



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## VISIT LAKE CITY SUPPLEMENT

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PREPARED FEBRUARY 2024  
[VISITLAKECITY.ORG](http://VISITLAKECITY.ORG)

VISIT



**LAKE CITY**  
MINNESOTA





# REFLECTION ON 2023

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When we began 2023, we indeed had some big shoes to fill. Coming off a such a special year in 2022, which included the 100th Anniversary of Water Skiing, 50 years of Water Ski Days, Lake City's Sesquicentennial, and the subsequent record breaking year for lodging tax intake, even I will admit I was afraid there would be a good chance we might take a step backwards in 2023.

However, now as I sit down to write this reflection and pour over the information included in this report, I am thrilled to say that not only was 2023 able to hang with 2022, but by most metrics, it exceeded the success of that monumental year. We had another record year for lodging tax intake (including adding another record quarter), we grew our web traffic by over 40%, we saw gains in attendance and revenue at the Chamber's signature events, and we significantly grew our social media numbers.

Perhaps even more meaningful, VLC launched exciting and groundbreaking new video advertisements, added new (and strengthened older) creative partnerships, continued to receive incredible earned media, ventured into new geographic and demographic markets, and successfully experimented with new marketing initiatives.

Oh... and then there's the small distinction of winning Explore Minnesota's prestigious "Only in MN Award" and being honored by having our proposal selected to host the 2024 Governor's Fishing Opener!

It is safe to say that 2023 exceeded our expectations.



ED HOFFMAN

Visit Lake City  
Tourism Specialist

# TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The Chamber has an 11-person tourism advisory committee populated by Lake City stakeholders.

The Committee meets or is provided with detailed written reports monthly.

The committee operates under a commission approved by the Chamber Board of Directors.



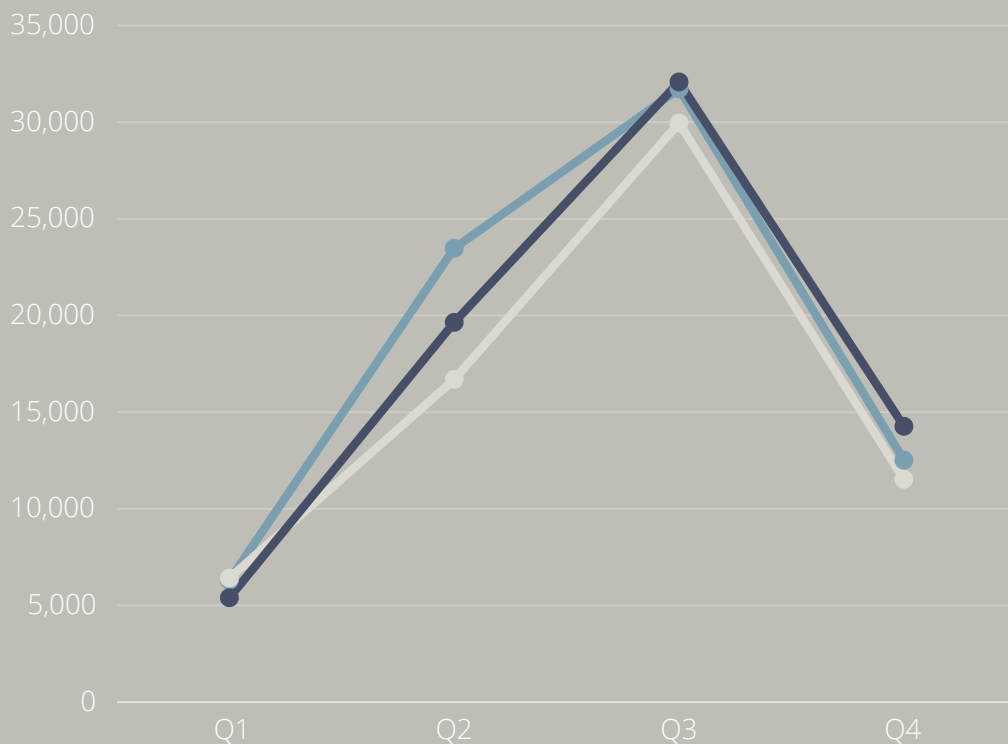
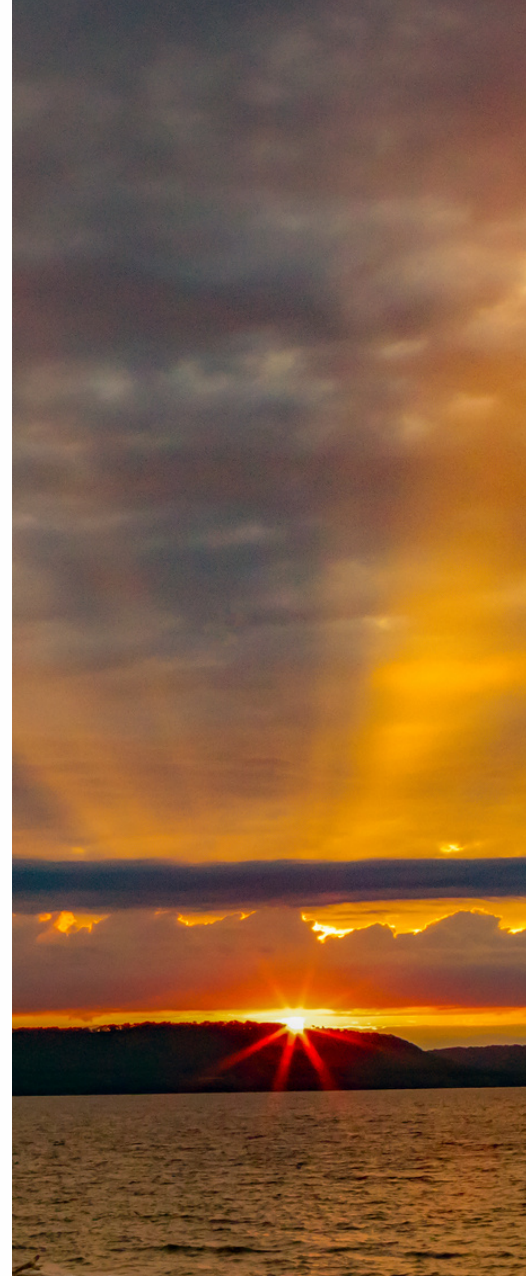
## THANK YOU 2023 COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

