



Winteroriginals

Unique, ORIGINAL things to do and see in Illinois' Rockford Region this winter.

Old Man Winter Warms His Spirit with Rockford Region Events

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ROCKFORD, IL — The cold, curmudgeonly face of Old Man Winter has been thawed by the Rockford Region, where the King of Cold has warmed his spirits with all of the unique, fun things to do. From rubbing shoulders with paleontologists at Burpee Museum's PaleoFest to monkeying around at Midway Village Museum's Sock Monkey Madness Festival, Old Man Winter's found so much to do in Rockford he's forgotten his miserly ways and, dare we say, let some sunshine through.

Don't miss these upcoming events. Old Man Winter sure won't!

Belt Out a Broadway Tune

From wicked witches to traveling salesmen, blushing brides to masked phantoms, the characters and music of Broadway leave a lasting impression on theatre-goers from all walks of life. The **Rockford Symphony Orchestra (RSO)** concludes its Pops Series in a not-to-be-missed tribute to the magic and majesty of musical theatre in "**Broadway Today!**" at **7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 6, at the Coronado Performing Arts Center**, 314 N. Main St., Rockford. The evening will feature Broadway stars Rita Harvey, Philip Hernández and Ted Keegan, three outstanding singing actors who are veterans of dozens of musical theatre productions on the Great White Way. They will join the RSO to perform music from the best of Broadway, including songs from *Wicked*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *Cabaret*, and more! Tickets can be purchased at www.rockfordsymphony.com or by calling 815.965.0049.

Walk Like a Dinosaur

Movies like "Jurassic Park" may just be thrilling fictional stories to the average person, but to real-life paleontologists, the distant life of the dinosaurs is a daily reality. From research to down-and-dirty dig sites, the world of paleontology is full of the excitement of discovery. **Burpee Museum of Natural History**, home of Jane, the world's best-preserved and most complete juvenile *T. rex*, is showcasing the multi-faceted world of paleontology at its annual **PaleoFest on Saturday and Sunday, March 6-7**. The weekend features two full days of symposia, children's workshops, and hands-on activities. Join world-class paleontologists as they share their discoveries, including "Tyrannosaur Evolution," giant fossil snakes, "Walk Like a Dinosaur" interactive presentation, an artist studio for teens, and Saturday night dinner keynote by Dr. Phillip Currie of the University of Alberta. Burpee Museum is located at 737 N. Main St., Rockford. For more information on PaleoFest, including admission costs, visit www.burpee.org or call 815.965.3433.

Experience the Magic of Sock Monkeys

A multitude of children's toys come and go, but the magic of the sock monkey has endured through the years, even making its way into a Kia car commercial on Super Bowl Sunday. The amusement and joy of watching a life-sized sock monkey drive a Kia, jump a jet-ski and more was felt by both young and old, and it's this wonderful magic behind the sock monkey that is the theme for **Midway Village's 6th annual**

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Sock Monkey Madness Festival – Abracadabra! Held from **11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 6-7**, Sock Monkey Madness is a tribute to all-things sock monkey. Rockford is home of the Nelson Knitting Company, which manufactured the now-famous red-heeled socks used to create these nostalgic toys, so sock monkeys are near and dear to the Rockford community. From the 4th annual International Sock Monkey Film Festival to the Ms./Mr. Sockford 2010 Sock Monkey Pageant, sock monkey-making workshops to a plethora of sock monkey-related vendors, the festival truly is two days of sock monkey madness! Midway Village is located at 6799 Guildford Road, Rockford. For more information on the festival, visit www.midwayvillage.com or call 815.397.9112.

Brave Bucking Broncos

You won't find any urban cowboys at the **All-Star Rodeo Challenge at the Rockford MetroCentre**, 300 Elm St. in Rockford. The power of the animals, the dirt and dust of the arena, and the blood and sweat of the challenges are taken on by top professional rodeo cowboys. Held at **7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 6, and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 7**, the event features 12 of the world's toughest cowboys matched up against the meanest bucking horses and bulls in the nation in events such as the Rough Stock Only, Bareback Riding, Saddle Bronc Riding and Bull Riding. The two highest scoring athletes in each event will face off in the Showdown Bonus Round, for a winner-takes-all, "let 'er rip" championship round! For tickets or more information, visit www.metrocentre.com or call 815.968.5222.

Immerse Yourself in Art

For true art lovers, experiencing art is indescribable. It's raw emotion made tangible. It's all the words that couldn't be said. It's a piece of someone's soul revealed. The **Rockford Art Museum (RAM)** has upcoming events and current exhibitions that present artwork by artists from various age-ranges and backgrounds, providing an artistic experience that speaks in many voices. The **Opening Day of the Young Artist Show: High School Division** is from **1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 7**. Now in its 68th year, the Young Artist Show is a Rockford tradition that showcases the strength and diversity of art programs across the region. **The exhibit will be on display through April 3.**

At **noon on Friday, March 12**, local printmaker Dave Menard will present the program "**Confessions of an Inkslinger**" as a part of RAM's Art Talks Lecture Series. Menard was an exhibiting artist in the 2008 Rockford Midwestern, a biennial juried exhibition that draws the best works by artists from a nine-state region. Now in its 71st year, the **2010 Rockford Midwestern is currently on display through April 25**, demonstrating RAM's commitment to presenting the breadth and depth of contemporary art in the Midwest.

Also at the Rockford Art Museum, **The World Through a Woman's Eyes in 2010** features artwork by nine local female **on display through March 28**. The exhibition provides a rare look through the eyes of each artist, depicting their unique perspectives of the world in the 21st century.

Rockford Art Museum is located inside Riverfront Museum Park, 711 N. Main St., Rockford. For more information, visit www.rockfordartmuseum.org or call 815.968.2787.

For more fun things to do in the Rockford Region, including events, attractions and winter specials, be sure to visit winter.gorockford.com.

Rockford, IL, is located approximately 60 minutes west of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport off Interstate 90. For information on accommodations and things to do, visit www.gorockford.com. RACVB is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to champion efforts to promote the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. The RACVB generates positive economic impact for our community through investments in tourism.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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