



MICHIGAN'S PREMIER MOTORCOACH CONNECTION
BETWEEN EAST LANSING, ANN ARBOR,
BRIGHTON & DETROIT METRO AIRPORT



e-news

FEBRUARY 2020



 [Story Contest - Click to Enter](#)

Tell a “Great Connections” Story, Win a Big Gift Card!

Just tell us a short—but great—true story about how Michigan Flyer-AirRide helped to connect you with a special person, place, or adventure, and you could win the \$500 gift card Top Prize in our new “Great Connections” essay contest! Or, you could win one of five \$100 gift card Runner-up Prizes. Plus, all winners will have their stories and photos published in our E-news for the enjoyment of fellow passengers.

It doesn't get much easier: Submit your story in 250 words or less [here at SurveyMonkey](#) between now and April 17. We'll notify the winners on or after April 30 by phone or email. Entries will be judged by Michigan Flyer staff and creative consultants, based on their judgment of which stories best fit the contest theme. Good luck!

Travel Alerts

Coming Soon! Detroit - Ann Arbor Commuter Bus Service

The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) in partnership with the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority is working to implement a new commuter bus service between Detroit and Ann Arbor, thanks to funding received from State grants. The service—to be operated by Michigan Flyer and Indian Trails—will provide non-stop trips between Detroit and Ann Arbor and is open to anyone to use. Service is expected to begin later this winter. [Learn more details!](#)



Book Seats Now for Spring Break in March

Final Notice: Michigan Flyer-AirRide seats will likely sell out during the Feb. 28-March 10 spring break period for students at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. Again this year, spring break at both universities is set for the first week in March, which means it will be difficult for us to accommodate everyone who'd like to ride with us then. That's because roughly 96,000 students from the East Lansing and Ann Arbor campuses combined will be traveling, along with many of their 42,000 faculty and staff members. So, reserve your seats early if you're planning for us to take you to DTW and back.



Travel Bargains

New Flights from DTW to Munich Coming in May

This bears repeating from our report in August.

Beginning on May 4, 2020, Lufthansa will fly nonstop from Munich (MUC) to Detroit Metro Airport five times a week—on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The flights will depart at 12:40 p.m. and land at DTW at 3:45 p.m. Munich time. The return flights to Germany will take off at 5:35 p.m. Detroit time, arriving in Munich at 7:45 a.m. the next morning. The

new flights are part of Lufthansa's summer flight schedule, which expands its long-haul program for international leisure travelers to U.S. destinations. However, access to the MUC hub also opens up more choices for U.S. travelers to Europe, Africa, and the Middle East in lower-tier fares.



Customer Comments

"My wife and I have been traveling with MI Flyer for several years and the service just keeps getting better. We flew to Denver in May, on to Texas and returned in June with our grandkids, taking MI Flyer both directions. We made a trip to Texas this past Christmas time and this year we flew instead of driving 1,400

miles, again as we always do when flying out of DTW we took MI Flyer.

“For \$84 you couldn’t fly one person from Lansing to DTW, let alone both of us both ways for that price. The buses are new and in great shape, free water and restrooms, plus delivery near our gates. We both are over 70 and have some difficulty walking and between MI Flyer and the travel services at DTW we had no problems getting there and getting to our gate. Returning we were able to flag down the driver and make it onto an earlier bus so we didn’t have to wait two hours for our scheduled bus.

“Again I will stress your service has been and continues to be great. Looking forward to our next trip.”

—E.C.C, St. Johns, Mich.

Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There

East Lansing

 **[MSU Women’s Basketball vs. Michigan](#)**, Sunday, Feb. 23 at 5 p.m., at the Breslin Student Events Center, 534 Birch Rd., East Lansing, on the MSU campus. At this writing, Coach Suzy Merchant’s squad is 12-12 overall, but 8-2 at home, which means fans can expect to see the Spartans at their best in this contest with the rival Wolverines (16-9) led by Coach Kim Barnes Arico. **[Tickets \\$8-\\$14](#)**.



 **[Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, with Joshua Bell, Director and Violin](#)**. One of the world’s leading chamber orchestras is led by violin superstar Joshua Bell in a performance featuring Brahms’ majestic Fourth Symphony and the musical fireworks of Paganini’s Violin Concerto No. 1. It’s at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 24, at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts. **[Tickets from \\$45](#)**.

Check out more local coming events with the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar: **<http://www.lansing.org/events>**.

Ann Arbor

[Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival](#). This annual event features divers and maritime history presenters from across North America who will help you see what lies beneath the surface of our Great Lakes. It’s 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m., on Saturday, Feb. 29, at Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., Ann Arbor. **[Tickets \\$25](#)**.

[Best of Broadway by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra](#). Enjoy an evening of Broadway hits featuring vocalists from the U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance. They’ll perform favorite show tunes from West Side Story, Les Misérables, The Sound of Music, Beauty and the Beast, Phantom of the Opera, Mama Mia, and more, with Yaniv Segal as guest conductor. It’s at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 14, and 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 15, at the Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. **[Tickets \\$30-\\$35](#)**.



