

2021 Back 9 Endurance Run Recap

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

The [2021 Back 9 Endurance Run](#) hosted and organized by the [Keweenaw Mountain Lodge](#) went off without a hitch at the Lodge on May 29th and 30th!

FUN.
JOYOUS.
ADVENTURESOME

**BACK 9
ENDURANCE**

Just One More Round

MAY 29-30

The inaugural running of this event had perfect weather (50-60 degrees during the daytime and 40-55 degrees during the night time), and even the bugs cooperated (for the most part)!



The race is a 3.5 mile loop around the Lodge property. Runners choose to run for 12 or 24 hours. In that time, they run as many laps as they can. Each lap started and ended at the gazebo next to the historic Lodge building. As runners completed each lap, they recorded their lap time, and then either head out for another lap or X out on the board and call it a race!

Below is a summary of the results.

- 12-hour solo: Kate McCloud, 16 laps (57.6 miles)
- 24-hour solo: Janelle Gomez, 20 laps (72 miles)
- 12-hour 2-person team: The Lone Rangers , 14 laps (50.4 miles)

- 12-Hour 4-person team: The Heavy Breathers, 13 laps (46.8 miles)
- 24-hour 4-person team: Total Hardness, 29 laps (104.4 miles)

More detailed results and pictures from the race can be found on the [Back 9 Endurance website](#).



It was wonderful to see runners meeting and exceeding their goals, running their farthest distance yet, cheering each other on, and having fun. And the medals (hand made by Aaron Maki of Old Hand Design Company) and shirts (printed by Beau Warren at [Tee See Tee](#)) were a fun benefit for the participants.



We are looking forward to the [2022 Back 9 Endurance Run](#), and hope you are able to join us!

Wed Talk with Kae: The Peace Only an Intimate Wedding Can Give

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

Some towns nestle up against our hearts. They end up becoming

the type of place you know you'll yearn for and think about when drowning in the everyday monotony. The place where you say, "can we fit it in this year?" in addition to the vacation you've been saving your PTO days for. Or at least... That's what rolls through my mind. So let's take that love of a place that feels like home and add something even more special to the mix: celebrating the love you share with your significant other.

This is where I have to admit my bias – I love Copper Harbor. This place truly is the town that nestled against my heart. I went to Northern Michigan University just to be a little closer to one of my own favorite places in the world. I've always looked forward to walking the lava flows, hearing the water splash against the coast, and breathing in that earthy smell so unique to the grounds here. In my mind, there's almost no reason *not* to consider getting married here... but here's my schtick: if you're an adventurous, earthbound person who loves the little things, join me in adding Copper Harbor to your intimate wedding list.



The very nature of an intimate wedding is just this: the freedom of spending intentional, quality time with those you love. It's being able to close your eyes, envision a room full of all your favorite people... but then opening your eyes, and it being a reality. It's booking cabins together so your best friends can play being your neighbor and your family being just across the

way. It's opening your door, taking a step outside and seeing *your* people on their own porches looking back at you. It's having coffee together while watching the sun illuminate the trees, casually enjoying breakfast while looking across the golf course and picturing your first few steps down the aisle. Listening to the birds sing their morning songs and knowing that there really is no better way to start your wedding day.

An intimate wedding is the convenience of staying all in one place, no additional travel required. It's being able to sit alone under the oak trees to catch your breath rather than hopping in the car to drive forty minutes to the next venue. It's feeling the wind in your hair and the sun on your cheeks and knowing everything is just as it should be. It's watching the sunset fall behind Brockway Mountain, listening to the laughs of your friends, and having drinks together in front of the fireplace. Intimate weddings are the gift of making memories like we want on Christmas... but instead, we're living off the joy from your wedding day as Copper Harbor has nestles into your heart too.



