CENTER OF EVERYTHING
but a world of its own to discover

2020 COMMUNITY GUIDE
110 W Superior St, Alma, Michigan 48801
gacc.gratiot.org
Welcoming New Patients in Family Medicine

“Consistent, friendly and caring.”
“Everybody makes you feel like family.”
“I was a new patient and was impressed with the staff’s friendliness.”
“Always professional.”
“Everything has been exceptional.”
“The office staff and nurses are top notch.”

Committed to Caring For Your Family

Family Practice Center in Alma is your home for all your primary medical care needs from office visits to hospital stays, including pregnancy and delivery. We work hard to accommodate short notice appointments for our patients with sudden illnesses.

Our practice is made up of faculty physicians and resident physicians, allowing you to benefit from two expert perspectives at every appointment. Faculty physicians have years of experience in training other physicians including our resident physicians, who have recently graduated medical school with the most up-to-date training and have chosen to advance their careers in a hands-on experience.

We are welcoming new patients and strive to schedule first-time appointments within two weeks.

You can expect:
- Care for the entire family – from newborns to seniors
- Convenient online scheduling
- Friendly, compassionate staff
- Pregnancy care – including delivering babies
- Sports physicals
- Pediatric care – infants/children
- Senior care (geriatrics) – older adults

To schedule an appointment, call (989) 629-8140.
Greetings,

Sitting directly in the center of the lower peninsula, Gratiot County has historically been known to many as the “Middle of the Mitten.” Being equal distance from the coasts of lakes Huron and Michigan, as well as within close driving distance of every major metropolitan area within our state, business leaders will tell you that Gratiot County is a great place for industry and business.

Of course as with any place, a community is much more than its location. This is especially true in Gratiot County, as it is geographically at the center of everything, but a world of its own to discover. While you are here in Gratiot County, experience our warm but charismatic culture by taking time to explore our great cities, towns, and villages. Whether it’s Ashley, Breckenridge, Alma, Ithaca, St. Louis, or anywhere in between, you can:

- See it in our historic downtown architecture, in our community art projects and performances, or on our broad and endless horizons visible from our county trails and seasoned with our state-of-the-art wind turbines and a centuries old legacy of farming.
- Taste it in our wonderful downtown restaurants, coffee shops, diners, and at the 45th annual Rural Urban Day steak fry (July 16 at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth Fairgrounds in Alma). Also, in the fresh harvest served and at the 45th annual Rural Urban Day steak fry (July 16 at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth Fairgrounds in Alma). Also, in the fresh harvest served and at the 45th annual Rural Urban Day steak fry (July 16 at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth Fairgrounds in Alma). Also, in the fresh harvest served
- Feel it riding your bike on one of our numerous trails, on the ferris wheel at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth (July 25 – August 1), or with the crowd during our many events such as Breckenridge’s Christmas in the Village, the 53rd Annual Alma Highland Festival (May 22-24), or at an Alma College Football Game. Go Scots!
- Hear it in our welcoming conversation and the dynamic variety of musical performances from coffee house and tavern troubadours to the Alma Symphony Orchestra.
- Immerse yourself in all that is Gratiot County.

Sincerely,

Garth Anderson & Brendan K Kelley

OUR MISSION
To advocate the partnership of business and community to preserve, enhance, and promote those unique qualities that make Gratiot County a great place to live, work, and visit.

Brendan K Kelley
Executive Director

Garth Anderson
Board President

Excutive Committee

Garth Anderson, President, Commercial Bank
Christine Crumbaugh, Past President, Crumbaugh Legacy
Wes Wicke, President Elect, Central Michigan Youth for Christ
Joy O’Neill, Treasurer, Mercantile Bank
Phil Hansen, Vice President, City of St. Louis
Jim Wheeler, Vice President, Greater Gratiot Development, Inc.
Barbara Fandell, Vice President, City of Ithaca

Promotional Committee Chairpersons

Alma Action Association
Kane Glover, Mercantile Bank
Breckenridge Area Action Committee
Brian Goward, Isabella Bank
Ithaca Promotional Committee
Ryan Mills, Hour! Food and Spirits
Kim Davidson, Commercial Bank
Middle of the Mitten Association (St. Louis, MI)
Todd Albee, Chemical Bank

Committee Chairpersons

Finance
Joy O’Neill, Mercantile Bank
Legislative
Gary Mellow, Freelance Solutions
Ambassadors
Riley Smith, GreenStone Farm Credit Services
Membership & Marketing
Brendan Kelley, Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce

General Board

Tracey Cordes, County of Gratiot
Bridget McPherson, Village of Breckenridge
Gary Mellow, Freelance Solutions
Todd Moeggenborg, Masonic Pathways
Sheila Pilmore, Breckenridge Schools
Matt Scholten, City of Alma
Brian Sheets, Avilla & Tahoe
Ashley Tupper, Alma College