Find more to do in the area with the Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar of coming events: <https://www.visitannarbor.org/splash/events>.

Brighton



[Pink Mt. Brighton](#) is an event dedicated to conquering cancer by supporting research at Karmanos Cancer Institute of Detroit. It includes a "Rally for Hope" pink ski parade, presentations & lunch, pink costume contest, and Pink Party with DJ, food, drink specials, games, photo booth and more. If you don't ski or snowboard, no problem—this party is for everyone. It's from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, at Mt. Brighton, 4141 Bauer Rd., Brighton. Tickets start at \$50.

[The Wild Women of Winedale](#). This live community theater production focuses on three women at crossroads in their lives. In a joyful, exuberant, and touching comedy, they prove it's never too late to take another life path for a grand new adventure. Performances at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, 3 p.m. Sundays, March 6-27. Catch it at the Brighton Coffeehouse and Theater, 306 W. Main St., Brighton. [Tickets \\$29](#).

Brighton, along with the other communities of Livingston County, offers a multitude of events to delight visitors of all ages. Explore them with the Livingston County Convention & Visitors Bureau events calendar: <https://visitlivingstoncounty.com/events/>.

Farewell to Two-Million-Mile Safe Driver Ernie Nieman

The average American driver travels about 14,000 miles a year—or about 980,000 miles in a lifetime—and has three or four accidents, [according to industry experts](#).

In contrast, last June, Ernie Nieman accomplished what only three other bus drivers in the 110-year history of our parent company, Indian Trails, have done so far: He reached two million miles of driving a motorcoach without a preventable accident.

That equates to 80 trips around the Earth or four trips to the Moon and back. Just to reach one million miles a driver must average 50,000 miles annually for 20 years.



Ernie, who recently retired from Indian Trails, earned his first million-mile safe driving award back in 2005. Last December, he and other staff members were honored at our annual Service Awards Dinner for their years of service.

Ernie started driving part-time for another bus company while running a barber shop he had owned for more than a decade. He liked driving much better than cutting hair.

He joined us in 1990 after meeting fellow driver Carl Briggs at a ball game, and found himself intrigued by

what Carl had to say about Indian Trails.

Some Places He's Gone

In his 29 years with us, Ernie has substituted for Michigan Flyer drivers who were sick or on vacation, and taken group charter buses to every state in the continental U.S. except California, Oregon and Washington, as well as through much of Canada. He's also piloted daily scheduled runs from cities in Michigan to Chicago and back, and then north to St. Ignace.

Among his favorite charter trips were those offered as part of the "Michigan Lakes & Mackinac Island" summer package by Tauck Tours. These eight-day excursions give folks from all over an opportunity to explore the wonders of northern Michigan.

Also memorable was a trip to New Orleans a few months after Hurricane Katrina. "I took a group of volunteers there who'd signed up to help with the ongoing clean-up efforts," he recalls. "Even though there was rebuilding going on, you could see that the devastation had been terrible. There was still much to be done."

Why We Were His Perfect Fit

Though Ernie came to us as an experienced bus driver, he still had to go through the same four-week intensive training as all new Indian Trails drivers.

"In my previous job, they put me behind the wheel and had me drive from Alma to Mt. Pleasant, Mich., and back, and then to Midland with one of the owners," he recalls. "The next day, I was on my own. At Indian Trails, there's a lot that's covered before you ever get into the driver's seat. Passenger safety is always number one."

As he adjusts to retirement, Ernie values the years he had with us and the friendships he forged with fellow employees. "I really didn't know too much about Indian Trails and how long it's been around when I first started. But early on, I remember seeing all these pictures that date back decades and decades. They treat their employees very well and are so considerate. I've really enjoyed it all."

Stress-Reducing Travel Tips

[Know How to Find us at DTW's McNamara Terminal.](#)

[Change Your Own Reservations Online, Sometimes.](#)

[Buy an Affordable Travel Insurance Policy.](#)

[Track Your Bus with Our Free Smartphone App.](#)



Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Please use the review sites below to let others know about your Michigan Flyer-AirRide experience and help them to understand how our service might improve their travels.



Happy Springtime—Just Around the Corner!

The days are getting longer and the nights are getting shorter. In every state except Arizona and Hawaii (which opted out of the time change), Daylight Savings Time (DST) will start on March 8 this year. That's only about three weeks from today, when clocks "spring forward" and we lose an hour, so there's more daylight to enjoy in the evening, though less in the morning.

Just 11 days after DST begins, spring officially arrives on March 19—the "vernal equinox"—when the Sun is directly above the Earth's equator, and day and night are both 12 hours long. All of us at Michigan Flyer-AirRide wish you the very best of this season of rebirth, rejuvenation, and renewal, as the weather warms and flowers bloom.

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, [click here](#) to view schedules on



Michigan Flyer
333 Albert Street - Suite 214 | East Lansing, MI 48823
www.michiganflyer.com



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