

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Discover the Secret Gardens of Rockford, Illinois USA

(Updated 2/18/2011)

ROCKFORD, IL – Stroll an exquisite Japanese Garden...explore 150 acres of unusual trees, shrubs and perennials...visit historical gardens reflecting those of the late 1800's.

If you think this sounds like British Columbia or North Carolina, think again! It's Illinois' Rockford Region...one of Illinois' three largest cities, just 60 minutes west of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Incongruous? Well, take another look at the "City of Gardens" and its 10,000 acres of parks and public gardens. Here's a tiny sample of what you can experience:

- **Anderson Japanese Gardens** was voted the best Japanese garden in North America in 2004, by the readers of the *Roth Journal of Japanese Gardening*. The 12-acre treasure is open for self-guided tours daily May through October and features waterfalls, ponds, paths, quiet corners and 16th Century Sukiya-style structures, including a guesthouse, teahouse and gazebo. A new visitor center with a restaurant, gift shop and art gallery opened in 2007. Hours vary by season. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$6 for seniors and \$5 for students. Guided tours for groups are available by appointment. Logon to www.andersongardens.org.
- **Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden** began in 1910 as a 150-acre nursery, planted with unusual trees, shrubs and woody plants from the owner's world-wide trips. Today, the Northern Illinois Botanical Society (NIBS) operates the site, which showcases spring blossoms, summer flowers, fall foliage and winter evergreens, plus themed gardens, sculptures, mazes and fountains. When an international team of botanists inventoried the site, they said there was only one other place in the entire world with such diverse and mature plant specimens...in France! Echoing the botanical theme are an art gallery, gift shop, library and spacious education center. Hours vary by season. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for seniors and children age 3-18; admission to special events is additional. For more info, logon to www.klehm.org.

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- **Sinnissippi Gardens**, Rockford's river-side garden spot includes an annual garden meticulously planted with colorful bedding plants, a floral clock planted each year with thousands of annuals and an accredited rose garden. The gardens are a favorite spot for outdoor weddings and the nature path along the river is a popular jogging and walking site. Admission is free. Nicholas Conservatory & Gardens, opening in fall 2011, will be a tropical paradise located in the heart of the city. The entire facility will be the third largest conservatory in Illinois with a total of 21,000 square feet and at the highest point will stand 52 feet.
- **Midway Village Museum's** campus includes a Victorian village with 26 historical buildings filled with artifacts of the era as well as several beautiful 19th century gardens that depict life in northern Illinois from 1890 to 1910. Interpreters in authentic period dress are available seasonally for guided tours.
- **Tinker Swiss Cottage Museum** is re-creating the cottage's Victorian era gardens, including an iris garden, a Victorian rose garden, the railroad gardens, an Illinois prairie meadow and a community garden.

Rockford is located in north-central Illinois at the juncture of I-90 and I-39, an easy 60-minute drive west of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

For more information about the Rockford Region's garden spots, logon on to www.gorockford.com, phone 815.963.8111 or fax 815.963.4298.

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For more information:

Andre Weston, Marketing Coordinator, 815.489.1676, aweston@gorockford.com