

Transition to Winter Outdoor Activities for the 2022-2023 Winter Season

written by admin | October 30, 2022

At the Lodge, we are now transitioning to the 2022-2023 winter season. The leaves have all fallen from the trees (as we pick them up around the Lodge), the first snow has fallen (albeit, melted away), and the [Outdoor Activities Center](#) has transitioned to it's winter location (in the Banquet room).

This means we are focusing on making sure the [cross-country ski trails](#) and [snowshoe trails](#) are cleaned up (doing some stump grinding and removing of downed limbs), the rental equipment is in good order ([snowshoes](#) and [Alta Skis](#)), and the crew rejuvenated after a strong summer/fall season. In addition, we are working on fixing and upgrading our grooming equipment (Gator groomer, Ginzu repairs). We are going to be ready for the winter season at the Lodge.







Here is a video produced by [Visit Keweenaw](#) by [Aaron Peterson Studios](#) to highlight the winter outdoor activities in the Keweenaw.

Adventure North!!

...and experience the snow activities: downhill skiing (at [Mt. Bohemia](#) and [Mont Ripley](#)), [cross-country skiing](#), [snowshoeing](#), snow biking, ice climbing, and snowmobiling at multiple areas around the Keweenaw.

In addition, there is [stargazing](#) – which happens year-round.



October 21, 2022: Night Sky Photography Workshop Recap

written by admin | October 30, 2022

Tom Oliver, photographer and ecology expert, led an informative and captivating Night Sky Photo Workshop this month. The seven Keweenaw Mountain Lodge guests gained knowledge about the phenomenon of the Auroras, learned about the importance of positive light management during hours of darkness, and picked up tips on effectively capturing nighttime and low light photos. After the lecture, the group was able to practice the new techniques at Hunter's Point Beach in Copper Harbor. The night couldn't have been more perfect. The Milky Way was a prominent feature in the night sky, encapsulated by an electro-magnetic purple aurora haze along with countless constellations and planets. A real treat for night sky photographers.

Golf 2022 Season Recap

written by John Mueller | October 30, 2022

Saturday, October 15th was the last day of the 2022 golf season. We had a wonderful golf season, with outdoor enthusiasts enjoying the fun. joyous. adventuresome atmosphere of a resort course in the wilderness. A dry summer with little rain had our

team working the irrigation system to keep the course in great shape. The golf course approximately 3 inches of rain from June 1st to September 15. We finally had some late seasonal rains brought the whole course back to lush green in October. The Outdoor Activity Center (OAC) and golf course maintenance crews did an excellent job providing a unique experience for people playing this historic course.

As with [2021](#), there were multiple reports that *“the course is in the best condition they I’ve ever seen” have been common all season.*

The [Outdoor Activity Center](#) (OAC), was staffed every day of the season, utilizing the historic cabin structure next to hole 1 tee box. Our rounds were down from previous years; however, our revenue was around the same as previous years for golf – while providing 15-minute tee-time intervals so that individuals do not feel rushed. Our goal is not to increase the number of rounds, but to provide a fun, joyous, and adventuresome experience for golfers. Thus, we are happy when we are seeing that one of our biggest compliments from golfers is that they are able to enjoy a quality wilderness experience at the top of the Keweenaw. Wonderful! We are trying to get people closer to nature, including when they are walking and playing the golf course.

The golf course opened on June 1st, with the OAC operating 9am – 5pm for the entire season. We scaled back the hours (previous year was 8am – 6pm), and this change had a positive result with maintaining the golf course and providing golfers with a quality experience. Golfers were still able to check in for their tee times at the OAC and make tee times via our online tee time system (provided by [Lightspeed Golf](#)).

We managed the operations throughout the season so we could

provide optimum customer service. With our first tee time each day being 9am, and our last tee time 5pm, we were able to staff the activity center with team members that could answer questions about the golf activities, as well other activities (e.g., [biking](#) and [hiking](#)).

