Since 2003, the Chamber of Commerce has been a member of the Iron County Alliance. But even though it performs a very important function in Iron County, aside from those directly involved in the operation of the Alliance, little is known about what it does.
In 2003, there was a concern that there may be projects that the individual organizations could not take on, but could be done using a cooperative effort of a more-encompassing entity.
The belief was that such an entity could take on a project and avoid duplication of effort. The three-member organizations agreed to contribute funds to create the Alliance. Each member organization would have three representatives on the nine-member Alliance Board.
The Alliance currently has two major projects.

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The Alliance felt that if tourism was important to the county, there needed to be a method of providing information to visitors conveniently when they are looking for it.
To respond to the tourism need, the Alliance organized its Rack Project. There are about 15 information racks located at various places throughout the county, and each rack has a variety of brochures about attractions in the area.
The Alliance finances the distribution of the brochures for the racks.
The second major Alliance project has been dubbed the “Big Book.”
The Big Book is the Iron County Visitor’s Guide, which assists people who want to come to Iron County, or are in Iron County, to locate attractions.
The third edition of the Big Book is now available, and it has information about what to do in Iron County in each of the four seasons, and pinpoints the attractions for tourists.
But why the Big Book? Prior to the printing of the Visitor’s Guide, the common method of distributing tourism information was to send out individual brochures.
The Alliance expressed the belief that if Iron County was going to “put its best foot forward” to visitors, it needed an attractive and informative type of invitation.
The Big Book has proven to be one of the most popular tourism items distributed throughout Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois sites. Because of the volume of information it provides, the Big Book is also the resource people have used in deciding to move to the local area.
The Iron County Alliance is doing important work to benefit our community.
And a reminder that WinterFest comes up March 5 in Caspian. A full day of activity around the Ski Hill, capped off with fireworks.