I'm the kind of gal who loves love, and as a photographer I can't help but look out for those beautiful locations. Now that I work here, it feels like every time I peak out the window my breath gets taken away. The beautiful, tall trees and the darling ways their branches grow from living a life in the Harbor... Well, what can I say – this can be your reality, too.

Wed Talk with Mariah: The menu tasting

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

So you've secured a venue, and are starting to reach out to vendors. Flowers, music, cake, and the big one, catering. Maybe your venue takes care of your catering, or maybe you need to find an outside vendor. But in either case, a tasting option will probably be in your future.

What does that mean exactly? Tastings are offered in two common ways...group tastings or private tastings. In either option, one thing remains the same: your wedding menu tasting is for you to learn about the chef's style and quality of cooking. It is NOT a free-for-all tasting of anything and everything you want from the menu. For private tastings, there will most likely be a set tasting menu, or you may have limited choices from different categories. Group tastings look a little different, with a buffet style set-up of dishes the chef wants to highlight.



The group tastings will be the choice the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge offers moving forward. Twice a year we will be offering group tastings free for couples who have booked weddings with us, and a cover fee for those still shopping around. This gives everyone a chance to try several different food options. 2021 tastings will be:

- May 1, 2021
- October 23, 2021

Remember to take notes on what you taste, and take pictures so you can distinguish between dishes. Don't be afraid to ask questions and give feedback, for your best experience possible. And have fun!

Snow much fun! Winter activities at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

After several false starts, is winter finally here to stay in the Keweenaw?

We sure hope so! The snow is falling, and is starting to stick and accumulate. There is not enough yet to open our trails for winter recreation, but we are getting there!



In preparation, we are spending time out on our trails every day. The trails have been marked for snowshoeing and cross country skiing with different colored blazes that correspond to the [color of the trail on the map](#), and our groomer is starting to get out and pack the ski trails. [resort guests and the general public are able to use the trails]



As well, our OAC (Outdoor Activity Center) is now open! This winter the OAC will be operating out of our conference center area of the Lodge building, while we work on winterizing the OAC building.

We will be offering snowshoe and [Altai Hok](#) ski rentals. For both the snowshoes and Altai ski rentals, you will want to book in advance to ensure that you have a pair which you can take out on the snow.



[Altai Hok](#) skis are a snowshoe/cross country ski hybrid with universal bindings that allow you to use them with any standard winter boots. They do not require a groomed trail, so they are perfect for back country excursions!

We are not offering cross-country ski rentals this season however, so bring your own cross-country skis when you come to explore the trails. See you out there! [Note: [Cross-Country Sports](#) in Calumet and [Downwind Sports](#) in Houghton rent cross-country skis]

Hiking and Trail Running Update for the KML, Summer 2020

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

During a time when the best thing you can do is keep your

distance from crowds, what better way to distance yourself from others than by getting out on the [trails](#)?

2020 has seen outdoor adventures in the Keweenaw, and at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge, on the upswing. More and more people gravitated to the outdoors, including [hiking](#). At the Lodge we addressed this increase in outdoors by focusing on more outdoor activities, including mapping out hikes and providing guided hikes, which we call [Morning Miles](#).



The [Copper Harbor trails](#) have a wonderful reputation when it comes to mountain biking; however, many people underestimate how fun the trails can be to hike and run! With so much varying terrain and views, every trail has something new to offer. Our guided hikes, [Morning Miles](#), at the lodge were held every Tuesday and Thursday at 10am this past summer, and concentrated on the set of trails directly adjacent to the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge: the Back 9 Trails.

The Back 9 Trails offer distances of 2 to up to 5 miles. For the Morning Miles this summer, the group would decide the hike each morning. The Lodge was able to provide multiple guides in cases where there were multiple levels of trail experience or interest.

Our hikers had some great experiences out on the trails this summer! Hikers were able to gather handfuls of huckleberries for

a trail-side snack. Or, to try fresh picked thimble berries for the first time. Wild mushrooms are plentiful and while not all are good for eating, they sure are pretty to look at!