Chamber Staff

Brendan Kelley, Executive Director
Sheila Bishop, Executive Assistant

Greeting,
Through our programs and committees the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce offers our members opportunities to learn, grow, connect to resources, and advertise their services. The Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce is here to help you strengthen your business.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

MEMBER - Member directory listing - Good Morning Gratiot free RSVP - Gift Certificate (“Chamber Bucks”) - Participation - Conference room use at Chamber office (one annual use only) - Networking program RSVP reduced fee, including: Business After Hours, Lunch & Learn, Young Professionals Network - Printed mailing label set of Chamber member list - Annual Dinner invitation ($30 fee to attend)

$750

$25 discount available for Nonprofits, Schools and Municipalities. For more information call 989-463-5525, or visit GACC.Gratiot.org

DIRECTORS CLUB

Includes everything from the MEMBER list as well as:
- FOUR conference room uses annually
- Free Networking Program attendance for up to THREE employees
- Receive TWO Annual Dinner tickets at NO COST
- Receive TWO entries to the Agri-Fit Challenge at no cost
- Community Guide Recognition of Director’s Club Membership

$625
Application for Membership

Name of Business: ____________________________________________

Type of Business: ___________________________________________

Primary Contact: ___________________________ Date Business was Established: ____________

Mailing Address: ___________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

Business Address (If Different): ___________________________________________

_________________________________________________________

Phone Number: ___________________________ Fax Number: ___________________________

Email: ___________________________________________ Website: ___________________________

Number of Full-Time Employees: ______ Number of Part-Time Employees: ______

Human Resources Contact: ___________________________________________

Contacts to List in Directory: ___________________________________________

Tier Selection: ___________________________

_________________________________________________________

Signature ___________________________________________ Date ____________
**THINGS TO DO**

The City of Alma has a population of 9,383. Alma offers the Pine River, Fred Meijer Heartland Trail (a non-motorized, paved trail), Pine River Country Club, live theater, unique downtown shops, major retail chains, and a movie theater as entertainment and recreation options.

Host to many great events and activities, Alma might be most famous for being the site of the Annual Alma Highland Festival, one of the largest Scottish festivals in the Midwest for nearly five decades.

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**EVENTS IN ALMA**

- **04.11** Masonic Pathways Community Easter Egg Hunt, 11 am
- **04.30** Athena Award Luncheon, Masonic Pathways
- **04.18** Alma Spring Clean Up Day
- **05.01** Field of Honor Dedication, Alma Elks Club, 2 pm
- **05.01-06.14** Field of Honor, Alma Elks Club
- **05.01** Spring Fling Golf Outing, Pine River Country Club
- **05.16** Alma Flower Planting Day
- **05.23 - 10.31** Farmers Market, Wed & Sat 7 am - 1 pm
- **05.22-24** Alma Highland Festival and Games – Alma College
- **05.22-24** June - Aug Gratiot County Players Showtime at the Strand and Summer Youth Workshop
- **06.14** Flag Day Event, Alma Elks Club
- **07.16** Rural-Urban Day at Gratiot County Fairgrounds

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**RURAL-URBAN DAY | 07.16**

The 45th Annual Rural-Urban Day is a chance for Gratiot County to celebrate the importance of agriculture to the community. Along with the annual agriculture awards, Rural-Urban Day is a festival centered around a delicious community steak fry at the Gratiot County Fair for Youth Fairgrounds.

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**PARTY ON STATE STREET | 09.12**

This year Party on State Street, Alma Church of God Block Party is moving to Wright Park! It’s four hours of music and fun near Alma’s vibrant downtown. Come enjoy great food and music while exploring Alma’s downtown this summer.

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**EVENTS IN ALMA (continued)**

- **07.25-08.01** Gratiot County Fair for Youth
- **08.20** Old US-27 Car Cruise, 1 pm - 3 pm
- **09.02-03** DALMAC Bicycle Riders
- **09.12** Party on State Street, Alma Church of God Block Party
- **09.12** Lucky Max Duck Community Day
- **09.12** Cyclecross Bike Race, 2 pm
- **09.15** Alma Fall Clean Up Day
- **10.02** Alma Homecoming
- **10.10** Alma College Homecoming
- **10.22** Alma Fall Festival
- **11.11** Veterans Day Salute, Masonic Pathways
- **12.11** Come Home to Alma Holiday Celebration
- **12.12** 5th Annual Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk
Breckenridge

WELCOME

to Breckenridge

THINGS TO DO

The Village of Breckenridge has a population of 1,328. Breckenridge is the heartland of the county in terms of agriculture. One of the largest grain processing facilities in Michigan is adjacent to the east side of the Village and is owned by Michigan Agricultural Commodities.

