



2015 Fair Exhibitor Information

It's Fair'ly Important



August 28, 2015

Mailing Address:

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

Fair location:

701 S. Lincoln Ave. ♦ Alma, MI 48801

Let's Make 2016 Even Better!

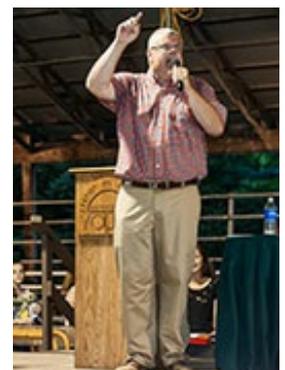


Countless hours were put into planning an awesome fair for our exhibitors and our community a month ago. If we solely rest on our laurels though we cannot get better, and our goal is to continually improve what we do so we can be the best fair in the nation. You can help us by taking time to fill out this short survey. We want your input and will carefully consider each comment. Let us know what we do well. Let us know what we need to do better. Give us an idea for a

new class or event. [Click here to begin survey.](#)

Decrease in Beef and Feeder Numbers Results in Lower Total But Higher Average Sale

The total GCFFY livestock sale auction numbers decreased by 9% in 2015 over the 2014 total numbers. A total of \$577,928.95 was generated for youth exhibitors by our generous buyers. The reduction in total sale revenue was due to a significant reduction in the number of beef and feeder beef projects in the past year. Feeder beef numbers dropped from 136 in 2014 to 99 in 2015 and finished beef steers dropped from 52 to 43. These reduced beef numbers resulted in a 17.7% decrease in pounds of beef sold. Average bid prices increased over most species and there was a significant increase in swine and sheep market exhibitors. The small animal portion of the sale increased by 8.7 % and



the Still Exhibit Sale broke \$100,000 for the first time ever bringing in a total of \$103,465.

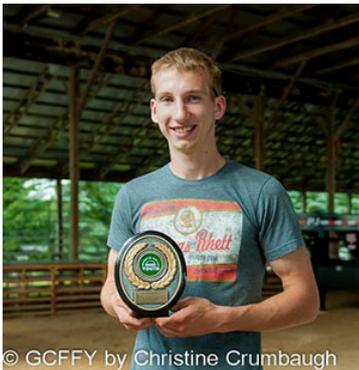
Donors Invest in Fair's Mission



Every year it takes considerable resources to maintain our fair's facilities and to put on the amazing eight day community celebration that is Gratiot County Fair for Youth. Each year a significant part of our funding equation is made up from donations and sponsorships. GCFY appreciates this investment into our mission. [A list of all of our current year financial supporters is found by clicking here.](#) This list does not include countless

others who donate resources and services that often are done without the fair's knowledge. Services like Bob Bissell donating their services for providing brine on our roads; Roslund Prestage preparing our tax reports; and Butcher Excavating bringing over heavy equipment countless times and never giving us a bill. Thank you to all of our supporters for all they do for our fair.

GCFY Awards Butcher & Lakeside Trading Post Appreciation Awards



Annually, GCFY awards two appreciation awards. One award is presented to an individual and the other to a business who have made significant contributions towards the fair. Jack Butcher, our 2015 individual recipient, is the first teen to receive this award since its 1982 inception. Jack has been a volunteer at the fair for many years. He has spent countless hours mowing lawn, repairing the facilities, digging holes and doing just about anything that needs to be done.

After the monsoon of 2012 when our fairgrounds took a severe beating, it was Jack who spent hours repairing and leveling our grounds. Jack was the recipient of the Michigan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions Youth Volunteer of the Year award in 2013.

Lakeside Motor Sports is the 2015 business recipient of the fair's Appreciation Award. Lakeside Motor Sports along with their sister company, Nelson's Speed Shop, have provided ATV's for use during fair week for many years. Lakeside and Nelson's have also purchased road signs, sponsored the rodeo, donated to the fair and purchased numerous animals and exhibits at the fair's sales.



