

69th Annual AHCA Gathering

by John McLaughlin

Our meeting will be on Friday October 23 and Saturday October 24, 2020. It is being called a Highland Color Tour! The host hotel is the Delta Hotels Kalamazoo Conference Center. Call (269) 375-6000 and mention American Highland Cattle Association to receive the group rate of \$124/night (1-4 people). Reservation deadline is October 1, 2020. Bus transportation will be provided each day.

Day one will start in the mid to late morning with a visit to Great Lakes Sires, where we will learn about bull health and the semen collection process. There will be Highland and other breeds drawn.

Everyone will also visit Dundonald Farm, in Centreville, Michigan where we will see Highland and Highland cross cattle, the K-Line irrigation system and other operating methods developed by Eddie Mackay and Rick Milliman. In addition, Dundonald will be hosting the Fall Color Highland Cattle Sale, where Midwest Highland Cattle Association members will be offering 10-15 elite Highland heifers for sale. This group will represent most, if not all colors of Highlands available! Details will be published in the near future. Entrants will be viewable online.

We will divide the participants into two groups, one going to Great Lakes and the other to Dundonald. The two groups will come together for a home cooked thresher's lunch at an Amish home near Centreville. All participants will experience Amish hospitality and have a chance to learn a bit about the Amish culture. The groups will then depart for the site they haven't yet visited. It is expected that the group going to Great Lakes after lunch will return to Dundonald on the way back to Kalamazoo.

Day two will begin with the general membership meeting at the hotel, then everyone will depart by bus to McLaughlin Farm in Jackson, Michigan where there will be a field day, including pasture walks, learning about the McLaughlin's use of tumble wheels for rotational grazing, winter feeding of forage on the ground, and other related topics. Several vendors that offer products for grazing or feeding on the ground will be present to demonstrate various products, beyond those in use at McLaughlin Farm. Stay tuned for more information about activities planned for the day.

Highland Color Tour



The group will then travel back towards Kalamazoo, stopping in Marshall, Michigan at Win Schuler's restaurant for its banquet and fundraising auction. Win Schuler's has been in business for over 110 years. Marshall is a delightful town best known for its cross-section of 19th- and early 20th-century architecture.

It has been referred to by the keeper of the National Register of Historic Places as a "virtual textbook of 19th-century American architecture". It is home to the one of the nation's largest National Historic Landmark Districts.

There are over 850 buildings included in the landmark. Established in 1830, town founders Sidney and George Ketchum named the community in honor of Chief Justice of the United States John Marshall from Virginia, whom they greatly admired. This occurred five years before Marshall's death and thus was the first of dozens of communities and counties named for him.

Midwest members are encouraged to hold open houses before and after the official meeting days to welcome AHCA members that are interested in visiting their farms. Watch *The Bagpipe*, your email and your mailbox for additional information as the event draws near.

A collage of images promoting Kalamazoo. At the top is a blue banner with the text "Discover ! KALAMAZOO". Below it is a large white sign that says "Welcome to KALAMAZOO". The main part of the collage is a photograph of a large, multi-story brick building with many windows. To the right of the main image are several smaller images with text overlays: "GIVE A CRAFT™ BEER TRAIL" (showing beer bottles), "LOCAL FLAVORS" (showing colorful food), "Discover KALAMAZOO.COM" (a green banner), "WORLD CLASS MUSEUMS" (showing a museum interior), and "139 MILES OF TRAILS" (showing a snowy landscape).