For recreation, Breckenridge offers a splash park, two village parks, a library, downtown shopping, and a golf course. The people of Breckenridge are committed to their future and welcome opportunities for growth.

EVENTS IN BRECKENRIDGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>05.25</td>
<td>Memorial Day Service, Ridgelawn Cemetery, 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.04</td>
<td>Fireworks, Breckenridge Area Action Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>08.11</td>
<td>Breckenridge Bernie Siler Memorial Golf Outing</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.02</td>
<td>Breckenridge Homecoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>Veterans Day Service, American Legion Post 295, 4 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.07</td>
<td>Breckenridge Christmas in the Village, Downtown</td>
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</tbody>
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A BIT ABOUT BRECKENRIDGE

The Village of Breckenridge is 1.07 square miles of land in the middle of Michigan’s agricultural heartland. Located in Wheeler Township, the Village was founded when the Pere Marquette Railroad came through the area and incorporated as a village in 1908.

Breckenridge is a beautiful and vibrant community with numerous community events, recreational activities, commerce options, and an outstanding public school system. The Village also has a Michigan Certified Industrial and Agribusiness Park. This is the first industrial park in the United States of America to be established specifically for the purpose of conducting agricultural business.

Area Attractions:
- Plank Road Museum and Drake House - Historical Society
- JayCee & Hoffmeyer Park
- Birch Street Park
- Howe Memorial Library

The Village of Breckenridge offers a few great parks for children of all ages. JayCee & Hoffmeyer Memorial Park located on Saxon Street (north side of town) is the home of the Splash Park. Other park features include a three-hole disc golf course, corn hole, horseshoes, beach volleyball court, and many play structures. Birch Street Park (south side of town) has a newly constructed restroom, pavilion and play areas.
THINGS TO DO

The City of Ithaca is the county seat of Gratiot County, MI with a population of 2,910. Ithaca has multiple city parks, a county park, a golf course, a bowling alley, unique downtown shops, and annual holiday events as entertainment and recreation activities. Ithaca is a historic town that cherishes its past, but is living for the future and is welcome to all development opportunities.

EVENTS IN ITHACA

04.11 Easter Egg Hunt, Woodland Park, 11 am
05.17 Dust Off Car Show, Downtown, 12 noon - 4 pm
05.25 Memorial Day Service and Parade, 10 am
06.13 Gratiot County Fair for Youth Golf Outing, The Fields
06.14 Flag Day Boy Scouts Presentation, All Wars Memorial
06.19-23 Gratiot Ag Expo, Ithaca Fairgrounds
06.20 Old US-27 Motor Tour, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
09.19 Agri-Fit Challenge Obstacle Course 5K, McNabb Park
11.11 Veterans Day Service, All Wars Memorial, Downtown, 11 am
12.04 Christmas Under the Stars Celebration & Santa Parade

AGRI-FIT CHALLENGE OBSTACLE COURSE 5K | 09.19

A crossfit race for the “Middle of the Mitten”. Last year more than 200 competitors completed the 5K course while overcoming farm themed hurdles and obstacles. The agricultural themed course challenges registrants from all over the country and in Canada while showcasing the agri-business history of Gratiot County. Don’t be surprised to see gym clothes and sneakers line up with blue jeans and boots on the starting line, each with an equal chance to take home glory.

OLD US-27 MOTOR TOUR | 08.20

An original stopping point for the Tour in its 14th year, downtown Ithaca plays host as the perfect backdrop for what can only be described as a traveling festival for lovers of classic cars. Last year there were 306 classic cars with owners from all over the globe that descended on Ithaca, as they stopped and celebrated on their week long tour north.
THINGS TO DO
St. Louis, Michigan, the “Middle of the Mitten” is known for its historic past. Its quaint downtown is on the National Register of Historic Places and is home to a wide variety of shops, eateries and service businesses. The City of St. Louis has a population of 7,482.

The community also offers many opportunities for fun and entertainment including Hidden Oaks Golf Course, a public swimming pool, the Pine River, a downtown music theater featuring live music, a modern library and six City parks.

EVENTS IN ST. LOUIS
- 03.07 St. Louis Dueling Pianos, Alma Elks Lodge
- 04.11 Easter Egg Walk, Downtown, 11 am - 1 pm
- 04.26 I Love My City Clean Up Day
- 05.25 Memorial Day Parade, Downtown, 10 am
- 06.04 Middle of the Mitten Community Golf Outing, Hidden Oaks Golf Course
- 06.13 St. Louis Joe Scholtz Memorial Fishing Derby
- 06.15 Flag Day Event, St. Louis City Hall
- 07.04 4th of July Celebration, Fireworks
- 08.20 Old US-27 Motor Tour, 3:15 pm - 5:15 pm
- 09.07 Labor Day Bridge Walk, St. Louis High School, 8 am
- 09.25 St. Louis Homecoming
- 10.29 Trick or Treat, Downtown
- 11.11 Veterans Day Service, Downtown, 11 am
- 12.03 Small Town Family Christmas and Lighted Parade, 6 pm

FARMERS MARKET | JUN 4 - OCT 29
Located in Downtown St. Louis at 300 N Mill St, offering plenty of parking and easy access to other downtown shops and restaurants.