[Click here for a complete list of Appreciation Award Recipients since its inception in 1982.](#)

GCFFY Awards 447 Trophies



At fair, GCFFY presented 447 trophies, plaques and special awards to our fair's exhibitors. Awards were given out in areas from agriculture to swine and culinary arts to welding. Congratulations to all of our exhibitors who received recognition from the fair. [A complete list of 2015 trophy recipients can be downloaded by clicking here.](#)

GCFFY Thanks 4-H Clubs and FFA

Fair week is the best week of the year! It takes many hands to make our fair the best possible event it can be and our 4-H youth, FFA members, volunteers and families make up the vast majority of GCFFY volunteers. On behalf of the GCFFY Fair Board, thank you to every one of you who helped. This year GCFFY created a plan to help us clean up our fairgrounds on Sunday when everyone was leaving. The fair provided club leaders and FFA advisors with specific job duties to complete before leaving for home. That post-fair Sunday there were many amazing youth and adults giving of their time and energy to get our fairgrounds put back into shape. The results were stunning! Our grounds have never looked better and our fair board members who work so hard during the week were able to leave the fairgrounds without putting in vast hours to clean-up on Sunday. So a HUGE GCFFY thank you to everyone who helped with that clean-up... or served barn security duty... or helped serve pancakes to the hungry Fair Coordinator... or helped with the River Rock Barn... or helped with a show or event... or just saw something that needed to be done and did it. It is the people and especially our 4-H families who make GCFFY the amazing fair it is.



Poultry Exhibitors Make Positive Change



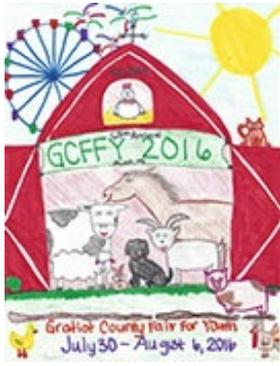
A huge GCFY thank you goes out to our Poultry Superintendent, Clay Mills. A few short weeks before the fair the Michigan Department of Agriculture's State Veterinarian cancelled any birds from being exhibited at any fair in the state of Michigan. Clay outlined a plan for poultry exhibitors to still participate at the fair and to sell their market poultry projects. Market project birds were already purchased by our

exhibitors prior to the MDARD ban. Trophies were reworked for the year to be appropriate for classes without live birds. Arrangements were made with the only USDA inspected processing plant in Michigan so GCFY project birds could be legally sold already processed. During fair, exhibitors still had a poultry show and did a great job decorating their cages. At the sale buyers were able to purchase project animals and even pick-up their frozen birds immediately after they checking out. Making the best out of a difficult situation is where the best stories come from and this was a story with a happy ending.

Fair Sale Checks

205 Livestock Sale Buyers and 176 Still Exhibit Buyers came together to support GCFY exhibitors at the fair. That is an impressive number of supporters who spent a combined \$681,381.98 purchasing animals and exhibits from the two sales. That level of support is impressive and humbling. After the sale most buyers pick up an invoice and take it back to their companies to pay their bill rather than paying the fair that day. Most of the time it takes about a month for the fair to collect enough payments to be able to cover printing exhibitors' checks. That means sale checks will not be printed this week. Our goal is to be able to have checks printed by early in September. GCFY often gets requests to print checks early. The way we produce our checks though makes this impossible so our answer is always "unfortunately no." When checks are printed they often will be grouped by family address and placed inside one envelope to be mailed. If one sibling gets a check and the other does not, check the envelope to see if there are multiple checks. While you are waiting for your sale check to come, don't forget to send your buyer a special thank you note for buying from you. If you have questions about the sale, please contact Brian Gardner at bgardner@gcfy.org or 989.875.5292.

2016 Fair Dates



If you have not already done so, be sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, July 30 to Saturday, August 6 for the 2016 Fair. We want to make sure you are part of the best week of the year. While you are marking, don't forget to pencil in 2017 dates of July 29 to August 5. These next two years we will again be using Maple Leaf Amusements who did an exceptional job providing our midway this year. I can only expect the next two years will be even better.

Pictured is the 2015 Fair Book Cover artwork by Emma Campbell

Winter Storage

GCFY barns are available for storing your summer recreational vehicles like campers, boats, cars and even a parade float. Applications are online for the 2015-16 storage season as well as additional information. [Click here for more information on winter storage.](#)

Applications Available to Serve on the GCFY Board of Directors

At GCFY's annual membership meeting on Thursday, December 4, its membership will elect four adults and appoint one teen representative to serve on its Board of Directors. [Any adult interested in serving on the Fair Board will want to complete a nominating petition that can be found by clicking here](#) and [any teen interested in applying for the Teen Representative position on the Board can download an application by clicking here.](#)

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