



TWO ICE CIRCLE
SAULT STE. MARIE, MI
(906) 635-RINK



BIG BEAR

ARENA



Est.
'96



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report
(January thru June 2026)

TAMMY L. GRAHAM, Recreation Director



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Recreation Agreements

The Recreation Division promotes recreation activities to Sault Tribe citizens in the seven-county service area through various agreements. These services are compiled in a Wellness and Recreation Guide that is updated seasonally. Statistics for the various locations are provided below:

Little Bear East Arena (St. Ignace)

 **3,507** visits



Northern Michigan University (Marquette)

 **39** new memberships



Northern Lights YMCA (Escanaba)

 **2,517** visits



Lake Superior State University (Sault Ste. Marie)

 **2,791** visits , **22** players Men's basketball camps



Manistique Pool (Manistique)

 **48** visits



Little Bear West Arena (Manistique)

 **92** visits



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Center-Based Approach Tenant Activity

The following events and activities were hosted for facility tenants and the adjoining childcare center:



Language & Culture Division

 The **Language and Culture Division** held **41** gym sessions and **2** skating sessions.



Youth Education and Activities

 **YEA** held **21** gym sessions and **12** skating sessions.



Anne Suggitt Early Childhood Center

 The **Anne Suggitt Early Childhood Center** held **66** gym sessions and **1** graduation.

Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Sault Tribe Featured Events

The facility hosted the following Sault Tribe department events and activities:

-  **February 10th** - Community Health's Snowshoe Event (**17** attendees)
-  **March 25th** - Community Health's Breakfast (**40** attendees)
-  **March 26th and 31st , April 9th and 16th** - Wildlife Program's Fire Pack Training (**6** staff)
-  **April 10th** - ACFS's Family Fun Night (**518** participants)
-  **May 15th** - Behavioral Health's Recovery Gala (**131** attendees)
-  **June 8th** - Language and Cultural' s Sacred Fire Teachings (**33** participants)



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Featured Events

The facility hosted the following community organization's events and activities:

- 🐾 **January 9th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**610** participants)
- 🐾 **January 9th** - Malcolm School Fun Day (**70** students and staff)
- 🐾 **January 9th** - Brimley Area Schools Fun Day (**60** students and staff)
- 🐾 **January 9th to 11th** - Kewadin Wings Hockey Tournament (**1,860** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **January 16th and 17th** - Sault High Blue Devils Hockey vs. Alpena (**700** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **January 16th to 18th** - SMHA Cabin Fever Hockey Tournament (**2,520** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **January 23rd and 24th** - Sault High Blue Hockey Showcase (**1,000** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **January 30th to February 1st** - MAHA District 7 Hockey Tournament (**1,320** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **February 6th** - Sault High Blue Devils Hockey vs. Traverse City (**350** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **February 7th** - Sault High Blue Devils Hockey vs. Petoskey (**350** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **February 12th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**610** participants)
- 🐾 **February 13th to 15th** - Katie Robinson Memorial Hockey Showcase (**3,120** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **February 17th** - MHSAA Regional Hockey Playoff Game (**325** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **February 19th, 20th and 26th** - Sault Area School Fun Day (**670** students and staff)
- 🐾 **February 21st** - MSU Extension 4-H Family Day (**100** attendees)
- 🐾 **February 27th** - Pickford Schools Fun Day (**320** students and staff)



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Featured Events (Continued)

- 🐾 **March 3rd and 23rd** - SMHA's HIP, 6U and 8U Division Hockey Banquets (**280** attendees)
- 🐾 **March 6th to 8th** - MAHA Midget JV State Hockey Tournament (**2,520** players and spectators)
- 🐾 **March 9th and 22nd** - Hospice Power of 45 Fundraiser (**12** attendees)
- 🐾 **March 12th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**595** participants)
- 🐾 **March 21st** - MyMichigan Family Fun Day (**130** participants)
- 🐾 **March 25th** - EUPISD Employee Appreciation Day (**70** participants)
- 🐾 **March 26th** - Sault Area Middle School Fun Day (**91** students and staff)
- 🐾 **March 27th** - Whitefish Township School Fun Day (**75** students and staff)
- 🐾 **April 10th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**606** participants)
- 🐾 **April 17th** - Les Cheneaux Community Schools Fun Day (**140** students and staff)
- 🐾 **April 18th** - Champion Force Cheerleading Stunt Clinic (**45** participants)



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Featured Events (Continued)

-  **May 13th and 22nd** - Sault Area Middle School Fun Day (**275** participants)
-  **May 14th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**520** participants)
-  **May 15th to 17th** - Laura Stamm Power Skating Clinic (**44** players, coaches and spectators)
-  **May 27th** - Sault Cooperative Preschool Graduation (**20** graduates and **60** spectators)
-  **May 28th to 30th** - SMHA 10UAA and 12UAA Hockey Tryouts (**78** players and **125** spectators)
-  **June 2nd to 4th** - SMHA 18UAA Hockey Tryouts (**27** players and **50** spectators)
-  **June 8th to 9th** - Hiawatha Behavioral Health Training (**20** attendees)
-  **June 9th** - Champion Force Cheerleading Awards Night (**50** attendees)
-  **June 11th** - Feeding America Food Distribution (**545** participants)