Vendors offer fresh local produce, baked goods, jams, roasted coffee, eggs, honey, maple syrup, hormone free beef and pork, eggs, unique handmade crafts and more. Listen to local musicians, watch a cooking demonstration or sample a new recipe.

The Market accepts Credit/Debit and participates in food assistance programs: SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC Project Fresh, Senior Market Fresh and Prescription for Health.

Open Thursdays from 2 pm - 6 pm, June thru October. Visit our exciting new website at gratiotfarmersmarkets.com/st-louis

W.T. MORRIS MEMORIAL POOL | JUN - AUG
The only outdoor pool in Gratiot County, the pool facility saw a $150,000 renovation project in 2019. The pool house work was done with the help of a GREAT Grant from the Gratiot County Community Foundation, a gift from Gary DeShano and a grant from the W.T. Morris Foundation.

Rebuilt in 2005, the pool is a quality facility that provides swim lessons, programming and fun events for youngsters and adults alike.

Keep up with schedules and events at facebook.com/stlouispool/
SMALL BUSINESS

Alma, Breckenridge, Ithaca, and St. Louis all offer downtown shopping areas filled with various shops, restaurants, and service establishments. Many small businesses in the area have specialized offerings (musical instruments, bicycles, and a brewery, to name a few), which draw in visitors from near and far. Classic gift boutiques, antique shops, and florists also offer convenient options for citizens and tourists to explore.

Small businesses in the area are supported by the Gratiot Area Chamber and Greater Gratiot Development, Inc. The Small Business Development Center is also available for assistance through a satellite office in Ithaca at Greater Gratiot. Small business services include business plan development, market research, and financial management.

For more information, or for business assistance, please contact the Gratiot Area Chamber at 989.463.5525 or Greater Gratiot Development at 989.875.2083.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Gratiot County is home to three different wind farms and 217 wind turbines. The County is an ideal fit for wind energy due to its rural nature and flat, open landscape. The first wind farm, Gratiot County Wind, was completed in 2012 and remains the largest farm (by turbine count) in Michigan with 133 turbines. Since construction, wind development has resulted in $42.8 million in tax revenue and 26 full-time jobs. The County is also hoping to take advantage of solar energy opportunities, and a solar ordinance was passed in 2018 to accommodate these developments. Solar energy is targeted for areas that have few redevelopment options. Gratiot County is proving to be forward-thinking in its attempts to attract alternative energy opportunities.

MANUFACTURING

The scope of industry throughout the County is very diverse, with manufacturing companies ranging in size from 2 to 400+ employees. Companies produce a variety of goods such as automotive parts, jet aircraft engine components, carbide cutting tools, pontoon boats, plastic parts, fabricated metal parts, bleach production equipment, and many others. The area industry is also served with necessary support services, including providers of industrial fasteners, metal recycling, and coatings.

Gratiot County is an appealing area for numerous industrial businesses due to its accessibility. The area is serviced by Gratiot Community Airport, which offers service for businesses, individuals, and freight. Two railroads also serve the area. Gratiot’s location in the center of the state offers easy access to major interstates via US Highway 127 and Michigan Highways 46 and 57.

Manufacturing businesses are supported through Greater Gratiot Development, Inc. (GGDI). GGDI assists businesses with building & equipment expansions, site selection, brownfield redevelopment, strategic planning, general consultation, and state & local incentives.

Also, the Gratiot Area Chamber (GAC) and GGDI participate in a monthly industry/education roundtable meeting, hosted by the Central Michigan Manufacturers Association, to discuss how schools, industry, and other partners can work together to solve workforce and training needs.
Agri-Tourism

DIVERSE & ABUNDANT

Agriculture provides the foundation for growth and development in Gratiot County. With 82% of land used in agriculture, Gratiot is a leader in crop and livestock production. The County is ranked in the top ten counties in the state for the following crops: soybeans, corn, sugar beets, dry beans, and wheat. In terms of livestock, the county is ranked 4th in production of milk, 5th in poultry and eggs, 7th in cattle, and 9th in hogs. As a result, total agricultural production is ranked 6th in the state and is valued at $281.4 million according to the latest USDA Ag Census.

To support production efforts, the County is also home to agribusinesses such as grain elevators, equipment dealers, and fertilizer dealers, to name a few. In 2019, the County welcomed ZF Ithaca, a new soybean processing facility that will handle 40% of the state’s total crop. Professional consultants, agriculture advisors, and USDA offices also contribute to the success of the local producers of agriculture products. In terms of production and support businesses, agriculture has a huge impact on the area economy—over 3,300 are employed on farms and in agribusinesses. Further, it is estimated that agriculture accounts for 22% of the County’s tax base.

