



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



e-news

MAY 2022



Our New Early Morning Roundtrip Began Today!

As quickly as we can recruit new drivers, we're expanding our schedule due to popular demand. Starting today, the Eastbound run #8002 departs from East Lansing at 3:30 a.m., then arrives in Brighton at 4:15 a.m., Ann Arbor at 4:45 a.m., and Detroit Metro Airport's McNamara and Evans Terminals at 5:20 a.m. and 5:30 a.m., respectively.

The Westbound return run #8003 leaves DTW's Evans Terminal at 7:15 a.m., McNamara at 7:30 a.m., Ann Arbor at 8:05 a.m., Brighton at 8:40 a.m., and arrives in East Lansing at 9:30 a.m.

This should be welcome news for travelers to and from mid-Michigan who prefer early flights into or out of

DTW, as well as for passengers who commute between Michigan State University in East Lansing and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

It's also a sign that life is gradually returning to normal after COVID-19 brought our operation to a halt for a year between March 2020 and April 2021. Before the pandemic, we had 14 daily roundtrips. We're now back up to nine.

You can find our [current schedule online here](#) or, if you prefer, [download a PDF of the schedule](#) to save on your computer or smartphone.



Ody's grandparents, Sara and Moshe Norkin, holding their son Aaron (Ody's father).

On a Mission to Help the People of Ukraine

Like so many of us, Oded "Ody" Norkin was stunned by the Russian invasion of Ukraine last February 24. And while the world watched it all unfold, he kept wondering what he could do to help.

As vice president of Michigan Flyer who also owns and operates the Skybird Okemos Travel agency, Ody was confident in his ability to get folks from point A to point B. He'd been making travel arrangements for close to 40 years. "As I watched the news I was thinking, I know

how to get people out—particularly the elderly who might have more difficulty. I could rent a van and help evacuees."

Although he's well-traveled, Ody had never before set foot in Romania or Ukraine, but he had ancestral ties to the latter country. His paternal grandparents, Sara and Moshe Norkin, were gunned down in the Odessa (Ukraine) Massacre of 1941 during World War II.

Ody was born in Israel and served in the Israeli Army, where he met his future wife, Rachel. They married in 1976. She's not only his partner in marriage, but also in business working side-by-side at both Skybird Okemos Travel and Michigan Flyer.

"The more news I watched, the closer the Russians advanced on Odessa—a major metropolitan area that I've heard about all my life—and the more I figured people would need help getting out. I thought, 'I can do this.' I knew I could do something to help."



Marco Katz escorting an ambulance aboard a ferry on the Danube River. Katz helped Ody deliver the ambulance to the people of Odessa, Ukraine.

First Trip in March 2022

He first contacted Rabbi Hendel Weingarten, with the Chabad House of Greater Lansing. "He put me in touch with Rabbi Avraham Wolff in Odessa, who told me about the great need for ambulances to transport the elderly and infirm. Existing ambulances had been commissioned for use by the Ukrainian military," he says.

In mid-March, Ody left with cash withdrawn from his own bank account, and headed to Bucharest, Romania, to buy an ambulance. Once he arrived and met with Rabbi Naftali Deutsch, his circle of connections expanded to include Marco Katz, head of the Romanian Zionist Association, who helped search for an ambulance they could buy.

While Ody was waiting for news of an available ambulance, he got involved with other humanitarian



groups, including one he traveled with to the city of Chernivtsi in Ukraine to deliver much-needed generators, camping equipment, and other items. With another group, he helped transport refugees to Bucharest. And with a third group, he joined in an activity that felt familiar to him—helping out at an airport to get Ukrainian refugees onto flights to Israel.

When his new friend Marco located a Mercedes ambulance through local emergency physician Radu Berca, Ody and he were faced with a potential bureaucratic nightmare: obtaining a license and title

which, in Romania, could take weeks. Ody turned to Lansing attorney David Mittleman, who contacted U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, of Michigan's 8th Congressional District, who reached out to the Romanian ambassador in the U.S. Together, they managed to get the paperwork done in just a few days.

