

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Region Strikes it Big as Bowling Tournament Schedule Grows *RACVB announces “Big Win” bowling tournaments; one tournament’s return since 1976*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 28, 2016

ROCKFORD, IL — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau announced on Thursday the booking of four “Big Win” bowling tournaments that will take place in the Rockford region beginning in **2016 through 2021**. Collectively, participants, coaches and fans who travel to the region for the tournaments will impact the region to an estimated tune of **\$842,000** during their stays.

“The Rockford region has long been a leader in the sports tourism industry and this designation is a result of the many long term and new partnerships we have made with our friends and leaders in the state bowling arena. The “big win” bowling tournaments and events for the upcoming years will make a significant impact through visitor spending leading to our local businesses’ economic growth,” said RACVB president and CEO John Groh. “We realize the tournament business has become increasingly competitive, therefore, we continue to work diligently as a community to offer the best experience possible for our industry partners and guests who continue to come back and visit our region each year.”

The announcement was made at Don Carter Lanes in Rockford, which will host the 2017 Illinois USBC BA Men’s State Tournament in the Spring of 2017.

“It is such a privilege to host the state championship women’s, men’s and youth bowling tournaments and events at Don Carter Lanes, Cherry Bowl, Forest Hills Lanes and Park Lanes in the Rockford region. Our region is known for being a top sports destination as well as a hotbed for bowling so we’re thrilled to be able to contribute to that recognition,” said John Sommer, Don Carter Lanes owner and president. “We value our partnership with the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and their team’s dedication in helping to secure exciting prestigious bowling events that have been coming back for years like the IHSA Girl’s State Bowling Finals to new events like the Illinois USBC BA Men’s State Tournament.”

In addition to the bowling tournaments announced at the news conference, the Illinois Women’s Bowling Association (IWBA) State Finals will take place at Don Carter Lanes and Park Lanes from February 5 through April 17 (10 weekends).

Rockford USBC Youth Association President and USBC Youth Director Ann Buja said, “I am passionate about our local bowling centers having the opportunity to host some of the most prestigious youth bowling events in the state right here in the Rock River Valley. The partnership we have created with the RACVB has allowed us to bring so many more youth bowlers and families into the Rockford area. The northern Illinois bowling community is dedicated to creating an environment that fosters the talent of our youth

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athletes. We are thrilled to continue to be able to bring more opportunities to our own youth and those in the surrounding area by working together to host these events.”

TOURNAMENT LINE-UP

2016 - 2020 Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Girl's State Bowling Finals (ihsa.org)

Date: Feb. 19-20 2016

Location: Cherry Bowl, Rockford, IL

Attendance: 740 bowlers will compete this year.

Economic Impact: Estimated 2,500 room nights and \$500,000 Estimated Economic Impact

Note: The IHSA Board of Directors met and approved a recommendation to extend the IHSA Girls Bowling State Final hosting contract at Cherry Bowl Lanes in Rockford for five years (2016-2020). The Rockford region has been host to the IHSA Girls State Bowling Finals for 24 years.

2016 United States Bowling Congress Illinois (USBC) Youth State Tournament (ilusbcyouth.org)

Date: April 16-17, April 23-24, April 30-May1

Location: Singles and Doubles Events - The Cherry Bowl, Rockford, IL and Team Events - Forest Hills Lanes, Loves Park, IL

Attendance: 350 singles/doubles, 250 teams

Economic Impact: 675 room nights and \$121,500 Estimated Economic Impact

2017 Illinois United States Bowling Congress Bowling Association (USBC) Men's State Tournament (ibabowl.org)

Date: April 1-2, April 15-16, April 22-23, April 29-30, May 6-7

Location: Don Carter Lanes, Rockford, IL

Economic Impact: 1025 room nights, \$184,500 Estimated Economic Impact

Note: This is the third time the USBC BA Men's tournament will return to the Rockford region and their first time back since 1976.

2017 Illinois United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Youth PEPSI State Finals (ihsa.org)

Date: May 2017

Locations: Don Carter Lanes, Rockford, IL (ages 12 – 19 division) and The Cherry Bowl, Rockford, IL (ages 8 – 12 division)

Economic Impact: 200 room nights, \$36,000 Estimated Economic Impact

***RACVB** exists to drive quality of life and economic growth for the citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County through tourism marketing and destination development. gorockford.com*

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