

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Big Wins Equal Big Business for Rockford Region

Eight 2020-21 events to yield \$12.6 million of tourism economic impact

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 6, 2020

ROCKFORD, IL — Backed by big venues, variety and expertise, the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is thrilled to announce eight tourism Big Wins that are slated to deliver \$12,643,430 of tourism economic impact to the region. These events, collectively representing a diverse mix in the meetings and sports segments — from major bowling and softball tournaments to basset hound and tattoo conventions—will take place throughout the Rockford area in 2020 and 2021.

Highlighting the multi-purpose nature of our region's tourism venues, these eight signature events will showcase the variety of our region's venues including: Mercyhealth Sportscore One, Mercyhealth Sportscore Two and its onsite Indoor Sports Center, Embassy Suites by Hilton Rockford Riverfront & Rockford Conference Center, Cliffbreakers Events & Riverview Inn & Suites, Don Carter Lanes, The Cherry Bowl and Park Lanes.

"The RACVB team continues to seek out opportunities to recruit a variety of events that draw visitors to the Rockford region—these eight big wins, a representative sample of our clients, will be a strong economic driver in 2020 and 2021 for the local economy," said John Groh, RACVB President/CEO. "This diverse set of tournaments and conventions will showcase all our region has to offer to customer groups of all types. The connections our team has made with clients and the excellent partnerships built with local partners fuel us to keep pushing the limits across all market segments."

The big wins line-up includes:

Professional Women's Bowling Association (PWBA) Rockford Open

Date: June 4 – 6, 2020 (Thursday 9 a.m.–7 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m.)

Location: Cherry Bowl, 7171 Cherryvale North Boulevard, Rockford, IL

Attendance: There will be up to 80 professional bowlers traveling here from across the nation and internationally

Economic Impact: Estimated 240 room nights, \$86,426 estimated economic impact (EEI)

Website: www.pwba.com

Note: There will be an opportunity for the community to be involved in a Pro-Am event on Thursday, June 4 at 7 p.m. Details to be announced at www.doncarterlanes.com

Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (ICCVB) 2020 Spring Conference

Date: June 9 – 10, 2020

Location: Embassy Suites by Hilton Rockford Riverfront & Rockford Conference Center, 416 South Main Street, Rockford, IL

Attendance: 100 attendees travelling from 38 different Convention & Visitors Bureaus throughout Illinois

Economic Impact: Estimated 60 room nights, \$35,741 EEI

Website: www.iccvb.org

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North American Fastpitch Association (NAFA) World Series

Date: August 12 - 16, 2020

Location: Mercyhealth Sportscore One, 1288 Elmwood Road, Rockford, IL

Attendance: There will be 80 teams coming from across the United States

Economic Impact: Estimated 2,000 room nights, \$694,514 EEI

Website: www.nafafastpitch.com

Quote: "Each year the North American Fastpitch Association holds the largest Men's Fastpitch Softball Tournament in the World. The organization's director and the NAFA executive committee have selected Rockford, Illinois to host the 2020 NAFA World Series on August 12 -16. Rockford was selected after the Committee cut the final list to Topeka, Kansas and Rockford. We want to congratulate the Rockford Convention & Visitors Bureau and Lindsay Arellano and the Rockford Parks District and Marianne Larson on the winning bid presentation," said Executive Director, Benjie Hedgecock.

2020 Basset Hound Club of America (BHCA) Nationals

Date: September 18 – 25, 2020

Location: Mercyhealth Sportscore Two and Indoor Sports Center, 8800 East Riverside Boulevard, Loves Park, IL (*primary event site location*)

Attendance: Approximately 200 exhibitors with over 250 Basset Hounds

Economic Impact: Estimated 640 room nights, \$757,614 EEI

Website: <https://basset-bhca.org/events-programs/bhca-nationals/>

Quote: "We would like to thank the RACVB team for their help in locating our show site and accommodations. The Rockford area provided many options for us to help make our event a success," said Brian Pechtold, Basset Hound Club of America Director.

The Rock River Tattoo Art Expo

Date: October 2 – 4, 2020 (Friday 12 p.m.–9 p.m., Saturday 12 p.m.–9 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m.–7 p.m.)

Location: Riverview Inn & Suites and Cliffbreakers Events, 700 West Riverside Boulevard, Rockford, IL

Attendance: 2,000 attendees traveling from across the country and internationally

Economic Impact: Estimated 900 room nights, \$445,984 EEI

Website: <https://www.tattooartexpo.com/index.html>

Note: Rockford is known as the home of Milton Zeis, who ran a state-sponsored tattoo school opened in 1951. He was an early pioneer in the globalization of the tattoo market and is known for one of the first and earliest publications of tattooing. This convention will honor him and other historic artists.

Illinois Association Chamber of Commerce Executives (IACCE) Fall Conference 2020

Date: November 4 – 6, 2020

Location: Embassy Suites by Hilton Rockford Riverfront & Rockford Conference Center, 416 South Main Street, Rockford, IL

Attendance: 125 attendees will be in the Rockford region traveling from across Illinois

Economic Impact: Estimated 250 room nights, \$72,863 EEI

Website: <https://www.iacce.org/>

Quote: "We are excited to host the 2020 IACCE Fall Conference in Rockford at the new Embassy Suites. In November, we'll be able to showcase not only the strong work our Chamber does for the business community, but the innovative and collaborative work happening within our city. As a Chamber, we are

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dedicated to business success – our colleagues from various towns and cities across the state are dedicated to the same in their respective towns,” said Einar Forsman, Rockford Chamber of Commerce president/CEO. “This year’s conference will allow them an immersive experience in a world class facility in a beautiful downtown setting while improving their skills through professional development. We look forward to sharing Rockford’s story with them and having a bit of fun along the way.”

Illinois State United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Women’s Bowling Tournament

Date: February 27 – April 18, 2021 (held over the course of seven weekends)

Location: Don Carter Lanes, 4007 East State Street, Rockford, IL and Cherry Bowl, 7171 Cherryvale North Boulevard, Rockford, IL

Attendance: Nearly 2,500 bowlers traveling from across Illinois

Economic Impact: Estimated 2,000 room nights and \$10,550,288 EEI (combined with the USBC Open Bowling Tournament)

Website: <https://illinoisstateusbc.org/index.html>

Note: This tournament continues to rotate throughout the state and because of strong partnerships with the Illinois State USBC board it has been hosted in the Rockford region in 2012, 2016 and once again in 2021.

Illinois State United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Open Bowling Tournament

Date: March 27 – May 2, 2021 (held over the course of five weekends)

Location: Park Lanes, 5318 North 2nd Street, Loves Park, IL

Attendance: Nearly 2,500 bowlers from across Illinois

Economic Impact: Estimated 1,000 room nights and \$10,550,288 EEI (combined with the USBC Women’s Bowling Tournament)

Website: <https://illinoisstateusbc.org/index.html>

This is the first time in Illinois State USBC history that the Women’s and the Open Bowling Tournaments will take place in the same host city.

“This is another reminder of all that the Rockford region has to offer,” added Lindsay Arellano, RACVB Vice President of Sales & Service. “We’re indeed a sports destination, and we also have a strong lineage of success in the meetings market. Tourism has something for everyone—that’s well represented by these eight events, and we’re excited to keep building on this success to keep growing our tourism economy.”

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

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