

I got a bite. I caught another fish! That fish looks big, you better go weigh it and see if it is the big fish in your age category. Those were some of the sounds you heard throughout the morning at the 17th Annual Kids' Ice Fishing Derby held Saturday, January 26th at Hyde Creek Pond. The kids' ice fishing derby was a great success, in large part due to hungry fish that kept the attention of both parents and kids' throughout the morning. There were 109 registered kids, 40 girls and 69 boys, ranging in age from 1 to 16 years old. More than 40 adults, including moms, dads, grandparents, neighbors and friends, accompanied the young anglers who came from places throughout Lemhi County and as far away as Pahsimeroi, Challis, May and Mud Lake.

The young anglers and the adults seemed to be in good spirits in spite of temperatures below freezing. All the kids really seemed to be enjoying their ice-fishing adventure. Melissa Leifeste, age 8, has won the derby several times. When asked how to catch a fish, she said, "You have a pink marshmallow and a worm and you put it on a hook and put it in the water." She has caught most of her fish with her lucky Scooby-Do pole that she has had "since I was a little girl". Michelle Dalling, age 4, said "I haven't caught a fish yet but I said a prayer to catch one." Shania Fitte, age 10, was asked what she thinks about ice fishing, she said, "It's different from the other kind of fishing. It's cold!" And Colter Bennett, age 4, was asked how do you like ice fishing, he just said "Good" and proudly held up his fish. When taking a break from fishing, popular gathering areas included the hot chocolate station and the warming fire.

The pond was stocked prior to Saturday with approximately 350 rainbow trout from the Mackay Fish Hatchery. The overall biggest fish of the day was caught by Hagen Miller. He won the age 12-16 category with a fish weighing in at 1.2 pounds. Other big fish winners included: Age 0-5 – Zane Hamilton at 0.87 lbs, Age 6-8 – Ty Cannon at 0.97 lbs and Age 9-11 – Bailey Weaver at 1.12 lbs. All four big fish winners were awarded a fishing rod and reel combo with a tackle pack donated by the Salmon Region - Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Along with additional prize donations from the Salmon-Challis National Forest, Idaho Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Salmon Field Office – Bureau of Land Management, no child went home empty handed. Prizes, totaling over \$2,000 in value, were awarded to registered youths present at the end of the derby by means of a drawing.

In addition to the prizes awarded at the end of the derby there were 27 tagged fish swimming around in the pond waiting for lucky anglers to catch them. Those tagged fish were worth a \$50 savings bond, if caught during the derby, sponsored by very generous local merchants and businesses. They included the Auto Clinic, Bruce Cole Insurance, Coach Works, DeBoard Insurance, East Idaho Credit Union, Hometown Realty, KMC Computers, Knights of Columbus, Lemhi Title & Abstract, Main Street Realty, Mountain West Real Estate, Paige Oeding Real Estate, Quality Motors (4), Robert & Phyllis Rose, Robie Real Estate, Salmon River Motors (4), State Farm Insurance, Susan Schaffner Real Estate & Bugs-Be-Where? Town and Country Real Estate, US Bank and Wells Fargo Bank. To everyone's surprise out of the 50+ fish caught during the ice fishing derby not one had a tag.

Another popular and very much appreciated donation was the porta potty donated by Lemhi Septic Service. Also, everyone very much appreciated the parking areas created by the great snow plowing efforts of the Lemhi County Road and Bridge crew.

Please look for the advertisement in this issue of the Recorder Herald thanking the merchants who supported this event. And when you get the chance, let them know how much you appreciate their continued generosity.

This year's Ice Fishing Derby was sponsored by the Salmon-Challis National Forest, Salmon Region – Idaho Dept.of Fish & Game, Salmon and Challis Field Offices – Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program-Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District.

We look forward to seeing you at the summer Kids' Fish Fair and Fishing Derby in June, during Idaho's free fishing day. The success of these fishing derbies depends upon local sponsors, local merchants/businesses, and especially the adults who make the time to take the kids fishing. So Kids, be sure to thank the adults who took you fishing and the local sponsors and businesses that supported this annual ice fishing derby.

- **See Attached Photo  
of the four Big Fish Winners**

**(Please Post in the January 31<sup>st</sup> Newspaper. If there are questions about this article please call Dan Garcia at the Salmon/Cobalt Ranger District 756-5237)**