The future for agriculture in the County is driven by its youth. Currently, almost 600 youth participate in the 4-H youth programs through MSU Extension. Additionally, 400 students are involved in Future Farmers of America clubs across Gratiot County schools. Educational programs such as these teach children necessary skills that benefit them throughout their lives.

Gratiot County’s rural charm is a result of its agricultural roots. Various events and activities are conducted throughout the County in order to embrace agriculture and its numerous benefits. Check out the various agri-tourism opportunities within Gratiot County on the following page!

GRATIOT COUNTY Quilt Trail

Over 75 beautifully unique wooden quilt squares hang on local farms and businesses in Gratiot County. This agri-tourism attraction celebrates both the art of quilting and the history of the local farms and businesses.

The Quilt Trail unites the rural and urban communities through promotional efforts that will encourage tourists to explore the countywide trail and support local businesses along the way.

To learn more about the Gratiot County Quilt Trail visit: gratiotcountyquilttrail.com or stop by Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce to pick up one of these brochures!
MidMichigan Medical Center – Gratiot, a 97 licensed-bed hospital located in Alma, has been serving the health care needs of residents throughout Gratiot, Serving Gratiot, Isabella, Montcalm and other counties since 1955.

An affiliate of MidMichigan Health, to keep you and your family healthy and managing chronic health conditions, we provide access to primary care providers including family medicine, internal medicine and obstetrics/gynecology. Along with our main Medical Center campus in Alma, we have physician offices in Ithaca, Alma, Breckenridge, Shepherd and Mt. Pleasant. Our offices all offer online scheduling and an online patient portal for personal access to your health information. We also have convenient urgent care and state-of-the-art emergency services located at the Medical Center.

Our full range of specialty services include heart and vascular care, cancer care, orthopedics, general and bariatric surgery, diagnostic imaging, laboratory, maternity, mental health and rehabilitative services including physical, occupational, and speech. Recent investments ensure we have the latest in advanced technology. For example, in 2019, we built a new, $2.6 million Maternity Center and invested $1 million in a Cardiac Catheterization Lab. A new MRI will also be installed in 2020.

What’s more, we are training the health care providers of the future. In 2016, a family medicine residency program was established to train family medicine physicians. Today, 100 percent of our graduates have remained in Central Michigan to practice. In addition, we partner with area nursing schools to help train registered nurses and have built a Simulation Lab which offers a leading edge way to train staff in patient assessment skills with life-like manikins that are programmed to present with symptoms and respond to treatments. Above all, in addition to our patients, we care for our communities. We give back with our time, talent and treasure through local support of a diversity of charitable, community and development organizations, such as Art Reach of Mid Michigan, the Alma Highland Festival, Central Michigan University, Child Advocacy of Gratiot County, Toys for Tots, United Way and more.

MidMichigan Health is a non-profit health system headquartered in Midland, Michigan, affiliated with Michigan Medicine, the health care division of the University of Michigan. To learn more visit midmichigan.org.

QUALITY SENIOR CARE
For those who wish to continue living independently in Gratiot County, yet desire the emotional security of a community environment, Arbor Grove Assisted Living and Masonic Pathways CCRC are two beautiful options. Both have much to offer, including various levels of assistance in personal care, medication administration, housekeeping, laundry, meals and social activities.

If you seek greater levels of care, Gratiot County is home to five of Michigan’s highest rated skilled nursing and short-stay rehabilitation centers, including the Laurels of Fulton, Masonic Pathways Health Care Center, Pine River Health Care Center, Schnupp Senior Care & Rehab Center and Warwick Living Center.

All facilities offer state-of-the-art rehabilitation programs, providing a bridge between the hospital and home for those who require intense therapy after joint replacements, stroke, or extended stays in the hospital.

Through physical, occupational and speech therapy, these health centers make it possible for their short-stay patients to reclaim their vitality, return to their homes and resume their daily lives. Each of these centers can also become a “home away from home,” where memory and long-term care residents receive around-the-clock nursing care, therapeutic activities and nutritional support while enjoying a home-like atmosphere. Physician, dental, optometry and podiatry are provided within each center. Additionally, as an answer to a critical need for long-term ventilator dependent care, Masonic Pathways recently opened a specialized Assisted Breathing unit. Gratiot County is truly fortunate to have many high quality options for our Seniors.