Justin Hawryluk - Chair  
Ed Hruska - Vice Chair  
Kjelgren Alkire - Chamber Representative

Lisa Quest (Hok Si La Park and Campground)  
Angie Stewart (Pearl Button Co.)  
Megan Kramer (City Council)  
Amy Brinkman (Lake City Sportsman's Club)  
Cailin Richard (Lake City Port Authority)  
John Hutchinson (Destination Lake City)  
Rick Berdahl (Kelly's Lake House)  
Vacant

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2023 Lake City saw success in the form of second record year in a row for lodging tax intake and added another record quarter. Q2 greatly surpassed any other spring quarter on record, making 3 of the past 6 quarters record breaking. Our sustained success and growth indicates that Lake City's tourism continues to recover from the pandemic, and continues to perform better than in pre-pandemic times. VLC continued to hold expenses to budget in 2023, and are able to continue an aggressive spending strategy in 2024. In addition to lodging tax revenue, Visit Lake City also collected nearly \$15,000 in grant funding from Explore Minnesota in 2023, and at this time expect a similar amount to come in 2024, with \$10,000 currently being reconciled. The Chamber continues to work with Lori Anderson, CPA to handle accounting for Visit Lake City.



2023 Lodging Tax Dollars  
by Quarter  
\*Q4 not finalized  
(estimated only)

2022 Lodging Tax Dollars  
by Quarter

Average of Lodging Tax  
Dollars by Quarter (2010-  
2023)  
\*2020 Removed from  
Averages



# A SEAT AT THE TABLE

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Lake City continues to engage with regional and statewide agencies to create strategies for larger marketing projects and to promote Lake City's place therein.

Ed Hoffman continued in his position on the Southern Minnesota Tourism Association's (SMTA) Executive Committee and as a Governor appointee on the Explore Minnesota Tourism Council.

# ONLY IN MN AWARD

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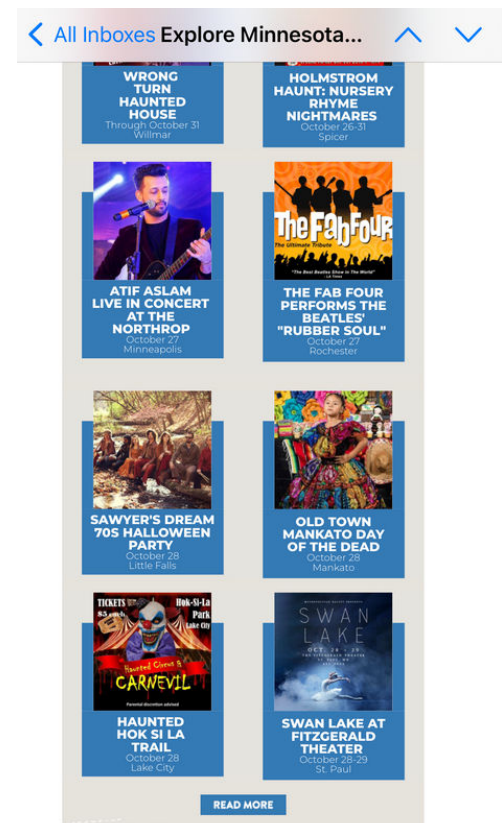
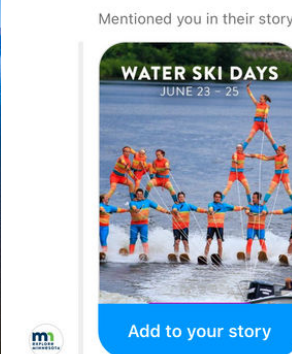
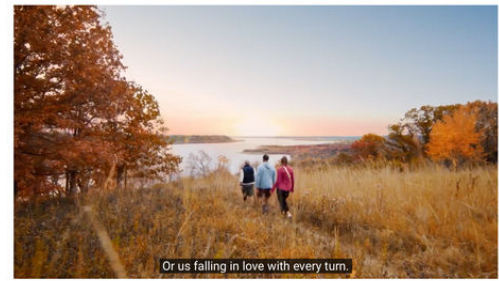
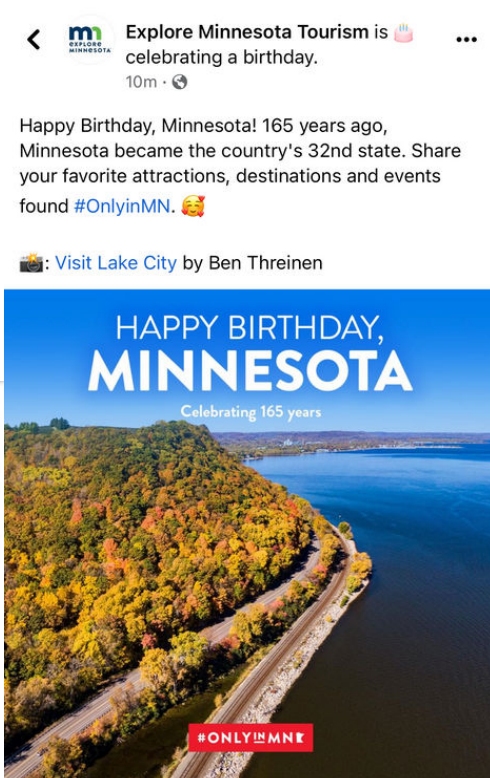
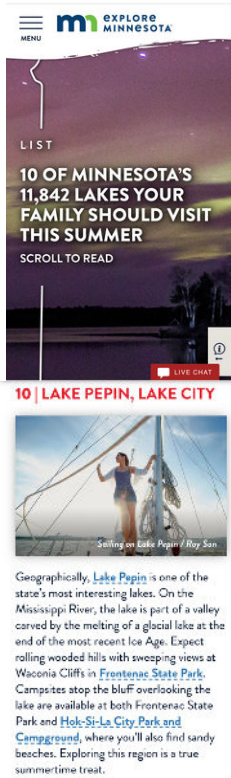
Visit Lake City began the year by taking home the prestigious "Only In Minnesota Award" at the annual Explore Minnesota conference in the Twin Cities.

