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Great Vacations Travel EXPO Kids Day to feature Travel Channel star, family vacation giveaway, characters and more

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Kids Day at the Great Vacations Travel EXPO, presented by AAA, is slated for Saturday, Feb. 4. Designed for the whole family, Kids Day offers parents the opportunity to talk one-on-one with travel experts to plan the perfect family vacation tailored to their family's needs, interests and budget, while, costumed characters, fun activities and live entertainment delight the kids.

As a highlight of this year's Kids Day, Josh Gates, star of Travel Channel's "Expedition Unknown," will take the AAA Travel Stage. A favorite of kids of all ages, Gates will share amazing tales of his expeditions and will sign autographs, giving EXPO guests the chance to meet him in person. A noted adventurer and avid explorer with a unique brand of humor and deep-rooted passion for off-the-map excursions, on "Expedition Unknown," Gates sets out to span the globe in search of the truth behind the most captivating and iconic unsolved legends.

Returning for Kids Day is the EXPO's extraordinarily popular "Passport For Prizes" game, in which families collect passport stamps from exhibitors throughout the EXPO in order to be entered to win a grand prize family vacation.

Beyond the family getaway contest, there's even more to explore at this year's EXPO, including The Great Outdoors area, presented by Metro Parks, where kids can enjoy discovering area wildlife, walking through a live woodland setting, meeting with naturalists and trying their hand at the putting green.

Favorite family vacation destinations are well represented at the EXPO, with parents having face-to-face access to the experts from exotic destinations, Universal Orlando Resorts, Ohio State Park Lodges, Ohio's Hocking Hills and Lake Erie Shores & Islands, among others. In the Lake Erie Shores & Islands area, everyone's favorite cartoon character -- Snoopy -- will be on hand to pose for selfies, and junior anglers can fish for fun prizes while playing on the sandy beach.

The AAA Explore Store features free road maps, travel guide books and expert knowledgeable travel advice and trip planning assistance from the professional travel agents at AAA for the perfect family getaway. The AAA Travel Stage will feature a day packed with family friendly live entertainment, in addition to the appearance by Travel Channel's Josh Gates.

The Great Vacations Travel EXPO, presented by AAA, opens Friday, Feb. 3 and runs through Sunday, Feb. 5, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Downtown Columbus. Hours are Friday, noon to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$8 at the door or at any AAA Ohio Auto Club store. AAA members who show their AAA card receive 50 percent off admission. Children ages 16 and under are admitted at no charge. Additional event details are available at AAAGreatVacations.com.

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