



A Night to Unite!

This event is a fantastic way to connect with and support people you frequently see on your block and never get a chance to have a good conversation with. It's a great way to learn about the history of your block and discuss recent events in the neighborhood. Julie, Hale

2009 Minneapolis National Night Out

1,033 confirmed events*
59,370 NNO participants**
15.5% of the City's population involved in NNO**
100% of residential neighborhoods participated (83 of 83)
2,237 blocks involved in NNO**

Pre-National Night Out

957 local planning meetings reported
1,107 events registered

* This figure combines people who completed the online NNO survey and those we reached by phone. It is **not** an estimate. The actual number of NNO events could be higher; we could not reach some people who registered. Also, some groups may have held events without registering.

** Each NNO organizer estimated the attendance and blocks involved at their own NNO event.

Introduction

Involved residents, advance planning, energized businesses, supportive local government, a helpful non-profit agency, groups that helped, coordinated publicity and convenient registration made the 26th Annual National Night Out in Minneapolis a success.

Minneapolis' 2009 NNO Campaign

Involved residents

The Police Department continued its long-time practice of encouraging grassroots leaders to organize block parties on NNO. More than 59,000 residents celebrated NNO in 1,033 separate events throughout the 83 separate residential neighborhoods. Most were small, involving 1-3 blocks, which gave neighbors a chance to get to know each other better, compare notes, and talk about the future in a relaxed, friendly environment.

Advance planning

While National Night Out has become a tradition in Minneapolis, we update our efforts each year. Our police staff committee first met in mid-January of 2009 and held eight meetings to provide direction to and updates on the campaign. This year, the group chose to adopt the State of Minnesota's theme, "A Night to Unite!" The group thought that it was a good theme and didn't want to confuse Minneapolis event organizers. National Night Out is about neighbors getting to know each other and helping to prevent crime. The committee focused on major components such as fundraising, materials, and communication with event organizers, using the most economical means (e.g., e-mails, Web, press releases, Nixle, City cable channels, Twitter, etc.). Committee members continued to provide valuable input throughout the year.

Energized businesses

The local business community helped the 2009 NNO to thrive. We were grateful to returning sponsors—the Minnesota Twins, Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America, Target, and the General Mills Foundation. The Minnesota Twins provided 15,000 ticket vouchers; each was good for two tickets. Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America gave 50,000 Mystery Passes, each good for at least one free ride. (Some passes were good for a day's or a year's worth of rides.) Target donated 400 \$10 gift cards, supplies for NNO start-up kits, and support for several events. General Mills Foundation provided funds for start-up kits and gift cards for door prizes.

We continued our efforts to obtain items that NNO organizers could use as door prizes. Through the spring and early summer we contacted numerous local businesses and Minneapolis branches of larger companies.

Thanks to funding from several smaller local businesses and Target, we were able to offer start-up kits to 27 first-time NNO organizers. Each kit consisted of one Target tote bag with plates, cups, plastic utensils, a tablecloth, garbage bags, icebreaker games, a deck of cards, bottle of bubbles, sidewalk chalk, and a \$25 Target gift card.

Supportive local government

Though coordinated by the police department, NNO has become a citywide endeavor in Minneapolis. By city ordinance, street closure is free on NNO. Mayor R.T. Rybak is a long-time proponent of NNO. He and his staff promoted involvement and attended events. The Mayor's Office and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs provided 2010 materials. City Council members also were instrumental in spreading the word through their newsletter publications and e-newsletters. They also visited events. The 311 Center answered questions and assisted people with registration, street closure, and the follow-up survey. The Business and Information Services Department updated and tested the online registration process. The Communications Department wrote and posted items on the city's web page and sent press releases to the media. Public Works assisted with street closure issues. Firefighters attended many events. Elections and Voter Registration provided Rank Choice Voting materials. The Mayor's Office and the police department helped promote Nixle to NNO event organizers. E-mails were sent to event organizers to ask them to print and distribute flyers to their neighbors about Nixle.