SENIOR CARE in Gratiot County

OFFERING STATE-OF-THE-ART CARE IN A RURAL SETTING
GRATIOT AREA 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 7  Dueling Pianos to support the Middle of the Mitten Assoc., Elks Club, Alma, 6pm
April 11  Downtown Easter Egg Walk, St. Louis, 11 am – 1 pm
April 11  Masonic Pathways Community Easter Egg Hunt, Alma, 11 am
April 11  **Easter Egg Hunt, Woodland Park, Ithaca, 11 am**
April 18  Keep Alma Beautiful, Alma Clean Up Day
April 26  I Love My City Cleanup Day, St. Louis
April 30  Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce ATHENA Award Luncheon, Alma, 12 noon
May 1  Field of Honor Dedication Ceremony, Elks Club, Alma, 2 pm
May 1  **Alma Action Association's Spring Fling Golf Outing, Pine River Country Club, Alma**
May 16  Flower Planting Day, Alma
May 17  Dust Off Car Show, Downtown Ithaca, 12 noon - 4 pm
**May 22–24**  **Alma Highland Festival and Games, Alma College Campus**
May 25  **Memorial Day Service and Parade, All Wars Memorial Courthouse Lawn, Ithaca, 10 am**
May 25  **Memorial Day Parade, Downtown St. Louis, 10 am**
May 25  **Memorial Day Service, Ridgeland Cemetery, Breckenridge**
June – August  **Gratiot County Players Showtime At The Strand and Summer Youth Workshop, Alma**
June 4  **Middle of the Mitten Community Golf Outing, Hidden Oaks Golf Course, St. Louis**
June 12 & 13  Ashley Trading Days, Ashley
June 13  Joe Scholtz Memorial Fishing Derby, St. Louis
June 13  **Gratiot County Fair for Youth Golf Outing, The Fields Golf Course, Ithaca**
June 14  Flag Day Event, Elks Club, Alma
June 14  Flag Day Boy Scouts Presentation, All Wars Memorial, Ithaca
June 15  Flag Day Event, City Hall, St. Louis
June 19-23  Gratiot Ag Expo, Ithaca Fairgrounds
June 23  **Fourth of July Celebration & Fireworks, Breckenridge**
July 4  Fourth of July Celebration & Fireworks, Breckenridge
July 16  **Rural Urban Day, Gratiot County Fairgrounds, Alma**
July 25- August 1  **Gratiot County Fair for Youth (GCFFY), Alma**
August 1  **GCFFY Super Kicker Rodeo, GCFFY Fairgrounds, Alma, 6 pm**
August 2  Bannister Czechoslovak Harvest Festival, Bannister
August 7  Sport Shirt Golf Outing, The Fields Golf Course, Ithaca, 12 pm
August 11  Bernie Siler Memorial Golf Outing, Breckenridge
August 21-23  Sunner Daze, Summer

**August 20**  **Ithaca 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Alma 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm, St. Louis 3:15 pm – 5:15 pm**

- September 2-3  **DALMAC Bicycle Tour, Alma**
- September 7  **Labor Day Bridge Walk, St. Louis, 8 am**
- September 12  **Lucky MacDuck Community Day, Alma**
- September 12  **Cyclocross Bike Race, Bridge Street, Alma, 2 pm**
- September 12  **Party on State Street/Church of God Block Party, Alma, 4:30 pm**
- September 12  **Ithaca Fall Fest**
- September 25  **St. Louis High School Homecoming**
- September (TBD)  **Alma Fall Clean Up Day**

**September 19**  **Agri-Fit Challenge Obstacle Course 5K, McLabb Park, Ithaca**

- October (TBD)  **Fulton High School Homecoming**
- October 2  **Alma High School Homecoming**
- October 2  **Breckenridge High School Homecoming**
- October 9  **Ashley High School Homecoming**
- October 9  **Ithaca High School Homecoming**
- October 10  **Alma College Homecoming**
- October 22  **Alma Fall Festival**
- October 29  **Downtown St. Louis Halloween Trick or Treat**
- November 11  **Veterans Day Service, Downtown St. Louis**
- November 14 – December 20  **Village of Ashley Country Christmas & North Pole Express Train**
- November 14 – December 20  **Veterans Day Service, American Legion Post 295, Breckenridge**

- December 3  **Small Town Family Christmas and Lighted Parade, St. Louis, 6 pm**
- December 4  **Ithaca Hometown Christmas and Santa Parade, 6 pm**
- December 7  **Christmas in the Village, Breckenridge, 5 pm**
- December 20  **“2020 Love Lights” – MidMichigan Medical Center-Gratiot, Alma, 4:30 pm**
- December 11  **Come Home to Alma Holiday Celebration, Downtown Alma, 5:45 pm**
- December 12  **5th Annual Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk, Alma, 10 am**
- December 20  **“2020 Love Lights” – MidMichigan Medical Center-Gratiot, Alma, 4:30 pm**
- December 11  **Come Home to Alma Holiday Celebration, Downtown Alma, 5:45 pm**
- December 12  **5th Annual Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk, Alma, 10 am**

This is the perfect calendar to pull out and put on your refrigerator or bulletin board! Just tear it out and you can have all the county-wide events for the year. For more information on these or other upcoming events, call the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce at 989-463-5525, or visit: GACC.GRATIOT.ORG
Gratiot County is extremely fortunate to have a multitude of recreational opportunities to serve a diverse and active population. Perhaps two of Gratiot’s greatest offerings are Paul Hubscher County Park in Sumner Township (west of Ithaca) and Reed County Park in North Star Township (south of Ithaca). Open to the public, both parks offer a swimming beach, a playground, nature trails, various sports fields, pavilions, and picnic tables & grills.

