end will be the best fit for us," LaMere said.

### MUNSON RETIREMENT SOLUTIONS

There's new life in the old Family Video building after Pete Munson purchased the storefront and opened Munson Retirement Solutions.

Munson will offer financial advising services and potentially use the remaining vacant space for long-term leased commercial space. Currently he leases to both Subway and Wild Wild West Tobacco.

Pete said there are a lot of good things happening in Negaunee. He sees the new growth spilling over into every facet of life in the city.

"Negaunee is my heritage; people take pride in this community! This is why I chose to invest here." Munson said.





## MODERN DRIFT BOUTIQUE

Negaunee's latest addition, Modern Drift Boutique, is infusing Irontown with a fresh wave of fashion. Strategically situated at the intersection of U.S. 41 and Teal Lake Avenue, adjacent to Irontown Pasties, the boutique opened its doors in the summer of 2023, promising a unique selection of fashion and gifts.

Savannah Sevegney, the boutique's owner and a passionate advocate for the fashion industry, has realized her lifelong ambition by launching Modern Drift. Her commitment to supporting American-made products, with a special focus on Michigan and, more specifically, the Upper Peninsula, is evident in her carefully curated collection.

Modern Drift Boutique proudly showcases a variety of locally sourced items, reflecting Savannah's dedication to community and quality. Among the standout offerings are bracelets crafted by a remarkably young entrepreneur, just 16 years old, highlighting the boutique's support for emerging talent.

With Savannah at the helm, Modern Drift Boutique is not just a store but a destination for those seeking distinctive fashion and gifts, all while supporting local artisans and entrepreneurs.

"I really wanted to play off of being near Teal Lake. I've always wanted to live on a lake, but now I get to work near a lake

every day, I can see it from my shop. This is what my line of fashion items are centered around, being near the water," Savannah said.

The boutique extends beyond fashion to include an array of jewelry, soaps, lotions, greeting cards, and unique gifts, with clothing and accessories adorning the store's shelves and racks.

Savannah is enthusiastic about the vibrant community of Negaunee. "I like what Negaunee is doing. The community seems to be on the rise. It's the center of where everything is happening-it's just a friendly place," she remarked.

Savannah is taking online fashion merchandising classes through Liberty University. Meanwhile, she hopes to gain further experience as it pertains to the marketing of her business.

Looking ahead, Savannah aims to make her boutique's offerings more accessible to a broader audience by expanding her online presence, including developing the website for e-commerce. For those eager to explore Modern Drift Boutique's selections, Savannah invites them to visit the store's Facebook page, where they can discover the latest products and learn about store hours.



## JASPER HILL PHOTOGRAPHY

After meeting Savannah and her newly launched Modern Drift Boutique, let's introduce her mother, Jennifer Sevegney, the proprietor of Jasper Hill Photography.

Jennifer's journey into photography began at her children's sporting events. What started as a volunteer role to capture these moments quickly turned into a recognized talent, leading her to contribute to the Westwood High School yearbook. She is also a proud graduate of the New York Institute of Photography, class of 2021.

Jennifer is now venturing into a new phase with her photography studio, aiming to refine her skills, especially when it comes to managing lighting

conditions. The studio not only helps in reducing delays due to weather but also intends to serve as a resource for other photographers and artists seeking a professional environment.

**THE QUESTION ARISES: WHY ALLOW COMPETITORS ACCESS TO HER STUDIO?**

**JEN BELIEVES IN A COMMUNITY WHERE THERE'S AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL.**

of services, such as professional headshots, senior portraits and family photography, along with photo editing, digital solutions, and printing services.

Choosing Negaunee for her studio was influenced by Jennifer's appreciation for the city's efforts towards growth and the potential to boost the downtown area through its social district, despite it being a bit away from her studio. She is also looking forward to the diverse events Negaunee has to offer.

Located next to Modern Drift Boutique, her studio is equipped to offer a variety





Presented by the Negaunee Downtown Development Authority

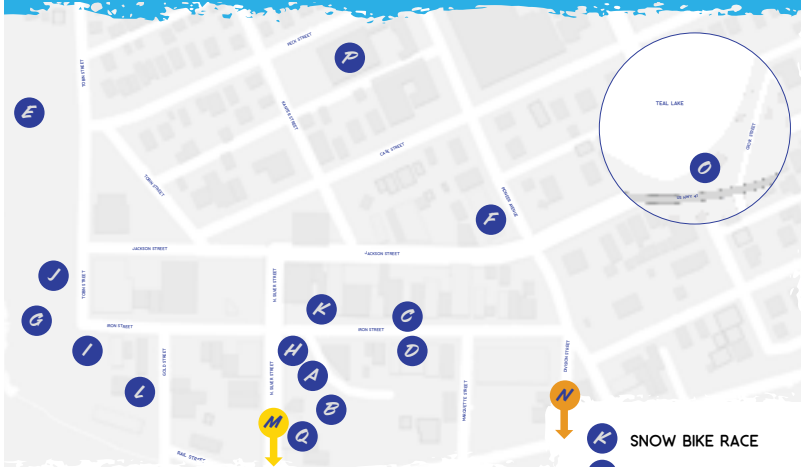
# TINSELTOWN

A Holiday Celebration  
DOWNTOWN NEGAUNEE

DECEMBER 14, 2024

## FESTIVITIES

- Hay Rides
- Cookie Decorating
- Live Music
- Tunnel of Lights
- Mini-Horse Rides
- Holiday Parade