Elizabeth Greenawalt attended the event in person to accept the award for our efforts in promoting the 100th Anniversary of Water Skiing and 50th Water Ski Days. EMT chooses only one recipient per year. Past award winners have included the St. Paul Winter Carnival and Minnesota State Fair.

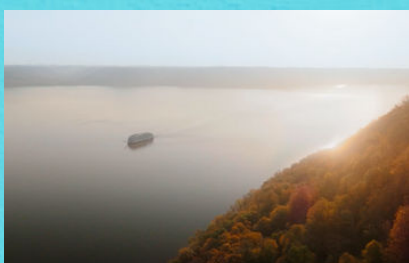
# EARNED MEDIA

The holy grail of destination marketing is always earned media. Nothing can compare to the impact that comes from a trusted publication or other media outlet choosing freely to extoll the virtues of a location. Visit Lake City is always hunting for PR and publicity opportunities.

Building on the all the added attention from last year, and strengthening our relationships with Explore Minnesota and regional media, 2023 was another banner year for publicity focusing on our area.



Lake City area was featured in Explore Minnesota's national ad campaign and on the homepage of exploreminnesota.com all fall!





# EARNED MEDIA, CONT.



Mayyadda - Enough (Official Music Video)

Mayyadda z  
6.6K subscribers

34,100 views Premiered Sep 15, 2023

Listen to Enough on your favorite music platform!  
spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/track/4Mx7DF...>  
apple music: <https://music.apple.com/us/album/enough...>

Director: Adja Gildersleeve  
Cinematographer: Bakar Elmi  
Production Assistant: Isatu Shirek  
Editor/Colorist/Droner: Adja Gildersleeve  
Styling: Mayyadda

Featuring:  
Chris  
Dafila  
Emmanuel  
Evalyn  
Jandeltha Rae  
Uchenna

Special thanks to Visit Lake City

WorldAtlas

## These Small Towns In Minnesota Come Alive In Fall

The Upper Midwestern state of Minnesota is known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," but also tests to residents and visitors to rolling prairies, forests, bluffs, hills, miles of Lake Superior shoreline, as well as sweeping Mississippi River views. During the autumn, Minnesota's big cities draw tourists in from all over, but so do the state's small towns that really come to life with their pumpkin patches, apple orchards, hometown fall festivals, and cozy eateries and cafes. Although the days may be a bit chilly, especially in the northern region of the state, the parks, historic districts and cultural attractions still beckon to be explored. If you're driving through Minnesota next fall, put these seven small towns on your trip itinerary.

### Lake City



Lake City is surrounded by the Mississippi River and Lake Pepin, as well as forests of trees that put on a dazzling color show each fall. Although the small town is an exciting place to visit all year round, the autumn months are particularly ideal if you're looking for a peaceful escape. To enjoy the annual Johnson Appleseed Days, which takes place at the end of September and features local and regional beer and cider, food trucks, live entertainment, and arts and crafts for sale. Leaves explode into a fiery array of colors at both the Muk Si La Park or Frontenac State Park, which offer miles of trails for hikers and bikers.

KTTC

Watch LIVE News Latest Video First Alert Weather Sports Midwest Access FOX47 2024 Fan Favorites

ADVERTISMENT

Great Academic Results! 3K

Rockville, MD 807.256.6036

### Lake City Events

Published: Aug 11, 2023 at 12:34 AM GMT+1

LIVE

Beach Party on the River  
Lake City | Saturday from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. | Chetopa Park

Midwest Access

MidwestLiving

We help people find answers, solve problems and get inspired. LEARN MORE

TRIP IDEAS DESTINATIONS HOME + GARDEN FOOD VOICES CURRENT ISSUE ABOUT US

## 6 Top Stops in Wabasha and Lake City, Minnesota

Soaring eagles, a posh B&B and a hand-carved carousel are just some of the reasons to visit Wabasha and Lake City along the Great River Road.

## 3. Lake Pepin Pearl Button Company

See locally harvested clamshells once used to make pearly buttons, and browse antiques and gifts in Lake City's [historic 1866 former button factory](#).

