



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



e-news

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Graham Diedrich

Revealing “Love Connections” Contest Winner #3

Our 2023 essay contest—“Love Connections”—asked contestants to tell us how Michigan Flyer connected them with a special person, place, or adventure dear to their hearts. It features a \$500 gift card Top Prize, and five \$100 gift card runner-up prizes. Based on which essays best fit the contest theme, Michigan Flyer staff and creative consultants select the winners from among the many fine entries we receive. (Please note that each winner is notified in the month their entry is to be published.)

We revealed our first winner in the [July E-News](#) and the second in the [August E-News](#). Now, we're pleased to announce that winner #3 is ... **Graham Diedrich** of

East Lansing.

A graduate student in environmental and climate studies at Michigan State University, Graham recalls doing something a bit unusual last year: On a trip aboard Michigan Flyer, he struck up a conversation with a fellow passenger after noticing a book she was reading. “It was so great to chat and connect with someone who shares the same interest as me. It showed me what you can learn from others when you’re open to the experience.”

Graham grew up in Haslett, Mich., and serves on his local township's environmental commission. He started taking Michigan Flyer regularly between East Lansing and Ann Arbor last January when he began a fellowship at the University of Michigan's Graham Sustainability Institute. "It was five days a week, from early morning to 5 p.m. I couldn't have done it without the Flyer."

He loves the comfort and convenience of the Flyer, and the fact that motorcoaches like ours reduce air-polluting emissions to near zero. "Traveling this way is an environmental benefit, so the Flyer is just the complete package."

Graham saw our call for contest entries as a welcome change from the academic papers and lectures he typically creates. "I enjoy writing, and even work as a tutor at MSU's Writing Center, so this seemed like a change that would be fun."

Like many contest winners, he was surprised when we notified him that he was a winner and would receive a \$100 gift card. "It felt wonderful to win for a piece of personal writing," he says. Graham plans to hold onto the gift card until the holidays, then buy a gift or two for others. Here's his story:

A Fortuitous Connection

By Graham Diedrich

"The Michigan Flyer is an important part of my life. Since the beginning of this year, I have been taking the East Lansing to Ann Arbor route to attend my fellowship at the University of Michigan. It has become a part of my daily routine and an important aspect of my academic career. Traveling back and forth along I-96, the Michigan Flyer has given me the time, space, and comfort necessary to prepare for lectures, write articles, and catch up on readings. But most importantly, the Flyer has given me the opportunity to meet new people and make connections. I recall a cold February morning where I struck up a conversation with a fellow passenger. I noticed her reading *Silent Spring*, one of my favorite books on environmental sustainability. We got to talking, and it turned out that she was a distinguished professor at the University of Michigan. We had a lot in common in terms of our research interests and life experiences. Along the rest of our journey, we talked about our shared passion for the environment and the work that we were doing in our respective fields. As the conversation progressed, we found ourselves exchanging ideas and insights that we had not previously considered. By the time we reached Ann Arbor, we had exchanged contact information and made plans to continue our conversation. Over the next few weeks, we met up regularly. It wasn't long before our conversations led to a research collaboration, and we began working on a project exploring climate justice in Michigan. I cannot thank the Flyer and its staff enough for being there to provide me with an outlet for my career pursuits. I look forward to continuing to ride Michigan Flyer and seeing where it takes me next."



And Here are Five More Winners!

Back in our [June E-News](#), we offered readers who've used Hytch a chance to win one of five \$100 Amazon gift cards. All they had to do in order to enter a random drawing was to complete a 5-minute online survey about their experience with Hytch, our new rideshare service. Now we're very pleased to announce the winners: **Becky Rodda** of East Lansing; **Mary Janevic** of Ann Arbor; **Anthony Patino** of Lansing; **Brenda Hofmann** of Ocala, Fla.; and **Tatiana Iretskaya** of East Lansing. Congratulations to all of you!

For anyone unfamiliar with Hytch (pronounced "hitch"), it's a door-to-door service that uses branded minivans to connect Michigan Flyer passengers with their bus at the East Lansing Marriott, either from or to the door of their home, workplace, or another location in the Hytch service area. This includes every address in roughly a four-mile radius from the Marriott, including downtown Lansing, the Michigan State University campus, parts of Meridian Township and more. Hytch rides are \$10 per person, one way, and available to Michigan Flyer passengers when they book their bus trips online.

Each Hytch minivan is a new-model, five-passenger vehicle (one is wheelchair accessible) with an experienced driver. Rides are available Sunday through Friday from 3 a.m. to 11 p.m., but not on Saturday. [Find complete details about Hytch at this link.](#)



Travel Alerts

Ann Arbor's Blake Transit Center Bypassed on U-M Football Saturdays

If you are planning a Saturday trip with Michigan Flyer-AirRide between Ann Arbor and East Lansing or Detroit Metro Airport this fall, please know that on U-M home football game Saturdays some of our runs will bypass the BTC on the way to and from the airport. This will affect some of our runs before, during, and after these upcoming games:

Sept. 23, Rutgers, Noon

Oct. 14, Indiana TBD

Nov. 4, Purdue TBD

Nov. 25, Ohio State, Noon

Please note that some Michigan Flyer-AirRide runs will continue to stop at the BTC on these days. It's easy to find out which ones: Just check the "Book a Trip" feature on our website.

Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There!



East Lansing

[To Kill a Mockingbird](#)

Emmy Award®-winning actor Richard Thomas stars as attorney Atticus Finch in this stage adaptation of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning masterwork by Academy Award® winner Aaron Sorkin. The New York Times called it "the most successful American play in Broadway history." Rolling Stone gives it 5 stars and says it's "an emotionally shattering landmark production of an American classic." Catch one of eight performances between Tuesday, Oct. 3, and Sunday, Oct. 8, at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Ln., Michigan State University, East Lansing.

It's for ages 12 and over. [Tickets \\$45-\\$135 plus fee.](#)



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



Ann Arbor

[The Magic of Motown](#)

This tribute to “Hitsville USA” features pitch-perfect harmonies, dynamic choreography, and costuming that perfectly capture the sights and sounds of Motown. Enjoy a cast of 15 power-house vocalists backed by a six-piece band performing hit after hit by The Temptations, The Jackson Five, Diana Ross & The Supremes, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, and Smokey Robinson—“Ain’t No Mountain High Enough,” “My Girl,” “Heatwave,” “Midnight Train to Georgia,” “Respect,” and more. It’s at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 22, at the Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. [Tickets \\$35-\\$74, plus fee.](#)

[NOTE: At 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 30, [The Magic of Motown](#) is also coming to the Wharton Center for Performing Arts on the MSU campus in East Lansing. [Tickets \\$43.50-\\$83.50 plus fees.](#)]



[Superstar Soprano Renée Fleming presents the Voice of Nature](#)

This special multi-media performance spans the classical, romantic, and contemporary eras with beloved songs and new commissions exploring nature as both inspiration and victim of humanity. Includes original video by the National Geographic Society. Fleming’s stunning voice will be accompanied by Inon Barnatan on piano.

One of the most highly acclaimed singers of our time, Renée Fleming is a National Medal of Arts recipient who has sung for momentous occasions ranging from the memorial service at Ground Zero after 9/11, the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony, the soundtrack for The Lord of the Rings, and the Super Bowl, where she was the first classical artist ever to sing the National Anthem. Catch her performance at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 28, at Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. [Tickets \\$20-\\$133, including fees.](#)

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



Brighton

[Rod Stewart Tribute Show](#)

Hailing from Hamtramck, Mich., [Danny D \(Dzialo\)](#) literally grew up in the center of Detroit Rock City. Playing music since age seven, Danny has matured with the inspiration of his rock-n-roll roots. He and his band, The Vagabonds, have opened for big-name artists such as Mitch Ryder, David Lee Roth, Bad Company, The Tubes, Air Supply, and The Romantics. His Tribute to Rod Stewart (whom he looks and sounds like) has gotten rave reviews from all across the metro area, and at the Michigan State Fair. In fact, Rod Stewart himself once brought Danny D up on stage at DTE Music Energy Theater to sing Do You Think I'm

Sexy? in duet. Catch him at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 30, at the Brighton Center for the Performing Arts, 7878 Brighton Rd., Brighton. Tickets [\\$19-\\$32, plus \\$2 fee](#).

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

[Peter Gabriel: i/o The Tour](#)

English singer, songwriter, record producer, and activist Peter Gabriel started his solo work in 1975 after leaving the progressive rock group Genesis. He's released 11 solo albums and written soundtracks for three films. Among his many honors are three Brit Awards, six Grammy Awards, and 13 MTV Video Music Awards. Lately, besides writing and recording, he and his band have been conducting an extensive tour of Europe and North America. As part of this run—called “i/o - The

Tour”—they will perform at Little Caesars Arena, 2645 Woodward Ave, Detroit, on Friday, Sept. 29, at 8 p.m. The [setlist](#) includes new material from Gabriel's forthcoming album i/o, as well as such hits as “Sledgehammer,” “Don't Give Up,” “Red Rain,” “Big Time,” and “In Your Eyes.” [Tickets \\$48-\\$275+](#).



[Eagles: The Long Goodbye with Special Guest Steely Dan](#)

After more than 50 years of consistently selling out arenas worldwide, the Eagles announced that “The Long Goodbye” will be their final tour. They'll visit Little Caesars Arena on Friday, Oct. 13, at 7:30 p.m. The Eagles' fellow Rock & Roll Hall of Famers, Steely Dan, will join them in this historic show.

The Eagles—Don Henley, Joe Walsh, Timothy B. Schmit, Vince Gill and Deacon Frey—will perform [many of the hits](#) from their amazing five-decade tour de force,

such as “Take It Easy,” “One of These Nights,” “Take It to the Limit,” “Best of My Love,” “Witchy Woman,” “Life in the Fast Lane,” and many more. [Tickets \\$274-\\$499+](#).

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 riders to and from these events. Little Caesar’s Arena is about a half-mile walk from D2A2’s stop at 1508 Park Ave., Detroit.

