



Kids Fishing Day **Second Saturday In May**

Special Needs Fishing Event **Second Friday in May**

Columbia Park Pond, Kennewick

The 16th Annual Kids Fishing Events will be held Friday, May 10th and Saturday, May 11th, 2013.

Fewer and fewer kids are taking part in outdoor activities including the sport of fishing. This is a disturbing trend. We need to introduce children (and their parents) to the beneficial aspects of fishing as an individual, as a family activity, and as a way to become more aware of our natural resources. The Columbia Park Pond "Kids Fish-in" event accomplishes all of these goals. First, it gives a child an opportunity to experience the thrill of catching a fish. In addition, educational sessions and hands on assistance from local anglers and outdoor enthusiasts will help the child learn more about fishing and the outdoors.

The 2013 youth fishing event marks the 16th year a sponsored youth angling event has taken place on Columbia Park Pond. This is a two-day event. The first event is scheduled for 4pm Friday evening and is limited to those anglers, both youth and adults, with special needs. In 2008 the first Special Needs Event was held at Columbia Park Pond on the Friday evening prior to the annual Kids Fish-in Event. Over 75 special needs children and adults were invited to spend a couple of hours with their families and volunteers fishing at Columbia Park Pond. Rods, tackle, and bait were provided along with a T-shirt commemorating the event. The event was a big success and has been continued every year since. The event has been expanded to 250 individuals from the Tri-city area with special needs. All the anglers for the Friday night event are sponsored by Tri-city area businesses and special needs care givers.





The Saturday event, *Kids Fishing Day*, scheduled to start at 9am will provide fishing opportunities for up to 1,200 children, ages 5-14. Each youth is provided a brand new rod and reel (theirs to keep) and bait. The registered youths are divided into four groups with varying start times so that no more than 300 children and their parents will be fishing at any one time. The pond is seven surface acres in size and can easily accommodate the anglers and their families.





This event relies upon volunteers from several public and private groups. Kennewick Parks and Recreation handles the registration for the event as well as fencing, tables, and clean-up after the event. Richland Rod & Gun Club volunteers complete the rod assembly, fish cleaning, and supplied numerous volunteers on the day of the event to distribute rods, help with registration, and help with casting and baiting on the pond. Kamaikin High School puts on a casting clinic prior to each schedule release to help teach children how to cast. Atomic Dive and Rescue conducts a safe water program for the children. The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) stocks 2,500 trout into the pond each year prior to the event. In 2011, KOE and WDFW developed a cooperative program to raise additional trout for the event. Over 3,000 jumbo trout are raised under this program for the cost of food only. These jumbo trout will be about 1.5 to 2 pounds each when they are stocked in the pond. This will provide kids with larger fish that will provide “the fight of their life” to many of these first time fishermen.



New in 2012, the Richland Rod and Gun Club will be tagging a number of trout with unique numbers. Youths catching these tagged fish during the events will receive a special prize that has been donated by area businesses. Businesses can become sponsors donating cash to assist

with the expense of the fish food and/or donating merchandise for a prize associated with one of the unique fish tags. Special needs kids will have a similar fishing opportunity on May 10th. We currently charge \$10 per registration. Between pre-registrations and walk-ins the event has sold out every year. Though we charge a registration fee, this fee barely covers the cost of the rods and reels. Additional funds are needed for insurance, bait, tackle, supplies, etc. There is no paid staff for this event or administrative fees. All funds raised for this event go directly to the event. We do not want to increase the cost of the registration and thus eliminate some families from being able to attend this event. Instead we rely on local individuals and businesses to help support this event.

We have had great support for these events from local businesses and volunteers. We hope that you will consider supporting the 2013 Kids Fishing Day!

*Proposed Donation Levels for Kids Outdoor Experience
Kids Fish-in Event
May 10th & 11th 2012*

GOLD LEVEL DONOR

\$500 cash donation plus store merchandise or gift certificate(s) of \$100 or greater.

SILVER LEVEL DONOR

\$250 cash donation plus store merchandise or gift certificate(s) of \$50 or greater.

BRONZE LEVEL DONOR

\$100 cash donation plus store merchandise or gift certificate(s) of \$25 or greater.

OTHER DONORS

All donations of cash or store merchandise are greatly appreciated!



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