

# MICHIGAN GIVING

STORIES OF MICHIGAN TOURISM INDUSTRY GENEROSITY

A scenic landscape featuring a grassy dune in the foreground, a line of trees on the left, and a calm body of water extending to the horizon under a vast, cloudy sky. The scene is captured in a wide-angle shot, emphasizing the natural beauty of the Michigan coast.

**TOURISM  
INDUSTRY  
GIVING  
DURING A  
PANDEMIC**





SINCE OUR LAUNCH IN 2013,

**3,150** VOLUNTEERS

made an impact on Michigan's historical, cultural, and natural attractions



**1/2 - 3 DAY PROJECTS** **30**



different locations throughout Michigan hosted these projects

**850K** LABOR AND SUPPLY SAVINGS

was invested in Michigan to enhance visitor experiences



**MEDIA STORIES** **75**



different media publications/sources shared news about the tourism industry making a difference.

WELCOME TO

# MICHIGAN GIVING

## Michigan Tourism Industry Continues to Give in Spite of Devastation

Since 2013, a formal effort to engage Michigan's tourism industry professionals in volunteerism to help historic, cultural and natural attractions in need, resulted in **3,150 volunteers providing over \$850,000 in supplies and labor to 30 different destinations**. Michigan Cares for Tourism (MC4T) is the industry's 100% volunteer, 100% giveback non-profit directing these results.

Like many other tourism organizations, we were forced to regroup in 2020. MC4T's planned volunteer events, bringing hundreds of volunteers together to give back, were cancelled as COVID-19 temporarily paused the tourism industry.

### This, however, didn't stop the tourism industry from "giving."

At a time when "giving" to others in need would understandably be of little concern to tourism organizations and employees, MC4T found quite the opposite. The industry continued, and continues to give. We found example after example of small, medium and large sized tourism businesses making an impact in even bigger ways, all while facing the most challenging times of their careers.

MC4T's third edition of *Michigan Giving* is dedicated to these organizations who gave, in spite of it all. From hotels donating rooms and event space for first responders and blood drives, to restaurants feeding employees and locals in need, the industry responded. From the Upper Peninsula to Detroit, tourism organizations made masks (pages 23 to 27), and from Alpena to Grand Rapids organizations shared their talents online to schools when they could no longer be open to the public, and used their expertise to make sanitizer when it wasn't readily available (pages 19-22).

While these stories didn't surprise MC4T's board of directors, and it doesn't surprise the tourism industry, it may just do so with others who don't know how the **industry's graciousness extends when times are good and when times are bad**. The tourism industry is giving, and not even a pandemic would stop them.

And, it didn't stop us. MC4T's board members quickly took inventory of existing N95 masks and donated them to a local hospital (page 29), efforts to fundraise for the Hospitality Employee Emergency Relief Fund were put in place (page 16), and safe ways to volunteer in 2020 were created under a partnership with Michigan Coalition for Clean Forests/Michigan DNR's Adopt-a-Forest program (page 29). Thanks to partners Blue Cross Blue Shield Michigan and others, 2021 is full of more opportunities to safely volunteer. **MC4T has 10 regional volunteer events planned across Michigan creating safe and rewarding ways to build a stronger and healthier Michigan (pages 31-32).**

*Michigan Giving* is a MC4T collaboration project written by board members, event volunteers, and supporters. We hope you are inspired by these stories. We are incredibly thankful to our volunteer authors. These individual story tellers are listed with each organization feature. Volunteer editors included **Olivia Rau** and **Kirsten Borgstrom**. **Elizabeth Smyka** volunteered her talents with this year's publication design.

Information about MC4T can be found at [michigancaresfortourism.org](http://michigancaresfortourism.org).

Yours in Hospitality,

*Patty Janes and the MC4T Board of Directors*  
[janesp@gvsu.edu](mailto:janesp@gvsu.edu)



2015 MICHIGAN CARES FOR TOURISM VOLUNTEER EVENT, EYETTE



BATTLE CREEK BREAKFAST



TCF CENTER



TRAVEL MICHIGAN



DETROIT CITY DISTILLERY



STORMY KROMER

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# **TOURISM GIVING: SHARING A MEAL**

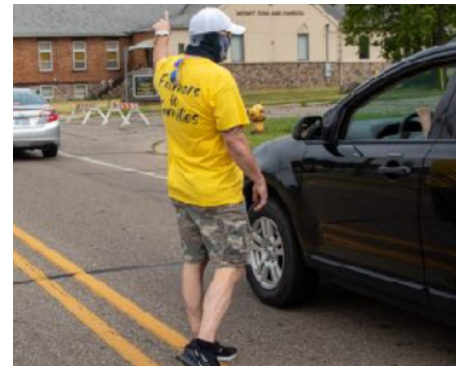
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**Battle Creek's Breakfast Table Drive-Thru**

**Garage Bar and Grill**

**Olivera's Sports Pub and Grill**

**Max and Emily's Eatery**



**“The more we come together as a community, the more we participate, the more we can grow as a community and heal,”**

**Clovis Bordeaux, Strategy and Marketing Officer, Battle Creek Community Foundation.**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING A MEAL

# BATTLE CREEK’S BREAKFAST TABLE DRIVE-THRU

By: Julia Masson

COVID-19 did not stop Battle Creek from continuing the longstanding tradition of their annual June Cereal Festival and World’s Longest Breakfast Table event. Traditionally, everyone who attended received a free bowl of cereal and the event had breakfast tables set up. However, since the event was cancelled this year, the idea of the drive-thru came about. They gave each car a box of dairy products and a box of cereal. Each dairy box contained two gallons of milk, four bottles of strawberry and chocolate milk, sour cream, French onion dip, cottage cheese and cream cheese, along with a box of Corn Flakes. “It was a giveaway for cereal and milk, so it kind of mimicked what we do for the Cereal Festival. The comments were really positive” said Linda Freybler, CEO of the Battle Creek Visitors Bureau.

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The June 27 drive-thru event was a collaboration between many organizations in the community, including Prairie Farms Dairy, Calhoun County Visitors Bureau, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Milk Means More, South Michigan Food Bank, and Battle Creek Community Foundation.

Freybler also shared, “Prairie Farms Dairy received a grant from the USDA as part of the Farmers to Families Program. They reached out to our community partners to make this into one of the largest single day distributions in the state. Cereal was provided by our local cereal companies in partnership with the South Michigan Food Bank.” By giving away cereal and milk, it was reminiscent of Battle Creek’s cereal events in the past, but in a new, social distancing friendly way!

On the day of the event, over 200 volunteers came out to help distribute the boxes. “We distributed nearly 20,000 dairy items, including 4,000 gallons of milk,” said Elly Stark, sales administrator for Prairie Farms Michigan. Everyone patiently waited in line, and everyone was so thankful. The grant has been extended through the summer so more events like these are in the works! “The more we come together as a community, the more we participate, the more we can grow as a community and heal. The foundation is always willing to put together a community event. This was an event that the community could come out and participate in and it helped families,” said Clovis Bordeaux, strategy and marketing officer for the Battle Creek Community Foundation.

“The kindness of our community is really on display here,”

Kevin Farhat, Owner, Garage Bar and Grill.

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING A MEAL

## GARAGE BAR AND GRILL

By: Allison Gravis

When the Coronavirus pandemic started to threaten the jobs of thousands in Grand Rapids and the ‘Stay at Home Order’ was issued, many worried if life would ever feel normal again. Hundreds of local restaurants and other small businesses were forced to shutter, laying off staff or scrambling to adjust their business models. Kevin Farhat, owner of the Garage Bar and Grill near downtown Grand Rapids, saw an opportunity.

7 Farhat, along with co-owner David Levitt, was quick to reach out to other local businesses with an opportunity to sponsor meals prepared by the restaurant for anyone in need. After gathering \$15,000 in donations from generous partners—Third Coast Construction, Mercantile Bank, Car City, and more—Farhat announced the news, 100 completely free meals a day, for 30 days, available to anyone who needed one. The effort was an immediate success. Every single meal was given away to someone who needed it during the month of April.

