



This alert contains information on the conventions and sporting events that will be arriving in September and October 2026. We hope you find this information useful for scheduling and to help welcome attendees.

September Events

Gay Softball World Series | August 30-September 5

The 2026 Gay Softball World Series, hosted by International Pride Softball, will take place August 31–September 5, 2026, at Berliner Sports Park. As the world's largest LGBTQ+ single-sport athletic competition. The event is expected to bring more than 230 teams and approximately 5,000 athletes from across the U.S. and Canada for a week of softball, community celebration, and LGBTQ+ pride. Attendees will also be encouraged to join International Pride Softball for Columbus Clippers Pride Night on Wednesday, September 2, providing an additional opportunity to celebrate LGBTQ+ pride throughout the Columbus community. Additionally, approximately 150 delegates will be in Columbus for annual meetings leading into the tournament weekend.

Attendance: 12,000

Meals: Attendees will be on their own for meals throughout the event.

Location: Berliner Sports Park & Fryer Park

Facebook: facebook.com/gsws2021

Group Contact: [Dallas Aldridge](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Ariana Tyler](#)

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US Box Lacrosse Championship | September 5-7

Hosted by the US Box Lacrosse Association, the tournament brings together qualified boys and girls teams from across the country to compete for national championships in multiple age divisions, showcasing some of the nation's top youth box lacrosse talent.

Attendance: 6,300

Meals: Attendees will be on their own for meals throughout the event.

Location: Resolute Athletic Complex

Facebook: facebook.com/boxlacrosse

Group Contact: [Anthony Kelly](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Jen Beck](#)

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National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Regions 1&4 Meeting | September 9-11

NRECA Regional Meetings bring the cooperative community together fostering collaboration with area leaders delivering a meaningful experience tailored to local priorities.

Attendance: 900

Meals: Some meals are provided for attendees.

Location: Hilton Columbus Downtown

Facebook: facebook.com/NRECA.coop

X: x.com/NRECANews

Group Contact: [Jean Johnson, CMP](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Carrie Thiel](#)

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Ohio Association of Realtors Annual Conference | September 13-16

The 2026 Annual Convention & EXPO in Columbus gives members the opportunity to stay updated with the latest in legal, legislative, CE credit, networking and more in Columbus.

Attendance: 800

Meals: Some meals are provided for attendees.

Location: Hilton Columbus Downtown

Facebook: facebook.com/OhioRealtors

X: [@OhioRealtors](https://twitter.com/OhioRealtors) / X

Group Contact: [Rae Marie Lieb Harper](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Carrie Thiel](#)

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Structural Building Components Association Building Components Manufacturers Conference (BCMC) | September 14-18

The trusted tradeshow for structural building component manufacturers to learn about the latest trends, cutting-edge technologies and ideas that are transforming their industry.

Attendance: 2,300

Meals: Some meals are provided for attendees.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Facebook: facebook.com/SBCAcomponents

X: x.com/bestwaytoframe

Group Contact: [Alison Saladin, CMP](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Zach Wellman](#)

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Ohio Dental Association Annual Session | September 17-19

The ODA Annual Session is one of the largest dental conferences in the five-state region, bringing together dentists and industry leaders. The event provides

exhibitors with opportunities to showcase products and services, connect with prospective buyers, educate attendees and generate new business leads.

Attendance: 5,000

Meals: Lunch is provided for attendees.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Facebook: facebook.com/ohiodentalassoc

X: x.com/ohiodentalassoc

Group Contact: [Suzanne Brooks](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Carrie Thiel](#)

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Churches of Christ Midwest Women's Conference | September 17-20

The Midwest Women's Conference of the Churches of Christ brings women from across the region for worship, biblical teaching and fellowship. The conference focuses on spiritual growth through educational sessions, worship services and opportunities to build connections grounded in shared faith.

Attendance: 500

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Group Contact: [Camille Wilson](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Jeremy Tipton](#)

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Ohio High School Basketball Coaches – Annual Clinic | September 20-21

The Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association (OHSBCA) Coaches Clinic brings together high school basketball coaches from across Ohio for educational sessions, networking and presentations focused on coaching strategies, player development and program leadership.

Attendance: 850

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their evening meals.

Location: St. Charles Preparatory School

Facebook: facebook.com/ohioBKcoaches

Group Contact: [Adam Hall](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Jen Beck](#)

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American Quilter's Society AQS QuiltWeek | September 23-26

American Quilter's Society QuiltWeek transforms the Greater Columbus Convention Center into a four-day celebration of quilting, bringing together thousands of quilting enthusiasts from across the country. The event features quilt exhibitions, educational workshops, shopping and demonstrations showcasing the latest techniques, tools and trends in quilting.