In addition to these major county parks, cities and villages within Gratiot County have a selection of local parks that offer a variety of amenities. For a complete listing of these parks, please visit each city’s website.

Outdoor enthusiasts are sure to enjoy Gratiot County’s offering of trails. The Fred Meijer Heartland Trail is 42 miles long and runs from Alma, Michigan to Greenville, Michigan. It is a smooth asphalt trail that can be used for walking, biking, skating, and other non-motorized traffic. The Alma Mountain Bike Trail, located in Alma’s Pine River Park & Outdoor Center, offers a more exhilarating and scenic ride. Finally, a paved 6.6-mile non-motorized pathway was recently constructed along the east side of US Highway 127 from Ithaca to Alma. This trail is part of the efforts of Mid-Michigan Community Pathways, a community group that seeks to establish a cohesive nonmotorized route from Ithaca to Clare.

Gratiot County is home to the Pine and Maple rivers. The Pine River boasts a 30-mile canoe/kayak trail that runs from Riverdale to Alma with multiple access points. The trail is wheelchair accessible at Luneack County Park in Alma, Michigan, which also offers multiple parking spaces for easy access. Maple River, located in the southern portion of Gratiot County, is surrounded by three state game areas. Additional outdoor recreational activities include 9-hole and 18-hole golf courses, a splash park, public swimming pools, shooting ranges, paintball courses, and soccer fields. Indoor recreational opportunities are also available throughout Gratiot County. Various live theater and music performances occur at the Strand Theatre in Alma and the Gem Theatre in St. Louis.

Additionally, all three cities offer beautiful downtown settings with a variety of dining options and unique shopping opportunities. Other indoor recreational options include a movie theater, public libraries, a bowling alley, indoor swimming pools, arcades, health clubs / gyms, and dance lessons. Suffice it to say that Gratiot County has a great variety of recreational activities that are sure to meet anyone’s needs and interests.

For a detailed listing of recreational opportunities, please visit gratiott.org.
For 130 years, Alma College has connected students with a world of ideas and opportunities. A four-year residential liberal arts college, Alma College offers each student a personalized education emphasizing high-impact experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, research fellowships, study abroad, and engagement with the local community. Alma College is proud of its community linkages. Collaborations between the college and community include mutually beneficial research projects, volunteer opportunities and community partnerships such as the annual Highland Festival.

The attractive 128-acre campus features a combination of historic and contemporary buildings within walking distance from downtown Alma. The campus is bordered by the 41-mile Fred Meijer Heartland Bike Trail. The Alma College Bookstore with Starbucks is a popular destination for both community members and students who seek Alma apparel or a coffee beverage. College athletics facilities, including the Alan J. Stone Center for Recreation and the McClure Natatorium, offer wellness education, swimming instruction and recreational opportunities to community members and local businesses.

Cultural and sports events are offered throughout the year. The Oscar E. Remick Heritage Center for the Performing Arts is the region’s premier performing arts facility, with concerts, lectures, plays and other events scheduled throughout the year. Alma’s Division III athletics program offers intercollegiate competition in 25 varsity sports.

EDUCATION
A Dynamic Offering

HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

The residents of Gratiot County recognize that a quality education is the basis for a successful life. Walk into any school in Gratiot County, and you will get a sense not only of personal friendliness but also of seriousness about education.

The six school districts have been able to preserve their small-town values while keeping up-to-date with the latest in educational practice and technology. A dynamic offering of educational opportunities is available to students of all ages. Preschools and developmental kindergarten programs, both public and private, are available. Elementary and secondary schools perform at a high level under the direction of dedicated teachers, administrators, and support staff members. Also critical to this mission are involved parents and a supportive community.

Several private parochial schools blend traditional education with religious values for elementary-age children. Career Technical Education (CTE) centers at Alma High School and Mt. Pleasant High School provide students with twenty-two programs ranging from welding and agriculture to culinary arts and nursing. CTE course offerings are gaining in popularity and importance, as our region continues to experience a welcomed increase in the manufacturing sector. In November 2013, voters in the Gratiot-Isabella RESD service area voted to support a 1.0 mil tax increase dedicated to enhancing CTE course offerings. This millage has been and will be used to upgrade facilities and support skilled trades programs in the region.