"Those who know me know that I'm not easily deterred," says Ody. "When someone says 'No,' I often ask, 'Why not?'"

Once the ambulance was secured, they transformed it into a trauma-level vehicle, filling it with all the required equipment, including monitors and defibrillators, before embarking on a long journey to Odessa that involved passing through 21 roadblocks.

While Ody intended to fund the ambulance on his own, another group was actively working behind the scenes to raise money. Rabbi Weingarten had contacted Amy Shapiro, executive director of the Greater Lansing Jewish Federation, and told her about Ody's mission. The GLJF set up [this website link](#) where anyone could donate to the cause, which helps people of all faiths.



At an airport, helping Ukrainian refugees board flights to Israel.

Once Was Not Enough

Ody made a second trip to Romania in April to secure an ambulance for the city of Dnipro in eastern Ukraine. He again met up with Marco, and things went more smoothly this time around, though there were still some hiccups along the way.

"We bought the ambulance from a dealer," says Ody. "In the U.S., you hand the title over when you sell a car. In Romania, it's more involved. They check the title as if you were selling a house, making sure there are no liens against the vehicle, no unpaid parking tickets, and the like."

Ody and his fellow humanitarians again sought out government officials to help cut through red tape quickly. And once again, they fitted the new ambulance with all the equipment needed to make it a trauma-level vehicle.

Ody's connections in Romania grew to also include Father Marius Drago, of the Greek Orthodox Church, and Aharon Cohen, an executive with the Ukraine



Handing off the second ambulance to driver Alexander, who took it the rest of the way to Dnipro.

Disaster Relief organization. They accompanied him and Marco on the second trip into Ukraine.

"It was a real group effort. Acquiring both these ambulances and outfitting them was much more challenging than I'd thought it would be," says Ody.

Besides being profoundly grateful to the amazing people he met and worked with on these journeys, and doing what he could to make a difference, Ody found himself in awe of the resiliency of the Ukrainian people. "Seeing all these women facing up to agonizing decisions about leaving their husbands behind in order to flee the country with their children was really something."

He was also surprised that, when Ukraine required men from ages 18 to 60 stay and fight, "There was no opposition or criticism. That's incredible."

Ody says he's been incredibly moved by all the folks from here and abroad who've donated to the Greater Lansing Jewish Federation to help pay for the critically needed ambulances.

"These are not Jewish ambulances," he notes. "They were donated to help those of any faith or no faith at all. They are there to help our fellow human beings."

For a more in-depth account of Ody's first journey, check out writer [Ken Glickman's excellent article in the Lansing State Journal](#).

For a firsthand look at the second trip, [check out this fine video](#) posted by Marco Katz on Facebook.



Travel Alerts

How Soon Should You Get to the Airport Before a Flight?

If you think arriving at the airport an hour before your flight is early enough, then you've got another think coming. Partly due to an expected crush of passengers this summer, travel experts now advise arriving two hours early, and sometimes three. Detroit Metro Airport puts it this way: "All check-in counters stop admitting new passengers once an aircraft is close to boarding. It's recommended that passengers arrive 2 hours before a domestic flight and 3 hours before an

international flight."

Adds Delta Airlines: "When you're traveling outside of the United States, we make the suggestion to arrive at least 3 hours prior to your departure. You must be checked in at least 1 hour before your scheduled departure. Additionally, we recommend being at the gate and ready to board 45 minutes before your scheduled departure time." The Transportation Security Administration agrees.

Face Masks Now Optional for Domestic Flights

On April 18, a U.S. District Judge struck down the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's travel mask mandate, which was going to expire May 3 anyway. Thereafter, the Transportation Security Administration lifted the requirement that travelers must wear face masks on public transportation and in transportation hubs. Major airlines then quickly made face masks optional for customers, employees, and crew members on all domestic and most international flights. But it can be a different story for some foreign destinations, where different laws and regulations may apply. So, your best bet is to at least bring a mask with you for international travel.