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



Airfare Bargains

Frontier Airlines to Begin Winter Flights to Warm Places

Budget carrier Frontier has announced expanded daily service from DTW to Cancun International Airport (CUN) beginning November 16, as well as three-days-a-week service to Fort Myers’ Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW). Using [Skyscanner.com](#), we checked prices for a sample trip departing Detroit on Sunday, Nov. 26, and returning from Cancun on Dec. 10. The difference in roundtrip airfares was

considerable for nonstop flights in both directions: \$315 for Frontier, \$517 for Delta.

The price differences were a bit less pronounced when we used the same dates to check roundtrip flights between DTW and Ft. Myers: \$161 for Frontier, \$189 for Spirit, and \$298 for Delta.

Since airlines set their own rules for luggage, seat selection, flight changes, etc., you may want to check out The Points Guy’s article on “[Everything You Should Know Before Flying Frontier Airlines](#).”

Tips for Finding Cheap Flights from Detroit

Courtesy of [Kayak.com](#), here are a few ways to snag lower airfares when flying from DTW:

- ✈ Buy your tickets at least three weeks in advance of your trip in order to get below-average fares.
- ✈ Avoid the June and July “high season” and—if you truly want to travel from Detroit during the cheapest month—choose January.
- ✈ Also, note that morning flights are generally about 30 percent less costly than evening flights.

Please, Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Kindly take a moment to help others understand how our service might improve their travels. Simply visit one of the websites below to write a brief review about your experience with Michigan Flyer. Thank you!





Schultz



Assid



Pricopio



Sturtz



Patton

Why Our Drivers Like Their Jobs

Indian Trails drivers like many aspects of their jobs besides a good hourly pay rate, great benefits, and free training leading to a Commercial Driver's License. While most appreciate working for a 113-year-old, family-run company with old-fashioned values like fairness, honesty, teamwork, and service excellence, here's what five drivers say appeals to them. ([Learn more and apply here.](#))

Lauria Schultz joined the company in 2012 and at the top of her list is interacting with the passengers who board her bus every shift. "In training, we're taught to be nice to everyone. That was easy for me. In my previous job, I was used to interacting daily with the public. I tend to talk with people like they're folks I know. And sometimes, they share a little bit about their lives." Lauria has been repeatedly honored with the Cora V. Taylor Safe Driving Award, named for the company's co-founder, and presented annually to drivers who complete a year without a preventable accident.

Mike Assid, who'd been a lab technician until he started with Indian Trails last year, was surprised by how much he liked driving a bus on the open road, and the variety of each shift. "Even though you're working for someone, you're the boss of your bus so there's a

certain freedom to that. It's really rewarding. You're meeting new people every day, so every trip is different."

Dan Pricopio remembers waking up one day—after 35 years of overseeing a newspaper subscription sales business—and thinking he'd really like to become a bus driver. So, he did his research and decided Indian Trails was the company for him. "I appreciate the variety of people who board my Michigan Flyer bus. Every day is different. I also love the route and the scenery along the way—the barns, the wildlife, the changing weather."

Mark Sturtz, who came to us in 2014 with experience as a school bus driver, still found some aspects of our driver training program challenging. However, he was heartened by how patiently the trainers worked with him. "It was at my pace so I could master it all, and the veteran drivers were so helpful with their advice." It gives him great satisfaction to provide passengers with a smooth, efficient, and customer-friendly trip to their destination.

Crystal Patton, who joined us in 2021, recalls being enticed by the salary and benefits package we offered to new drivers. "I only wish I'd done it 10 years sooner," she said. Much to her surprise, she also found that she loves the job—which has taken her on new adventures, enabled her to interact with new people, and learn interesting things she might otherwise never have known. An added bonus was gaining more confidence in herself and praise from her dad. "He's so very proud of me and thinks what I'm doing is so neat."



Happy Columbus Day & Indigenous Peoples Day!

Columbus Day—Oct. 9

The second Monday of October (Oct. 9 this year) marks Columbus Day in the United States. It honors the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, who launched the ships Niña, Pinta, and Santa Maria from the coast of Spain in 1492, intending to sail to China, India and the Spice Islands of Asia. Instead, after 10 weeks, he landed in the Bahamas on Oct. 12, 1492, becoming the first European to arrive in what is now the U.S. In 1934, Congress declared Columbus Day a

federal holiday. It has also become a celebration of heritage for Italian-Americans.

Indigenous People's Day—Oct. 9

Tribal nations occupied the territory now known as the mainland United States for centuries before the first European explorers and settlers arrived. In fact, these Native Americans had populated the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Gulf of Mexico to northern Canada. After 1968—when Gov. Ronald Reagan signed a California resolution calling for an “American Indian Day” to honor and celebrate their traditions, cultures, and contributions—several states followed suit, albeit with varying dates. In 2021, President Joe Biden signed proclamations declaring that both [Columbus Day](#) and [Indigenous People's Day](#) be celebrated on the second Monday in October.

Why Drive?

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



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www.michiganflyer.com



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