The [OAC staff](#) catered to our qualities in being a [historic wilderness resort](#) that focuses on providing an [outdoor experience](#). We have incorporated being [fun, joyous, and adventuresome](#) by introducing alternative forms of golf to the Keweenaw (e.g. [FlingGolf](#) and [Disc Golf](#)), we have freshened up our merchandise offerings, and enhanced the experience for our customers overall.

Starting in the [2020 season](#), we made the decision to be a resort-oriented golf course. This meant no longer holding tournaments, having memberships available, or golf cart storage. This decision was made so we did not have resources being diverted from our primary reason of operations – being a resort (as opposed to a country club). This allowed us to focus on our primary target market – the guests that stay at the resort.

As with the previous two years (2020 and 2021), this year we continued to see people stay in cabins, and have both their golf clubs and their bikes with them. They would ride in the morning, and play 9-holes in the afternoon. Or they would play golf one day, and ride and/or hike the next day. Having biking and hiking trail access from the property, and a golf course out their cabin door, allows Lodge guests to easily take advantage of what the Keweenaw and the Lodge have to offer without having to use their cars.

The E-Z-GO RXV ELiTE carts continue to be a strong addition to the quietness at the resort, and providing golfers a new experience for getting around the course at the Keweenaw

Mountain Lodge. These carts are powered with Samsung SDI Lithium Technology batteries, providing golfers excellent mobility without sacrificing the wilderness golfing experience. Each EZ-GO ELiTE was also equipped with GPS technology which allowed us to prevent the carts from driving on greens, tee boxes, or through the rough, which helped us maintain the condition of those sensitive areas, as well as the carts themselves. [\[read more about our fleet, here\]](#)

Last season, we brought in a new technology to focus on how the sport was started – walking a round of golf. However, this year we had technical difficulties with the Tempo Walks (Club Car's robotic caddie), and they did not go out on the golf course (we are working with Club Car on getting this back on the golf course in 2023 so that golfers can enjoy the Lodge golf course while walking the wilderness of the Keweenaw. [[read more about our Tempo Walks, here](#)]

Even though the Tempo Walks did not work for us this season, we did see an increase in people walking the golf course and using the [CaddyTek](#) EZ-Fold Pushcarts.

And our Callaway club rentals continued to be a solid addition to providing golfers the ability to play quality clubs.



Our golf course maintenance crew did an exceptional job this season keeping the course in great shape, especially since we had staff members leave before and during the season, and we had a limited amount of rain during most of our playing season (approximately 3 inches of rain from June 1st to September 15th). The core crew worked exceptionally hard to irrigate and mow the turf to keep the turf in good shape.

Long-time golf course superintendent, Bill Alband, retired at the end of the 2021 season. However, he was willing to help out in 2022 on a part-time basis this season (marking his 27th year working at the Lodge). This was very important for the golf course maintenance crew as the person that was hired to fill Bill's shoes left before the golf course opened for the season. This meant that Bill spent the summer teaching John Mueller the ins-and-outs of nuances for maintaining the Lodge course (*i.e.*

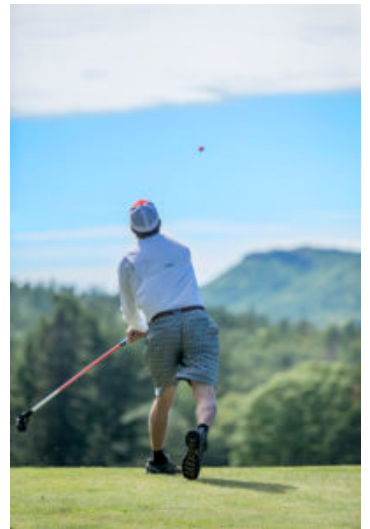
co-superintendents). Long-time Lodge team member, Ron Koski, did a wonderful job keeping the grass mowed, with the help of seasonal help (Aidan and Mason).

We strive to have the greens in excellent shape, good tee boxes, and decent fairways. We were able to accomplish that with the golf course maintenance crew. This is evident in the positive responses we received from golfers.

Now that the season has come to a close, the grounds crew is preparing for the upcoming winter in order to prevent snow mold and other casualties that could possibly harm the course in the future.