Update on Getting a Shelter for Our Brighton Passengers

A covered bus stop shelter for our passengers at the Meijer parking lot should become a reality before long, according to the Livingston County Transportation Coalition. Minutes of the LCTC's April 26 meeting note that an agreement has been signed and delivered for a solar-powered shelter on site that will include a TV monitor listing Michigan Flyer's daily departure times. The LCTC was established in 2005 to recognize gaps in public transportation and pull together providers to identify strategies to eliminate these gaps.



"Get Ready," and "Papa Was a Rolling Stone."

Catch it June 7-12 (times vary) at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing. [Tickets \\$35-\\$95.](#)



<http://www.lansing.org/events>.

Ann Arbor

[Taste of Ann Arbor](#)

More than two dozen restaurants—set up on Main Street downtown between William and Washington—will offer tastes of what they do best. Plus, enjoy live music by popular local artists, as well as kid-friendly activities on E. Liberty St. hosted by the Ann Arbor District Library and Grievewell Kite Festival. It happens on Sunday, June 5, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Food prices range from \$1.00 (1 ticket) to \$6.00 (6 tickets), with nothing priced over \$6.00. Ticket sales will be located on E. Liberty between Main and Fourth.

For more entertainment in and around A2, see the Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar of coming events: <https://www.visitannarbor.org/splash/events>.

Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There!

East Lansing

[Ain't Too Proud – The Life and Times of The Temptations](#)

The electrifying new smash-hit Broadway musical follows The Temptations' extraordinary journey from the streets of Detroit to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Nominated for 12 Tony® Awards, it's a thrilling story of brotherhood, family, loyalty, and betrayal during a decade of civil unrest in America. It includes the group's treasured hits, such as "My Girl," "Just My Imagination,"

[The Moth Mainstage](#)

True stories told live and without notes. Don't miss The Moth's return to Wharton Center (see above) in this co-presentation with Michigan Radio at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 14. Hugely popular each week on NPR stations across the country, The Moth is a community where entertainment and enlightenment merge. The Moth Mainstage features five tellers who develop and shape their stories with Moth directors. [Tickets \\$31-\\$61.](#)

Check out more local coming events with the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar:



Brighton

 Brighton, like other communities in 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/>.



Detroit

[Bluegrass Happening featuring Béla Fleck & My Bluegrass Heart, Sam Bush & The Jerry Douglas Band](#)

To hear some of the nation's very best bluegrass performed live on stage, don't miss this opportunity at the Detroit Opera House at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 23. Banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck has earned 15 Grammys in genres including Country, Pop, Jazz, Instrumental, Classical and World Music. But his roots are in bluegrass, and he returns to Detroit with My Bluegrass Heart, his first tour in 24 years. His band will spotlight a gamut of the best of bluegrass players, all sporting a myriad of Grammy Awards and IBMA awards: fiddler Michael Cleveland, mandolinist Sierra Hull, multi-instrumentalist Justin Moses, bassist/multi-instrumentalist Mark Schatz, and Bryan Sutton on guitar.

Sam Bush worked five years with Emmylou Harris' Nash Ramblers, and did a stint with Lyle Lovett. He's also won three-straight IBMA Mandolin Player of the Year awards. Dobro master Jerry Douglas, a 14-time Grammy winner, is to the resonator guitar what Jimi Hendrix was to the electric guitar, elevating, transforming, and reinventing the instrument. [Tickets \\$49-\\$89.50](#).

PLEASE NOTE: The D2A2 Express Bus from Ann Arbor's Blake Transit Center (BTC) to Detroit's Grand Circus Park can get Ann Arbor-area residents to and from the event listed above. It's within easy walking distance of D2A2's stop in Detroit. When the [D2A2 schedule](#) coincides with [Michigan Flyer's schedule](#) at the BTC, it's also possible for East Lansing and Brighton residents to travel by motorcoach for some of these performances, too.

To learn what's happening in Detroit, check out the Detroit Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar of coming events: <https://visitdetroit.com/events/>.

Stress-Reducing Travel Tips

[Change Your Reservations in Two Quick Steps](#)

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

[Invest in Travel Insurance for Peace of Mind](#)

[Download Our Free App to Track Your Bus in Real Time](#)



Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Please take a moment to visit one of the websites below to let others know about your Michigan Flyer-AirRide experience and help them to understand how our service might improve their travels.



