



STROLL *on* STATE[®]



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2019

Stroll on State Adds New Magical Experiences in its Seventh Year, Because Seven Hours Matter

An expanded holiday parade, refreshed attractions, new vendors and more live entertainment highlight event

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2019

Rockford, IL – The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is excited to announce that the seventh annual **Stroll on State, presented by Illinois Bank & Trust**, is set to return on Saturday, November 30 in downtown Rockford.

This year, the Stroll on State team, along with partners, volunteers and sponsors are planning, working and giving *because seven hours matter*. During the event, from 2 – 9 p.m. there will be new enhancements, attractions, live entertainment, vendors and more for eventgoers to enjoy.

The free community event, which is always held the Saturday after Thanksgiving in downtown Rockford, attracted more than 87,500 guests last year.

“As we approach Stroll on State’s seventh year in the Rockford region, I am awestruck at just how much this event continues to evolve with the help of so many. Each year, I am reminded that our community is filled with so many selfless, big-hearted people and businesses who help our RACVB team put on this amazing event,” said Tana Vettore, RACVB’s director of destination development. “The magic of the season shines through our downtown during Stroll and brings people together in a variety of ways. We are truly thankful to our partners, volunteers, patrons, sponsors and vendors for their support throughout the years and this year.”

Sponsor Support Makes Stroll Possible

In total, 36 local companies and organizations are providing financial support through sponsorship of this year’s Stroll on State and Dasher Dash 5K. Their investment allows RACVB to present the event as a free gift to the community.

“Illinois Bank & Trust has been the presenting sponsor of Stroll on State since 2015 and each year seems to be even more enjoyable for our team, families and friends. We are grateful for our invaluable partnership with the RACVB which allows us to bring happiness to so many people during the holiday season. As we look to the years ahead, we are truly excited about continuing this time-honored tradition in the Rockford community,” said Jeff Hultman, president/CEO of Illinois Bank & Trust. “Our company tagline is ‘Great Things Happen,’ and this event is a prime example of how great things can happen when you have a community that comes together to bring such joy to the Rockford community just in time for the holidays.”

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Additional local organizations and media companies provide support invaluable to the production of Stroll on State. A complete list is on pages 5 through 7 of this release.

“Stroll on State is another powerful example of the welcoming nature of Rockford, as we unite for an entertaining and enjoyable kickoff to the holiday season,” said Mayor Tom McNamara. “Most importantly, Stroll illustrates the diverse and progressive spirit of our city, providing a unique opportunity for visitors and residents alike to join together in celebration.”

What's New? – Stroll's Top 7 Announcements for 2019

1. **Stroll on State's Holiday Parade starts at 2 p.m.**

The Stroll Parade has expanded this year adding even more attractions and fun surprises! **Stroll on State's Holiday Parade, presented by The Power Connection – IBEW 364 & NECA**, will step off on South Main Street at Chestnut Street at 2 p.m. and stroll north to State Street and then east across the State Street Bridge, ending at 3rd Street. Parade onlookers are encouraged to find a spot along the route starting at 1 p.m. The parade will feature eight large-scale holiday-themed and character balloons – including Buddy the Dinosaur and Butterscotch the Elf, several festive floats, live music, DJs and a few extra surprises.

Calling for Parade Entries: Local organizations and businesses are invited to participate in the parade. The parade committee is pleased to provide commercially prepared floats for rental and use. Deadline to register is November 1. For pricing options and information, contact Kristen Paul, RACVB's destination development operations manager, at kpaul@gorockford.com. Visit www.gorockford.com/stroll-on-state/parade/ for a list of rules and to download a registration form.

2. **Take a stroll through Strollville**

Strollville is the largest, new attraction at Stroll on State this year. Strollville will include real elf houses that children can play inside. There will be plenty to see, touch and take photos with, including a larger-than-life Elf parade balloon. Strollville is also the location of Rudolph's Reindeer Village, Santa's very own reindeer. This interactive experience will be located immediately east of BMO Harris Bank Center and one block south of the City of Rockford Christmas tree.

3. **Reimagined Main Stage and Tree Lighting Experience**

This year there will be a reimagined tree lighting experience for the **Official City of Rockford Christmas Tree, sponsored by Northwestern Illinois Building Trades**. To accommodate growing crowds and to allow guests additional vantage points from which to view the stage, the **Main Stage, sponsored by Gallagher Williams-Manny** is moving to the southwest corner of Wyman and State Streets (just west of the former location). There will be special moments to enjoy and guests are encouraged to sing together and count down to the official tree lighting. Watch for

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Santa as he makes a special appearance during the music production beginning at 5:45 and count down to the tree lighting beginning approximately at 6:15 p.m.