- A BONFIRE
- B IRONTOWN RAIL JAM
- C TUNNEL OF LIGHTS
- D NEGAUNEE EAGLES
- E LANTERN SNOWSHOE TOURS
- F NEGAUNEE ELKS
- G SLEDDING PARTY
- H GOURMET S'MORES BAR
- I MINIATURE HORSE RIDES
- J FIREWORKS VIEWING AREA
- K SNOW BIKE RACE
- L NEGAUNEE VFW
- M SKI HILL\*
- N LUGE\*\*
- O FISHING DERBY
- P SCHOOL ART SHOW
- Q PASTY EATING CONTEST



The City of Negaunee's Heikki Lunta Festival is an unforgettable celebration of winter wonder in the heart of the Upper Peninsula. From heart-pounding snow sports to family-friendly activities, this event promises frosty fun for all.



HEIKKI LUNTA  
NEGAUNEE, MICH

FEBRUARY 7-9, 2025







## U.P. FUN WITH FRIENDS

### NEGAUNEE'S INDOOR WONDERLAND FOR FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT AND ADVENTURE

Get ready for an exciting indoor adventure at Negaunee's U.P. Fun With Friends, even in winter! Surprisingly, you can enjoy a game of putt-putt golf regardless of the snow.

This newer Negaunee establishment isn't just about indoor mini-golf. It boasts a variety of activities including a climbing wall, gymnastics, cornhole, and an expansive inflatable obstacle course. It's also an ideal spot for hosting birthday celebrations.

"Our goal is to create a space where families can enjoy quality time together," said owner Dell Kab.

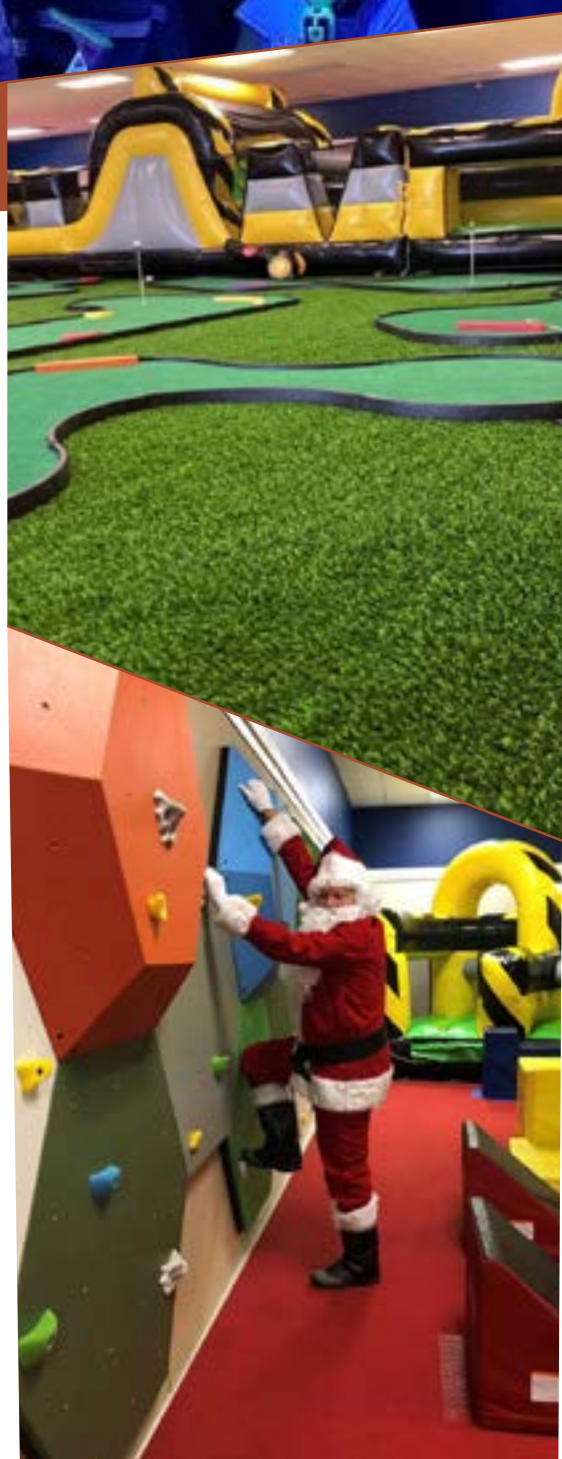
Dell, who hails from Northern Africa, relocated to the U.S. and settled in Negaunee around 2009 after a 20-year stint as a corporate manager at Lowe's. He noted there weren't many places that provide indoor recreation, especially in the winter and decided to

make a much needed change.