Attendance: 16,000

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Facebook: facebook.com/aqsonline

Group Contact: [Michelle Hiatt](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Zach Wellman](#)

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Ohio Blue Jackets Challenge Cup | September 25- 27

The 2026 OBJ Challenge Cup will take place September 25–27, 2026, at OhioHealth Chiller Ice Rinks throughout Central Ohio. Hosted by the Ohio AAA Blue Jackets, the youth hockey tournament brings together top teams from the United States and Canada across multiple age divisions for a weekend of competitive hockey and community engagement.

Attendance: 500

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Various OhioHealth Chiller Ice Rinks

Facebook: facebook.com/aaabluejackets/

Group Contact: [Jen Hamilton](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Jen Beck](#)

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Ohio Quarter Horse Association All American Quarter Horse Congress | September 26-October 24

The All American Quarter Horse Congress, produced by the Ohio Quarter Horse Association, is the world's largest single-breed horse show. The event attracts equestrians from around the globe and features competitions, educational programming and a trade show with approximately 200 exhibitors offering equine products, apparel and equipment.

Attendance: 650,000

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Ohio Expo Center

Facebook: facebook.com/quarterhorsecongress

Group Contact: [Autumn Bowlby](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Zach Wellman](#)

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Blackbaud bbcon | September 29-October 1

Blackbaud's annual conference brings thousands together for three days of educational sessions, networking and product training. Attendees explore AI-powered solutions, share best practices and connect with peers to advance their organizations' missions and increase their impact.

Attendance: 3,000

Meals: Lunch is provided for attendees.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Facebook: facebook.com/blackbaud/

X: [Blackbaud \(@blackbaud\)](#) / X

Group Contact: [Kristin Mahaffey Foldvik](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Lindsey Wolfe](#)

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October Events

Best Buy Company, Inc. Holiday Leadership Meeting | October 5-6

Attendance: 1,900

Meals: On October 5 and 6, Best Buy Holiday Leadership will be in Columbus, bringing approximately 1,900 attendees to the city. We wanted to make our restaurant partners aware of this opportunity so you can plan accordingly and be prepared to welcome their attendees. This group will have a strong presence in the community during the evening hours, with many attendees looking for dining and late-night options between approximately 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. Based on feedback from last year's event, attendees are especially interested in late-night dining opportunities in and around the Greater Columbus Convention Center area. If you are able to offer extended hours or late-night dining options during this timeframe, we encourage you to consider this opportunity and welcome the attendees visiting Columbus.

Experience Columbus Contact: [Jeremy Tipton](#)

Premiere Beauty Classic | October 11-12

The 2026 Premiere Columbus Show Preview gives you your first look at the education, brands, and experiences waiting for you this fall. Explore 130+ classes, learn from industry experts, and discover the products, techniques, and trends shaping the future of beauty.

Attendance: 5,000

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Hyatt Regency Columbus

Facebook: facebook.com/PremiereBeautyShows

Group Contact: [Jayke Lind](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Lindsey Wolfe](#)

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American Society for Nondestructive Testing Annual Conference | October 12-15

The American Society for Nondestructive Testing, Inc. (ASNT) is the world's largest technical society for nondestructive testing (NDT) professionals. As professional development conference, ASNT's annual conference is designed to "bring the NDT world together" for the purposes of learning, collaborating and networking. The conference is also used as ASNT's most visible channel to forward the strategic plan of the organization.

Attendance: 2,500

Meals: Lunch is being provided on Tuesday and Wednesday, attendees are on their own for the rest of the meals.

Location: Hilton Columbus Downtown

Facebook: facebook.com/asntinfo

Group Contact: [Alicia LeMasters, CMP](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Carrie Thiel](#)

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Ohio Optometric Association EastWest Eye Conference | October 14-17

The EastWest Eye Conference is the premier conference in the Midwest for eye care professionals. This year, EastWest has the same high-quality CE and fun events along with a new location – Columbus!

Attendance: 1,300

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Hilton Columbus Downtown

Facebook: facebook.com/EastWestEyeConference

Group Contact: [Jordan Quicke](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Jeremy Tipton](#)

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Intercollegiate Tennis Association – DI Men's Midwest Regional Championship | October 15-19

The 2026 ITA DI Men's Midwest Regional Championship will be hosted by The Ohio State University. The tournament brings some of the top men's collegiate tennis players from across the Midwest to compete in singles and doubles. The championship features a 64-player singles main draw, and 64-team doubles draw, with qualifying and main-draw competition taking place throughout the week. The two singles finalists and the doubles champion from each ITA region earn qualifications for the NCAA Championships.