AG EDUCATION

Over 525 students throughout Alma, Breckenridge, Ithaca, and St Louis are enrolled in an agri-science career and technical educational program at their respective middle & high schools. With topics ranging from ag mechanics to horticulture and zoology to ag business management, students gain hands-on, employability skills with an agriculture emphasis. Their classrooms are far from the traditional setting. You will most likely find agri-science students learning how to treat county fair animals in their educational livestock barns, growing plants for a community spring sale in the ag science greenhouse, or using GPS to harvest corn on the school’s land lab. As part of their programs, students also participate in their local FFA Chapters, gaining leadership skills through team projects, contests, travel, and community service.

We are proud of the investment our community has made towards building our future employees, leaders, and productive community members!
What makes our community an exceptional place to live is our people. There is a collaborative, engaging spirit that literally flows into our non-profit organizations. You will find volunteering for one of our community’s charitable organizations rewarding, and you will be able to see how your time and energy makes an impact.

Our volunteers in Gratiot County have a generous spirit and give of their time, talents and resources. It is our volunteers who make Gratiot County a special place.

ROSE AWARD

John Pavlik
Alma’s Order of the Tartan Award
John has an extensive background serving the community through the Alma/St. Louis Rotary, the Alma First Presbyterian Church, and by volunteering his auctioneering services to numerous organizations.

Lisa Yoder
Ithaca Person of the Year
As a 5th grade teacher at Ithaca Public Schools, Lisa has educated the young minds of Ithaca for almost two decades. She encourages her students to make Ithaca a better place by working on different service projects, including an annual Veterans Day Ceremony.

Ron Salladay
Spirit of St. Louis Award
Ron, a lifelong resident of St. Louis, has shown commitment to the City through his service as a firefighter and EMT. Ron is also very active in working with youth in the community through the St. Louis Church of Christ and St. Louis Schools as a para-pro.

Joel Colbry
Breckenridge Distinguished Citizen Award
Joel has been a guiding figure for the youth of Breckenridge, where he taught for 37 years and coached football for 31 years. Joel has also been active in Gratiot County 4-H Youth Programs, the Breckenridge/Wheeler Area Historical Society, and the Breckenridge United Methodist Church.

Anne Lambrecht
Athena Leadership Award
Anne was recognized for her commitment to human rights and her dedication to helping those in need. She currently serves at Alma College as the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Counseling, Health and Wellness.

PERFORMING ARTS

Housed in the historic Strand Theatre, and celebrating its 52nd season as a county artistic highlight in 2019-20, the Gratiot County Players is a long-standing community theatre group comprised of area volunteers, young and old alike, with admirable talent willing to bring the theatrical experience to Gratiot County. Open to both college students and community members, the Heritage Center at Alma College is a perfect venue for local artists as well as the more established performers fostered by Alma College.

VISUAL ARTS

The Alma Community Art Center, a non-profit organization with a showcase of local artists, offers a well-rounded curriculum of classes.

DANCE

At the Academy of Performing Arts in Alma, professionally trained and educated teachers lead dance classes for all ages and levels of experience from the beginner to the advanced student. DUJadway Dance Dimensions bringsdance to those with a more competitive spirit, providing the community with an elite team of award-winning and traveling dancers.

GRATIOT COUNTY HISTORY

The City of Ithaca is home to many historical sites including the Courthouse, Historical & Genealogical Society and Historical Museum. The museum, located adjacent to the Ithaca Public Library, displays various artifacts and much of the history of Gratiot County. The Historical and Genealogical Society can be found in the 130-year-old Georgians Peet Miller home. There you can research the names of every resident who has ever lived in the county. An archive of original newspapers spanning the past 100 years is also on file at the Society. History buffs will find both locations a must stop in Gratiot County.

Other Gratiot County historical sites include the Plank Road Museum in Breckenridge, the St. Louis Area Historical Society in St. Louis, and the state’s smallest Post Office in Elm Hall. Walk or bike the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail to Riverdale and you’ll find the Riverdale Museum. In Riverdale, you might also want to stop by the Riverdale Tavern, one of the area’s oldest restaurants.

Another key historical feature of Gratiot County is the recently restored Wright Lepsius Opera House Block (see cover). This historic building was constructed 140 years ago by Ammi Wright as a retail and entertainment venue. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by a fire in 2010. However, thanks to the leadership and generosity of Alma College, several community donors, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the building has been restored to its original character and integrity. The building offers event space, retail stores, and student housing. The Opera House is now the cornerstone of Downtown Alma.
### Membership Roll Call

#### ALMA BRANCH
111 West Center Street
Alma, MI 48801
989-463-8311

#### ITHACA BRANCH
915 East Main Street
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