With a young child himself, Dell understands the importance of family bonding through fun activities. U.P. Fun With Friends is not just a business for him; it's a mission to enhance family togetherness.

The facility is conveniently located along the U.S. 41 corridor near the Border Grill in Negaunee. Reasonable pricing options include a family membership for unlimited access to all U.P. Fun With Friends activities during regular business hours. Dell's vision is to provide an affordable, regular family activity, not just an occasional treat.

U.P. Fun with Friends is a unique destination for family entertainment and healthy fun.



## NEGAUNEE ELKS

### A PILLAR OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

The Negaunee Elks Lodge, situated at 107 N. Pioneer Avenue in Negaunee, is part of the Upper Peninsula District's network of eight Elks Lodges. With a membership of 285, this Lodge is deeply committed to community support. Their contributions extend beyond local initiatives, including donations to Veterans, the Michigan Major Project aiding special needs individuals, and the Michigan Elks Charitable Grant Fund (Gold Key) for post-high school scholarships for special needs students. **In 2022, the Negaunee Elks significantly supported various local causes, and it appears that their contributions in 2023 were set to exceed the previous year's totals.**

#### The Negaunee Elks 2022 contributions include:

- St. Vincent de Paul: \$744 for food and utilities, and \$3,080 for 500 pasties for the less fortunate.
- Toys for Tots: \$300 plus several bikes for Christmas toy donations.
- Negaunee High School: \$2,200 in scholarships.
- Negaunee Public Schools: \$292 for Americanism Essay Awards.
- Elks National Foundation: \$2,719 towards Elks programs.
- Negaunee Lady Elks: \$4,263 from pasty profits.
- Negaunee City and Township Fire Departments: \$1,142 and \$2,182 respectively for firefighter projects.
- Negaunee Irontown Association: \$800 for community projects.
- Knights of Columbus: \$1,226 for charities.
- High School Boys Baseball: \$2,272 to fund sports.
- Iron Range Hockey: \$1,432 for local junior hockey.
- 8th Grade Class: \$1,350 for a class trip.
- Pink Power Charities: \$200 for a charity walk.
- Gold Key Scholarship: \$2,710 for special needs students.
- Bean Bag Brawl: \$6,602 raised for the Negaunee Elks Scholarship Endowment.

#### 2022 Funding Sources:

- Volunteer-prepared meal profits: \$24,753.
- Bean Bag Brawl profits: \$6,602.
- Golf Outing profits: \$5,420.
- Packers Raffle: \$2,500.
- Member Donations: \$6,042.

**The grand total of the Negaunee Elks Lodge's 2022 contributions to local and surrounding communities amounts to \$54,817.**

If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer, would like to help support your local community and/or are interested in becoming a member of the Negaunee Elks Lodge, contact (906) 475-4401. **ELKS CARE, ELKS SHARE!**

- U.P. Children's Therapy: \$1,000 for a summer speech therapy program.
- Pioneer Days: \$2,140 for July Kids Day Bike Parade and activities at the Ice Arena.
- City of Negaunee: \$1,100 for a park project.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters: \$2,800 for support and events.
- Negaunee High School Band Backers: \$200 to sponsor two students.
- Negaunee High School: \$250 each for the Choral Society and All-Sports Boosters.
- Negaunee Public Schools: \$881 for children's boots, \$100 for the All Night Graduation Party.
- Negaunee Little League: \$600 for equipment.
- Hoop Shoot: \$405 for travel and awards.
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library: \$2,000 for child literacy.
- D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans: \$1,000 for a B-29 Fly-in event, \$240 for newspaper subscriptions, \$254 for relief funds.
- Michigan Elks Major Project: \$6,683 for special needs children.



**WENDI THOMAS**  
Exalted Ruler  
Negaunee Elks Lodge #1116







## GET INVOLVED!

### NEGAUNEE CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 PM  
Negaunee Senior Center  
cityofnegaunee.com | 906-475-7700

#### **City Manager & Downtown Development Authority**

Nate Heffron  
cmsecretary@cityofnegaunee.com  
906-475-7700 Ext 11

#### **Planning & Zoning**

David Nelson  
dnelson@cityofnegaunee.com  
906-475-7700 Ext. 12

#### **Public Works**

Mark Daavettila  
mdaavettila@cityofnegaunee.com  
906-475-9991

#### **Parks & Recreation**

Derek Dushane  
parksandrec@cityofnegaunee.com  
906-475-7900



**2024 PIONEER DAYS**  
**JULY 5 – 13**

[WWW.NEGAUNEEIRONTOWN.ORG](http://WWW.NEGAUNEEIRONTOWN.ORG)

*Forge Your Adventure*