

THE TACKLE BOX

December 2025

Awareness Days

- [World AIDS Day](#) - December 1
- [International Day for People with Disabilities](#) - December 3
 - Disability Network of Southwest Michigan Free webinars:
 - [Ableism 101](#) [Dec 3rd](#) or [Dec 9th](#)
 - [Ableism 102](#): [Dec 17th](#)
- [Giving Tuesday](#) - December 3
- [International Volunteer Day](#) - December 5
- [Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day](#) - December 7
- [International Genocide Prevention Day](#) - December 9
 - [Virtual Book Display](#) - University of Memphis
- [International Human Rights Day](#) - December 10
- [International Migrants Day](#) - December 18

The Outdoors are for Everyone!

As the weather gets colder and folks get ready to do their favorite outdoor activities, this is a reminder that there are accessible options for differently abled folks across the state looking to enjoy nature. Below is a list of resources for folks looking to find inclusive outdoor recreation options:



A child in a red puff jacket, goggles and helmet rides a sit-ski downhill as it is guided by an instructor in an orange vest and black snow suit.

- [Accessible Nature Resource Guide by Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation](#)
- [DNR's Accessible Recreation Opportunities](#)
- [Sensory Friendly Days at the Outdoor Adventure Center](#)
- [Accessible Nature: Trail List](#)
- [Wheelchair Accessible Trails](#)
- [Hunt 2 Heal](#)
- [Accessible Travel in Michigan](#)
- [Adaptive Winter Sports and Fitness in Michigan](#)
- [Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors](#)

The More the Merrier:

Holidays of the Holiday Season

The holiday season is upon us—"All I Want for Christmas Is You" plays everywhere, trees are lit, and Santa greets us at every turn, making it easy to think Christmas is the only winter celebration. Though widely observed, Christmas is just one of many meaningful holidays, which is why we're sharing this summary of major winter observances. Recognizing all winter holidays encourages cultural understanding and creates space for everyone to express their identities fully. As you connect with others this season, remember the values these celebrations share: kindness, generosity, renewal, and love. As we enter the new year, let's carry these values forward, support one another, and celebrate our differences.

Diwali

Late October or November based on lunar Calendar
(was Oct 20, 2025)



A festival of lights, celebrated in Kartika during the Hindu New Year, symbolizes the victory of Dharma over Adharma, light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. It is one of India's most celebrated holidays.

Yule

Shortest day of the year - December 21st



The oldest European winter solstice festival, which is now largely celebrated by Neo-Pagans. This pre-Christian festival originated in Scandinavia and was later subsumed, along with other pagan celebrations, into the Christian holiday of Christmas.

Bodhi Day(s)

Secular - December 8th

Lunar - Jan 26, 2026



Commemorates the day that the Buddha experienced enlightenment ending the cycle of transmigration by reaching Nirvāna or spiritual release.

Christmas

December 25th



Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Christianity. The holiday has evolved to become more secular, observed by both Christians and non-Christians.

Hanukkah

Late November or December based on the 25th day of Kislev in the Hebrew Calendar (Dec 14 - 22, 2025)



A festival of light celebrating the miracle during the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 164 BC, commemorating the Maccabean Revolt when Jewish fighters reclaimed the Holy Temple from Greek Syrian forces.

Kwanzaa

December 26th - January 1st



Celebrates African American unity, heritage, and culture and is nonreligious celebration of 7 principles which are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).

Lunar New Year

January 21st to February 21st depending on lunar Calendar
(Feb 17, 2026)



It is a ceremonial holiday to pray for a good planting and harvest season and is a time to reunite with immediate and extended family. It is the most important holiday in China, and it is also widely celebrated in South Korea, Vietnam, as well as other countries with a significant Chinese population.

Spice up your Holiday Shopping

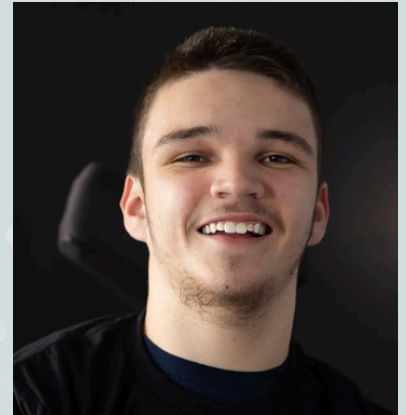


A green chili pepper breathing fire rides a souped-up flaming wheelchair

On the hunt for a unique holiday gift that will blow someone's mind—or at least their taste buds? Why not give Crippling Hot Sauce a try? Founded in 2023, the company's origin story is just as interesting as the names of its products. After receiving a B- on his high school business plan project, 18-year-old Drew Davis decided to prove his plan could work. In just two years, he has taken the business from a humble start in his family's kitchen to a multi-million-dollar operation. The company's name reflects Drew's self-effacing sense of humor and his refusal to let cerebral palsy define his life. As he says, "Cerebral palsy... that's just a detail in my story, not the whole plot." Although he acknowledges that living with a disability is challenging, he doesn't let it stop him. Drew uses his business—and the social media platform he has built around it—to show that the world doesn't care about your limitations; if you have a dream, you must give it your all and "watch the magic

happen." Read more about Drew's story in the Entrepreneur article "[A Teen With Cerebral Palsy Pitched a Creative Product in School. He Got a B- — Then Grew the Business to \\$5 Million a Year Anyway](#)".

If you don't have anyone on your gift list who enjoys hot sauce, there are plenty of other small businesses—both here in Michigan and nationally—whose owners are working hard to make their dreams a reality. The list below is by no means exhaustive, and we encourage you to support small businesses in your community. Gift cards to local shops, cafés, restaurants, and independent theaters also make excellent presents. We all strive to give meaningful gifts, and where a gift comes from can be just as powerful as the gift itself.