4. Sky Lights Fireworks Displayed in a New Location

The **Sky Lights Fireworks** presented by **Pierce Distribution** will launch from Davis Park immediately following the tree lighting production. Some of the best viewing locations will be from Wyman Street and the East State Street bridge. Viewing in Davis Park will not be permitted.

5. Additional Performance Stage Added to the Lineup

There were so many performance applicants this year it was clear that we needed a third stage to accommodate all of the great talent from the local and regional areas. The newest stage added to the lineup is the **Sleigh Bell stage**, which will be located in front of Chase Bank along East State Street. This stage is in addition to the **Silver Bell and Jingle Bell stages, sponsored by PCI Pharma Services.**

6. River Lights Experience Shines in a New Location

Under the Jefferson Street bridge, catch the synchronized light show, **Rockford's River Lights – Dancin' in the Street, sponsored by Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 23.**

7. Newly Enhanced Frosty's Merry Market

Stroll on State's vendor experience has been expanded this year with new and returning outdoor food, beverage and gift vending at two locations: Rockford City Market Pavilion at the corner of East State and Water Streets, and the parking lot at the corner of West State and Wyman Streets. Exact locations of the vendors will be announced soon.

Classic Attractions

In 2019, the main event grounds will be along State Street in downtown Rockford bordered by Jefferson, Church, Chestnut and Third Streets.

The popular **Hot Chocolate Express** will be at two locations; featuring a special recipe hot chocolate with sprinkles of marshmallows. Join the **Rockford Marlins Swim Team** at the **Grinch's MovieLand, sponsored by Xfinity**, where you can watch the classic cartoon version of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," and at Rudolph's Reindeer Village, sponsored by **Mercyhealth.**

Make your way to say hello to Santa at **City First Church's outdoor SantaLand** located at the Millennium Fountain on Water Street (shhh ... don't tell the kids, but a second SantaLand is also available indoors at Stewart Square located at the corner of South Main and West State Streets). The Riverview Ice House will once again be open for **free ice skating**, with children's activities, throughout the night thanks to the **Rockford Park District.**

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More Live Entertainment

Live entertainment will take place at various locations, including Veterans Memorial Hall, **sponsored by Ironworkers Local Union 498**, where **Starlight Theater** will present “A Christmas Story” at 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. along with a Once Upon a Dream Performances meet and greet from 3-9 p.m. Just down the street at Nordlof Center, **The Studio Rockford** will perform “Newsies.” Performances by The Studio are underwritten by the David and Colleen Anderson Family.

Additional Event Favorites:

- **Randy Finch and the Ice Brigades, sponsored by OSF HealthCare**, are back outside the Rockford Register Star building to showcase their amazing ice sculpture creations.
- The popular **Fire & Ice, sponsored by OSF HealthCare**, will wow crowds again as blocks of ice dissolve into beautiful bonfires that create an enchanting display at the corner of East State Street and N. 2nd Street, as well as outside of Veterans Memorial Hall.
- **S’mores stations** will be set up in three locations. Whether you’ve just visited Santa or are watching a holiday movie, Stroll grill masters will grill these tasty treats all night.
- **Horse & Wagon Rides** will be in two locations – the corner of Elm and South Main Street across from the BMO Harris Bank Center, and the lot across from Indoor City Market on Madison Streets.
- **A full listing of events and attractions is available at www.strollonstate.com**

Shop on Small Business Saturday

Stroll on State takes place in conjunction with Small Business Saturday which is an annual holiday shopping tradition that gets communities out in support of shopping local. Locally owned businesses throughout the River District will offer holiday specials and fun events.

The RACVB team will sell Stroll on State merchandise at the **St. Nick’s Market**, also known as Waterstreet Café, located at 115 Water Street directly in front of the Rockford City Market pavilion.

Volunteers Help Make It Happen

Stroll on State is made possible in part with the help of several organizations, businesses and volunteers. Once again, **Heartland Community Church** and **Rockford Sharefest** are spearheading the volunteer efforts. Volunteer Workshops are held Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. and Tuesday evenings from 6 – 9 p.m. at 310 Winnebago Street, on the corner of Winnebago and Chestnut Streets. Children ages 12-15 may volunteer with an adult and a signed waiver; 16- and 17-year-olds must provide a signed waiver.

