

## **Milwaukee to host 2013 International Moose Convention**

The Moose are heading to Milwaukee, giving area hotels, restaurants and other businesses a badly needed boost.

The Moose International service organization has selected Milwaukee as the host city for its 2013 international convention. The six-day meeting, announced Wednesday, amounts to one of the largest conventions booked for Milwaukee in recent years, and comes after another large meeting planned for 2013 fell through.

The Moose International meeting is expected to bring more than 7,000 delegates to the city, take up as many as 18,000 room nights, and generate around \$9 million to \$11 million in local spending, according to estimates from Visit Milwaukee, the public-private agency that markets the Milwaukee area to visitors.

Room nights are the number of area hotel rooms used, multiplied by the number of nights each room is filled. They are a key measure of a convention's economic impact, which benefits mainly the hotel industry as well as restaurants, stores and other businesses. The annual Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. sales conference, typically among Milwaukee's largest conventions, usually creates around 12,500 room nights.

Moose International, comprising the Loyal Order of Moose and the Women of the Moose, is a fraternal and service organization founded in 1888 with nearly 1.1 million members.

The group had estimated its Milwaukee convention would create 14,000 room nights, but has since raised it to as high as 18,000 room nights, said David Fantle, Visit Milwaukee vice president of public relations.

The Moose herd, which will migrate to Milwaukee over Memorial Day weekend, will help replace what had been expected to be a major convention for 2013, which fell through.