

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Reimagined Holiday Parade to Kick Off Stroll on State

*Floats, music and holiday characters are needed for the parade;
applications now available*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2017

Rockford, IL – The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) will transform downtown Rockford into a night of memorable holiday traditions when **Stroll on State presented by Illinois Bank & Trust** marks its **5th anniversary** on **Saturday, November 25, 2017**. This year the event kicks off with a reimagined and expanded **Merry & Bright Holiday Parade** featuring impressive floats, festive music and costumed characters. The parade steps off at 3 p.m. This spectacular parade will be in addition to several other attractions, activities, holiday shopping experiences, the City of Rockford's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony and more.

"We are overjoyed that Stroll on State has become a cherished holiday tradition in the Rockford community. Over the last four years we've worked alongside so many inspiring community partners and volunteers to grow the event by adding new attractions each year," said Tana Vettore, RACVB director of destination development. "We thought the five-year anniversary would be the perfect time to introduce a festive parade to kick off the event in an extraordinary way. We couldn't be more excited to share this new experience with our guests who come to Stroll."

Calling for Parade Entries: Local organizations and businesses are invited to participate in the parade. In order to be part of the parade, participating floats must be decorated with a **Classic Christmas** theme such as the North Pole, Santa's Workshop, or Winter Wonderland. The Stroll on State, Merry & Bright Holiday Parade Committee is pleased to provide commercially prepared floats for rental and use. These floats average 28' in length and 8' in width, include the business or organization's name on both sides, and are ready to ascend and ride. Most rented floats will accommodate 12-15 people. For pricing options, please contact Kristen Paul, RACVB's executive assistant, at kpaul@gorockford.com.

The fees to participate in the parade are \$150 for non-profit organizations or \$300 for for-profit entities if turned in **by October 20** and \$200 (non-profit) or \$350 (for profit) if registered after that date. Visit www.gorockford.com/stroll-on-state/parade/ for a complete list of parade rules and regulations and to download a registration form.

Parade line-up begins at 2 p.m. at the parking lot of Hinshaw & Culbertson (100 Park Ave. just south of Beattie Park) and the parade starts promptly at 3 p.m. The approximately one-mile route begins at Jefferson & Wyman Streets, traveling south on Wyman Street and turning east onto State Street, ending at 3rd Street.

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Several local businesses, organizations and partners reach out to RACVB each year to see how they can be a part of Stroll on State. There are sponsorship opportunities as well as numerous ways to volunteer, from decorating to building a float for the parade and more. Forming such solid community partnerships for the benefit of Stroll on State allows RACVB to continue offering new and fun activities each year.

“The new parade this year will definitely be awesome and something families are going to love. From what I understand, there will be lots of very cool surprises in store that will certainly put a smile on peoples’ faces,” said Christopher Brady, director of theatre and arts at Rock Valley College’s Starlight Theatre. “Our team at Starlight Theatre is happy to have a float included in the parade and to help with decorations for this adored community event. We can’t wait to see so many great ideas come to life!” Brady also noted that he looked forward to seeing other organizations and businesses sign up to be in the parade.

For additional information about Stroll on State, volunteer opportunities, or to participate as a vendor, visit www.strollonstate.com. Updates and event information will be posted to the Stroll on State Facebook page at www.facebook.com/StrollonState/.

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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