Volunteers are welcome to come to the workshops without prior registration. Workshops end on Tuesday, November 19. Volunteers are needed for the downtown decorating days on Friday and Saturday, November 22-23. Those looking to lend a helping hand the day of the festival can get more information about available opportunities at www.strollonstate.com.

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Parking and Transportation

Parking decks in downtown Rockford open during Stroll are noted on the event map. On-street parking and surface parking lots will be available as posted. The event map with suggested parking areas is available at www.strollonstate.com. There also will be **three Remote Parking Lots** with free shuttle bus transportation, **sponsored by Rockford Mass Transit District**, again this year at the YMCA, 200 Y Boulevard (*handicapped accessible paratransit buses are available*); Heartland Community Church, 1280 S. Alpine Road; and Illinois Bank & Trust, 4048 E. State Street. Shuttle buses run continuously from 1 – 9:30 p.m.

Supporters & Partners

Led by the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, in addition to many partners, the following entities have come together to generously support Stroll on State:

Presenting Sponsor:

- Illinois Bank & Trust

Parade Presenting Sponsor:

- The Power Connection IBEW 364 & NECA

Supporting Sponsors:

- OSF HealthCare
- PCI Pharma Services
- Mercyhealth
- Northwestern Illinois Building Trades Union
- Pierce Distribution
- LaMonica Beverages
- Butitta Brothers Automotive
- Gallagher Williams-Manny
- Xfinity
- ComEd
- Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 23
- Ironworkers Local 498
- Project First Rate
- Roofers & Waterproofers Local 11
- FurstStaffing & FurstProfessionals
- Landstar System, Inc.
- Primary Eye Care
- Pearson Plumbing & Heating
- Event Floral
- Tractor Town
- Two Men and a Truck
- Montel Technologies, LLC
- David & Colleen Anderson Family
- Tree Care Enterprises
- Stenstrom Companies
- SVL Productions

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Partner Organizations:

- City of Rockford
- Heartland Community Church
- Rockford Sharefest
- Rockford Park District
- Fleet Feet Rockford
- Rockford Mass Transit

Dasher Dash 5K Sponsors:

- **SwedishAmerican, presenting sponsor**
- Illinois Bank & Trust, award ceremony sponsor
- Turano Baking Company
- Wolfe Landscaping
- Beefaroo
- Fleet Feet Rockford
- Eckburg Insurance
- Northern Mechanical Inc.
- Performance Food Group
- Peak Fitness

Media Sponsors:

- Northwest Quarterly
- Rockford Register Star
- The Rock River Times
- Lamar
- Mid-West Family Broadcasting
- Townsquare Media
- WIFR 23
- WREX 13
- WTVO 17 / FOX 39
- Journal & Topics Newspapers
- El Sol

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Vendors included at Frosty's Merry Markets

- 15th & Chris
- Baker Street Burgers
- Bar None
- BSA Troop 23
- Cake Shoes by Maya
- Churros Y Chocolate Inc.
- Cookies by Design
- Deb's Daily Grind
- Disco Chicken Food Truck
- District Bar & Grill
- Downtown Fancy Franks
- Festa Italiana
- Frybabies
- Gretta's Goats
- Happy Stix
- Hermes Popcorn
- Hyde and Chic MKE
- JushShop
- La Esmeralda Jewelry Inc.
- Lucha Cantina
- Lulu's Roasted Corn
- Mamma Mia's
- Mario's Taco Express
- Nothing Bundt Cakes
- Olivo Taco
- OpenDoor Coffee LLC
- Perfectly Seasoned Catering
- Pet Wants Rockford
- Pewter Dragonfly
- Pierogi Squad
- Pino's on Main
- Pizza on Earth
- Rockford Woodcrafts
- Roosevelt Community Education Center
- Rucci's Cinnamon Roasted Nuts
- Sausage Fest Food Truck
- Savor BBQ Co.
- Soap of the Earth
- Stix and Noodles
- Sweet T's Kettle Corn
- Synergy Collective
- The Bell Churros
- The Candy Cloud Company
- The Cheese Market
- The Glow Zone
- The Olive Branch
- Veebo's Pizza
- Witches in Stitches
- Wok n Roll by Bamboo
- Wonderland Sweets
- You're Bacon Me Crazy

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About RACVB: RACVB is responsible for promoting the Rockford region as an attractive travel destination and enhancing its public image as a dynamic place to live and work. Through the impact of travel, RACVB strengthens the economic position of the region and provides opportunities for people in our communities.

www.gorockford.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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