

## Coon Valley & Area Youth Foundation FAQ's

The following are frequently asked questions we have received. These can also be found on our website, [www.cvayf.org](http://www.cvayf.org).

Q: Is the Coon Valley & Area Youth Foundation (CVAYF) a club that you have to join?

A: No, the CVAYF is a non-profit civic organization that was established to provide activities for children and youth in the greater Coon Valley area. The CVAYF board, which is comprised of volunteers, meets monthly to share ideas and plan activities. The activities we make available are mostly on a show-up basis with the exception of activities requiring a special bus trip, like the Corn Maze or the upcoming Winter Indoor Swim, for which we ask for participants to sign up by phone or online. We do require parents or guardians to provide us with a Registration Form, which can be printed from our website or obtained at activities. This form provides standard emergency contact information as well as giving the parent's consent for their child to attend the activities. Unlike club membership, there are no dues and no requirements to attend activities.

Q: Is the CVAYF connected to any church or religious organization?

A: No, the CVAYF is a civic organization that serves all children in the community with no regard to religion or race.

Q: Is the Youth Foundation designed to help the disadvantaged? Are there income limitations for families who participate?

A: No, the CVAYF is for the entire community. Planning activities for groups can make these activities more available, more practical and certainly more fun. For example, the upcoming Winter Indoor Swim on March 4<sup>th</sup> will include a bus ride to the AmericInn in West Salem, a pizza party, board games in the party room there, and of course fun in the pool and hot tub. This is an opportunity for kids of any income level to get together with their friends and enjoy a pool party in the wintertime. The only limitation we find to be necessary in some activities such as this one is that of age. Because the shallow end of the pool is 3 ft. deep, children must either be old enough to swim in that depth of water or else their parent must come along and personally attend to them. This is also the case with the summer swim. Children should be old enough and able to participate. Parents are always encouraged to come along and help chaperone activities if they want to. That way the children's activities provide opportunity for families to mingle and get to know each other as a community.

Q: How can you provide these activities for free?

A: Of course there is cost involved for every activity, but that cost is paid for by funding from our CVAYF sponsors and by funds raised by the Coon Creek Duck Race, which is held every other year (this summer!). The CVAYF tries very hard to keep costs down to make the most of the funds we have, and many of the activities are staffed by unpaid volunteers. The summer activities, like the weekly swim at Westby Pool does have paid staff due to the frequency of the staffing required. CVAYF has employed teachers, college students and even high school students to supervise and help supervise the summer activities.

Q: What kind of oversight is there for the spending of funds?

A: Activities are discussed and decided upon by the CVAYF board, which includes estimates of costs. The Village of Coon Valley maintains a checking account for CVAYF funds. When a board member uses personal funds to purchase items for a CVAYF activity, they must bring the receipt to a board meeting and have it initialed by 2 other board members before turning it in to the Village Clerk for reimbursement. The Village Clerk also disburses CVAYF checks for expenses that come in bill form, such as charges for the bus, the PO box and such. The Youth Foundation is very grateful for the support provided by the Village of Coon Valley and especially the Village Clerk's office.

Q: What are some of the activities that the CVAYF provides?

A: The CVAYF sponsors 3 major parties each year besides other activities. The Easter Egg Hunt & Party is held every year on the Saturday just prior to Easter Sunday. Also we have the yearly Halloween Party & Costume Contest on Halloween. The Christmas Party has been held in both late November, on the Saturday after Black Friday, and also in December. That date varies with the availability of the Village Hall and other such factors. Each summer, beginning later in June when the Westby pool opens, we take a bus to the pool there every Tuesday. We also have made bus trips to the Corn Maze and to the Winter Indoor Swim yearly activities. Other summer activities have included Bingo days, Hot Wheels & Hot Dogs days, Ice Cream Sundae building days, Tie Dye days, Let's Make a Deal days, an Indoor Luau party, activities in the park like a Scavenger Hunts, Coon Hunts and Family Fun days. We've also taken trips to the Highroller Skating Rink in La Crosse and to Myrick Park. We have provided kiddie carnival games in Chaseburg Park for Family Fun Day, in Coon Valley Park for the Fireman's Association and as part of our own Duck Race fundraiser. Speaking of the Duck Race, this fundraiser itself turns out to be a fun community activity as we dump large quantities of yellow ducks off one bridge into Coon Creek and everyone follows the floating flock to the

other end of the park to see which ducks win the race. Mother Nature and flooding has caused difficulty with the last couple of races but we are hoping for lower waters this summer. Besides all these activities, the CVAYF also enters floats in both the Snowtrailer's Parade in Chaseburg and also in the Memorial Day Parade in Coon Valley.

Q: Why do you people do all this?

A: True, it is a lot of work and a lot of volunteering, but it is very worthwhile. For those who are new to the area, it is a great way to make friends and get connected to the community. Kids get to meet other kids outside of their school grade level or immediate neighborhood. They build memories of fun times in community activities. This makes the entire greater community better. Our kids are our future. The smiles on their faces, their excitement and their enthusiasm make it all worthwhile. Many hands make light work, so many thanks also go to those parents who step up on the spot and help out. Your involvement makes the activities even better.

Q: What are the biggest challenges in planning these activities?

A: In the past finances have presented a great challenge. Thankfully in recent years the corporate and civic sponsorship we have received has made a big difference and allowed us to continue planning regular activities. We are very grateful for our corporate and civic sponsors and proudly display our sponsor banner at parades and major activities. The other two challenges go hand-in-hand. Some activities we prepare end up having a very low attendance. Those who come have a wonderful time, but we would like to see more kids enjoying all the activities. Sometimes the low attendance is due to unintended schedule conflict with other activities, but we think that in many cases people do not realize that our announcements and invitations are for them. CVAYF is not an exclusive club nor is it a charity. It is an organization providing activities for youth in our community. Now the second challenge in that regard is that we never know how many people will come to each activity, with the exception of those requiring a sign-up. CVAYF runs on volunteerism. We strive to make sure that every activity is amply staffed and supervised. Activities like the Easter Egg Hunt tend to draw larger crowds, so when parents and even teens come to us and volunteer to help out, it makes a huge difference. Those who help out find that taking part in the activity makes it more enjoyable. So for every activity we hope to see a good turnout and also a few parents willing to join in and help out too. The outcome is always worth the challenge.

Thank you for your interest in the Coon Valley & Area Youth Foundation!