Wildlife is abundant in the Keweenaw. So, it wasn't uncommon to be able to quietly view some deer, or watch the turkeys leading their young. Porcupines didn't like the company and would scamper up trees. Bears are also present in the woods. However, while there weren't any actual bear sightings, they left their signs in the form of scat and markings on trees to let us know they were out there!



Because our guides are armed with interesting facts about local flora and fauna, other local hikes, and of course the history of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and the surrounding area, our hikers were awarded with conversation that was as good as the views.

Check out our [website](#) for easy to follow maps of some great routes.

[Trail running](#) is another great activity that can be enjoyed at the Lodge. Group trail runs have not yet been scheduled, but we want to make sure that runners know the trails are open for them as well! We had planned an endurance run in May, the [Back 9 Endurance Run](#); however, we cancelled the event due to executive orders and health and safety reasons. The inaugural run will now be in May 2021.

However you choose to do it, some time in the wilderness of the Keweenaw will never disappoint!

KML hand-stamped copper golf ball markers, local artisan William Thompson

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

This summer, the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge has commissioned an artisan to make a unique copper golf ball marker.

The Keweenaw is known as copper country, since copper for much of the eastern seaboard was mined in the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Thus, having a golf ball marker made of copper made sense from a historical perspective. And having an artisan from the area made it even more authentic.

The result was a KML hand-stamped copper golf ball marker, made by Keweenaw native, William Thompson.



William Thompson was born and raised in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. After graduating from Calumet High School, he joined the U.S. Marines, and he was honorably discharged. After that,

in 2007 he earned his first degree, an Associates in Applied Sciences in Physical Therapy from Finlandia University.

Growing up, William had always enjoyed working with his hands. His creativity showed from an early age, whether he was creating wood carvings or doodles. As an adult, William then decided to take that creativity a step further. In 2018 he graduated from Finlandia University, earning his Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in ceramics. More recently, he has expanded into working with copper. We contacted him with the idea of making copper golf ball markers, and he was happy to work with us. The results were outstanding!



The hand stamped copper ball markers have a rustic, natural look. They are available to be purchased in our Outdoor Activities Center.

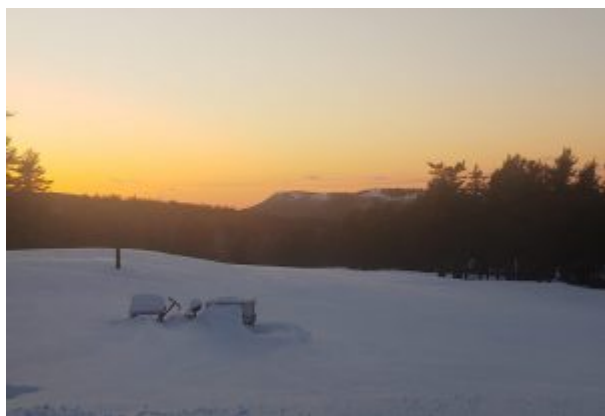
William's ceramics and other works can be found at the [Copper Country Community Art Center](#) in Hancock, and the [Calumet Art Center](#). You can follow him on Instagram @williamthompsonart or visit his [website](#) .

Wed Talk with Mariah – The Winter Wedding

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

The fire is warm, the snow is falling gently outside the window, and you are standing with your other half about to dedicate your lives to each other in front of the fireplace. Or, maybe you are standing outside under the gently falling snow wrapped in a fuzzy, warm shawl while reciting those vows.

Sound appealing? We think so, too. The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge is exploring a new idea...winter weddings! If you think that the Brockway Mountain backdrop is beautiful in the summer, the snow-capped ridge in the winter is another level of wilderness beauty.



A winter wedding in the Keweenaw stands out. You may attend two or three weddings throughout the summer and fall, but that winter wedding...that is the wedding you will remember.