When 30 days passed, the promotion was supposed to end. Instead, Michigan’s “Stay at Home Order” was extended and Farhat reached back out to the community. “The interest and the need was still there, and so was the generosity,” said Farhat. “After the order was extended, we went back and asked the partners if they wanted to do it again, and they donated another \$15,000 and we did it through the “Stay at Home

Order.” All in all, the Garage Bar supplied over \$57,000 worth of meals over 60 days. Not only was the mission geared towards giving back to the community, but because of the initiative, the downtown restaurant was able to remain operational, and retain nearly all of their employees. Garage Bar South, the second location, temporarily suspended operations but consolidated all staff to the remaining location.

Thanks to the Garage Bar Cares promotion, Farhat estimates that only a couple of employees across both locations temporarily received unemployment benefits. Front of house staff took phone orders and greeted patrons as they picked up their meals. Kitchen staff remained busy as ever, cooking for 100 every day. Extra staff worked in the building on remodeling and cleaning tasks. Kevin expressed, “Overwhelmingly, people are so thankful and so generous, and it gave my

crew a sense of accomplishment and giving back. They really stepped up. Overall, it is nice to give, and they appreciated what we did.”

Since the end of the promotion, Garage Bar and Grill has since reopened for dine-in service, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. The generosity supplied during the most difficult months has not been lost on the community. “I was pleasantly surprised with the return of the guests and the amount of sales we’ve done since we have been back. It’s been an amazing uptick in sales, and even though we are practicing social distancing, it’s still busy and the guests are still appreciative,” Farhat adds. “It’s the community supporting those in need, which is keeping our staff employed. The kindness of our community is really on display here.”



“The community also came together, volunteered their time and helped in any way they could,”

Betsy Darling, Manager, Olivera’s Sports Pub and Grill.

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING A MEAL

# OLIVERA’S SPORTS PUB AND GRILL

By : Mario Martorana

Olivera’s Sports Pub and Grill restaurant is located in downtown Ionia. I spoke with Betsy Darling, Manager at Olivera’s, to gather insight regarding the amazing thing Olivera’s restaurant did on Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020, during COVID-19. It was called “Free Meals for Families in Need.” On Easter Sunday, Olivera’s restaurant provided meals to families less fortunate during this pandemic for them to enjoy. Olivera’s wanted to give back to the community, especially to the families in need during the pandemic. To make this giving event a success, staff volunteered their time on Easter to come in, help out, and serve the families. The community also came together and volunteered their time and helped in any way they could.

Volunteers helped deliver the meals throughout the community to any families who were not able to physically drive to the restaurant. If families were able to drive, they waited in their cars in the drive-thru line at the restaurant to pick up their meal. The cars were lined up around the restaurant to the property across the street. Due to COVID-19, no one was allowed to pick the meals up inside. The volunteers and workers would wheel the packaged meals on a cart to the car windows for a contactless drive-thru pick-up. Masks were donated for the workers and volunteers to wear to make sure they were safe, as well as the people receiving the food. The meal consisted of chicken, potatoes, and breadsticks. Halina Biella, owner of Olivera’s, told me they used roughly 1,200 pounds of chicken, 1,000 pounds of potatoes, and 400-500 breadsticks making these delicious meals for families in the Ionia area to enjoy.

Many families throughout Michigan, as well as the United States, were struggling to make ends meet during this time, and some continue yet today. Grocery stores were having difficulty supplying food on their shelves during the Stay at Home mandate. Olivera’s stepped up and made it possible for many of these families to enjoy a warm meal, prepared for them at no cost for the Easter holiday, and to enjoy this food with their family members.





**“...be there for people to help fill the fear and loneliness of this moment,”**

**Chris (Elmo) Walton, Owner, Max and Emily's Eatery.**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING A MEAL

## MAX AND EMILY'S EATERY

By : Liv Rau

Max and Emily's Eatery is a longstanding, crowd-favorite delicatessen in downtown Mt. Pleasant. Max and Emily's delicious sandwiches, soups, and baked goods have built a strong reputation in the community, but that's not the only thing that keeps the customers coming back—it's their giving spirit.

Four years ago, Max and Emily's began a free food program called “People Helping People.” Initial inspiration for the program was due to the local soup kitchen being closed on Sundays. To address the issue of food insecurity on Sundays, former Max and Emily's owner, Tim Brockman, began distributing free sack meals from the restaurant to anyone who needed it. Every Sunday for the past four years, Max and Emily's has continued the tradition begun by Tim and estimates that it provides over 4,000 free meals per year to locals.

Fast forward to 2020, where the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing food insecurity, economic hardships, and poverty levels in every town—Max and Emily's has again stepped up to assist the community through tough times. As our country shut down in attempts to contain the coronavirus, the Mt. Pleasant soup kitchen was also forced to close its doors. Max and Emily's, under the leadership of current owner, Chris “Elmo” Walton, committed to fill the void in the community's access to healthy food.

The restaurant has expanded their “People Helping People” program to provide free meals EVERYDAY to the local homeless population or anyone struggling to make ends meet. Elmo tells that it was important for the restaurant to transform their give-back program to mirror the needs of the community and to “be there for people to help fill the fear and loneliness of this moment.” He also notes the bravery that it takes to ask for help in your time of need and reiterates “everyone who uses the program is like any other guest and are treated with the same dignity and respect as any customer.”

Although the financial hardships from the pandemic have turned Max and Emily's profits upside down, the restaurant has put the needs of the community first. The generosity is contagious and has prompted other local businesses to get involved by donating produce and baked goods to help offset the cost of providing high quality free meals. As of July 20, 110 days since the beginning of the COVID-19 shut-down, Max and Emily's had given away an astounding 4,732 meals.

It is truly a team effort that has made this program so successful. As they say, at the end of the day, we are all just “People Helping People.”



# **TOURISM GIVING: SHARING ROOMS AND SPACE**

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**TCF CENTER:  
BECOMES HUB FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

**TRAVEL MARQUETTE:  
HOSPITALITY FOR HEROES**

**THE INN AT ST. JOHN'S:  
OPENS DOORS TO BLOOD DRIVE**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING ROOMS AND SPACE

# TCF CENTER: BECOMES HUB FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION

By: Kirsten Borgstrom

Most folks in the tourism industry know Detroit's TCF Center, formerly Cobo Center, as the destination for major conferences and events like the North American International Auto Show. However, during 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic when shows were cancelled, conferences paused, and travelers almost nonexistent, the TCF Center shifted gears from visitors to taking care of the people of the Detroit community.

Partnering with the Detroit Chapter of Food Rescue US, a technology-based, volunteer-driven agency committed to reducing food waste and food insecurity in America, the TCF Center stepped up to use the facility for food distribution.

According to Food Rescue US, an estimated one in seven people are struggling with food insecurity in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic, causing poor health, emotional stress and mental burden. Coupled with the fact that each year, the United States throws away 40 percent of its food supply. Its solution is implemented on a national level, in major metropolitan areas across the country including Detroit.

Each Friday, volunteers from the Detroit Chapter of Food Rescue US work alongside TCF Center employees, on the venue's loading dock, to collect tons of food from local restaurants, grocers, and other food providers. They organize the donations for local nonprofit agencies and churches to pick up and redistribute to those in need.

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"We set up docks to comply with regular commercial, federal and local food safety guidelines," said Claude Molinari, General Manager of TCF Center. "The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) worked with Food Rescue US and provided oversight throughout the contract period, conducting audits to ensure food safety plans are followed. We made sure all of their needs were met to do so."

To date, more than one million pounds of meat, fresh produce and packaged foods has been distributed.

**"We made sure all of their needs were met..."**

Claude Molinari, General Manager, TCF Center.



# TRAVEL MARQUETTE: HOSPITALITY FOR HEROES

By Julia Masson

Travel Marquette offers a travel guide to visitors, filled with information about the best restaurants, hotels, and things to do in Marquette County. In response to COVID-19, Travel Marquette launched “Hospitality for Heroes,” a new program that pairs frontline medical professionals leading the fight against COVID-19 with local hotels for nightly accommodations.