Attendance: 500

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Ohio State University

Facebook: facebook.com/ITACollegeTennis

Group Contact: [Tyler Eatman](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Jen Beck](#)

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Nationwide Children's Hospital Columbus Marathon & ½ Marathon | October 17-18

The 2026 Nationwide Children's Hospital Columbus Marathon & ½ Marathon takes place October 17-18, bringing thousands of runners and spectators to downtown Columbus. The weekend begins Saturday with the Jesse Owens 5K and 1-mile Fun Run/Walk. Sunday is the main event, with the Columbus Marathon & ½ Marathon starting at 7:30 a.m. from the North Bank Park. A race expo and packet pickup will be held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Friday, October 16 from 12-7 p.m. and Saturday, October 17 from 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Attendance: 38,000

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: North Bank Park, downtown Columbus streets

Facebook: facebook.com/ColumbusMarathon

Group Contact: [Darris Blackford](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Ariana Tyler](#)

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The Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference | October 20-21

The Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference (OTEC) has been the place for transportation professionals to learn about and discuss new ways to safely and efficiently move people and goods throughout the state.

Attendance: 3,800

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Hyatt Regency Columbus

Group Contact: [Lan Le](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Jeremy Tipton](#)

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Independent Electrical Contractors SPARK | October 21-24

IEC SPARK 2026, the premier event for electrical contractors, is coming to the Greater Columbus Convention Center in downtown Columbus, from October 21-24, 2026. The multi-day expo features hands-on training, industry vendor showcases, leadership development, and networking opportunities for professionals across the trade.

Attendance: 1,500

Meals: Lunch is served in the Exhibit Hall Thursday and Friday, breakfast is served Thursday – attendees are on their own for all other meals.

Location: Greater Columbus Convention Center

Group Contact: [Kari Messenger](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Carrie Thiel](#)

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Eldorado Scioto Downs – Breeders Crown | October 23-24

The 2026 Breeders Crown is one of the premier events in North American harness racing. The event will feature 12 championship races for top 2-year-old, 3-year-old, open, and mare trotters and pacers, with substantial purses across the divisions. The championship finals will showcase the sport's best horses, drivers, trainers, and owners. There are several premium hospitality opportunities available, including VIP experiences and a beer garden.

Attendance: 15,000

Meals: Attendees will be responsible for their own meals.

Location: Eldorado Scioto Downs

Group Contact: [Amy Ankerson](#)

Sports Commission Contact: [Ariana Tyler](#)

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SingUnited International Convention | October 26-31

SingUnited International is the global organization for women's barbershop harmony singers and one of the premier a cappella music organizations in the world. The SingUnited International Convention will take place October 26–31, 2026, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, bringing together top qualifying choruses and quartets from around the globe to compete for international championship titles. In addition to the highly anticipated competitions, the week will feature educational workshops, performances by past champions, networking opportunities, and social events, creating a vibrant

celebration of music, artistry, and community. Attendees are passionate supporters of the performing arts and often extend their time in the destination to experience local attractions, restaurants, and entertainment offerings.

Please Note: SingUnited International was formerly known as Sweet Adelines International. The organization previously held its 77th Annual International Convention & Competition in Columbus from October 20–25, 2025. Many local businesses and hospitality partners may recognize the group from its previous visit. While the organization has since rebranded to SingUnited International, it continues to attract a large international audience that generates significant economic impact through hotel stays, dining, entertainment, shopping, and local transportation.

Attendance: 4,000

Meals: SingUnited International 2026 convention attendees are fully responsible for arranging and purchasing their own meals while in Columbus. The group is approximately 99% female and is expected to arrive primarily on Sunday and Monday, creating significant dining demand throughout the city during those days. Attendees frequently dine out in large groups and often seek restaurants that can accommodate group seating, offer convenient locations, and remain open later into the evening. Competition schedules, rehearsals, and special events regularly extend beyond traditional dinner hours, resulting in increased demand for late-night dining options. Many attendees are encouraged to explore local restaurants and support Columbus businesses throughout their stay. It is also worth noting that this organization previously met in Columbus under the name Sweet Adelines International, and local restaurants and hospitality partners may recognize the strong dining activity and community engagement generated by that event.

Location: Hilton Columbus Downtown

Facebook: facebook.com/singunitedinternational

Group Contact: [Vanessa Masucci](#)

Experience Columbus Contact: [Jeremy Tipton](#)

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The Convention and Sports Alert is published monthly to assist area restaurants, hotels and other facilities in anticipating their staffing and supply needs. To add a recipient to receive this email, have them fill out [this form](#). To change or delete an email recipient, please contact Jenese Tchokouani at jtchokouani@experiencecolumbus.com.