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Program Highlights

Youth Spring League (April 6th to May 21st):

- 🐾 Developed and implemented the 28th Youth Spring League (2-Year hiatus due to COVID in 2020 and 2021) which included players from the Sault, Dafter, Kincheloe, Brimley, Barbeau, Cedarville, Pickford, Newberry, McMillan and St. Ignace. Additionally, there were players from Ontario, including the Sault, Blind River and Garden River.
- 🐾 All players younger than 13 were led in skill instruction during the first week by the LSSU D1 Men's Hockey team.
- 🐾 During the seven-week season, the league featured:
 - **175** Players
 - **16** Teams
 - **5** Divisions
 - **16** Skill Sessions
 - **16** Draft Games
 - **88** League Games
 - **3** All Star Games
 - **5** Pizza Parties



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Program Highlights (Continued)

Summer Recreation Program (June 15th to August 7th) :

- Developed and implemented the 28th annual Summer Recreation Program (2-Year hiatus due to COVID in 2020 and 2021). The group-based program included a variety of activities such as sports, arts and crafts, cultural teachings, guest speakers, water fun days, skating, nutritional education, field trips, and other organized recreational games and activities.
- The program partnered with Anishnaabek Community and Family Services to provide Child Care Development Funding (CCDF). There were **30** tribal youth utilizing the program.
- In addition, a partnership was formed with the Language and Cultural Division to provide cultural classes and Sault Tribe Community Health to provide nutrition classes to the participants through-out the summer.

There were **60** participants, **56** Sault Tribe youth (93.3%) and **4** community members (6.7%).



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Programs and Events

The facility hosted the following community drop-in events, programs and activities:

Totzones: Indoor community play zone with themed activities, snack, ride-on toys and trikes for ages five and under.

January: 33 Participants, 50 Parents/Grandparents (Winter Solstice and Pirate)

February: 43 Participants, 65 Parents/Grandparents (Valentines and Lego)

March: 18 Participants, 27 Parents/Grandparents (Elio Movie)



Special Events:

There were 125 parties, celebrations, meetings and trainings during the reporting period. The monthly breakdown is below:

January: 18 Parties/Celebrations, 2 Trainings, 2 Meetings

April: 13 Parties/Celebrations, 4 Meetings

February: 13 Parties, 1 Family Skate, 1 Meeting

May: 20 Parties/Celebrations, 6 Meetings

March: 29 Parties/Celebrations, 1 Training, 3 Meetings

June: 8 Parties/Celebrations, 4 Meetings

Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Programs and Events (Continued)

Drop-In Activities: A variety of activities are available and free for Sault Tribe citizens. No registration required. Programs are scheduled seasonally based on availability.

Drop In Basketball / Volleyball

357 Participants

131 Sault Tribe Citizens (36.7%)

226 Community Members (63.3%)



Public Skating

2,798 Participants

935 Sault Tribe Citizens (33.4%)

1,863 Community Members (66.6%)



Stick N Puck

419 Participants

109 Sault Tribe Citizens (26.0%)

310 Community Members (74.0%)



Cardio Drumming: A fun, accessible indoor exercise program designed for older adults and people of all ages and fitness levels. Activities can be adapted to individual abilities and are intended to get your heart rate up while encouraging movement, strength, balance, and overall wellness.

There were **282** participants during the reporting period.



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Community Programs and Events (Continued)

Basketball

26 Practices



Volleyball

31 Sessions



Pickleball

63 Sessions



Cheerleading

44 Sessions



Dance

291 Sessions



Boxing

29 Sessions



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Facility Administration

The **Administration Department** completed many projects including those highlighted below:

- ✓ Collaborated with the Sault Tribe ACFS to install fencing around the playground
- ✓ Collaborated with the Sault Tribe Transportation Department to install fencing around the retention pond
- ✓ Worked with the Human Resource Department on recruitment efforts for various vacant positions
- ✓ Participated on the Wayfinding Project Team to develop plan for the seven county service area
- ✓ Participated on the Transportation TIP Project team to develop plan for the re-design of Ice Circle Drive
- ✓ Processed registrations for LSSU athletic camp for Sault Tribe youth
- ✓ Coordinated LSSU athletic team schedules during construction of their new ice rink and gym maintenance



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Facility Operations

The **Building Operations Department** completed many projects including those highlighted below:

- ✓ Worked with the HVAC contractor to modify rooftop unit intakes, identify and repair roof leaks related to the new HVAC installation, and completed programming for the new HVAC system.
- ✓ Completed condenser tower, compressor, and ice refrigeration system maintenance and replaced existing condenser pump
- ✓ Completed maintenance on both ice resurfacing machines and performed routine maintenance on the Olympic rink, including cleaning glass and boards, adjusting hinges, repairing player benches, replacing damaged glass, and making necessary board adjustments
- ✓ Coordinated with Sault Tribe Construction, Facilities Management and contractors to complete snow removal from the roof
- ✓ Began installation of LED lighting throughout the facility using funding from previous rebates
- ✓ Completed painting the facility restrooms and installing new baby-changing stations
- ✓ Completed upgrades in the Hospitality Room including patching, painting and replacing blinds



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Retail Overview

The **Events Management** retail area sold a total of **399** accessories, including, tape, laces, pucks, mouthguards and also sharpened **222** pair of skates, generating just over **\$3,060** in revenue.