The rooms are made available at no charge to doctors, nurses, EMTs, paramedics and other frontline medical staff who need a place to sleep, recharge or isolate from their families. Although they cannot help everyone, they are doing their best to accommodate as many people as possible. They plan to continue the program as long as

donations keep coming in. The program is a collaboration between Travel Marquette, Marquette County and the Marquette County Health Department. The program is being funded by grants from regional and national foundations so that hotels can be reimbursed for costs associated with hosting workers.

Participating in the program is easy. Healthcare workers must fill out an online application and attach a copy of their badge or letter from their employer certifying their license is active. Requests are reviewed in the order they are received. The program covers a maximum of five nights free, and any more nights above that the individual will be responsible to pay for. All of the hotels included in this

program are following mandated sanitation and social distancing guidelines.

“During this crisis, medical professionals have been working in the most challenging circumstances, sacrificing their own needs for the greater good,” says Susan Estler, Executive Director of Travel Marquette. “We are honored to work with local hotels to support these heroes as they continue to serve the community during this difficult time. Furthermore, we are thankful to those foundations who have donated funds to make this program possible.”

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“...sacrificing their own needs for the greater good,”

Susan Estler, Executive Director, Travel Marquette.



**“We have to take care of our community; we are here because of it,”**

**Paul Wegert, Managing Director for The Inn at St. John’s.**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING ROOMS AND SPACE

## THE INN AT ST. JOHN’S: OPENS DOORS TO BLOOD DRIVE

By : Lauren Janes



A hotel usually is not the site for a blood drive. Weddings and conferences don’t pair well with needles and blood, leaving hotels a less than ideal venue to host a drive. However, the global pandemic which impacted the tourism industry beyond measure, changed this perception for The Inn at St. John’s located in Plymouth.

Due to Michigan’s ‘Stay at Home Order,’ many churches could not host the blood drives that they typically would. Simultaneously, The American Red Cross faced severe blood shortages due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 17, 2020 the group said, “due to an unprecedented number of blood drive cancellations in response to the coronavirus outbreak ... [there is] heightened concern for blood collection organizations and hospitals across the country.” At the time, canceled blood drives caused some 86,000 fewer blood donations.

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Dr. Robertson Davenport is the director of Transfusion Medicine at Michigan Medicine in Ann Arbor. In March he said, “I am looking at the refrigerator that contains only one day’s supply of blood for the hospital.”

That’s when Paul Wegert, CEO of Boutique Hotel Professionals and the Managing Director for The Inn at St. John’s, saw an opportunity to step in and help. Michigan’s statewide restrictions on weddings, meetings, and conferences left The Inn at St. John’s 48,000 square feet of ballrooms and meeting spaces empty. This opened up the perfect opportunity for a wonderful partnership with American Red Cross.

With assistance from Diane Risko, Regional Account Manager of The American Red Cross, The Inn at St. John’s transformed its Grande Ballroom, that typically hosts wedding receptions and corporate events, into a blood drive center. “We are so appreciative of the team at The Inn at St. John’s. It’s hard to find adequate space to host blood drives, and they always go above and beyond to accommodate us and help in any way,” Risko says.

Wegert explains, “Approximately 50% of our business is wedding/social and the other 50% is corporate business. The way the travel industry is now with COVID-19, corporate business is basically on hold due to statewide restrictions limiting weddings and events to 10 or fewer. As a result, our ballrooms have been sitting empty and dark since March 2020.”

The first blood drive held at The Inn at St. John’s was on April 10, 2020. Since then, there have been nine more with additional ones scheduled every month through May 2021. At the August 13, drive The American Red Cross started checking for antibodies in the donors.

“It has turned out that our location is perfect for [the blood drives]. They have been averaging 80 to 100 donors per drive. We plan to continue this partnership with The American Red Cross even after the pandemic settles down,” Wegert says. For more information on upcoming blood drives visit The American Red Cross of Michigan website at [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).

# **TOURISM GIVING: SHARING MONEY RAISED**

**RETRO BOAT RENTALS**

**MICHIGAN CARES FOR TOURISM:  
THEY CARE. WE CARE.**

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**TRAVEL MICHIGAN:  
GIVING WHEN THERE IS NO FUNDING**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING MONEY RAISED

# RETRO BOAT RENTALS

By : Julia Masson

Retro Boat Rentals in Saugatuck is a vintage boat rental business that has helped other small businesses survive financially during COVID-19. The organization thought it would be a great idea to run a promotion during the pandemic to use their income to help other local businesses in the community. When any of their customers booked a boat rental reservation for a weekday during the 2020 summer season, they used half of the reservation's cost and purchased a local businesses' gift card to send to the customer. For example, if the customer booked a boat ride for two people, at a cost of \$115, the customer would also receive a gift card of \$57.50 to a local restaurant or retailer of their choice.

Retro Boat Rentals' generosity gained significant support from the community, and a lot of people joined in to support their cause. In an interview with The Saugatuck Center for Arts, owners John Sharar and Lauren Stanton see this hardship as an opportunity to "get to know fellow business owners in a way where we are all here for each other." Their promotion has brought their community together into a team working towards one goal. Sharar said, "All of us in Saugatuck/Douglas were nervous about what our upcoming summer season would look like, and we were all shut down at the time. We thought, if we could get people looking ahead to the summer for boat rentals, we could get folks to pick their favorite restaurant or retail shop and could get some money flowing for everyone. It was honestly so amazing how many people reached out and took part in this. It helped all of us."

On their Facebook page they shared, "We felt it was a win-win-win for everybody at a time when we definitely all need each other. We're thankful for all the hard work that's going on behind the scenes of our community to reimagine our upcoming summer season and open up our tourist town safely and thoughtfully for businesses, employees and visitors alike." As of July, they had purchased just over \$5,000 in gift cards for businesses in their community. It is giving like this that helps keep our communities alive during tough times.



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**"We felt it was a win-win-win for everybody at a time when we definitely all need each other,"**  
Retro Boat Rentals.



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TOURISM GIVING: SHARING MONEY RAISED

# THEY CARE. WE CARE. MICHIGAN CARES FOR TOURISM.

By : Kirsten Borgstrom

In the Spring of 2020, when COVID-19 started to shut down Michigan's tourism industry, a time when Michigan Cares for Tourism would typically be planning and preparing for an annual clean-up event, they found themselves pivoting and trying to come up with a way to help an industry near and dear to their heart. The organization that has been hosting annual events to rejuvenate and refresh Michigan's historic, cultural, and natural attractions turned their mission inward to provide support for the people, the faces of many of Michigan's tourism destinations, and launched the "They Care, We Care, Michigan Cares for Tourism" online fundraiser.

"For the past eight years, over 3,000 Michigan tourism industry employees volunteered their time, talents, and resources to breathe new life into attractions and destinations around the state through our Michigan Cares for Tourism clean-up events. Many of these same volunteers and all these destinations have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Patty Janes, Grand Valley State University professor and Michigan Cares for Tourism coordinator. "We knew we needed to do something, and we hoped creating this online fundraiser would help bring hope to members of our tourism industry."

The MC4T Board of Directors created a fundraiser as an opportunity for those who love to travel in Michigan to make a difference for the more than 600,000 hospitality, lodging, and food services employees throughout the state. For each donation received, Michigan Cares for Tourism sent a thank you gift. "We wanted to show the love and appreciation to those supporting the tourism industry," Janes added. Donors received Michigan Cares for Tourism stickers, t-shirts, hats, water bottles, or Michigan steppingstones depending on the level of support. The Michigan Cares for Tourism organization purchased these items to give, and covered the cost of shipping, to ensure 100% of every donation went directly to those in need.

"We hoped that those who care about Michigan's tourism industry as much as we do would be willing to make a donation to the front line employees in need, to help ensure our favorite travel destinations are fully functioning once we are able to travel again," Janes added.

More than \$5,000 was raised in support of the many housekeepers, servers, tasting room staff, destination marketers, cooks or maintenance technicians who were impacted by COVID-19. Michigan Cares for Tourism worked with the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association (MRLA) to make sure donations went directly to employees through The Michigan Hospitality Industry Employee Relief Fund.

**"We knew we needed to do something, and we hoped creating this online fundraiser would help bring hope to members of our tourism industry,"**  
Patty Janes, Coordinator, Michigan Cares for Tourism.