Let's consider some other appealing points:

- Vendor availability could be wide open. In fact, you might be the center of their attention! 78% of weddings in the United States take place between the months of May and October. Instead of you wrestling for space on the calendar, the vendors may be fighting over you! Maybe the health situation in the world this year meant you had to reschedule your date and now you can't find vendors with any availability later in the year. Think winter!
- Speaking of wrestling, imagine tentatively picking a summer date, and then immediately starting to worry about that weather forecast? Instead of wrestling the elements and dreading that soaking downpour, a snowfall in the winter will only leave you with wonderful photo opportunities. Not worries about being drenched in rain. Or, stay inside and get married. That cozy fireplace scene could be your backdrop.
- Those photo opportunities though! The colors of your

flowers and bridesmaid dresses will pop against the white snowy backdrop. And let's face it, you know you want to throw a snowball at your new spouse. Now you can blame it on the photo op!

Bottom line, should a winter wedding at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge be in the cards? We are working to figure out if we shouldn't rule out that November through April wedding. It could be the unique, fun, joyous, and adventurous start to a great marriage!

Back 9 Endurance Run – Dry-run on Saturday, May 23rd

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

As many of you know, we cancelled the running of the inaugural [Back 9 Endurance Run](#) this year, and have postponed it until 2021. The race was supposed to be run last week, May 16th and 17th. The weather was [great last weekend](#), and it would have been nice to have held the race. However, due to the current health concerns that have engulfed the world these past several months, and the stay-home, stay-safe executive order in Michigan, we made the [decision in late March not to hold the race this year](#).

That said, to make the race better next year, and to test the markers on the course, we have setup the course this weekend.



We want to see how well we can setup the course, and if the route is one that works well for an endurance run.



We have setup the course markers tonight, and people can come out and run the route tomorrow, Saturday, May 23rd.



Mariah even ran the route late in the evening to see how it looks; and she will be at the Lodge tomorrow to run the route again – we want to see how the flags look in the dark.

For you, tomorrow, track your time on your GPS device (Strava, Runkeeper, Garmin, etc). See how far you run. Provide your GPS route showing you ran the course, and you will get a 10% discount on your food today at the Lodge (we are offering [take-out](#) currently), and [15% off your 2021 registration](#).



Start



Finish

Back 9 Endurance Run: What would have been a great race weekend

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021



May 16 should have been the big day. The day of the inaugural Back 9 Endurance Run. However, due to health and travel concerns, we had to make the decision to cancel this year's race.

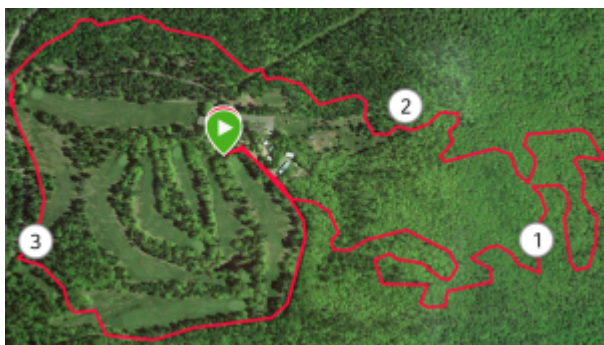


It was a beautiful sunny day for running, and the special project we were working on in lieu of what should have been our inaugural race. Mariah Summers, Race Director and Events Lead at the Lodge, spent the day filming content out on the trails with [Trail Genius](#). The content will be used in a Virtual Experience the Keweenaw, a series of online experiences featuring local adventure hot spots. It has narrative describing how the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge ties into the trail running, hiking, and mountain biking adventures in Copper Harbor and the Keweenaw.

The filming, done on the Back 9 trails, shows the entire trail system. There are many different views and terrain showcased throughout the filming.



