

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Coronado Listed in AOL Photo Gallery as the Number One Wonder in the U.S. Rockford Fans Rallied to Gather Votes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 2, 2010

ROCKFORD, IL —Rockford's own Coronado Performing Arts Center can officially claim the title of the *Top Wonder of the United States*. The majestic theater in downtown Rockford was the top vote-getter overall in an online contest by AOL and the U.S. Travel Association, receiving more than 6,500 votes. A last-minute rally by fans and an organized push through social media by RACVB helped move the Coronado to first place. In addition to bragging rights, the theater is now listed in the AOL photo gallery at <http://news.travel.aol.com/2010/07/01/readers-choice-wonders-of-the-us/>.

RACVB nominated the Coronado as an architectural wonder last May in AOL's Explore America program, in partnership with U.S. Travel Association. The program encouraged web users to select the greatest wonders of the United States by casting their votes online. RACVB worked with the Coronado and other partners to promote the contest through local and regional media, and coordinate an online and social media strategy that would rally the community to support our "crown jewel."

"It's been really exciting to watch the way the community has reacted to this campaign," said RACVB Marketing Coordinator Mika Doyle. "You could see the votes jump in response to tweets, Facebook postings and media coverage. People were really eager to get involved and show their support for the Coronado and our community. This just proves people in Rockford value what this community has to offer."

"Special appreciation for this honor really goes to the more than 6,500 people who cast their vote for the Coronado; to the Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Rockford Register Star for spearheading the campaign of support for the theater; and, once again, to the City of Rockford, the visionary leaders and the countless businesses, private donors and supporters whose efforts secured the survival of the Coronado and continue to help ensure its future," said Michael Goldberg, executive director of the Coronado Performing Arts Center.

-MORE-

Second place went to Mount Rushmore National Memorial, in Keystone, S.D, Yellowstone National Park in Wyo. placed fifth and the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Mo. came in seventh. The Statue of Liberty in New York, N.Y. received an honorable mention.

The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is a private, non-profit organization that champions efforts to promote and further develop the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. RACVB generates positive economic impact for the community through investments in tourism marketing, sales, promotion and advocacy.
www.gorockford.com

###

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Kristina DeCoster, RACVB Director of Public Affairs: 815.489.1664/kdecoaster@gorockford.com