Minnesota Monthly

EXPLORE FOOD EDUCATION ARTS CULTURE THINGS TO DO NEW RESIDENTS

Home - Sponsored - 12 Weeks of Fall - 10 Reasons to Visit Lake City in Fall

## 10 Reasons to Visit Lake City in Fall

Lake City, Minnesota, is a dream destination in autumn. Filled with a full spectrum of colors and activities, here's our top 10 things to do in the area in fall.

75 KSTP-TV News Weather Watch Live Traffic Sports

KSTP-TV 5 Follow Page 338K followers

## Summer events happening in Lake City

By KSTP  
May 3, 2023 - 5:52 PM



KSTP-TV 5 Follow Page 338K followers

Take a tip from the Star Tribune and start your summer of fishing right here in Lake City!  
[#lakecitymn](#) [#lakepepin](#) [#onlyinmn](#)



STARTRIBUNE.COM

## 'Walleye Road Trip': Take a week to cruise Minnesota and catch our tastiest fish

To spark the imagination and nurture the wanderlust many anglers harbor, follow along on ...

Visit Lake City  
Published by Edward Hoffman September 26, 2023

We're so lucky to be situated where we are, on the [Great River Road MN](#)! Thanks for the ❤️

Great River Road MN  
September 25, 2023

Lake City is the gateway to Lake Pepin, Minnesota's South Shore – and art is always at the forefront with live performances, arts and crafts vendors, public art ... [See more](#)

MidwestLiving

We help people find answers, solve problems and get inspired. LEARN MORE

TRAVEL TRIP IDEAS ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN

## A Getaway Along the Upper Mississippi River Leads to Small Towns, Big Views and Natural Wonders

A vast liquid ecosystem curves the line between Minnesota and Wisconsin. Take a drive (or float) to explore the wonders of the Upper Mississippi.

This national scenic byway traces the Mighty Mississippi from its headwaters in northern Minnesota down to the Gulf of Mexico. Hundreds of charming river towns dotted with hole-in-the-wall bars, barbecue joints, and neo-Victorian bed-and-breakfasts line the route. My own three-day road trip covers 120 miles, crisscrossing three bridges joining Minnesota and Wisconsin, and focusing around Lake Pepin. Reaching 2 miles wide in places, it's the broadest naturally occurring part of the Mississippi and also the birthplace of waterskiing, invented nearly a century ago.



Great River Road. PHOTO COURTESY OF EXPLORE MINNESOTA/BEA THOMPSON

Just 15 miles south, Frontenac State Park spells paradise for bird-watchers. Follow 13 miles of trails to high bluffs, dense forest and restored prairie. Farther south, [Lake City Marina](#) loans bikes; tool around Lake Pepin to look for one of the Mississippi's only working lighthouses and Pepee the Lake Monster (Bluff Country's Nessie).

LINKS

HOME POCUENT COURSES TRAVEL COMPANIONSHIP LIFE EVENTS TOURS CITY OF NEWSLETTERS SHOP

## Top 10 Minnesota Courses You Can Play

### The Jewel Golf Club, Lake City

Shining bright in the Mississippi River valley bluffs of Lake City, 70 miles southeast of Minneapolis, is The Jewel, a 2005 Hale Irwin design that sparkles with variety from start to finish. Each nine on the 7,050-yard par-71 layout begins with open, prairie-style holes then darts into the woods. Among the memorable tests are the drivable, 312-yard par-four 6th and two holes, the 209-yard par-three 11th and the 437-yard par-four 14th that head straight into the face of steep, tree-lined bluffs.



## Lake City receives 'Only in Minnesota' tourism award from Explore Minnesota

The Lake City Chamber of Commerce/Visit Lake City took home a top award at the Explore Minnesota 2023 annual conference held on Feb. 28 at the Bloomington/Minneapolis South Double Tree by Hilton.



# EARNED MEDIA, CONT.



## Lake City to host Governor's Fishing Opener in 2024

Devie Harde KAATV  
November 1, 2023 - 9:20 AM



(ABC 6 NEWS) - Plans for the 2024 Governor's Fishing Opener have been released. Lake City will host the 76th annual celebration of fishing next spring.

5 Eyewitness News

### Waltz announces 2024 Governor's Fishing Opener to be held in Lake City

The official celebration for next year's fishing opener is headed to southeastern Minnesota. On Tuesday, Governor Tim Waltz announced that...



Duluth News Tribune

### Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener set for 2024

LAKE CITY, Minn. — Governor Tim Waltz announced Tuesday that Lake City will host the 76th Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener on May 10-11, 2024.

KNSI

### Lake City to Host 2024 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener

(KNSI) - The 2024 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener is set for Lake City. Lake City, known as the birthplace...



Nov 1, 2023



Pre-programmed hardware, installation, Guest Portal with Your Brand

GET IT

## Here Are The Most Beautiful, Charming Small Towns In Minnesota

14. Lake City



Lake City, MN 55001, USA

Lake City is the location of Lake Pepin, the birthplace of water skiing. Many water sports are still enjoyed there today. The [Explore Minnesota](#) website has additional information.



USA-WWF  
7 hours ago

We Celebrate the 101st Anniversary of Water Skiing by Getting on the Water!

We love water skiing... and all towed water sports.

At the USA Water Ski & Wake Sports Foundation, we always want to share the love by celebrating our past with the [Hall of Fame](#) or supporting our young athletes

## Hok Si La in the News!

★ Star Tribune

### If summer plans fall apart, Minnesota will provide a wondrous alternative

When the writer's plans for a summer trip to the BWCA went bad — and he was already packed for an adventure — a new plan was hatched and the...