**“The collaboration of creating and implementing this fundraiser was such an uplifting, unifying activity,”**

**Dave Lorenz, Vice President, Travel Michigan/MEDC.**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING MONEY RAISED

## TRAVEL MICHIGAN: GIVING WHEN THERE IS NO FUNDING

By : Kirsten Borgstrom

During a time of budget cuts, the financial stability of an organization is typically their primary focus. Flash back a few months when Travel Michigan, the state’s tourism promotion arm, was in that position and while their budget was always on their mind, their main concern was the financial health and future of the tourism industry as it tried to weather the COVID-19 pandemic.

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“At the height of the pandemic more than 55% of the tourism industry was either furloughed or laid off, not working at all. There was a sense of doom and absolute loss of hope within the industry,” commented Dave Lorenz, Vice President of Travel Michigan, a division of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. “We knew something needed to be done. We wanted to help the very people who welcome visitors to our communities, who share their talents as musicians and such, and we needed the industry to come together to get it done.”

Representatives from Travel Michigan, along with several tourism entities started meeting, virtually, trying to come up with that great idea of how to give back to the industry. Several brainstorming sessions and work groups later, an idea was hatched where the industry could offer a week-long virtual concert and entertainment series with the goal of raising funds for the Michigan Hospitality Industry Employee Relief Fund, an initiative of the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association’s Education Foundation to assist frontline hospitality industry members displaced due to the pandemic. The relief fund was already underway and receiving tens of thousands of requests for assistance.

“The collaboration of creating and implementing this fundraiser was such an uplifting, unifying activity,” Lorenz added. “From show development to production, scheduling, technical aspects, and show hosts, everyone brought a different skillset to the table to make the event happen. It was an emotional boost we all needed.”

Co-hosted by MLive’s John Gonzalez and “Under the Radar Michigan” host Tom Daldin, with the occasional guest appearance by Dave Lorenz, a five-day virtual variety show kicked off in conjunction with National Tourism Week. During the 7pm hour each night Michigan entertainers, restaurant workers and owners, celebrities, and athletes to name a few shared performances, food and beverage demonstrations and more live on MLive’s Facebook page. Viewers tuned in each night to watch, have fun, and support Michigan’s tourism industry. In all, \$30,000 was raised to assist tourism industry workers through the Michigan Hospitality Industry Employee Relief Fund.

“It was an enjoyable week of entertainment and we were all sad to see it come to an end,” Lorenz added. “But in the end, we are hopeful to have made a small difference to our tourism industry family during their time of need.” “Come Together” was just one of many ways Travel Michigan, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, gave back during these unprecedented times. If you missed any of the “Come Together” episodes you can find them on MLive’s YouTube Channel.



# **TOURISM GIVING: SHARING EXPERTISE**

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**THE THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY'S:  
VIRTUAL EDUCATION**

**FORD HOUSE'S FLOWERS**

**DETROIT CITY DISTILLERY:  
UNLIKELY HAND SANITIZER**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING EXPERTISE

# THE THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY: VIRTUAL EDUCATION

By: Lauren Janes

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A three-part series, entitled “The Science of Shipwreck Exploration,” connected students with Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary archaeologists. The program started this past Spring when schools were forced to abruptly close their doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary – who organized the virtual learning events – also had to temporarily close their doors to visitors.

Designated a national marine sanctuary in 2000, Thunder Bay is a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Sanctuary’s team educates students, community members, and tourists about the Great Lakes and specifically shipwrecks in northwestern Lake Huron. Typically, the group would engage visitors through glass bottom boat tours or in-person instruction.

The Thunder Bay team developed an education initiative after the ‘Stay at Home Order’ prevented their typical forms of engagement. In a virtual classroom, the group brought interactive lessons to Alpena High School students at home. Students explored the physics and technology involved in scuba diving. The program transported students from the discovery of a shipwreck to documentation of the site while (virtually) scuba diving, and culminated in studying the chemistry of artifact conservation. Each part of the series was delivered by a different sanctuary archaeologist.

“We’ve all had to use our imaginations and think about how we can still connect to our resources – if they are natural or cultural – how can we connect people to them, because that’s how they will care,” said Stephanie Gandulla, NOAA affiliated archaeologist and diver, who helped create the curriculum. NOAA’s Thunder Bay National

Marine Sanctuary main mission is to protect the rich history of the Great Lakes. “Once you are connected to a place you are going to care about it, not just the compelling shipwreck stories, but also the challenges the entire ecosystem is facing,” Gandulla continued. Climate change, over-fishing, and improper agricultural practices are some of the problems affecting this area.

The “Science of Shipwreck Exploration” lessons provided a unique learning experience for students. The classes were presented live. Gandulla shared that one of her favorite components of the virtual classroom was everyone is in their homes, students asking questions as they learned. “It wasn’t like I submitted a presentation and students had to watch a recording. It was very conversational, like I was actually in the classroom with them.” She found students to be more engaged in the virtual learning than



**“It was very conversational, like I was actually in the classroom with them,”**  
Stephanie Gandulla, NOAA Archaeologist, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

they had in years past when she had presented in-person.

“We’ve worked hard with the instructors to make it something they could then take, make it their own, and re-use,” Gandulla continued. The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary pivoted from mostly in-person programming to virtual. “Whether it’s to local Alpena and Northeast Michigan or it’s across the globe, we have done half-a-dozen other virtual programs.” From a virtual 360° Dive on the D.M. Wilson to “Exploring the Lakebed in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary,” NOAA created more resources that can be accessed on their website.

“Since tourism is such a hands-on, in-person, real-world experience, it has faced some of the biggest challenges in these times when we have to be home,” Gandulla shared. While the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary’s offices are still closed, they continue to

educate about the sanctuary’s natural and cultural resources.

In previous (‘normal’) years Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary would take students out on the glass bottom boat Lady Michigan. The group says “we will again.”



TOURISM GIVING: SHARING EXPERTISE

## FORD HOUSE'S FLOWERS

By: Lauren Janes

Ford House allows visitors to see the family home of a great American dynasty, Edsel & Eleanor Ford Family. On its 87 acres located in Grosse Pointe Shores sits a lagoon, recreation building, meadow, rose garden, and the Ford family's primary residence. This Spring, as COVID-19 closed most activities in the state of Michigan the non-profit's team wanted to give back to the community it's been a part of since the property's 1926 inception.

On a sunny spring day, The Ford House's staff from all over the property – facilities, landscaping, security, communications, development – cut purple and orange tinted tulips. The group's horticulturalist, Kelley Maricle, then created flower arrangements. The goal: bring the beauty of Ford House's garden to people who needed a smile the most.

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On March 13, when Ford House got news that they needed to close, the team sprang into action. From cleaning supplies to N-95 mask, Ford House donated all it had to local hospitals. Then in early April a large sign hung across the entry with the message: Thank You Healthcare Heroes. May flowers would typically bring visitors to the Tribute Garden. The state of Michigan's "Stay at Home Order" prohibited Ford House from hosting visitors, however. The group's response was to bring a part of the garden to the people hit hardest by the coronavirus outbreak.

Cynthia Sohn is the Development & Community Engagement Manager for Ford House. Over the course of the week, Sohn was a part of cutting and delivering flowers to the community. "We cut the Tribute Garden flowers, which were thousands of tulips, put them in vases and we took them around to the to all the people who support us, who were homebound, several elderly people, and especially our healthcare workers. We put them on their front-porch, rang the doorbell, and told them we were leaving them," Sohn remembers.

People were reluctant to answer their front doors due to the pandemic, Sohn says. Once the recipient registered that the flowers were a gift, the person would fill with joy saying, "oh my gosh, that's so nice." Sohn remembers some of the people who opened their doors hadn't seen nor talked to many people in a while – showing the importance of such a small gesture.

**"It's little tiny things..."**

**Cynthia Sohn, Development & Community Engagement Manager, Ford House.**

Since the start of the pandemic, The Ford House membership has been slightly affected. The biggest limitation Ford House faces is in suspending its in-house tours. Sohn shares that the group does not "feel that [in-house tours] are completely safe, at this point. We don't have air-conditioning or great ventilation and there are a lot of tight places in the house. But, we are open outside."

