

## Community Events Foster Fun!



*By Paul Beachnau*

As we enter our peak summer season, I am truly aware of how much our community looks forward to special events. The past month served as a reminder with the buzz of Alpenfest and its numerous activities, committee meetings and eager volunteers coming and going from our office.

In addition to the return of our staple events to Gaylord, we have added a number of new events this year. The Tourism Bureau is proud to sponsor them, as they bring specific reasons to visit our community. Our hope is that attendees will return throughout the year to enjoy other activities.

2022 saw the return of Alpenfrost, Alpenfest, Extreme Powersports 250 Snowmobile Race, Big Ticket Festival, the Old U.S. 27 Car Tour, Otsego

County Fair, Mark Mellon Triathlon, 4.5 on the 45<sup>th</sup> Race and Thunder over Waters.

Joining the line-up this year was the Tri-45 Winter Triathlon, Yeti Cup Pond Hockey Tournament and the Gus Macker 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. Snowbelt Brewing Co. also added a summer long concert series at Claude Shannon Park featuring Northern Michigan artists.

Our Tourism Bureau Board made a few changes in our sponsorship policy this year. We are requiring the host organizations to complete a brief sponsorship application, simple hold harmless agreement and provide proof of insurance. Our Board is committed to sponsoring and encouraging these events and supporting the work of the many volunteers that make them happen. At the same time, we want to ensure that everyone is safe and legally protected.

One of the greatest things we have learned throughout the challenges of the pandemic is that we are social beings with the desire to travel, be together and have fun. Hosting unique events that bring our community and visitors together is one of the most impactful and enjoyable ways to accomplish this.