Jun 23, 2023



★ Star Tribune

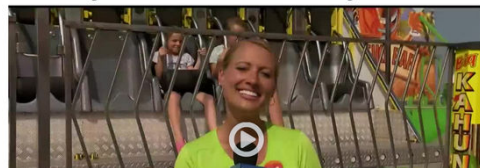
### Already popular, park cabins rise in value as a gateway to winter camping

A national report found even more people have plans to camp this winter than last. Here are five ways to try the activity.

Oct 12, 2023

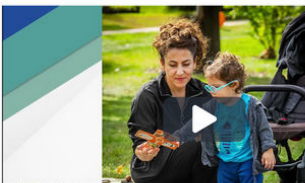


## Lake City hosts 51st Water Ski Days



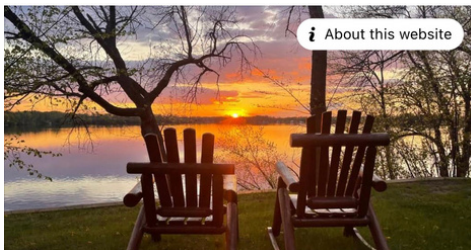
## Johnny Appleseed Days in Lake City

By KSTP  
September 29, 2023 - 4:47 PM



JOHNNY APPLESEED DAYS  
THIS WEEKEND IN LAKE CITY

"Located on the Wisconsin-Minnesota border, Lake Pepin is the largest lake on the Mississippi River and it might just be one of the most scenic in... See more



About this website

ONLY IN YOUR STATE · 4 MIN READ  
Here Are 11 Of The Most Beautiful Lakes In Minnesota, According To Our Readers

Jason DeRusha  
October 22, 2023

Ideal day visiting Southeastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin in the Mississippi River Valley! The colors were especially nice in the Lake City - Wabasha corridor. We stopped in Hastings (great river town, cool-looking new hotel), went to Kings in Miesville for burgers (properly rated! Excellent!), Red Wing is one of my favorite towns (had to go to Hanisch Bakery), then Lake City and back on the other side - Nelson, Maiden Rock, Stockholm and back to town. Nice quality time... See more



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NEWS LOCAL

## Lake City takes home 'Only in Minnesota' award

The city was recognized by Explore Minnesota for its 50th annual Water Ski Days celebration last year.



Boaters enjoy the warm weather on Lake Pepin at Lake City on Thursday, June 23, 2022, during the 50th annual Water Ski Days. Lake City recently earned an Explore Minnesota

Jack and Kitty are back at it giving you what they love most about Lake City and Wabasha! Check out their 2023 travel guide for exploring these two quaint and fun Mississippi River towns right here!

<https://jackandkitty.com/2023/03/weekend-in-lake-city-and-wabasha-minnesota?fbclid=IwAR1TICKOzUBAicgk5z8lc7KIN8Xtocw-Fd8NCEWixucqCTLg8jmfDVv5z1>



jackandkitty.com  
Weekend in Lake City and Wabasha, Minnesota  
| JackAndKitty.com

Bring Me The News

### Kid gives up shoveling snow in Lake City, MN

Kid gives up shoveling snow in Lake City, MN. Author: Video Duration: 14. Tags: trends: funnyLake City MNMinnesotaMN SnowFeature...



MPR News

### Small land transfer may be a big deal in tribal lands debate

In what could become a blueprint for similar Minnesota communities, Lake City, southeast of the Twin Cities, has returned ownership of...

1 month ago






# DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Digital advertising continued to be the focal point of Visit Lake City's Advertising efforts in 2023.

With partners like Sievers Creative, Media One, Star Tribune, Greenspring Media, and Orange 142, we collaboratively designed a robust marketing strategy that includes digital display (ie. banner ads), paid social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok), content marketing, and email blasts. Each of these channels work in consort with our continually updated website, and serves ads to those who fit within our targeted location, interests, and income demographics, as well as to those who have searched for and visited [visittlakecity.org](https://visittlakecity.org).

We are continually monitoring data to better refine which demographics and locations we focus our advertising on, and are active in serving new images and copy to viewers on a month by month basis.

## Meta

 Visit Lake City with Explore Minnesota Tourism.

Posted by Brandon Lau

Paid Partnership · 

Lake City, Minnesota, is a dream destination in Autumn. Brimming with a full spectrum of colors and activities, here's 10 of our favorite things to do in the area in fall.



Visit Lake City this Fall  
<https://www...>

Learn more

Visit Lake City  
<https://www...>

## Tik Tok



 ADVANTAGE



Star Trib



*Lake City adventures are waiting for you!*

You set the pace. From nice and slow to exciting and active, Lake City has it all!

## MailChimp

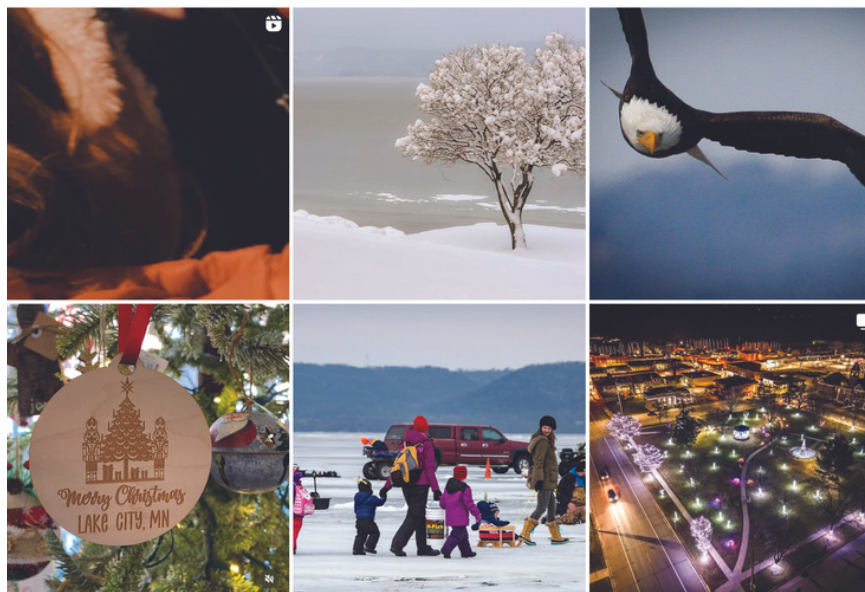
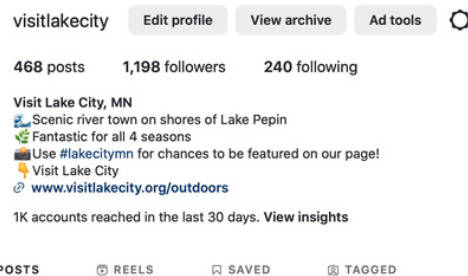