Visitors continue to visit the gardens, walk along the lake, and attend COVID-19 safe events and workshops. The Ford family's legacy continues to inspire and support their neighbors.

"It's little tiny things," Sohn says, "it's nothing like others have given. But you feel helpless and you want to do something."



TOURISM GIVING: SHARING EXPERTISE

# DETROIT CITY DISTILLERY: UNLIKELY HAND SANITIZER

By : Lauren Janes

“Not only did the situation with The Distillery look dire, but the whole world did. The idea was we need to make a lot of sanitizer because people need it,” said Mike Derksen, Co-Founder of Detroit City Distillery (DCD). During an unprecedented time, when friends and families were asked to not see each other due to COVID-19, a company built on friendship survived through innovation. Just as couples pivoted from traditional weddings to Zoom ceremonies and graduations went virtual, DCD paused production of spirits to make sanitizer. The company was built by eight childhood friends wanting to see each other more and make spirits the old fashion way. However, COVID-19 changed the company’s plans. The Distillery closed its tasting room and forced the founding friends to make the tough call of laying-off many employees, many of whom became close friends to the founding eight owners.

In the ashes of what appeared the bleakest of futures for the company an opportunity arose: the community needed more sanitizer and DCD had an ample supply of products needed to make large quantities of the disinfectant. “Our distillery is going to go under,” Derksen thought, “We might as well go out doing the right thing. I had zero idea what was going to happen in life, let alone what was going to happen to The Distillery. If you were to ask me ‘what do you think the odds are that The Distillery would survive this,’ I would have said, ‘not very good.’ But at least we had the goods to make a bunch of sanitizer and we could help a lot of people.”

Since mid-March, DCD began producing hand sanitizer per World Health Organization specifications. J.P. Jerome is a founding owner of DCD and now runs its operations. Jerome says before the pandemic, small distillers like DCD were not legally allowed to make nor sell sanitizers. However, regulations became looser due to national need. “The only thing we were doing for about two months was sanitizer,” he said. The group worked to get over 25,000 gallons of hand sanitizer to over 200 organizations on the frontlines in Michigan. Another 75,000 gallons of ethyl alcohol was sold to help organizations make more disinfectants. 480 gallons alone of DCD sanitizer went to the City of Detroit Police and Fire Departments.

**“...we might as well go out doing the right thing,”**

**Mike Derksen, Co-Founder, Detroit City Distillery.**

After two months the group says bigger producers caught up to the need, but DCD still had a lot of sanitizer. Instead of trying to sell it, DCD donated 6,500 16oz bottles to We the People of Detroit – a community-based grassroots organization devoted to inform, educate, and empower Detroit residents on issues surrounding civil rights, land, water, education and more.

DCD is back to making their usual products: bourbon, rye, whiskey, vodka, and gin. The group says they were able to hire back all its employees that were laid off. As for sanitizer, they won’t be making it but require it if coming to visit their new outdoor seating patio.

# **TOURISM GIVING: SHARING RESOURCES**

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**THE HENRY:  
AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION BY MARRIOTT**

**STORMY KROMER GIVES BACK**

**THE PARADE COMPANY:  
A COSTUME DIRECTOR'S CALL TO HELP HER COMMUNITY**

**MASKS FOR MARQUETTE**



**“...making sure our associates- our Henry family- felt at ease and appreciated,”**

**Tara Wallen, Guest Service Ambassador, The Henry.**

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING RESOURCES

## **THE HENRY: AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION BY MARRIOTT**

By: Haley Brown

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The Henry Autograph Collection is a hotel catering to mainly business travelers and it is often referred to as a “home away from home” for many travelers. As COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, The Henry followed all guidelines required by the City of Dearborn, Marriott Corporation, and the State of Michigan. Unfortunately, due to business demands and lower occupancy many of the ambassadors at The Henry were laid off. During this time, managers and limited ambassadors in security and engineering were kept on staff to keep the hotel running.

Tara Wallen, a guest service ambassador at The Henry shared, “One of the most notable aspects of our COVID-19 response, in my view, was making sure our ambassadors, our Henry family, felt at ease and appreciated. In March, The Henry sent each ambassador who was laid off a note from the owner thanking them for their hard work and wishing to see them back to work quickly, along with a \$50 Meijer gift card. Additionally, these ambassadors were regularly sent a newsletter updating them on what was being done at the hotel so they would not be left in the dark. Finally, a Facebook group page was made for ambassadors to communicate with each other about both serious topics (e.g., unemployment questions, updates on family and friends) and to have some time together. These virtual gatherings included moments to wish each other a happy birthday, share funny pictures, and simple life updates to stay connected. By mid-summer, the hotel general manager personally called each ambassador still laid off to speak with them individually regarding plans for coming back to work and potential timelines. It is well known that turnover is a huge problem in hospitality, but it is clear The Henry truly values its ambassadors and fosters an environment of support that encourages many to stay for years.”

COVID-19 has significantly impacted all of the hospitality and tourism industry which has forced everyone to be flexible. The Henry has done particularly well in staying connected to ambassadors and responding to this pandemic. As a result, ambassadors were made to feel cared for and supported, and undoubtedly eager to return to the company when it is safe to do so.



TOURISM GIVING: SHARING RESOURCES

## STORMY KROMER GIVES BACK

By : Kirsten Borgstrom

Just days after an abrupt stop to tours, closing their doors to customers, and suspending production at the Stormy Kromer headquarters in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, a call from a local hospital, followed by many other calls, got the ball rolling again for this iconic company.

"Due to the COVID-19 crisis we knew we had to close our doors to keep our customers and employees safe, but we had no idea the production team would return as quickly as they did," said Gina Thorsen, President of Stormy Kromer. "The first call, inquiring about mask and hospital gown production, was just one of many from hospitals lacking adequate supplies for their staff and it got our team thinking."

A small team of Stormy Kromer sewing engineers, production and purchasing managers met on a Sunday to discuss the critical need and by that evening had created a mask sample according to one of the hospital's specifications. "An employee's husband hit the road, driving 150 miles, to hand deliver the sample," Thorsen added. "Normally with a new product it might take several months to go from idea to production, and we had a sample mask in production in about four days."

Production followed. The women sewing these masks had been making Stormy Kromer products just the week before and now proudly making these essential items. The masks are not N-95 grade masks but rather a coated exterior fabric with a cotton lining to provide protection. Mask orders continued to come in, followed by an initial order for gowns. The gowns go over scrubs, are washable and reusable, and provide an extra layer of protection.

"We started with a smaller crew, bringing back sewing machine operators to the line as orders continued to come in," Thorsen added. "We are doing everything we can to create the safest possible environment for our workers – we've implemented additional cleaning, separated the work stations and have ensured that only those that are essential to produce personal protective equipment are on site."

What started as a request for supplies for essential workers has again shifted to meet another need, a need for masks for the general public. Sales of the iconic plaid flannel face covering began on May 1, and in true Stormy Kromer fashion 10% of sales has been pledged to help support two charitable organizations. Through the month of September, Stormy Kromer has proudly donated over \$31,000. The masks are still for sale online and at local Stormy Kromer retailers. Donations will continue to be made to the organizations as long as the need for face coverings continue.

"The only way we get through this crisis is together," Thorsen added.

**"The only way we get through this crisis is together,"**  
Gina Thorsen, President, Stormy Kromer.

# THE PARADE COMPANY: A COSTUME DIRECTOR'S CALL TO HELP THE COMMUNITY

By: Lauren Janes

For 94 years The Parade Company has captured audiences on Thanksgiving Day. One component that sets “America’s Thanksgiving Parade” apart from the many other day’s events is the unique and well-designed costumes. Despite the novel coronavirus’s impact on Detroit, large-scale gatherings, and holidays, The Parade Company continues to unite and bring joy to its community.

Arlene King is the Costume Director at The Parade Company. King’s grandmother, a seamstress, helped teach her the trade. A lifelong Detroit, for thirty-six years – more than a third of The Parade Company’s existence – King has made sure costumes were ready for the parade. During a typical year, King would sew three to four hundred costumes for the day’s event. 2020 has been anything but typical. In March, when King would normally be preparing for November, the “Stay at Home Order” prevented her from coming into work.

