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## Beer association taps Grand Rapids for national convention

By [Pat Evans](#)

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The Grand Rapids beer scene can't resist getting more love — not even the homebrewers.

The American Homebrewers Association confirmed the 2014 National Homebrewers Conference will be held in Grand Rapids from June 10-14, 2014.

The conference will bring an estimated 3,500 visitors to Grand Rapids and its bustling beer scene for seminars and workshops at DeVos Place, said Eric Fouch, president of the Primetime Brewers Association, a Grand Rapids homebrew club.

AHA Director Gary Glass said the association first researched Grand Rapids for the 2010 conference but passed, now settling on the 2014 date. Michigan hosted the conference in 2000 when it came to Livonia.

Grand Rapids beat out several cities for the event, including Austin, Texas, which was knocked out by strict liquor-control laws that prevented further consideration.

“Michigan has a really great brewing community,” Glass said. “Both home and microbrewers are very much involved in the community, and that’s certainly a drawing point.

“And people across the country consider Michigan as a great beer state.”

Glass said one of the major draws was DeVos Place and how willing the hotels are to offer great deals.

Fouch said there has been talk of a seven-city rotation for the conference, and he hopes Grand Rapids would be included.

“One of the main goals for the 2014 convention is to make Grand Rapids stand out above the rest of the cities,” Fouch said.

To do that, he said Primetime Brewers will plan events for the weekend that showcase the special features of Grand Rapids many visitors don't get to see such as Founders Brewing Company's aging facility at the gypsum mines.

Although Grand Rapids is rapidly growing in notoriety for its beer, the conference will help showcase the new and lesser-known brewpubs of the city, many more of which will be open by 2014.

“It's gonna be huge,” Fouch said. “It'll really help put them on the map.”



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