

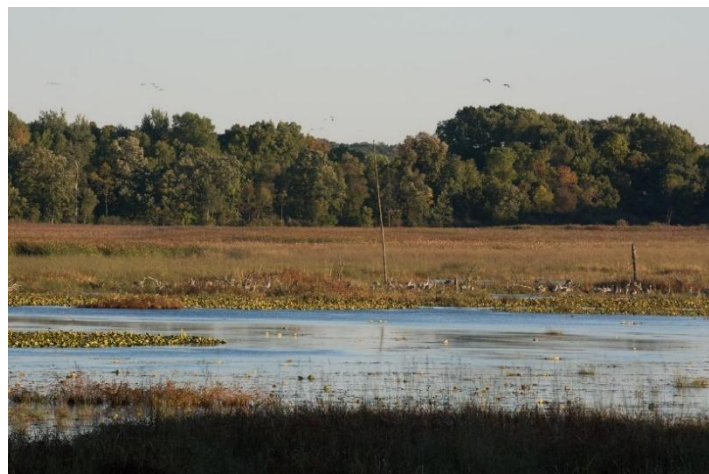
CraneFest XXXI 2026 – Saturday October 10 & Sunday October 11 at the  
Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek's Youth Conservation Area from noon until dusk

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After our CraneFest hiatus in October 2020, I really looked forward to good weather and attendance for CraneFestXXVI 2021 - October 9 & 10, 2021 at Kiwanis Youth Conservation Area. I imagined lots of cars rolling into our Youth Area full of people who are thinking I want to “get back to nature and set my soul free.”



But wait, let's not get ahead of ourselves. Those who came early took advantage of the Artists showing quality works featuring outdoor themes and Venders and other outdoor-minded groups offering an array of thought, wares and tastes intended to enhance your afternoon experience. People roamed the color-coded trails in search of seasonal birds and wildlife. Open from noon until dusk, the Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek welcomed our visitors to come with us and enjoy a day outdoors.



Twenty-five or six years ago CraneFest first appeared at our Youth Area with the organizing efforts of Mike Boyce who was associated with the Michigan Audubon and a member of our Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek. Previously an in-town event, his idea was to bring people out for a visit together for some fun and learning in the outdoors provided by our Youth Area. The Kiwanis and Boyce organized, and our club members and the town people helped, to put on the first CraneFests. As the event evolved, the Michigan Audubon got involved with organizing the event and grew the scope of the participants in the event.

During the last 10 or 15 years, with our Kiwanis Club hosting and Michigan Audubon organizing the CraneFests, we could expect, over the two-day event, to draw between 2000 to 4000 visitors. We have carried on in hot, cold and rainy weather. Once I had to cancel the event due to a deluge which flooded our parking area. When 2020 brought the event to its knees as Michigan Audubon dropped out as organizer and Covid hit. CraneFest XXVI 2020 never got off the ground.

Not to be denied, the last two CranFests have worked out very well with good crowds and pleasant Michigan weather. This year our Kiwanis Club took on the challenge to make CraneFest XXXI 2026 happen and offered as many of the traditional natural and outdoor features of the event as possible. We welcomed dozens of artists, vendors, non-profits and other organizations that participated in past years as well some new to our CraneFest XXXI 2026 event.

In addition to the artists and vendors, our pavilion area will offer a live reptile and amphibians display, nature walks every other hour, solar telescope viewing, bird spotting scope areas and a kids hands-on discovery tent. Keep your eyes open as you drive up. We have some new greeters at the entrance.

Many thanks to our sponsors: 4-H of Calhoun County, The Medalist Golf Course, Michigan Audubon, Michigan Bluebird Society, Citizen's Climate Lobby and Republic Services.

Find further information on the Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek:

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1XPPAaXBEv/>

and

Web Page: <https://k00153.site.kiwanis.org/locations/crane-fest-xxxi/>

or email Don Stilwell: [stilwelldb@comcast.net](mailto:stilwelldb@comcast.net)

Finally, a reminder to all, the Youth Area has a pavilion and restrooms but come prepared for the changing Michigan weather. See you at CraneFest XXXI 2026 on October 10 & 11, 2026 from noon until dusk at the Kiwanis Youth Conservation Area, 22300, 15 Mile Rd., Bellevue, MI 49021.