In an interview over the phone, King shared she kept seeing the news of mask shortages. She thought of her

brother, who lives in a senior citizen home, and all of the other people who did not have access to masks. King’s next thought was of the scrap fabric at The Parade Company - breathable cotton that she used to make costumes. King says, “We had this fabric around, we were not using it, so we could put it to good use.”



King presented the idea to The Parade Company’s CEO who gave her the green light. Over the course of about six months, March to August, King sewed over two thousand masks. “I had to come up with a pattern” King shared, “and

figure out the best one.” All the masks King made were donated.

Back in the office, King is working adjusted hours to bring America’s Thanksgiving Parade to life. She says, “regardless of what’s going on, you still have to go on and live as normal as you can. We at The Parade [Company] are still doing what we need to do to get the parade down the street.” Thanks to King, she made it easier for some two thousand people to get back to a new normal.

This year, “America’s Thanksgiving Parade” was live, but televised-only. The theme: We Are One Together - honored frontline workers and heroes of the COVID-19 crisis. Presented by Gardner-White, televised through WDIV Local 4, and produced by The Parade Company, millions of people tuned into the parade’s 94<sup>th</sup> installment. King, along with The Parade Company, continue to unite their community in these unprecedented times.

**“regardless of what’s going on, you still have to go on and live as normal as you can,”**  
Arlene King, Seamstress, The Parade Company.

TOURISM GIVING: SHARING RESOURCES

# MASKS FOR MARQUETTE

BY: Julia Masson

**“We want to do whatever we can to help; we’re not just leaving them out there on their own,”**

**Sally Steen, Organizer of Masks for Marquette.**

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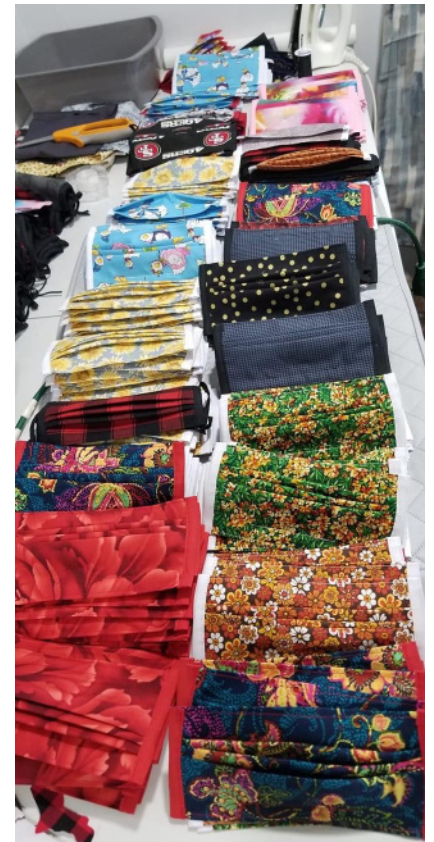
In an effort to combat the shortage of face masks for healthcare workers during COVID-19, a group of Marquette seamstresses began sewing masks. The “Masks for Marquette” group hoped to sew 10,000 masks, and asked others to volunteer their time to help the group reach their goal. Sally Steen, organizer of the “Masks for Marquette” group said, “If you sew or know someone who does, please send them our way. Our goal is to make 10,000 masks, and we can easily give those out to a long list of people that have requested them.” This initiative is all about community. People from all over have jumped in to help make these masks for their local healthcare workers.

With so many helping hands in the mix, volunteers must be sure to follow guidelines in making these masks, which can be found on the group’s Facebook page. After Steen spoke with healthcare workers on how to make the masks most effective, she said “This pattern will fit over an N-95 face mask, and that’s the preferred face mask for medical workers.” Sewing a filter in between the two pieces of fabric is the most crucial part in effectively filtering out pathogens.

The initiative has taken off as so many people join together to give healthcare workers these masks. Just

two days after launching the groups’ Facebook page had over 1,000 members. As of July 13, the page had 2,990 members. Group members are still actively posting on the page and sewing up a storm! Steen said, “I think the main thing is it’s the community coming together to do something because we understand that the pressure is enormous for our healthcare workers. And we want them to know that they have our support. We want to do whatever we can to help; we’re not just leaving them out there on their own.” The group also created a GoFundMe page for those who are not skilled in sewing but would like to support the cause and purchase materials. As of July 13, the GoFundMe page had raised over \$16,000.

Since March 2020, they had exceeded their first goal of 10,000 masks. “Masks for Marquette” is still making masks as fast as ever, with no end in sight. As of June 18, the group had collected 24,028 masks! Their focus now is to sew masks for students and school staff. They will still continue to donate masks to their original target market, but now have such a following that they are looking to expand.



# MICHIGAN CARES FOR TOURISM YEAR IN REVIEW



**2020 REVIEW**

**A LOOK INTO 2021 28**

**VOLUNTEER LIST**

**DONOR LIST**

# MICHIGAN CARES FOR TOURISM 2020 REVIEW



## ADOPT-A-FOREST

Michigan Cares for Tourism (MC4T) sought a way to safely volunteer and give back to Michigan destinations/attractions in need. An existing volunteer project was identified with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division/Michigan Coalition for Clean Forests celebrating the 100th anniversary of state foresters in 2020. This was an ideal way to continue to safely volunteer and help honor this centennial celebration. Their volunteer project set out to remove debris from at least 100 of the known 600 public land sites with existing trash.

Although the Michigan Adopt-a-Forest program is a year-round volunteer effort, the focus to engage others in this mission fit perfectly with MC4T's mission. And, the industry responded. With MC4T's help, Adopt-a-Forest more than surpassed the 100 locations goal. Over 100 tourism industry professionals, most past MC4T volunteers, promoted this effort to family and friends and engaged with others to give back to Michigan's public lands by removing unwanted debris. They safely volunteered and made a positive impact on the environment and visitor experiences. With increased visitation to natural spaces in Michigan there was no better time. Volunteers shared with MC4T what they faced in these trash-filled sites from removing old couches to old building material the impact was apparent.



## N95 DONATION

Board member and volunteer Jane Lovett, owner of Peaches Bed & Breakfast, manages MC4T's supplies/trailers and like others, was worried about not only her business' future but the many others in the industry and world in need. She quickly reacted to the need for N95 masks for medical personnel to remain safe, and when the media shared the shortage of supply, she knew MC4T could help. Jane knew MC4T had an inventory of masks so she made contact with Spectrum Health and found a way to donate all the masks MC4T had available.

Jane also took this opportunity to help MC4T manage the increased supply of event materials and outfitted the second MC4T storage trailer for more efficient volunteer work site management. Along with her husband Doug Wondergem, a frequent MC4T volunteer, they reorganized the two trailers for MC4T to be better prepared for future events. Often cited by MC4T volunteers as the most organized system for supplies, Jane and Doug shared their increased available time with others in need.



## SILENT AUCTION

Raising money is never an easy task for a non-profit organization, but thanks to the solicitation efforts of many board members and the coordination by Olivia Rau, MC4T raised nearly \$6,000 from a 55 item silent auction at the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism. Generous organizations donated baskets and items for the auction ranging from a Muskegon travel adventure to Detroit Red Wings and Tigers tickets, a Lady Americana mattress and registration for the TwoSix Digital training summit. Conference attendees bid on items while touring the trade show featuring tourism organizations and suppliers.

As travel and event restrictions occurred following the conference, some auction items were no longer usable due to the pandemic. Winners of these items were notified with offers to refund their donation in light of what had occurred. None of those contacted asked for the money to be returned, and donating organizations graciously offered to extend the use deadlines. One hundred percent of donations will be used to facilitate future MC4T volunteer events.



## CEMETERY RESTORING EVENT

Sixty Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism conference attendees volunteered to begin their experience in Grand Rapids by helping restore two historic buildings in the Greenwood and Oakhill cemeteries. Volunteers spent four hours sharing their time and talents helping improve these currently unused buildings by repainting the interiors.

The Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation division wanted to enhance these buildings to be used for non-profits engaged with the cemetery, grounds, and area. One of the cemeteries, historically known as a park cemetery, is home to 70 different plant/tree species. The city hopes to designate this area with an arboretum accreditation.

