

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Santa & Mrs. Claus to Visit Airport during 22nd Annual Holiday Music Festival



Grand Rapids, MI – The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is getting into the holiday spirit with a music festival, and a visit from Santa & Mrs. Claus.

Kris Kringle will be listening to children's requests, and passing out treats with Mrs. Claus in the Airport's Grand Hall **from 1 - 4 p.m. on Thursday, December 8th**. The event is free and the public is welcome to attend. Visitors are encouraged to bring a camera to snap a



photo with Santa Claus. Photos with Santa are free of charge, but the airport is asking guests to bring in two non-perishable food items per person.

In addition to Santa's appearance, GFIA's traditional Holiday Music Festival is running the week of December 5-9. The 22nd Annual Holiday Music Festival brings in middle and high school choirs from around West Michigan singing a variety of Christmas carols. Daily performances run from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., but a full schedule is available on the Airport's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/GeraldRFordInternationalAirport.

A total of 15 local choirs representing public, charter and private schools sing 20 minute song sets throughout the day, putting passengers and guests at GFIA in the holiday spirit.

"Our airport is extremely busy around the holidays, but it is important for us to reflect upon what this season is all about," said GFIA Interim President & CEO Phil Johnson. "We are hoping we can put some smiles on children's faces as they sit on Santa's lap and listen to carols, and at the same time we are asking West Michigan to give back to the community by donating non-perishable food items to those in need."

The donated food items will go to Mel Trotter Ministries – a Grand Rapids organization serving the hungry, homeless and hurting in West Michigan through its shelter, food pantry, and job readiness and housing placement services.

"Life-change can start with a meal. That's why we are blessed to partner with the Gerald R. Ford International Airport during our Fall Food Drive again this year," said Dennis Van Kampen, CEO of Mel Trotter Ministries. "Partnerships like this one help make it possible for Mel Trotter Ministries to stock our pantry and serve more than 110 families a week who are seeking emergency food assistance."

For interview or photo requests, please contact Tara Hernandez.

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