The busiest month of the year, July, is upon us. It starts this Saturday, and it's going to be packed with events and festivities in Iron County.

Yes, you can argue that May (preparations for summer, Memorial Day and graduation) and December (the countdown to the holiday season) are both frantic, and we won't deny that. But when you look at all the events taking place every week, planned by local volunteers, July has them all beat.

First, we are now in the final countdown for the Fourth of July weekend, which winds up with Independence Day activities next Monday in Iron River, Alpha and Amasa. Parades, kids races, family activities, reunions and, of course, the fireworks shows at night. The story on the front page has all the details.

Less than a week later, from July 8 to 10, it's the Bass Festival in Crystal Falls. A busy, busy weekend, starting with the boxing show on Friday night, followed by the parade on Saturday, food, games and music at the park, ethnic softball and Run Your Bass Off. Lots to see and do in Crystal Falls during the Bass Fest.

One weekend later, the spotlight shifts to Iron River and its Rum Rebellion weekend, July 15 to 17. Da Yoopers concert, a historical parade, hijinks, a disc golf tournament and a fun new review, focusing on the actual Rum Rebellion incident from early in 1920, just after Prohibition laws went into effect. A true blast from the past!

Then it's Rodeo Weekend. The 44th annual U.P. Championship Rodeo comes to town, with three performances on July 23 and 24. The big parade is on the morning of July 23. Plenty of color, plenty of horses, plenty of Old West atmosphere as the cowboys come to town.

And don't forget that on Friday, July 22, it's the big country music show at the Fairgrounds, featuring Mark Wills and Jeff Bates. It's the third year for the Rodeo Concert, and, judging by the first two years, it's going to be another enormously crowd-pleasing show.

Four really busy weekends are ahead of us. We'll be out there, getting photos and covering the events. But why don't you join us? It looks like some really nice summer weather is in the offing, so come along and take in some of the fun.

Winter will be here soon enough; let's go out and enjoy summer while it's here.

--Peter Nocerini