When these cemeteries were built in the mid-1800s, it was common for them to be used for various recreation and meditation purposes. An interview of University of Oregon Professor Keith Eggener stated during this time cemeteries were built in open spaces where little opportunity existed for developed gardens, parks, or museums. Further, he stated, "You suddenly had large pieces of ground, filled with beautiful sculptures and horticultural art. People flocked to cemeteries for picnics, for hunting and shooting and carriage racing. These places became so popular...guidebooks (were) issued to visitors."



## CONFERENCE DONATIONS

Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism attendees donated household and non-perishable food items from the Ronald McDonald House of West Michigan's (RMHWM) "wish list." Conference attendees went above and beyond with their donations in 2020, more than doubling donations from 2019, the first year MC4T coordinated this effort. Many lodging properties donated full boxes of travel sized toiletries with Grand Hotel alone donating six full bags of items. By the end of the first day of the conference, an entire table was overflowing with donated items. Upon receiving photos for an update on how the donation drive was doing, Kim Rantala, RMHWM Development Officer responded with "Wow!!! This is amazing!! I literally have goosebumps."

Rantala also asked if MC4T would have enough volunteers to make door signs for the families, noting that the door signs "make for a nice warm, welcome home when they [patients and families] return from the hospital at the end of the day." In true tourism industry generosity, the response to Kim was, "We're all in!" What resulted was the completion of door signs for each of the patients and families residing at the RMHWM.



## INDUSTRY MENTORING

For the first time, MC4T took action toward investing in human capital and the future of the tourism industry. Fifty-five students from six different universities were partnered with industry professionals as mentors during the annual Pure Michigan Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Engagement between mentors and mentees ranged from email only communication to staff embracing students before, during and after the conference seldom leaving their side. The goals were to help the students transition to professional communication with industry leaders, build an industry network, and participate in the tourism conference for a first time. Mentors wanted to share their insight and expertise with students learning from them at the same time and giving back.

Most mentors were executives (65%) with 90% suggesting doing the program again. One mentor shared, "...helping the next generation and keeping the industry full of great people who may be able to learn something from the people who came before them." Mentees agreed with 94% indicating it should be done again. Mentees stated, "It was great to connect with an industry professional and hear their story as well as their advice on the industry and how to get your foot in the door." "Being able to connect with an industry professional that I otherwise would've been too intimidated by was definitely a strength!"

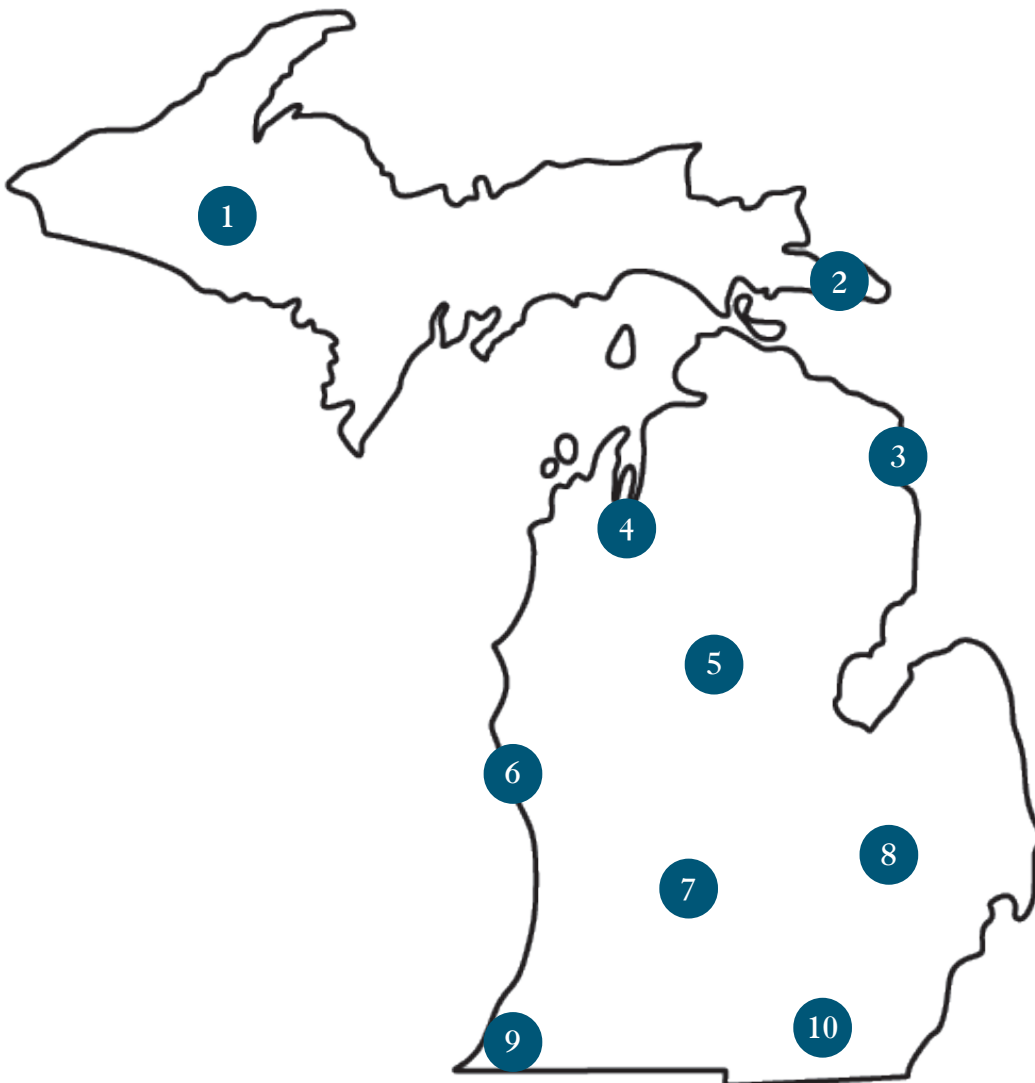


# 2021 - 30 DAYS OF GIVING

The tourism industry has been hit hard and our historic, cultural and natural attractions need us more than ever. Michigan Cares for Tourism (MC4T) has planned SAFE, rewarding, and close to home giving opportunities for all who want to help preserve and protect Michigan's beautiful resources. Join us this fall for our "30 Days of Giving." Specific September/October dates and registration will be available during National Travel and Tourism Week, May 2-8. These one to two day volunteer events have limited space (all projects are for 10-30 people), and are FREE to those able to give of their time and talents.

Don't forget about our year-round volunteer opportunities through our partnership with Michigan's Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division /Michigan Coalition for Clean Forests called Adopt-a-Forest. Over 600 areas around Michigan need your help keeping clean.

Text 'DAYS' to 80888, or scan the QR code below, to join the MC4T Volunteer Event notification list.



**PROJECT DIFFICULTY**

Easy	Moderate	Difficult

# YOU CHOOSE YOUR VOLUNTEER ADVENTURE!



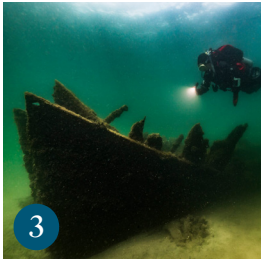
## 1 BOND FALLS SCENIC SITE, PAULDING

Remove/reinstall boardwalk for accessibility, paint buildings, build a trail, and repair benches. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ●



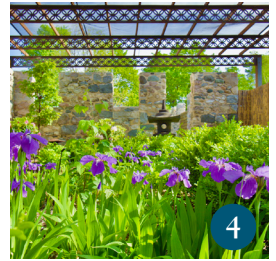
## 2 LIME ISLAND RECREATION AREA

Experience two days on Lime Island engaging in challenging work with trails, land development, drywall, and invasive species removal. Volunteers will stay overnight in rustic island cabins. Two day project. DIFFICULTY: ●▲



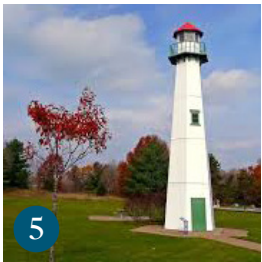
## 3 THUNDER BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY, ALPENA

