

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Jehovah's Witnesses to Bring Regional Convention Back to Rockford

This multi-weekend event is expected to draw 15,000 attendees to the region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2017

Rockford, IL – The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is thrilled to welcome the annual **Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses** back to Rockford after a ten year absence. This three-weekend gathering will be held at the **BMO Harris Bank Center** in Rockford, **July 28-30, August 4-6 and August 11-13, 2017**. The group last held this convention in Rockford in 2006.

This big win for the Rockford region will draw approximately **15,000 attendees** who are expected to visit from Milwaukee, Madison, Dubuque, Davenport, Kenosha, Racine and the Chicagoland area. The estimated economic impact of the convention is nearly \$589,500 and more than 4,500 room nights are anticipated to be filled during the three weekends.

"It's an honor to welcome back thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses to the Rockford region. After a ten year absence this will be the ninth time we've hosted the convention and we are working diligently with the convention organizers, staff at the BMO Harris Bank Center and other local area businesses to ensure our guests have a memorable experience while they're here," said Lindsay Arellano, Director of Sales and Servicing.

The event theme this year is "Don't Give Up" and features several talks and videos that teach Scriptural lessons. Interviews and re-enactments show how to apply Bible principles to every day life. The event is open to the public. There is no admission cost and no collections are held. All programs begin at 9:20 a.m. and end at various times in the afternoon. A complete schedule including more information about the Jehovah's Witnesses can be found at www.jw.org.

"Every effort is made to arrange large gatherings like this in peaceful and centralized locations where entire families and the local community in general can concentrate on sound counsel from God's Word the Bible. We feel Rockford, Illinois provides such an environment," said Peter Arthurs, Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses media services overseer and Cherry Valley Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses local elder.

The Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses has been in existence for over 100 years. The "Don't Give Up" annual convention will be held throughout the United States and around the world (481 U.S. conventions and 268 English.) As of 2016 there were 8,340,982 Jehovah's Witnesses in 119,485 congregations in 240 lands. They spent 1,983,763,754 volunteer hours in the ministry and conducted 10,115,264 free home Bible studies. Locally there are: 11 English, 4 Spanish, 1 ASL Congregations.

The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. www.gorockford.com

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