

It's Fair'ly Important News from the Fair Office



January 16, 2015

Office (Mailing) Location: 219 N. State St. ♦ Alma, MI 48801

989.875.5292 ♦ www.gcffy.org ♦ info@gcffy.org

Fair location: 701 S. Lincoln Ave., Alma, MI 48801

GCCFFY has Moved!!!

Gratiot County Fair for Youth, who's office has been located with MSU Extension since its inception in 1950, has moved along with MSU Extension. MSU Extension and GCCFFY now have the following mailing address and are now located at:

219 N. State St.
Alma, MI 48801



This is the same building that houses the Alma Secretary of State office which is physically about one mile north of the fairgrounds. All of phone lines will remain the same. Stop by and say "hi" if you are in the area. GCCFFY is proud to be affiliated with our MSU Extension Partners who help the fair in numerous ways and thanks Gratiot County for their continued support.

Fair Presents its Fair Exhibitor Schedule

There are only a few minor changes to the GCCFFY show schedule this coming year when compared to last summer. On the schedule are times and location of each event which should help families plan for a successful 2015 fair. The dates and times are tentative at this time however. A few events have not yet been contracted and there is a possibility of slight changes so please plan accordingly. [Click here for your copy of the exhibitor schedule.](#)

Camping Update



GCCFFY has not yet mailed letters to families who camped with us last year. These letters have been delayed because the fair wanted to wait until the changes in the Armory could be seen and the board could visualize how their project will impact camping at the fairgrounds. Furthermore the board wanted to make a few decisions on camping. GCCFFY is committed to replacing campsites and is planning to install new campsites near the campsites

the fair installed in 2011 however due to MDEQ regulations GCCFFY must remain at 150 campsites unless we add additional shower stalls which is not planned for 2015.

For families who camped at last year's fair, renewal letters will be mailed in the next couple of weeks with 2015 camping registration forms and additional information. The camping rate will be \$125 for fair. The letters will not guarantee the exact spot campers had last year but will guarantee a spot provided the MDEQ approves our plan for replacing the displaced campsites. If you are interested in moving to a different spot, please let the fair know by listing that on the cover of the camping agreement. This year because of the displaced campsites already occurring because of the Armory renovations, moving sites will be much more

difficult.

Camping at GCFFY is first offered to campers who camped at the fair in past years. Campers will be offered the rate of \$125 who have a fair exhibitor staying with them or have either a fair board/staff member or a superintendent who is over a species that is housed on the fairgrounds. The rate for everyone else is \$250. To fill campsites that are vacant after letters are sent, GCFFY will contact individuals on our fair's Master Camping Waiting List. Individuals will be called from the top of the waiting list and given a short time to accept a campsite.

For individuals who would like to be added to the fair's campsite waiting list, contact Brian Gardner at bgardner@gcffy.org or 989.875.5292 and give me your name, address, email and best phone number to be reached and I will put you on our waiting list for a campsite. If you call and I do not pick up the phone, leave a message and I will confirm to the email address you provide and add you at the time the message was recorded on our voice mail. Currently there are over 40 families on that list which while not impossible, it is likely camping will not be available in 2015 but once you are on the list, you will remain on the list until a campsite becomes available.

New Rides Make for a Great Midway

Maple Leaf Amusements have added five exciting new rides to their ride package last year that will excite and possibly terrify riders at Gratiot County Fair for Youth next summer. The new rides range from the fast moving Crazy Surf to the sixty foot tall and exciting Rampage. "Last fall when GCFFY met with Maple Leaf Amusements, their owners, John & Erin Fitzgerald talked about how they wanted to add height to their midway", states Brian Gardner, GCFFY's Fair Coordinator. "That is exactly what they did as three of the new rides will make those with a fear of heights nervous but will excite the thrill seekers among us."



Along with the visually stunning Rampage, is the Rock-O-Plane which goes around like a Ferris Wheel but allows the riders to spin their seats. The other ride to bring height to the midway is the Star Trooper. A more family oriented ride to round out the mix is the Raiders which has a course with hanging bridges, a rope ladder and slides. "Maple Leaf is planning to provide us more rides than in the past," states Gardner. "They have a great vision on how to make our midway fun and special."