These convenience items are available for facility patrons to purchase anytime Reception is open or when an Events Coordinator is on-site.



The **Concessions** area is leased to the Soo Eagles Booster club to provide food and beverage services to facility staff, tenants and patrons. The area operates based on facility activity and scheduled events.

The facility retains revenue from the vending machine sales. During the reporting period, **1,352** bottled beverages were sold, generating total beverage sales of **\$3,116**.

Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Upcoming 30-Year Anniversary Celebration

September 27, 1996 marks 30 years for the Big Bear Arena! Planning is underway to celebrate this special milestone, and we're excited to share some of the activities being planned:

-  Skating
-  Face Painting
-  Bounce Houses
-  Games & Activities
-  Giveaways & Prizes
-  Vendors
-  Light Refreshments
-  Commemorative Event T-Shirts
-  Photos Through the Years
-  Community Memory Banner



More details will be announced as plans come together. We hope you'll join us in celebrating 30 amazing years of memories at Big Bear Arena!



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Upcoming Events for 2026

JULY

- 7 Parties/Celebrations Scheduled (July 1 to 31)
- Summer Recreation Program Activities (July 1 to 31)
- Feeding America Food Distribution (July 9)
- LSSU D1 Hockey Training Begins (July 13 thru September)
- SMHA Board Meeting (July 22)
- Church Skate (July 29)
- Soo Eagles Hockey Tryouts (July 31 to August 2)
- Soo Indians Hockey Tryouts (July 31 to August 2)



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Upcoming Events for 2026 (Continued)

AUGUST

- 5 Parties/Celebrations Scheduled (August 1 to 31)
- Summer Recreation Program Activities (August 1 to 7)
- Great Lakes Hockey Camp (August 3 to 6)
- Champion Force Cheerleading Tryouts (August 10)
- Hunt Safe Training Course (August 12)
- Feeding America Food Distribution (August 13)
- Line Dancing Classes Begins (August 13)
- Fitness Conditioning Classes (August 17 to 26)
- LSSU ACHA Hockey Training Camp (August 18 to 27)
- Soo Jr. Greyhound Girls U15AA Training Camp (August 19 to 20)
- Soo Jr. Greyhound Girls U18AA Training Camp (August 20 to 21)
- Abby Roque Hockey LLC Camp (August 21 to 22)
- Soo Indians Parent Meeting (August 23)
- Soo Eagles Training Camp (August 24 to 31)



ABBY ROQUE HOCKEY
SUMMER HOCKEY CAMP

BIG BEAR ARENA
SWIFT STE. MADE, MI

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21

AGES 7-10	7PM - 8PM
AGES 11-13	8PM - 9PM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22

AGES 7-10	10AM - 11AM
AGES 11-13	11AM - 12PM

\$125/CHILD

CAMP INCLUDES AN
ABBY ROQUE HOCKEY JERSEY

 **SCAN HERE TO REGISTER**

FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF CAMP ON SATURDAY, ABBY WILL BE HOSTING A MEET & GREET WITH THE WALTER CUP



Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Upcoming Events for 2026 (Continued)

SEPTEMBER

- 2 Parties/Celebrations Scheduled (September 1 to 30)
- LSSU Women's Volleyball Practices (September 1 to 2)
- SMHA Travel Team Practices Begin (September 1)
- Feeding America Food Distribution (September 10)
- Torque Boxing Season Begins (September 13)
- Champion Force Cheerleading Season Begins (September 14)
- JKL Girls Basketball Practices Begin (September 14)
- Sault Tribe Behavioral Health Recovery Walk (September 24)
- Sault Tribe Language and Culture Workshop (September 26)
- 30-Year Anniversary Celebration (September 27)
- Sault Women's Volleyball Season Begins (September 30)



Sault Tribe Health Division
Sault Tribe Behavioral Health's 16th Annual

Recovery Walk

NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH
RECOVERY IS REAL.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
988 or 988Lifeline.org

SAMHSA's National Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Disaster Distress Helpline
1-800-985-5990

FindTreatment.gov

FindSupport.gov

Save The Date

September 24, 2026 at 4pm
Big Bear Arena (2 Ice Circle Chi Mukwa)

If you are interested in participating as a vendor please contact us for additional information
(906) 635-6075

Recreation Division

Semi-Annual Report (January thru June 2026)



Phone: **906.635.RINK (7465)**

Email: **bookthebear@saulttribe.net**

Website: **www.BigBearArena.com**

Facebook: **www.facebook.com/Big-Bear-Arena-Chi-Mukwa-114428901153482**



Tammy Graham, Recreation Director: 906.635.4758

Shelbey Smith, Events Manager: 906.635.6509

Neil Krull, Recreation Facility Manager: 906.635.4982