

Chandos Lake Kid's Fishing Derby

By Jim Franks, CLPOA Director

The *first annual* Chandos Lake Kid's Fishing Derby held on Saturday, July 15th went off without a hitch.

There were 90 registrants that participated in a fun-filled day. The skies were blue and the weather was warm. The only thing bigger than the *24 inch pike* caught that day were the smiles on the kid's faces.

There were plenty of activities to keep both the young and the old entertained. From the OPP Marine Unit Display, a Taxidermy Exhibit & Fish Cleaning Demonstration, Scales Nature Park with a display and talk of their exotic reptiles & amphibians, and of course the BBQ with free hot dogs and pops for the kids there was more than enough to keep the crowd happy.

To finish the day off there was an amazing prize table with a prize for every participant. A special thank you goes out to all the generous sponsors and hard working volunteers that made the day so extra special.

Here are the eight lucky winners:

Pike 24 inches

- Billy Boa, age 6

Small Mouth Bass (3 way tie) 12 inches

- Ryan Tucker, age 9
- Grayson Walling, age 7
- Evan Shee, age 9

Perch (3 way tie) 7 inches

- Caige Arbour, age 11
- Cheyanne Heyworth, age 12
- Nathan Heyworth, age 9

Pan Fish: total weight 6 pounds

- Zachary Goble, age 11

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Fishing for Answers

By Peter Hughes - with help from Jim Franks + Rick Daniels.

These Fishing Derbies are promoted as "Catch and Release". At the Chandos event, a six year old caught a 24" Pike! Did he keep the fish? And if an adult helped him catch the fish, would the adult need to have a Fishing License?

On the topic of Catch and Release, Jim Franks wrote: We promote this event as a Catch and Release Fishing Derby with the exception of the pan fish (rock bass, sunfish, bluegill, pumpkinseed etc.). Pan fish have been known to overpopulate and ruin some smaller lakes. They compete with the game fish (bass, pickerel, lake trout etc.) for food and nesting sites. They have also been known to eat some of the smaller game fish. What we did with the pan fish at the Derby was give them to Scales Nature Park where they use them as feed for their reptiles and amphibians. This fit in nicely with our environmental and ecological initiatives.

Having said all this I'm not sure what happened to the 24 inch Pike as I was busy that day overseeing other areas. There's no way we can truly enforce the catch and release program but we certainly try to promote it.

On the topic of Licensing (i.e. if you help a child who is fishing, do you need a Fishing License? And, doesn't everyone in the boat have to have a fishing license?), the Musky Guide, Rick Daniels wrote:

This is a good question ... but being a retired Paralegal, I'm not going to give a straight answer. The way I interpret the legislation is as follows: One does NOT need a fishing licence if they are assisting someone who is exempt from a fishing licence (no matter what you are **in or on**) as long as you're NOT engaged in fishing.

So, if mom and her two kids are sitting in a boat and there are three lines in the water, she can't claim she's assisting. But if a child hooks a big Pike and can't reel it in by himself – mom can certainly help. In essence, an MNR officer has to believe both that someone is actually (deliberately or negligently) contravening the regulations and believes that the MNR has a reasonable chance of getting a conviction in court.

This is similar to the scenario if your car broke down in a no parking zone and the tow truck was on the way. You're not deliberately trying to break the law even though technically you are and, if you went to court, it would probably get tossed out.