



# MN Outdoor Youth Expo

*"This expo's goal is to help young people develop a lifelong passion for the outdoors," said Wild Wings Sponsor Jeff Hughes. "Doing this has become more important as an increasing number of children have become used to the instant gratification of our electronic world. They are now growing up spending little time outdoors," he said. "That's why bringing these organizations together at the Youth expo is so important. These experiences offer a foundation for a lifetime of rewarding recreation and awareness of nature."*

The MN Outdoor Youth Expo is a family event designed for kids & teens to get outside and meet outdoor organizations, experts and educators. Organized and primarily sponsored by Wild Wings of Oneka, this event offers youth and families a venue to get reacquainted with opportunities the outdoors bring and with many dedicated organizations, experts and educators in this field. The event is all about education and hands on experience for youth.

Tailored for family participation, it is our belief that parents are the key to getting kids involved. The Youth Expo provides a place where organizations and families can connect. Each of our exhibitors have an activity, "hands on learning", and also offer future opportunities.

This expo is unique and there has not been another like it. We have expanded the typical "Outdoor Expo" focus to include areas such as outdoor sports & agriculture.

The MN Outdoor Youth Expo is an event where youth and families can;

- see, hear, touch and feel a diverse collection of outdoor activities, from sports to agricultural
- attend together and have fun finding new interests, resources and organizations that bring them back to outdoor recreational activities.
- be educated about outdoor traditions, natural resources and wildlife
- get excited about, appreciate and respect nature,
- leave with many options to choose to participate in after the expo is over (ex: summer camps, organizations to join, future events).



May 19 & 20, 2012  
Wild Wings of  
Oneka  
Hugo, MN





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*"Our intention was to have something for the Kids to get them interested and reacquainted with the outdoors, and all it has to offer. I believe (from the positive comments we heard) we can state MISSION ACCOMPLISHED."  
Jeff Hughes, Wild Wings Sponsor*

## Second Annual Results – Mission Accomplished

First year attendance totaled over 1400, second year attendance totaled over 1600. Being an outdoor event, we are at the mercy of the weather. Our first year of the event in 2010, we experienced rain most of the day on Saturday and mostly sun on Sunday. In 2011, the weather was not in our favor and we experience rain most of the weekend. The expo was shut down at 1:30pm on Sunday due to sever weather. Regardless of the rain, we were amazed to see the people still arriving. Once again, we were met with overwhelming positive feedback and many requests for the event to return again.

Overall Visitor Feedback 98% positive for the second year in a row.

*"I just want to let you know that we took our grandson on Sunday and it was really an excellent expo, he had more fun than we thought possible. Please do it once again next year. The exhibitors and everyone volunteering there were so informative, polite and made the day extra special. Thank you." Charley and Rosey Klopp and Jeffrey Milles.*

Overall Exhibitor Feedback 92% positive for the second year in a row.

*"Thanks so much for putting together such a great event! We had enough coverage that I was actually able to spend some time with my son checking out some of the other booths: Archery, Climbing wall. Kayaking. We managed to get a handful of potential scouts to fill out interest forms, we met a number of current scouts and we got to discuss scouting with a lot of non-scouting families. On top of that, we were able network as leaders. It was a great event and I'm glad we were able to be a part of it. Thanks again so much and please keep us on the list!"  
Cub scouts*





## MN Outdoor Youth Expo

*"The MN Outdoor youth Expo is an investment in the future. Your support provides an opportunity for many non-profit organizations to connect with Youth and families. In addition, you are contributing to the preservation of our natural resources by teaching our children why it is so valuable."*

A note from Jeff Hughes, Wild Wings Owner & Operator since 1976

For the past two years Wild Wings of Oneka has sponsored the MN Outdoor Youth Expo. This project started as a vision in our organization as we realized that there is a real need to introduce young people (and acquaint families) with the outdoors, and the wide variety of activities available in the outdoors.

Wild Wings of Oneka is a Hunting Club with a history of over 55 years in the Game bird rearing, and hunting club business. We have seen a gradual loss of interest in hunting and outdoor activity over the last 6 - 8 years. We feel that we have an opportunity, and an obligation, to make a difference in the lives of young people due our long history of recreation and conservation through our outdoor venue. In addition, Wild Wings provides an ideal location to connect our metro youth as we are less than 20 minutes from St. Paul/Minneapolis with over 2,000,000 people.

We feel that this event and venue is a valuable component of giving young people an opportunity to experience the outdoors in a variety of ways. We are not just talking about hunting, and fishing, but instead we have tried to cover all the bases. We offer archery, shooting, golf, paintball, basketball, 4H dog agility, camping, kayaking, geocaching, airplane flying, skateboarding, etc. You get the picture. If it can be done outdoors we have tried to feature the activity at the Expo. Our intentions are simple. If we get young people to attend, because they are interested in one or more activities then they will have the opportunity to explore, and perhaps develop an interest in other activities. But the overall bottom line is we need to get children outside.

Technology is a wonderful thing, but it is robbing many of our youth of developing a connection with the outdoors. This connection is imperative if we hope to develop a society that has a high regard, and concern for the outdoors, the environment we live in, and an interest to continue the preservation of all that we hold dear.

This letter is a simple request for help. In order to make this event attractive to visitors and exhibitors, it has been and will continue to be, free for children and non-profit organizations. In other words, Wild Wings is not hosting this Expo for financial gain. Most of the money spent on the expo is for advertising, and materials to organize the event. To make this event happen we do rely on a volunteer staff of over 150 people. As you can see much effort, time, and resources are dedicated to the expo each year. As the event grows, our need for funding is growing as well, and we are hoping that this is where you can help.

With time we are hoping that the expo will become self supporting, but in our developing stage we are looking for any financial support that we can get.

We thank you for your time and the opportunity to consider the worthy cause.

*Jeff Hughes & the Staff of Wild Wings*

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