Want More Daily Roundtrips? Help Us Find More Drivers

Michigan Flyer-AirRide now offers nine daily roundtrips between East Lansing, Brighton, Ann Arbor, and Detroit Metro Airport. Many of you have asked for more, and we're ready to deliver—as soon as we can hire and train enough drivers.

Would someone you know be interested in a rewarding professional driving career—one where travel and adventure come standard? If so, please let them know that Indian Trails (which staffs Michigan Flyer with

professional drivers) pays a starting hourly rate of \$20.40, plus a \$3,000 sign-on bonus.

Importantly, no previous commercial driving experience is necessary. All new drivers gain knowledge and expertise (plus help in obtaining a Commercial Driver's License) through our free in-house training program, which has served as a model for driver training nationwide. In fact, they earn \$18 an hour while they learn from veteran drivers, and then take the wheel of a motorcoach confident in their skills and supported on the road by our 24/7 Dispatch Center.

“Driving a motorcoach is similar to piloting a plane. You're in charge and responsible for your passengers. The people you transport, and the sights you see along the way, are the best part.”

—Tom Kirkconnell, veteran Indian Trails driver.

Indian Trails is a 112-year-old, family-owned company with a culture of safety and an employee-friendly atmosphere. We truly appreciate our hard-working staff members, and live by old-fashioned values like fairness, honesty, teamwork, and service excellence.

"I can call and talk to the president of the company to express an idea or just talk about something."
–Luis Garcia, veteran Indian Trails driver.

Our drivers pilot Michigan's newest and largest fleet of deluxe motorcoaches. Their job is to ensure that passengers experience top-notch customer service while getting to their destinations safely and on time. In return for this most important work, Indian Trails also provides such benefits as:

- ✍ Two weeks of paid time off in the first year
- ✍ Medical, dental, vision and life insurance
- ✍ 401(k) retirement program with employer match
- ✍ Annual safety bonus, employee recognition banquet & company picnic

We currently have openings based at all three of our operations centers—Owosso, Romulus, and Kalamazoo. As a Certified Veteran-Friendly Employer, we also welcome all veterans. Please visit our website to find out more or to apply: <https://www.indiantrails.com/careers>.



Celebrating Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Dads & Summer!

✍ On May 30th—Memorial Day—We Honor Those Who Gave Their Lives in Our Armed Forces

Originally called Decoration Day in 1868, it began as a day of remembrance, when the graves of 620,000 people killed during the Civil War were decorated at Arlington National Cemetery. Both Confederate and Union soldiers are buried there. At the turn of the century it was renamed Memorial Day. In 1971, a federal law designated its observance on the last Monday in May, and extended the honor to all soldiers who died in American wars. Today, the national holiday still begins at Arlington with the laying of a wreath on

the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the decoration of each grave with an American flag.

✍ On June 19th—the third Sunday of the month—We Celebrate Both Father's Day and Juneteenth

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson approved a resolution officially making Mother's Day the second Sunday in May. Five years before that, in 1910 a woman named Sonora Smart Dodd—one of six children raised by a widower—staged a successful campaign to establish a Father's Day in Washington state. However, it was not until 1972 that Richard Nixon signed a proclamation making Father's Day a national holiday.

Juneteenth, our newest national holiday, was signed into law last year by President Joe Biden. It establishes June 19th as a federal holiday celebrating the end of slavery in America in 1865. While President Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation on Sept. 22, 1862, it was not until June 19, 1865, that General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, with his troops and freed the last of the slaves. The formal end of slavery was marked by ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution on Dec. 6, 1865.

 On June 21st—a Tuesday—Summer 2022 Begins in the Northern Hemisphere.

Astronomically speaking, this is when the summer solstice will occur, giving the northern half of the Earth the longest day (and shortest night) of the year. In the Southern Hemisphere, it's the opposite: the June solstice marks the astronomical start of winter, when the Sun is at its lowest point in the sky.

Why Drive?

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



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