Smiling portrait of teen Drew Davis founder of Crippling Hot Sauce.

Michigan Businesses

Woman Owned

- [Women in Hospitality Leadership](#)
- [Woman-Owned Businesses Directory](#)
- [Celebrating Michigan's Women-Owned Small Businesses](#)
- [Detroit Mom](#)
- [Grand Rapids](#)

LGBTQ+ Owned and Friendly

- [Great Lakes Pride](#)
- [The "Gander - +30 local LGBTQ+-owned businesses](#)
- [Visit Detroit](#)
- [Ann Arbor](#)
- [Everywhere is Queer](#)

Black and Minority Owned

- [Support Black Owned - Michigan](#)
- [Visit Detroit](#)
- [Jackson County](#)
- [Blapp](#)

Online Alternatives

Bookstores

- [Bookshop.org](#) - supports independent bookstores
- [Thriftbooks](#) - used books, DVDs, CDs & VHS

Technology

- [Newegg](#)

Small Business

- [ebay](#)
- [Shop My Porch](#)
- [goimage](#)
- [Esty](#)
- [Google Small Business Filter](#)
- [ShopRedBag](#)
- [Amazon Small Business Filter](#)
- [Little Blue Cart](#)

Sustainable and Ethical

- [EarthHero](#)
- [Package Free](#)

Minority Owned

- [BLAPP](#)
- [Buy Black](#)
- [American Indian Services](#)
- [USC Native American Student Assembly](#)
- [Sweetgrass Trading Company](#)
- [Disability-Owned & Employed Companies](#)
- [Shop the Hood](#)
- [Eighth Generation](#)

Featured Art

Contemporary Anishinaabe Art: A Continuation



A view inside Contemporary Anishinaabe Art: A Continuation at the Detroit Institute of Arts, showcasing works across painting, beadwork, fashion, film, and sculpture, created in collaboration with Anishinaabe artists.

Until April 5, 2026, the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) is hosting the exhibit "Contemporary Anishinaabe Art: A Continuation," which celebrates the enduring cultures and creative achievements of Indigenous artists from the Great Lakes region. With more than 60 artists contributing over 90 works, this exhibition is the largest presentation of contemporary Indigenous art in the Midwest, as well as the first major Native American exhibition at the DIA in 30 years.

Guided by an advisory council of Ojibwe (Chippewa), Ottawa (Odawa), and Potawatomi (Pottawatomi) artists, the collection highlights the continuation of Anishinaabe creativity—an artistic legacy that has persisted for centuries despite the impacts of colonialism. The exhibit seeks to shift perceptions of Native American art by challenging how it is traditionally presented and interpreted, emphasizing the unique histories and perspectives of the Anishinaabe people.

To honor this cultural heritage, all artwork labels have been translated into Anishinaabemowin, the original language of the Great Lakes region. Residents of the Tri-County Area, as well as anyone with a tribal identification card, may enter the museum for free. We encourage anyone visiting Detroit before April 2026 to take advantage of this remarkable opportunity to view and learn from such a stunning collection of contemporary Anishinaabe art.



Cressandra Thibodeaux's *Fever Visions I* (2023) transforms a quiet rural field into a surreal landscape, using bold color shifts and layered forms to evoke a dreamlike, altered state.



Patrick Desjarlait's 1946 *Maple Sugar Time* depicts Anishinaabe families working together in the seasonal maple sugar harvest, highlighting community and tradition.



Above: using red and green this stylized painting captures the chaos of the holiday season. On a background of red characters arguing, singing, and celebrating, an overwhelmed green woman with hands on top of her head stands in the foreground.

Ally Corner: Avoiding Stress & Conflict During the Holiday Season

Even in the most gemütlich families, there are moments when you wish you could truly hire Leslie Jones to interrupt conversations as they start to drift into confrontational territory. While mainstream media tells us we should be overflowing with light and joy, the truth is that the holiday season can be difficult for many of us. As we rush around trying to check everything off our holiday to-do lists, our brains are subconsciously preparing for upcoming family gatherings. It's all too easy to slip back into long-standing family dynamics—from reviving old sibling rivalries to picking sides in family power struggles. Layer on top of these underlying dynamics a little overindulgence and some ideological differences, and you've got a recipe for disaster even better than Aunt Betty's rock-hard fruitcake. Fortunately, there are strategies that can help you avoid falling into familiar conflict loops and reduce the impact of controversial or confrontational conversations.

Navigating Family Interactions

- Set boundaries
- Don't get involved in drama
- Accept your family as they are
- Talk to your partner
- Break the cycle of manipulation
- Be mindful of old patterns
- Remember it's just a few days - ground yourself

For more details on how to apply these tips please read Dr. Nilufar Ahmed's article "[The most wonderful time of the year? Top tips for avoiding a stressful family Christmas](#)"

Controversial or Confrontational Conversations

- Consider your goal
- Be honest about the stress you're under
- Lean into what you have in common
- Listen and validate
- Have an ally

For more details on each of these suggestions please read "[Ask the expert: five ways to approach political conversations with family over the holidays](#)" by MSU own Elizabeth Dorrance Hall.

Holiday wishes from the MAFS DEIJB Committee! May this season bring calm, happiness, and hope. Remember that you're surrounded by a caring community and that the MAFS DEIJB Committee is committed to fostering an inclusive chapter culture. If you'd like to connect, share resources, or contribute thoughts, we're here. Contact us at mifishcastafs@gmail.com or submit suggestions anonymously.

Warm Wishes -

Dana Castle (she/her), Lydia Doerr (she/her), Tracy Galarowicz (she/her), Kynzie House (she/her), Maggie Haite (they/them), Taylor Skiles (she/her), Kathleen Quebedeaux (she/her)