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Fling Golf



This season we continued to offer guests the opportunity to play [FlingGolf](#) – think golf, but using a Lacrosse stick to throw the ball instead of hitting it with a club. We had an array of FlingSticks available for rent at the OAC. Not only was FlingGolf fun and family friendly, it allowed for a unique alternative to golf, broadening our options to guests. We received regular, positive feedback from guests as well as staff on how much fun FlingGolf is at the Lodge.

Wildlife and Nature on the Golf Course

An aspect of the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge's golf course that is regularly commented on by guests is the likelihood of seeing wildlife on and around the course. Whether it be crows sounding a "wake-up alarm" around the cabins, painted lady butterflies feeding on nectar from the viburnum planted in front of the lodge, deer eating apples from the apple tree along the Hole 4 fairway, or the occasional black bear that strolls through our campus, one-on-one encounters with wildlife really emphasize for people the surrounding wilderness landscape and connect them personally with our environment. These are just a couple of the many examples of wildlife encounters around and on the golf course this past season.

A pair of Sandhill Cranes nested on the course again this year. Their nest was not successful; however, they remained on the course throughout the season until they migrated south. They became very accustomed to the golfers and golf carts and provided some great opportunities for photos.

A pair of Merlins (a type of small falcon), nested in a pine tree between Holes 8 and 9 this season. They successfully fledged three young. A windstorm in early September forced them out of their nest because a large branch fell through it. Fortunately, the young were developed enough to fly and all survived.

As usual, there continues to be a healthy population of squirrels and chipmunks on the property. Near the end of the summer, an immature red-tailed hawk discovered this fact and took up temporary residence near the OAC. It was, on multiple occasions, seen gliding low among the trees, then snagging an unsuspecting chipmunk or squirrel for its meal.

We recognize the value of maintaining healthy ecosystems and

getting the chance to encounter wildlife in such ways. To help protect our environment while preserving the natural heritage of the game of golf, the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge has joined the [Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf \(ASCP-Golf\)](#). ASCP-Golf is an education and certification program developed by Audubon International to help enhance the valuable natural areas and wildlife habitats that golf courses provide, improve efficiency, and minimize potentially harmful impacts of golf course operations. The ASCP-Golf program takes stock of and then develops a plan for improvement around six key environmental components: Environmental Planning, Wildlife and Habitat Management, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, Water Quality Management, and Outreach and Education.

While much of our effort to gain this certification will occur without much notice by guests. When you visit us over the next year there are some aspects you might see. For instance, we have already started an effort to convert some of the areas of rough to help local pollinators and aid in Monarch butterfly migration by planting native wildflowers and grasses. If you see work being done on the course and are not sure what it is, please ask. We are very excited to talk about the future of the ASCP-Golf at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge.

Looking Forward: The 2023 Season

Looking forward to the next season, here are several items we will be focusing on in 2023:

- Continue to promote exercise / walking, by carrying one's bag, using a pull cart, or using a Tempo Walk
- Increase the awareness and activity of Speed golf on our golf course
- Evaluate, design, and implement a Foot Golf course

- Increase the awareness of the wildlife and nature associated with the golf course
- Moving through the process of [becoming a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Golf Course](#)

Until June 1st next year, the golf course is now closed and being put to sleep for the winter.



September 26, 2022: Night Sky Photography Workshop Recap

written by admin | October 30, 2022

The September Night Sky Photo Workshop was a very special event. The sky was overcast with clouds blocking any sign of the stars, but for the only guest in attendance, a 10 year old photography enthusiast, Nate Bett, professor of photography, was a shining star. Nate took the opportunity to give one-on-one attention to the young scholar, teaching different angle and lighting techniques and showing her how to manually set her camera shutter and aperture to gain optimal night sky, bright light, and moving photos. Hats off to Nate for embracing the moment to motivate, educate, and inspire.

Golf: Aerating and Top

Dressing the Greens

written by admin | October 30, 2022

Last Thursday, [September 15th](#), the golf course maintenance crew is working on aerating and top dressing the greens on the golf course. We started on last Thursday, and will continue this week, to get the greens aerated and top dressed.

