

# aroundthe**state**

townships in the spotlight



## Garfield Township

**G**arfield Township (Clare Co.), with a population just over 1,800 according to the 2020 Census, is a water recreation destination, with numerous lakes in the area, including Eight Point, Crooked, Big Cranberry, Gray, Perch and Big Mud Lakes to name a few.



Because of its proximity to Crooked Lake, the settlement of “Lake Station” began in 1877 as a depot on the Pere Marquette Railway. A post office with the same name was also established that year and its name was later shortened in the early 1900s to simply “Lake.” Even today, the community is still referred to as Lake Station, though it is also a familiar refrain from residents to clarify that they are from “Lake, Michigan,” not the Great Lake “Lake Michigan.”

After five years of studies and grant applications, the Lake Station Trailhead was built in 2018 along the paved Pere Marquette State Trail that runs through the community, allowing walkers, runners, bikers, snowmobilers and others to head out in 12 uninterrupted miles east to Clare or 45 miles west to Baldwin. It continues 27 miles to Reed City, where trail users can intersect the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail south to Grand Rapids or north to Cadillac. The trailhead features air service, bike racks, a picnic pavilion, restrooms, running water, and nearby food and drink locations.

The latest addition near the trail is a standalone 10-foot by 20-foot pop-up shop available for rent by local artists, makers, farmers and others, with the hope to attract tourists to the area while supporting local businesses.

Along the trail is a unique sight—one of the state’s two readily accessible coal docks, a 75-foot-high concrete tower built to supply coal to steam locomotives in need of fuel. The docks, also called tipples, operated until diesel replaced coal as fuel for the trains. Just 15 towers remain in Michigan.

The township has welcomed new and improving businesses recently and is also working to enhance access to popular Crooked Lake for visitors and nearby residents. A retrofitted beach area, picnic shelter, re-engineered parking lot and kayak launch, among other amenities, are part of a two-phase plan.