## Display

# SOCIAL MEDIA

When discussing tourism marketing today, not enough can be said about the power of social media. Beautiful images, short videos, shared content, rapid and personalized responses to comments and messages, and snappy, conversational copy continued to be a winning combination in 2023. Visit Lake City saw growth in all important Facebook and Instagram metrics over the past year: Engagement, Reach, Impressions, and New Page Likes. Overall, our advertising on Meta platforms through Sievers Creative delivered over 1.2 million impressions, with an additional reach of almost 500,000 more between organic and in-house boosted posts. Our click through and engagement rate maintains well above the industry average.

We identified an opportunity to capitalize on user generated content, repeatedly asking our followers to tag their local photos with #LakeCityMN and sharing selected images to our accounts. We have also continued to contract with Ben Threinen for the use of a database of professional photos.





# PRINT ADVERTISING

While we continued to grow our focus on digital advertising, we remained committed to targeted print ads and content marketing in publications that we felt reached those most likely to travel to Lake City.

In 2023 we maintained a monthly 2 page spread in Rochester Visitor Magazine, and placed ads in Today, Big River, Minnesota Monthly, MSP Magazine, and AAA Magazine. We also advertised in Explore Minnesota's official state guide, and took out a full page ad in Experience Rochester, the official guidebook for Rochester's CVB.

**LAKE CITY**  
Minnesota's South Shore

**In the Land of  
10,000 Lakes  
there's only one  
Lake City.**

Only thirty minutes  
from Rochester.  
Experience the jewel  
of the Mississippi River.

[www.visitlakecity.org](http://www.visitlakecity.org)

**m**  
EXPLORE  
MINNESOTA

**10,000 Lakes.  
Only One Lake City.**

**VISIT**  
**LAKE CITY**  
MINNESOTA

[visitlakecity.org](http://visitlakecity.org)

Just as the leaves change, every season,

**YOU ARE NEW**

**LAKE CITY**  
Minnesota's South Shore

**m**  
EXPLORE  
MINNESOTA

**VISIT**  
**LAKE CITY**  
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**10,000 Lakes  
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Experience the  
Jewel of the  
Mississippi.

Only an hour from  
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and 30 minutes  
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**Vacation Inspiration**

**Chilling Thrilling**

**Pedal Puddle**

**LAKE CITY**  
Minnesota's South Shore

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**LAKE CITY**  
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shop • dine • play • relax

**EXPERIENCE**

**LAKE CITY**  
Minnesota's South Shore

[visitlakecity.org](http://visitlakecity.org)



# NEW FRONTIERS VIA GRANTS AND COOP ADS

Visit Lake City continually looks for grant opportunities and the best values wherever it can find them. In 2023 we collected nearly \$15,000 in grant revenue, and have been awarded \$10,000 more to date, which will be collected in 2024. We also took advantage of state subsidized programs that allowed us to buy ads in coops with savings of up to 70%.

We took advantage of these opportunities by branching into new markets, new publications, and new media partnerships, while dipping our toes into new forms of advertising such as highly targeted digital travel intent marketing and YouTube advertising (debuting professional and groundbreaking video advertisements created during last year's grant cycle). In doing so, in total, we were able to reach hundreds of thousands of potential visitors that we would not otherwise have been able to.