Doing the aerating at this time of year is now our regular schedule, with this being the 4th year in keeping with this schedule.

Yes, at the top of the Keweenaw, we still have good weather to play golf. So some golfers question why we are aerating the greens at this time. We would like to continue to have a quality putting surface to play on.

The reason for performing the aerating is because of the good weather. We should not aerate when there is poor weather (e.g. rain, snow, etc.). We need to take advantage of this weather when we can. Prior to 2019, aerating was pushed back as far into the fall season as possible. As a result, aerating would not take place every year because the weather would turn wet before being able to aerate.

If we are to continue to have quality greens on the Lodge golf course we need to improve the probability the golf course maintenance crew we can do a quality job. Aerating in mid-September is part of that strategy. This strategy also means greens will be ready earlier in June (rather than in mid-July if not later).

If you are still wanting to play this week, the golf course will be open during the aerating and top dressing process. Golfers will need to play around the green which the crew is working on,

and then come back and play that hole or play another hole to ensure you get your full 9- or 18-hole round completed.

The green fees are still the regular green fees as they stay the same throughout the season (June 1st to October 15th). You can find them [online here](#).

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2022 Keweenaw Mountain Lodge Copper Harbor Trails Fest

written by admin | October 30, 2022

We are now in the week leading up to the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge Copper Harbor Trails Fest that will take place over the Labor Day Weekend.



The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge is proud to be the title sponsor of the event, and continue to support the event and the nationally recognized trails at the top of the Keweenaw.



There are multiple activities taking place as part of trails fest, including the main mountain biking races and the KML Learning Experiences. The learning experiences are a mountain bike clinic (with Revolve) and nature hikes with KML's Event and Education Lead, Tom Oliver. These learning experiences are in line with what we are about at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge – outdoor activities and education (with rustic worldly food being the 3rd leg of our stool).

See the participant's Guide for the Trails Fest:

- [2022 CHTF Participant Guide](#) (last updated August 23, 2022)













Impromptu Stargazing Party on Brockway Mountain

written by Chris Guibert | October 30, 2022

When the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge was [designated as an International Dark Sky Park](#) in June individuals passionate about astronomy reached out to congratulate the Lodge. One gentleman from Marquette called us and said he would like to donate his telescope for our [telescope lending program](#). On August 11th Steve Mahaffehy and his brother Merv drove to Lodge to deliver

the [Orion AstroView 90mm EQ](#). What a joy it was to meet the brothers and accept this generous gift. I put the Steve-Scope, as we now call it, on the shelf in the [OAC \(Outdoor Activity Center\)](#) and returned to helping guests plan their day.



Steve Mahaffehy donates his Orion AstroView 90mm EQ telescope to the KML Telescope Lending Program.

On August 16th there were multiple families staying at the Lodge that were interested in Astronomy. There was a chance for Northern Lights that night and the OAC decided to throw an impromptu Star Gazing Party at the West Overlook on [Brockway Mountain](#). At 10pm we loaded the new telescope, a few blankets and some camp chairs and headed to the viewpoint. Star gazing parties are respectful outings with people minimizing their flashlights, preferably using [red lights](#), and looking through telescopes and talking about stars and planets.

STAR GAZING PARTY

ST. 1934
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Keweenaw



MOUNTAIN
LODGE

The West Overlook is a popular spot for sunsets and stargazing

and you never know who will be there. To our delight there were a few vans and cars, all of which had their lights off and were there to stargaze.



Vehicles are silhouetted against the moonlit clouds on the West Overlook on Brockway Mountain.

I pulled out the Steve-Scope and set it up in the dark. I can now advise that it is probably best to first set up a new telescope in the daylight. I fumbled with the adjustments and was able to get Saturn in the viewfinder through a break in the clouds. It was small but the rings were visible. The wind kicked up and the group took turns trying to look at Saturn but some struggled with the sensitive viewfinder and shake of the scope from the wind.

After about an hour some of the group headed back to the Lodge, and shortly after the clouds cleared and we put the scope aside. The Milky Way loomed overhead. We pulled out the chairs and

blankets, laid back and took in the universe above us. It was a spectacular show. Around midnight the moon rose. We looked at the third quarter moon briefly in the Steve-Scope and decided to call it a night.



