

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Rockford to Host Travel Media Conference *Conference provides opportunity to re-write Rockford's story*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2012

ROCKFORD, IL — More than 125 travel journalists from around North America will visit the Rockford Region next year as part of Travel Media Showcase 2013. The tradeshow will fill approximately 1,000 hotel room nights and generate more than \$100,000 for area businesses. But more importantly, it will help spread the word about Rockford.

"This is a chance for us, as a community, to change the story being told about Rockford," said RACVB President/CEO John Groh. "These are people who influence the travel patterns and perceptions of cities. Now we have the opportunity to show first-hand what we have accomplished and the future we are headed toward."

Rockford has become "a tale of two cities" in the national media. Last week the Chicago Tribune did a two-page spread promoting the Rick's Picks exhibit while a separate political story described a very different and bleak Rockford. Earlier this year, Forbes touted the Discovery Center Museum as one of the best in the nation while that same week declaring Rockford one of the ten most miserable cities.

"We've made amazing strides forward. Rockford City Market, Friday Night Flix and Dinner on the Dock have brought new life to downtown. The riverfront has a growing cluster of sites and attractions with the opening of the new section of river walk, the expansion of the Riverfront Museum Park and the new Nicholas Conservatory and Gardens. The national media exposure generated by this conference will help further that momentum," said Groh.

Travel writers from the United States and Canada will attend the event August 20-23, 2013, representing such media outlets as Fox News Travel, Golf Vacations Magazine, Chicago Tribune, Boston Globe, Midwest Living, Huffington Post and Wall Street Journal. Additionally, the conference features vendors from destination marketing organizations, cruise lines, airlines and more.

"This event really puts the spotlight on the Rockford Region. It presents a unique opportunity for us to showcase what we have to offer from our amazing attractions to our 'wow' customer service," said RACVB Board Chairman Linda Heckert. "The travel media will leave with a positive impression of the Rockford Region which they will share with their audiences."

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Previous host cities include:

- Sioux Falls, S.D.
- Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Irvine, Calif.
- Montgomery, Ala.
- Kansas City, Mo.
- Palm Springs, Calif.

Rockford's selection as the next host city was announced Thursday, August 23 at the tradeshow in Sioux Falls, S.D.

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

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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