These exciting rides will be paired with the industry leading Nagel food wagons will continue to make GCFFY an outstanding place for a fun family outing. Maple Leaf Amusements will be set up at our midway on Monday, July 29 and the rides will run through Saturday, August. Features this year will include pre-purchased wrist bands at \$8 per day and an opportunity to win a car (used) for anyone who purchases a daily wrist band.

Fairgrounds Usage

On the south side of Alma sits a beautiful facility which might be the perfect location to host your next event. GCFFY's fairgrounds is the perfect location for a company retreat or picnic, a peaceful meeting, a family reunion or of course an animal event. GCFFY has covered picnic areas, an all-weather, technology equipped, conference room, large barns and arenas. Our online calendar has all of our events listed at www.gcffy.org found by clicking on Upcoming Events tab. If you would like to see how GCFFY could serve your needs, contact Brian Gardner at the fair office at 989.875.5292 or bgardner@gcffy.org.

Any 4-H club or FFA chapter who is looking for a meeting location or a place to hold your next club event is encouraged to consider the fairgrounds. The cost for 4-H and FFA groups is often waived depending on the scope of the event and the amount of work it will take fair staff to clean-up after the event.

Your Help is Needed to Build a Great Fair



Thanks to the 83 donors to date, Gratiot County Fair for Youth is well on its way to meeting its goal of having all 446 trophies and awards it offers sponsored. Currently the fair is about two-thirds of the way to its goal. Reaching our goal of 100% trophy sponsorship not only provides well deserved recognition for our exhibitors but it helps the fair complete the funding equation necessary to run a successful fair program, maintain and improve our facilities and provide an educational and memorable fair experience for our exhibitors and our community.

You can help. You can support the fair through a gift to our annual fundraising campaign. A class level donation starts at \$50 and donors will be recognized with their name on a trophy and will receive a complimentary weekly parking pass. [Pledge forms and additional opportunities are outlined here.](#)

Support Your Fair at the Annual Fair Dinner Dance



Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 14 for the fair's annual Dinner Dance. This great time to reconnect with friends from around the county will be held again at the Elks Lodge in Alma. More details will be coming your way very soon. We hope to see you there.

GCCFY Memorial Scholarship



In just its third year the Gratiot County Community Foundation's GCCFY Memorial Scholarship has grown from one \$500 scholarship to two \$550 scholarships which will be offered to a deserving GCCFY Exhibitor. The scholarship is open for a graduating high school senior or an exhibitor finishing their first year of college, university or trade school and has the following criteria:
Scholarship Criteria

- Must be a graduating high school senior accepted at a college, university or trade school OR a student currently in his or her first year at a college, university or trade school;
- Must be a current Gratiot County Fair for Youth exhibitor who has participated for a minimum of five years with a preference to exhibitors who participate in multiple areas;

- Display a commitment to community service;
- Demonstrate leadership skills;
- Must not be a previous recipient of this scholarship;
- Must submit an essay outlining the skills learned as a fair exhibitor and how those skills will serve you throughout your lifetime. Be certain to address the aforementioned criteria. Essays must be no longer than one typewritten page in an easy to read font. Also include at least one personal letter of reference.

Scholarship applications are due in March for this and several other community based scholarships to the Gratiot County Community Foundation. Every applicant to any GCCF Scholarship must have registered for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1. More details are available at <http://www.gratiotfoundation.org/1/280/scholarships.asp>.

GCCFFY Market Beef Project



The registration deadline to sell market beef projects at GCCFFY is 4:00 p.m., Monday, February 2. To sell market beef as well as market feeder beef, goats, sheep or swine at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth Livestock Sale the animals must be properly registered with GCCFFY which includes turning in the registration form in on-time along with pictures of each animal registered showing the animal's ear tag (which can be read) and already applied in the project animal's ear. Official GCCFFY tags cost \$1 each and are available at the fair office within the MSU Extension Suite which is now located at 219 N. State St. in Alma (the building that houses the Secretary of State). Market beef project animals must weigh at least 950 pounds when they

weigh-in on Sunday, July 26, 2015 and exhibitors are encouraged to make their project selections accordingly. This year there are no market beef rule changes from those in the 2014 fair book. Registration forms are online at http://gccffy.org/parts/Registration%20Forms/2015_beef_prereg.pdf. Contact Brian Gardner at the Fair Office at 989-875-5292 or bgardner@gccffy.org with any questions.