Keweenaw Mountain Lodge guests count shooting stars as they layback at the Star Gazing Party.

The OAC staff learned a lot from our first star party and opened our eyes to how we can continue to improve these celebrations of dark skies.

July 30, 2022: Night Sky Photography Workshop Recap

written by Tom Oliver | October 30, 2022

The workshop this month was attended by ten people. Some drove from Chicago and Detroit for the workshop, others were from far away places and included the workshop as part of their larger itinerary (e.g. from Nevada), and others were from the Keweenaw but wanted to learn how to use their camera better.





We are in the time of year when the core of the Milky Way is more visible in this region, the primary focus was planned to be about shooting the Milky Way. However, conditions for possible Aurora activity were predicted earlier in the day. So, each of those topics were discussed during the class portion of the workshop. All-in-all, the workshop lasted around two and a half hours, during which time several tips for taking night sky photos were discussed.

The class portion was active and engaging for all the participants. The sky was clear and the group decided to shoot the Milky Way from Bete Grise Beach.



Participants of a Night Sky Photo Workshop on July 30, 2022, set-up and photograph the Milky Way over Bete Grise Beach.

Once we arrived all the participants set up quickly and all started getting great shots right away.



Although it was not visible from the location selected for Milky Way photos, on my way home following the workshop I did notice that the Northern Lights were visible, so I stopped at one of my favorite locations in the Keweenaw to take Aurora photos and was able to take a nice shot of Ursa Major (The Big Dipper), highlighted with the northern lights. The shooting star, likely from the Perseid Meteor shower (which is building in intensity until August 13th of this year), was a lucky bonus in the picture.

It's nice to know that people can walk away from the Photo Workshops at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge with the added confidence and technique to capture beautiful images of the night sky, whenever they happen to come upon them.

June 25, 2022: Night Sky Photography Workshop Recap

written by Tom Oliver | October 30, 2022

For about a year, the [Keweenaw Mountain Lodge](#) has been hosting night sky photography workshops on or near the date of the new moon each month. This month's workshop was the first, following our designation the [Keweenaw Dark Sky Park](#), by the International Dark-Sky Association – for which the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge serves as the headquarters.

The workshop this month was attended by three people. Since we are entering the time of year when the core of the Milky Way is more visible in this region, the primary focus was planned to be about shooting the Milky Way. However, conditions for possible Aurora activity were predicted earlier in the day. So, each of those topics were discussed during the class portion of the workshop. All-in-all, the workshop lasted around two and a half hours, during which time several tips for taking night sky photos were discussed.



Because this workshop occurred near the summer solstice, the onset of darkness did not occur until about 11:30pm. Additionally, thunderstorms were occurring throughout the area and we had very overcast skies during the class portion of the workshop. The plan was for me to scout locations for conditions between when the in-class portion ended and the "hands-on" practice was planned to begin. Then we all would meet back together and decide whether or not conditions were favorable for photographing the night sky.

After scouting potential locations, we decided that the conditions did not appear promising and we decided to fore-go a photo shoot of the dark sky. However, one participant (Brad) requested that I show him a good location so he could try to go take pictures when conditions were better. I agreed and the two of us went to one of the Lake Superior shoreline locations not far from the Lodge.

While we were there, Brad, used the Photopills App on his phone to pre-plan some shots he thought he would like to take. While he was doing that, I noticed that the sky, far to the north,

over Lake Superior was starting to clear. I pointed it out to Brad and told him that I thought the local sky conditions might improve two to three hours later (It turned out that was a gross overestimation.)