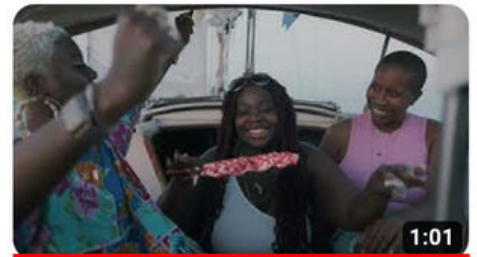
**Visit Lake City Minnesota this Fall**

12K views • 5 months ago



**Visit Lake City Minnesota this Fall**

22K views • 5 months ago



**Visit Lake City Minnesota this Summer**

36K views • 6 months ago



**Visit Lake City Minnesota in Spring: Feel Good by Sweet & Lonely - Dir....**

25K views • 1 year ago



**Visit Lake City Minnesota in Spring: Feel Good by Sweet and Lonely - D...**

10K views • 1 year ago

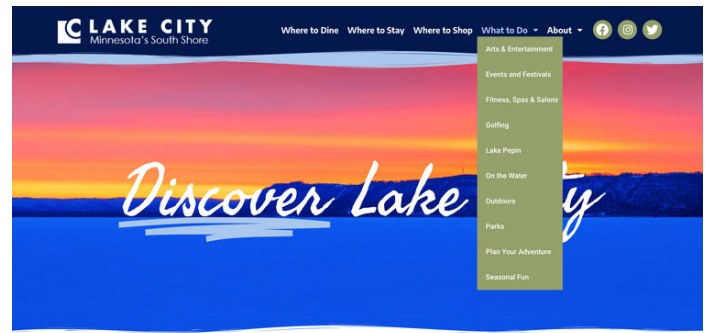


**Visit Lake City in Winter: Eagles on the Ice by The Heavy Set - Dir. Nat...**

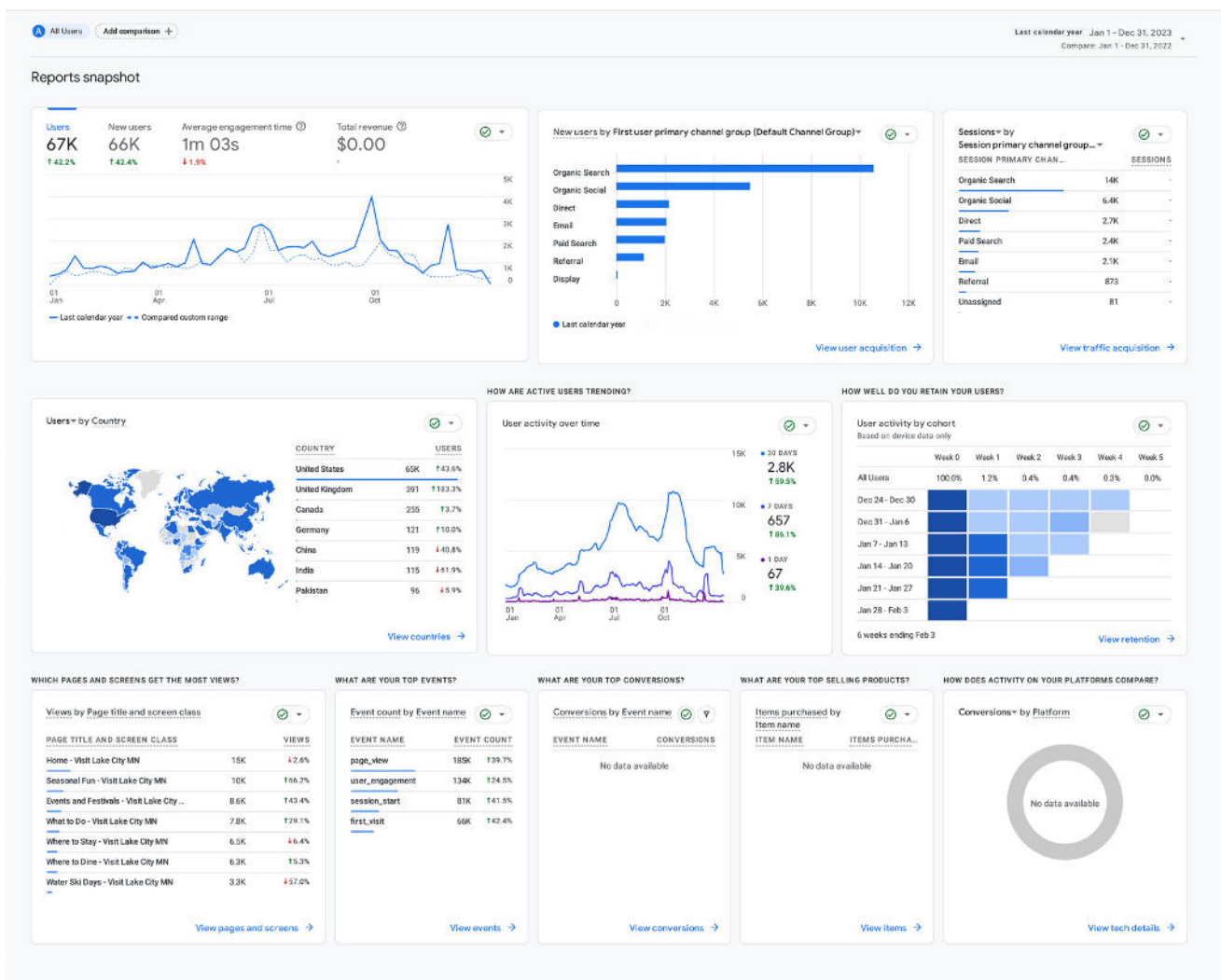
36K views • 1 year ago



# WEBSITE GAINS



Website visits are the gateway to actual visits to our community. Whether it is through clickable social media advertising, display ads, or newsletters, we strive to deliver content that directs people to our site where we give them an engaging experience and optimal performance. We place an emphasis on SEO and referrals which keep visitlakecity.org at the top of search engine suggestions. In 2023 we saw 67,000 people visit our site, an increase of a 42.4% over 2022. With 2022's gains of 67% over 2021, we can confidently report that we continue on the right track since taking over and rebuilding the site in mid-2021.



## 2023



## 2022





# USA-WWF HALL OF FAME



VLC's Ed Hoffman joined Mayor Mark Nichols and Destination Lake City's Marco Molinari in Lakeland, Florida, at the USA Water Ski and Wake Sport Foundation's Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

The foundation seated our delegation at the head table, and a Lake City promotional video created by VLC was shown to the attendees and live-streamers of the event. Nichols and Molinari were invited to deliver remarks on stage, and a table was set up to distribute Lake City maps, guides, and memorabilia.

Hoffman also visited the Hall of Fame museum in Davenport and met with staff at Visit Central Florida about ideas for future collaborations.