Groups that helped

The MPD's community service officers, Juvenile Diversion Program interns, and YouthCARE Minnesota Community Service Stars helped with this year's NNO. The Community Service Stars distributed NNO promotional flyers in several neighborhoods that had low NNO participation. Community service officers helped put together more than 600 registration packets. Juvenile Diversion interns counted and bundled Minnesota Twins vouchers and schedules.

Coordinated publicity

We publicized the 26th Annual NNO in many ways. Our web site (www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno) was well-stocked with helpful NNO-related information. The main city web page publicized major NNO deadlines. The city's communications office sent press releases to the media; crime prevention specialists e-mailed messages to subscribers on the City's GovDelivery system.

Convenient registration

It was easy to get involved in Minneapolis NNO. We mailed an information packet to new crime prevention block leaders and to everyone who had organized an NNO event in 2008. This information was also posted on our website. People could register for NNO and apply to close their streets online. Minneapolis 311 assisted people without Internet access.

The Impact of Minneapolis NNO

NNO has many important effects in Minneapolis. Event organizers report that NNO helps them build community, deter crime, improve the quality of life and accomplish important local priorities.

- **NNO builds community**

All Minneapolis NNO events are organized by volunteers and most are small, involving one to three blocks. NNO is a perfect time for neighbors new and old to get to know each other better, as these comments from event organizers show:

It has brought us closer together since we can put names to faces. Nicole, Bancroft

Brought everyone closer and introduced new neighbors to everyone. Kate, Keewaydin

Provided a venue to meet and cultivate relationships with our neighbors. Troy, Audubon Park

We are a much tighter community, we are looking out for each other. This was the 3rd year, and I can definitely feel a difference on the block. Anne, Audubon Park

- **NNO deters crime**

When neighbors know each other, they feel more empowered to watch out for each other and report crime and suspicious behavior throughout the year. This is very important in stopping crime.

More neighbors know each other...which makes us more interested in looking out for each other and easier to spot when something is amiss. Mary, Field

I really feel connected to my neighbors, and I think everyone else feels the same way. We know that we are there for one another and are watching out for each other's safety. Alicia, Lynnhurst

It has brought us all closer together. We already have a block club, but this annual party encourages us to get to know each other and watch out for each other. Meleah, Linden Hills

Neighbors watch out for each other. Tana, Windom Park

- ***NNO helps neighbors get important things done***

In Minneapolis, NNO is much more than a night of parties. Neighbors use the connections they make at NNO (and often, part of their NNO time together) to work on important local priorities. Examples in 2009 included:

- Collecting and exchanging contact information (names, addresses, phones, and e-mails)
- Discussing and sharing neighborhood problems
- Distributing crime prevention information
- Helping neighbors to reconnect with each other
- Conducting a food drive

- ***NNO improves the quality of life***

When people know their neighbors and everyone is watching out for each other, they are less afraid of crime and feel better about where they live.

This is just a great way to meet, connect with and build relationships with our neighbors. There were 3 households that attended this year that I had not seen in the past 3 years and I hope they became more comfortable with the neighborhood after tonight. Lynn, Wenonah

Welcoming new folks, remembering faces, expanding the comfort level. Claudia, Minnehaha

Brought block closer together; and allowed people who don't get out as much or are rather shy about speaking with their neighbors to be able to do so, letting down bias. Vanessa, Elliot Park

We are all much closer and help each other out more. Virgil, Tangletown

Summary

NNO is a 26-year, widely supported, very popular institution in Minneapolis. It has proven to be an excellent time to bring block clubs together and to get new groups involved. Participants describe a number of longer-range impacts including building community, reducing crime, and improving the quality of life. NNO also helps groups achieve priorities that are important to them. No single-day event involves more Minneapolitans and none has greater long-term impact.

We are firmly committed to continuing the Minneapolis NNO tradition in 2010 and beyond.

To learn more about Minneapolis National Night Out, see www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno or call 612-673-2956.

Mui Le, Minneapolis National Night Out
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