Our walk back to our vehicles was about 50-60 yards through the woods, in the direction that Brad had been planning his shots. When we emerged from the woods, most of the sky was crystal clear – all the clouds for at least 80% of the sky had simply dissipated in a matter of a few minutes. It almost felt like passing through the woods had teleported us to another time and place

So, Brad and I quickly returned to the shoreline, where he set up his tripod and camera for the composition of the Milky Way that he wanted. While he was taking those pictures, I took a general picture of the Lake Superior horizon to the north (opposite of the direction Brad was facing) and I surprised to see that we could also capture the distant glow of the Aurora that had been predicted, earlier. When I showed Brad what my camera had captured, he was thrilled beyond description. He told me that he had never before been able to take pictures of the Northern Lights. We ended up staying there for an additional two hours, which gave him the chance to try a number of different compositions, for both the Milky way core and the Northern Lights – and to try various combinations of settings and lenses.



A picture of Brad taking a picture of himself celebrating his Northern Lights victory along the Lake Superior shoreline – under the dark skies of the Keweenaw Dark Sky Park.

I just received the following note from Brad:

I'm so grateful you went out with me, helped with the shoot, and patiently waited for me to get the shots I wanted before leaving. I really appreciate that. Without your help and patience I wouldn't have gotten all of these terrific shots. It's rare I'm under dark skies so this was really important to me. Thank you! I have all of these marvelous shots because you stuck it out.

The Keweenaw Mountain Lodge has scheduled multiple Night Sky Photography Workshops for this summer season – each one scheduled for a weekend around the time of a new moon. Our next

[Night Sky Photo Workshop will be held Saturday, July 30th, 2022 at 7:30pm.](#)

Please see our [Calendar of Events](#) for the complete listing of upcoming workshops, then contact the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge – [Outdoor Activity Center](#) or [Events & Education Department](#) for more details and to reserve your space.

2022 Back 9 Endurance Run Recap

written by admin | October 30, 2022

May 28-29, 2022 saw another great year for the Back 9 Endurance Run. 33 runners came out to enjoy the trails and challenge themselves in the beautiful wilderness at the top of the Keweenaw for the [2022 Back 9 Endurance Run](#).



BACK 9 ENDURANCE

Just One More Round

MAY 28-29, 2022

KEWEENAW MOUNTAIN LODGE

COPPER HARBOR, MICHIGAN

BACK9ENDURANCERUN.COM

The race began promptly at 8:00 AM with a countdown by the race director, Tom Oliver. The first day of the challenge began with a calm, clear morning with comfortable temperatures in the upper 50's. The weather remained optimal throughout the day and into the evening as the sun set. After dark, the wind picked up considerably and brought with it some light rain which resulted in several of the racers' tents blowing down. As a result, the runners and spectators along with the scoreboard and the aid/refreshment station moved into the banquet hall at the south end of the Lodge.

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!

The trail was well marked with reflective flags and glow sticks every 25-50 feet and with low light lanterns hung in the trees along the trail in the darkest part of the woods.

Near the start and finish line, the timer was set up to reflect the actual time and as runners completed a lap, they recorded the lap and time on the white board that had been moved into the banquet hall.

The race ended officially at 8:00 AM on 29 May 2022. An award ceremony was held directly after the last runner crossed the finish line. Each participant received a finisher medal, crafted by hand, by Aaron Maki of Old Hand Design Company. The participants with the greatest number of laps in each category took home a distinctive, hand-crafted, first place medal.

Registration packets included a Back 9 Endurance Run t-shirt along with a trail map were provided to each runner.

Additionally, we love to educate our participants on our status as an internationally recognized Dark Sky Park. In doing so, we explain the importance of reducing light pollution and the use of red lens light sources during dark events, such as the Back 9 Endurance Run. We also explain the Leave No Trace Initiative which encourages guests to leave as little evidence of their presence in nature as possible. Guests can do this by carrying out all trash that they carried into the wilderness. Also being cognizant of other life all around them and doing their best not to cause damage to trees, plants, and other animals.

Below is a summary of the results.

- 12-hour solo: Cory McDonald, 17 laps (62.4 miles)
- 24-hour solo: Cade Meyer and Lucy Campbell, 17 laps (62.4 miles)
- 12-hour 2-person team: COVID Cavaliers , 13 laps (47.7 miles)
- 24-hour 4-person team: Total Hardness, 37 laps (134.7 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 [2023 Back 9 Endurance Run](#), and hope you are able to join us!