Eden Prairie's Fish Hut to host ice fishing event on Lake Minnetonka

Free event set for Feb. 22

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(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Fish Hut co-founders Vick, left, and William Tan drilling holes on a lake for ice fishing.

Families of all ages and skill levels are invited to attend a free ice fishing event (weather depending), hosted by Fish Hut and Build A Reef, from 1-2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 22, on Lake Minnetonka.

The third annual event aims to unite all community members in a fun, nature-oriented experience, while providing them with the opportunity to learn about Lake Minnetonka's water quality and ways to care for the environment. Fishing equipment — bait, rods, heated ice castles — and prizes will be available to event participants.

"[The event] basically brings the community together because we accept everyone, people of all backgrounds," Fish Hut Director Lawrence Tan said. "Anyone can come for the event. It's all free. There's free heated ice castles they can go in. It's warm. There's going to be pre-drilled holes, there's bait, and there's prizes for [attendees] to win, and everything is all free. We don't charge for anything. We just want to make sure that the kids and the families have a good time."

He estimated 300-400 people to be in attendance at this year's fishing event, based on attendance numbers from years prior.

Fish Hut has partnerships and sponsorships with several well-known outdoor brands, including Dick's Sporting Goods, Scheels, Patagonia and Aqua-Vu. Local company REL Fishing is supplying heated ice castles for the event, Flexzilla is providing detection devices and equipment, and Nothing Bundt Cakes is offering coupons and bundt cakes for prizes.

The event is so highly anticipated locally that Fish Hut's green, white and turquoise color scheme will be displayed on the I-35W and Lowry Avenue bridges in Minneapolis.

"The support that we have from the community is amazing," Tan said. "That's the reason why we have a wide range of both big companies … as well as local businesses that we make sure that everyone has supported."

Fish Hut is a 501c3 certified nonprofit organization co-founded in 2023 by Eden Prairie brothers Vick, 16, and William, 15, Tan.

The brothers took their passion for fishing and love of nature and transformed it into an organization that strives to promote mental well-being in youth through free fishing events.

Their father, Lawrence Tan, has taken on the role of the organization's director until Vick and William are of age to fulfill the position themselves.

In addition to offering free local fishing events, Fish Hut also offers its services in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Alaska.

The organization is best known for its professionally handcrafted Fish Huts. These boxes include information on fish species; two to three prespooled, retractable fishing rods with reels; a pack of 10 patent pending biodegradable hooks that promote eco-friendly fishing habits; a pack of sinkers; and information from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources detailing local fishing regulations and licensing.

Vick and William were recipients of the 2025 Barron Prize of Young Heroes and were awarded $10,000 for their organization's positive impact on the community.

Fish Hut also received $1,000 from the Eden Prairie Community Foundation. Both prizes helped to financially support the organization's work.

In 2025, William founded another nonprofit organization, Build-A-Reef, which promotes environmental stewardship and outdoor activities. Build-A-Reef is also a newer sponsor of this year's ice fishing event.

While Fish Hut has already gained recognition across other states, Vick and William hope to continue expanding their fishing services to reach more people on a national scale, making fishing accessible and affordable for all families.

"Right now, the objective is for them to be a national organization. So, basically have a national outreach, basically stretching to all states," Lawrence said. "For example, they'd like to be able to do it in Alaska, they'd like to be able to do it in North Carolina and Florida. But, of course, that takes a lot of work, a lot of motivation, and that's something that they have to figure out and to try to get as many partners as possible."

Visit fishhut.org for more information on the organization and its upcoming events.

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