



## Fort Gratiot Light Station Sand Sculpting Festival and Competition

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BLUE WATER SANDFEST RETURNS TO FORT GRATIOT LIGHT STATION JULY 12-14, 2019**

A long weekend full of fun for the whole family!

**Port Huron, MI – June 2, 2019** – Master and Advanced Amateur Sculptors from around North America will be gathering for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Sand Sculpting Championships when Blue Water SandFest returns to the Fort Gratiot Light Station July 12-14, 2019. The event has become one of the most important sand sculpture competitions in the United States and has been named one of USA Today's Top 10 and one of Fodor's 10 Best Sandcastle Competitions.

This family-friendly event offers a wonderful array of activities for guests of all ages.

Items of interest:

**Advanced Amateur Doubles Competition** – New this year some of the Advanced Amateur Sculptors will team up to design and execute their creations.

**Blue Water SandFest Live Music Festival** – Live music all weekend long at Blue Water SandFest, with a special "Singers in the Round" on Saturday night starting at 6:00 PM. This will feature Keith Menzies, Jeff Smith, Tommy Moutoux, and Dean Barnette. Other artists throughout the weekend include Julianne Ankely, Denny Dwyer, Raven Ray, the Poltroons and many others.

**Bert Adams of Sand in the City®** will be joining the SandFest Master Sculptor Competition this year. Bert is from Vancouver, Washington and has been sculpting since 2007. Mostly a contest organizer and teacher, he's started more contests than any known person in the world, and annually oversees the Sand in the City® fund raising contests. He LOVES being invited to a contest he doesn't organize. His "Under Pressure" sculpture, (or Hand on Head), is still a favorite on the web (still on the 1st page of Google Images Sand Sculptures). He's gotten 6 AP and UPI photos from his contest entries. Bert is proud of starting the Sand in the City® Contests. These fund-raising contests have generated over \$8M for non-profit organizations, and taught sand sculpture to literally thousands of people. Many Sand in the City® graduates now compete at Masters Contests throughout the USA. Bert's Goal is to make Sand Sculpture the next intramural high school and college sport/competition. Bert is originally from Michigan.

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### EVENT FACTS

- It takes a full week from start-up to tear-down
- Over 500 tons of sand are brought to the Fort Gratiot Light Station from Mid Michigan Materials in Jeddo
- The public has three days to view the sculptures as they progress from piles of sand to works of art – Friday, July 12 through Sunday, July 14
- The event will feature 7 Master Sculptors and 8 Advanced Amateur Solo Sculptors and 6 Advanced Amateur Doubles Sculptors
- Friday – Salute to our Heroes and Educators Day
  - All active duty and veterans of the armed services, first responders and border patrol get in free with valid ID
  - All education employees get in free with valid ID
- Saturday – Blue Water SandFest Amateur Challenge - sculptors, individuals and groups, compete for the Amateur Championship. This is an open competition for kids, families, adults and groups with pre-registration information available at [www.bluewatersandfest.com](http://www.bluewatersandfest.com)
- Family fun – Kid’s Zone with sand sculpting lessons taught by professional sand sculptors
- Live entertainment all weekend – music, Quick Sand Competition, and sand sculpting demonstrations, including Singers in the Round on Saturday night
- Food vendors and the Lighthouse Beer Garden
- Beach access for people to bring their towels and relax on the beautiful Lake Huron shore while watching the progress of the sculptors throughout the day

### PROCEEDS

All proceeds from Blue Water SandFest are used for restoration of the historic buildings and grounds of the Fort Gratiot Light Station County Park.

### PRESS CALENDAR LISTING

Blue Water SandFest – Michigan Sand Sculpting Championships  
July 12-14, 2019

### Location:

Fort Gratiot Light Station County Park, 2802 Omar Street, Port Huron, MI 48060

### Tickets:

\$6 per person, online and at the gate. Children 4 and under are free.

Purchase a 3-day pass for just \$15 allowing entry to the park all weekend to watch the progress of the sculptors.

Tickets are available in advance on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

Event information is available at [www.bluewatersandfest.com](http://www.bluewatersandfest.com).

### Times:

Friday	10:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Saturday	10:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Sunday	10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

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### **About Friends of the Fort Gratiot Light**

Working Together to Keep the Light Burning Bright - The Friends of the Fort Gratiot Light (FFGL) share a passion for the Fort Gratiot Light Station County Park that has exhibited itself in many ways over the years. At first, the focus was financial to support restoration on the oldest lighthouse in Michigan, the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse. Once that goal was met, the focus shifted to the other historic buildings and the grounds of the park. This created a growing opportunity for volunteers to fulfill their passion by continuing fundraising along with supplying physical labor and guidance in the restoration effort.

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