

# “Kids & Families” Discover Fishing at Bison City

## Fishing Thrills at 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Jimmy Griffin Memorial Teach-Me-To-Fish Event

May 20, 2018; 106 Kids, 238 Total Attendance; 34 Volunteers; 10-Learning Stations

By Forrest Fisher

Kids arrived eager to learn details about adventure in the outdoors through the fun of fishing. Bright sunny skies and warm sunscreen weather welcomed visitors from Western New York and Canada to Bison City Rod & Gun Club. Linda Cooley, Lynda Kollar and Rose Barus provided energy and excitement with folks during first-connection moments at registration.

The kids learned that the Buffalo River offers fishing, boating, kayaking and canoeing, as well as really big red tug boats pushing really big barges too. Lots of folks could watch and enjoy the watercraft as they were catching fish from the deep in the rejuvenated Buffalo River.



Marine Unit 2 with the Erie County Sheriff Patrol Team provided tours of their 37' vessel, explaining water-safety and allowing kids to ask questions and get to know them. Law enforcement folks are great people. Fun times!

Kids and parents learned “How-To-Fish” and what to do from Western New York bass pro, Scott Gauld, who took time to share “easy tips” for everyone. He

explained artificial baits, live baits, bobbers and rods/reels, all to find a little bit of fun adventure when fishing with kids. People went away looking for the fishing pier!

The river was running a bit discolored from recent rains, the steady flow of fish-catching showed proof that water color is not a deterrent. Kids fishing from the Bison City fishing pier discovered details about hooks, bobbers,



sinkers, worms and those finny critters called fish. They caught lots of fish!

Russ Johnson and Bob Carlson, members of the East Aurora Fish & Game Club, who have perfected the system for educating kids and parents on how to tie a Palomar Knot and Clinch Knot, taught kids to tie up a hook in seconds.

Rigging a weedless plastic bait, a plastic worm or jig tail, was made easy with a hands-on demonstration by Collin Voss and NY State Junior

Bassmaster, Alex Gauld, one of

only 64 such members in the country. They provided each youth with a souvenir plastic creature bait to fish with and take home. The girls seemed to pick the pink squiggly tails with silver sparkles.

Environmental Conservation Officer Jeff Jondle and NRA Instructor Joe Mills provided hands-on firearm safety training, explaining responsibility for parents and kids as they experienced the Cabela’s BB-Gun Range. The safety-instructors provided easy 1-2-3 learning guidelines for safe use of a firearm, using a Daisy Red Ryder BB-Gun. The paper targets with holes in them were special souvenirs as happy kids took their targets home.



The Cabela's Archery Booth was dedicated to lifetime youth educator and certified New York State Archery champion, Paul Stoos, who recently had suddenly passed away. Earl Farrel, Sr., stepped up to provide first-time how-to lessons for kids using air-suspended targets. It was a fun time.

Ted Malota and Scott Skinner taught kids to cast a spincast fishing rod with hookless casting baits. The kids were tossing lines a very long way toward hula-hoop targets in just seconds. The skills we develop at young ages! Fun time.

Fishing from "George's Landing" at the Bison City Fish Pier provided fun and adventure for many



young and old. Some first-ever fish too!

Fishing educator, Stan Brozyna and Dave Solowski provided eager kids and families with rods, reels, bobbers, hooks and plenty of nightcrawler bait supplied by Weekley's Worms – they sell more than 80 million worms per year! Special thanks to Donna and Stacy Kayes for providing "pre-fish confidence" while outfitting each youth with a life-preserver before entering

the pier area. There was fun for everyone. The fish were placed in the Bison City aerated Lunker Pool and released by the kids after the event. Kids that did not catch a fish enjoyed seeing fish that others caught.



Lyme Awareness Educator, Sheri Voss, provided hands-on lessons for families with advice to stay prepared, informed and proactive with special focus on deer ticks, mice and Lyme disease prevention thru awareness. As families completed the learning stations, a 72-slide projection show indoors allowed for continued education with Sahlen's grill-cooked hot dogs, tasty ice cream, Gwen Jozwiak's hand-made "fish cupcakes" and munchies. During the random raffle, 102 happy youths won a free rod/reel combo. Everyone else, adults too, took home fishing maps, tackle and a map with "places to fish." The kids and adults were **BIG WINNERS!**

*This special youth outreach event is sponsored by the Bison City Rod & Gun Club with special thanks to Cabela's, Ted & Doraine Malota, Erie County Federation of Sportsmen, Sahlen's Meat Packing, the Norby Antonik Foundation, Weekley's Bait, Gwen Jozwiak, 34 dedicated volunteers who donated their time to help youth and their families learn more about the outdoors through the fun of fishing! Thanks TEAM!*

*Dave & Rose Barus, 2018 Program Chairpersons*