# COMMUNITY EVENTS

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## ANOTHER BIG YEAR OF FUN!

In 2023, we built on the momentum of the milestones we saw in 2022 by forging full head of steam. Whether building greater attendance for the 16th Tour de Pepin or keeping the 51st Annual Water Ski Days rocking by bringing in another national rising star, the Chamber showed no signs of slowing down.

In 2024, we continue this pattern, by hosting the Governor's Fishing Opener Weekend, making huge plans for Tour de Pepin, and with some big surprises awaiting announcement for the 52nd Water Ski Days.



### TOUR DE PEPIN

The Chamber celebrated the 16th annual Tour de Pepin with approximately 850 riders on June 2nd, 2023. By all accounts the event was a major success, with participants, vendors, and sponsors providing positive feedback and a desire to return in 2024. Dozens of volunteers in Lake City and around the Lake Pepin route helped the Chamber facilitate a fun and safe ride. Brent and Sheena provided festive tunes at the finish line and Winona's Island City Brewery was there for a third consecutive year to pour the post-tour beverages.



### WATER SKI DAYS

Water Ski Days wowed locals and visitors alike in 2023, with national talent and local favorites rocking the stage at Ohuta Park. We continued our collaboration with the USA Water Ski and Wake Sport Foundation, as well as all of our local partner organizations and volunteers for another incredible year.

Building upon the momentum of the 100th anniversary of Ralph Samuelson's moment was no easy task, but in almost every metric we either met or surpassed the success of 2022.



### ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 2nd Annual golf event was held at Lake City Golf on July 21st, with over 20 teams participating. Hole sponsors, golfers and volunteers were very happy with the turnout and success of the tournament. Lunch and Dinner were provided by Heidi's Huggamug and Rebel Fire Que'N Company, respectively. The Chamber is excited to host and grow this event again on July 19th, 2024.



# COMMUNITY EVENTS, CONT.

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## Y-KNOT TRI

The 2nd annual Lake City Y-Knot Tri took place at Ohuta Park on Saturday, August 12th, 2023. The event consisted of a 2.5 mile paddle on beautiful Lake Pepin, a 14 mile bike ride on a 'there and back' route to Frontenac, and a 5K run along the river side.

The Chamber was proud to collaborate with the Y-Knot committee, offering administrative services and its expertise in event planning. The event was a huge success, garnering many participants and a massive outpouring of community support. The Y-Knot Tri will return on August 10th, 2024.



## FLOAT A PALOOZA

Sharing a date and Ohuta Park with the Y-Knot Tri, Float a Palooza returned for another iteration in 2023 on August 12th.

Dozens of families joined at Ohuta Beach to play in the sand with a widely successful sand dig, listen to the musical renditions of Ryan Sullivan Music and local Victor Holland, snack on Huettl's fare and wash it all down with Charlie's Lemonade. Look for some new exciting pairings August 10th of this year!



## FALL FEST

The Chamber continued its partnership with the Fall Fest Committee in 2023 to bring a wildly successful fall chocked full of family friendly events. A bucket raffle was paired with the fundraiser luncheon and a Trunk or Treat event was added on Halloween. Touch a Truck and Fun Zone in Patton Park continue to be local favorites. The frighteningly good Haunted Hok Si La, while cold, was a cut above the rest! The Fall Fest Committee is committed to continuing this fall tradition in 2024.



## JOHNNY APPLESEED DAYS

The Chamber organized Johnny Appleseed Days September 30th and October 1st. The event was a 2-day block party that featured numerous bands, dozens of vendors, kid's art activities, a pie eating contest, and more.

New this year, the Chamber added a Beer and Cider Fest that exceeded all expectations; selling out tickets before the doors opened on Saturday. This event will have additional tickets in 2024 with more vendors and breweries in attendance.



## LIGHT UP LAKE CITY

In what has become a wonderful collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce and various City of Lake City departments and other community organizations, the holiday lights lit up our community on Shop Small Saturday, November 25th, 2023.

The event featured hot beverages and cookies in Patton Park sponsored by Heidi's Huggamug. There was also a fire truck parade through town that brought Old Saint Nick to the festivities where he and Mrs. Claus greeted Lake City's children.

# LOOKING FORWARD

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We have so much to look forward to in 2024.

The Governor's Fishing Opener is approaching quickly, landing in Lake City on May 9-11. This event will bring dozens of media members and state dignitaries to our town for 3 days of fishing and fun. The event will allow us to garner numerous new periodical and newspaper articles, TV and radio spots, and introduce new media influencers and content creators to Lake City. It gives us the opportunity to solidify and build new relationships with media members and writers. Not only will this event boost our reputation for having some of the best fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities in the Midwest, but will give us a chance to show off *all* that Lake City has to offer. It is our chance to put on our best face and really WOW our distinguished visitors.

Being awarded the Governor's Fishing Opener is part of a positive pattern in a relationship with Explore Minnesota and other statewide agencies that Visit Lake City has been working hard to cultivate over the past 3 years. Since 2021, we have been invited to a seat on the Governor's Council on Tourism, we've won one of the most prestigious tourism awards in the state, we've been featured in one of Explore Minnesota's national advertising campaigns and repeatedly are featured in their social media posts, and we've been awarded numerous competitive grants that have allowed us to make groundbreaking advertisements that have caught the eyes of officials at the state level. In 2024, we will continue to broaden our horizons with by reaching into new markets and experimenting with new forms of marketing. We will continue to capitalize on grant opportunities and relationships that we've built with media members. We will work to form even more collaboration with, and buy-in from, Lake City community members and stakeholders.

Lake City has momentum on our side.