While we weren't able to hold the race this year, we are working on making next year's race even better! Next weekend, May 23, the Back 9 course will be set up at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge. The course will be up all day, so come any time, on your own time, and give it a go! It's a great opportunity to preview the course. Come the 2021 race, you will know what's in store for you! We would also appreciate feedback on the course (markings easy to follow etc.). All of the information we gather we can use to improve the race for next year.



The route offers great views of Brockway Mountain as you run towards the golf course segment of the course. This time of year there are no leaves yet on the trees. As a result, your loop

around the Little Loon trail will reward you with views of Lake Superior in all of her glory!

Please visit the [Back 9 Endurance Race](#) website for all of the race and course details.

Weddings: Coping with planning during times of uncertainty and change

written by Mariah Summers | June 11, 2021

Here we are, at the start of the summer season in the Keweenaw. The beginning of May is a time of change, as businesses begin opening up, snow is melting, and the temperatures are warming up for guests to enjoy a superior Keweenaw summer and fall season. A change that creates warmth and vibrancy in the Keweenaw.

However, this year has taken an interesting twist. Executive orders are restricting many businesses in Michigan. To stay safe, citizens in Michigan and around the country are being advised to stay home. Normal Keweenaw vibrancy has been dampened and postponed.

This is contrary to what normally occurs during the month of May at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge. We are normally ramping up for a summer season. And this wasn't any different this year, as we had many weekends full of events and weddings.

We had events and weddings scheduled for every weekend from May until the end of October. In order to allay health concerns and

stop the spread of a disease, events in May have been cancelled. We have had several cancellations in June, and we continue to monitor the status for July – October weddings at the Lodge.

Instead of greeting happy and joyful brides, grooms, and their supporting wedding parties, we are now advising and counseling wedding parties about their options for weddings and what we are seeing happening during these times of uncertainty caused by a pandemic and governmental executive orders. Our focus at the Lodge is on celebrating a couple's most special moments together. Seeing those moments disappearing is disheartening.

However, not all is lost! The current health crisis might have dampened the spirit and enthusiasm surrounding weddings; however, there might be an end in sight and the future awaits – whether it is in your own backyard, or here in the Keweenaw.

The sun continues to rise daily in the East, and brightens each and every day. You can do the same! We still have a plan to have a great season, and are executing on that plan. We positively look forward to each and every day, and we want everyone to do the same as they continue to look forward to their special event. We want to find ways for you to **have a fun, joyous, adventuresome, and also safe and healthy, experience!** To keep wedding planning on track, we will make necessary changes, and we will continue staying positive.

That said, how do the current changes in our environment affect the wedding couple? To put your mind at ease, the result is a positive change.

It is a difficult decision you are facing, and we want to be here to ease that decision making process. We can help you make decisions on scaling down your wedding, whether virtual options would fit your situation, or help you find and book a new date that will work for you and your other vendors. Try thinking

about what aspects of your wedding are non-negotiable as it relates to the current restrictions in your area. That can help paint a clear picture of whether a new date or cancellation is necessary, or if you can mold your existing wedding to fit the proper criteria. We know you are watching the news, staying up late reading articles from wedding industry experts, and just generally existing in panic mode. Committing to a decision is the best thing to calm your mind and move forward.

Of course, what we all want is for you to be able to keep your original wedding date as planned. We will do whatever we can to make that happen. Our refund policies are flexible during this uncertain time. We know that we are not the only vendor on your list of contacts, and that you are trying to keep up with and coordinate several different vendor policies. We will be able to offer you a plated dinner versus a buffet, at no extra charge. Or, provide servers for your buffet to minimize guest contact as much as possible. We will be able to offer sanitizing supplies, masks, and gloves. Instead of pre-set tables we will offer rolled silverware. We will try to accommodate any special requests you have to help you and your guests feel comfortable and able to have a great time.

However you choose to proceed with your planning, the most important thing is that you are starting a life together. Take the time with your fiancé to do something special that reminds you of why you fell in love and why you are getting married. Whatever that union looks like now, in the end, you will have a beautiful future to look forward to together.