Volunteers will dive into protecting maritime history with trail development and painting projects. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●▲



## 4 THE BOTANIC GARDEN, TRAVERSE CITY

Spend a day learning, and touring, how forests and history can support tourism, followed by a day of winterizing gardens, fall planting and more. Two day project. DIFFICULTY: ■



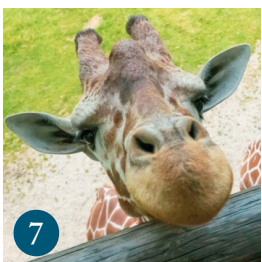
## 5 CLARE WELCOME CENTER

Volunteers will repaint the 60' lighthouse that greets visitors as they come in for travel information, maps, and brochures. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●



## 6 MUSKEGON LUGE ADVENTURE SPORTS PARK

Engage in various projects from trail signage installation, archery range refurbishment to painting and construction of a shed and picnic tables. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●▲



## 7 BINDER PARK ZOO, BATTLE CREEK

Volunteers will engage in a demolition day at the zoo with painting and garden rebuilding too. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●▲



## 8 CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION HISTORIC STATE PARK, IRISH HILLS

Learn how to restore a historic barn then put your knowledge to work! Volunteers will spend a half day learning and a half day doing. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●▲



## 9 NEW BUFFALO WELCOME CENTER

Volunteers will repaint the 60' lighthouse welcoming visitors to Michigan. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ■●



## 10 ISLAND LAKE RECREATION AREA, BRIGHTON

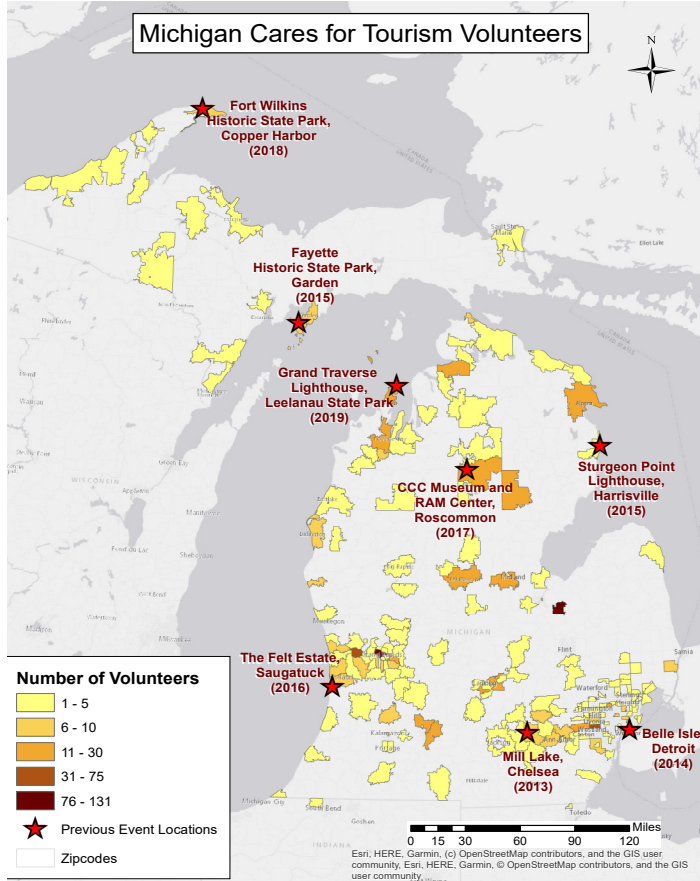
Revitalize rustic bunkhouses with new paint, accessible walkway, native garden and interpretive signage installation. One day project. DIFFICULTY: ●▲

# WITHOUT THE HELP OF OUR VOLUNTEERS, MC4T WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE. WE WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO RECOGNIZE EACH OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO MAKE MICHIGAN THE BEST IT CAN BE!

If we forgot your name, send us an email ([icare@michigancaresfortourism.org](mailto:icare@michigancaresfortourism.org)) and we will send you a special gift!

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Black Eagle Partners	Fox Ford	Humane Society of Kent County	Peaches Bed & Breakfast*	Thornapple Brewing Company
Black Star Farms	Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn Lodge*	Hyatt Place - Detroit/Utica*	Petoskey Area Visitors Bureau*	Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Blue Cross Blue Shield*	Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce & Convention & Visitors Bureau*	Indian Trails*	Pictured Rocks Tours	TICOM*
Bob's Butcher Shop	Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park	Inland Seas Education Association	Place + Main Advisors*	Tim Hortons
Brewer's City Dock	Fred's of Roscommon	It's All About Consulting	Pumpernickel's Eatery	Tip'n the Mitten
Brewery Vivant	Friends of the Felt Estate	J. Petter Galleries	Ray's BBQ, Brews & Blues	TNT Roofing Inc.
Calhoun County Convention & Visitors Bureau*	Garage Bar & Grill	Jiffy Mix	Residence Inn Grand Rapids Airport*	Togpolf
Cambria Hotel Traverse City	Gaylord Area Convention & Tourism Bureau	JJ's Catering & Rentals	Residence Inn Warren	Tourism Cares*
Cantina Mexican Grill	Geiger	Jons To Go	Romence Gardens	Travel Marquette*
Carhartt	General Agency Company*	JW Marriott Grand Rapids	Roscommon County Community Foundation	Travel Michigan*
Cedarbrook Trout Farm	General Mills*	Kent County Hospitality Association*	Rylee's Ace Hardware*	Traverse City Tourism*
Cellet Marketing & Public Relations	Gilmore Catering	Keweenaw Adventure Company	Salt of the Earth	Traverse City Track Club
Central Michigan Inns, Inc.	Go Great Lakes Bay*	Kimberly Mormando, CAS	Salted Cupcake	Troy Marriott
Charlie's Round the Corner	Good Life Cupcake Co.	Kirtland Community College	Sandhill Crane Vineyards	Under the Radar Michigan
Chef Containers	Grainger	Kris Mart	Saugatuck Brewing Company	UPTRA*
Chelsea Community Hospital	Grand Haven Area Convention and Visitors Bureau*	Lake Express	Saugatuck Dune Rides	US Park at Detroit Metro Airport
Cherry Republic	Grand Hotel*	Lakeshore Museum Center	Sault Ste Marie Convention & Visitors Bureau	USS LST 393
Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix	Grand Rapids Brewing Company	Laketown Township	Savor Catering	Village Inn
Churchill Pointe Inn	Grand Rapids Downtown Market	Landmark Inn	Schupan Recycling*	Wahl Tent Company
Circle Michigan*	Grand Rapids Drive	Lear Corporation	Scooters Cafe & Pizzeria	WayPoint Restaurant
Coca-Cola*	Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra	Leelanau Peninsula Wine Trail	Scot Wack Family Construction	Werner Sand and Gravel
Coldwater Country Conference & Visitors Bureau	Grand Traverse Bike Tours	Leelanau Township Community Foundation	SF Supply*	West Branch Visitors Bureau*
Comfort Inn - Chelsea	Grand Traverse Pie Company*	Lions Club Leelanau	Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry*	West Michigan Film Office
Comfort Inn - Grand Rapids	Grand Valley State University/ Alumni Relations	Livingston County Convention and Visitors Bureau*	Sherwin Williams*	West Michigan Symphony Orchestra
Connie's Cafe	Grand Valley State University/ Hospitality and Tourism Management*	Long Weekends	Ship-N-Shore Hotel/Boatel ShowSpan	West Michigan Tourist Association*
Consolidated Fruit Distributors, Inc.		Lost Lake Woods Club	Silver Beach Carousel*	West Michigan Whitecaps
Cooper Hotels		Lucido's Fine Jewelry	South Haven/Van Buren County Convention & Visitors Bureau*	White Pine National Golf Resort
Country Dairy*		Macatawa Bank	SpeakEZ Lounge	White Swan Inn
Courtyard by Marriott Grand Rapids		Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau*	SMG at VanAndel Arena	Ypsi Real*
Downtown		Mackinaw Trail Winery & Brewery		YMCA
Crane's Orchard		Madden Media		
Cross Country Ski Headquarters		Madonna University*		

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