GCCFFY Registration Dates and Information

In order to show at GCCFFY each exhibitor must be registered. Most all of the fair events will be signed up for on our fair's Fair Entry Form (which is due on June 25) however there are a few but very important registration deadlines.

- To show a **market beef steer, market feeder beef steer, market goat, market lamb** the exhibitor must also complete a Market Registration Form **along** with their fair entry form. These market registration forms will require the exhibitor to have their animals tagged and provide on their registration form a picture of the animal showing the tag (without being held) in its ear. All market animals must get their tags from the fair office within the MSU Extension Office (now located in Alma). Tags for beef, feeders, goats and lambs cost \$1 each and the swine tags (**NEW:** GCCFFY will ONLY require the MDARD tag in 2015 and not a GCCFFY tag) will be at no cost. The two registration forms required by each exhibitor to exhibit one of these market animals are due at GCCFFY's office within MSU Extension Office at:



Species	Market Animal Due Date	Fair Entry Form Due Date
MARKET BEEF	4:00 p.m., Monday, February 2	4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25
MARKET FEEDER BEEF	4:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 15	4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25
		4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25

MARKET GOATS	4:00 p.m., Friday, May 15	4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25
MARKET SHEEP	4:00 p.m., Friday, May 15	4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25
MARKET SWINE (PIG)	4:00 p.m., Friday, May 15	4:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25

- To show a **horse or pony**, the exhibitor must complete a horse registration form by Friday, May 1 and turn it into the fair office within MSU Extension's office (now located in Alma) by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1.

If you miss your registration deadline, you may still turn in your forms however there will be registration fees. For the market animals each exhibitor will be charged a \$10 per business day fee (where business day is referred to as a day Gratiot County government offices are open) up to one month past the registration deadline (after which registrations will be closed). Late Fair Entry Forms will cost a flat \$25 to enter.

Market Goat Age Change

At last week's GCFFY Board of Directors meeting the Board changed how it will determine the age of a market goat at the fair. Previously the board required market goats to be born after January 1 of the current year. This rule was difficult to enforce and would require goat breeders to aim for early January kids which in harsh winters which is very difficult on the babies during harsh winters. To overcome the board adopted a rule requiring all market goats showing at GCFFY to still have their milk (baby) teeth at the fair's check-in. This will allow exhibitors to purchase animals which could have been born prior to January 1 as long as they have their milk teeth at the fair. For more information or questions, contact Brian Gardner at GCFFY at 989-875-5292 or bgardner@gcffy.org.



GCFFY Plans Golf Outing



While you have your calendars out, mark the date for the 2015 GCFFY Golf Outing. The event will be Thursday, June 18 at the Fields Golf Course in Ithaca. This is always a great outing and odds are you will be able to have a lot of fun, enjoy some golf and help out Gratiot County Fair for Youth. We hope to see you there.

Fair Seeks Swine & Sheep Superintendents

The Gratiot County Fair for Youth is seeking a qualified person to serve as our fair's volunteer swine superintendent and another to serve as their volunteer sheep superintendent. Candidates should be organized, have basic knowledge of how a fair livestock show runs, and most importantly interact well with our youth exhibitors, volunteers and parents. As a large animal superintendent the selected person will:

- Serve on the fair's Large Livestock Committee as a voting member (a committee which usually meets twice per year)
- Review registration forms
- Work with the fair office to get ready for fair
- Set up and assign pens
- Check-in and weigh-in swine projects
- Introduce themselves with swine exhibitors
- Set up the market show and showmanship show
- Help the fair office prepare the sale bill
- Get the exhibitors ready for the sale
- Prepare swine exhibits for the showmanship sweepstakes
- Arrange for transportation of swine after the sale
- Work with exhibitors and volunteers to clean-up barn after the fair

Applications are available on the fair's website (www.gcffy.org) and are due by Monday, January 19. Contact the fair office with any questions at bgardner@gcffy.org or (989) 875-5292.

GCCFY Sets Fair Dates

Along with signing a three-year carnival contract, GCCFY also confirmed our fair dates for the 2015 – 2017 years. This will help exhibitors and families plan their summer schedules. The dates will be:

- July 25 – August 1, 2015
- July 30 – August 6, 2016
- July 29 – August 5, 2017

We now know what will be the BEST week of the year!!!



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