

Appendix C

Press and Media Coverage



Guy Ellis/News Advocate

Students from Brethren Middle School's Summer Adventure course prepare to take the fishing training they received in class to the waters of Portage Lake Monday.

Getting kids outdoors

Course educates youngsters about the outdoors

By GUY ELLIS
Staff Reporter

ONEKAMA — Monday morning the sun rose bright, the sky clear blue over Portage Lake. They weren't the best fishing conditions, but it mattered little to a group of 14 Summer Adventure students from Brethren Middle School who gathered on the municipal dock to board three fishing boats for a fishing trip on the lake.

They wanted to test what they'd learned during five weeks of classes on the outdoor arts, in this case fishing.

The course is offered by the Kaleva Norman Dickson school district and supported by a 21st Century Learning Center Grant with additional support and technical assistance from the Little Manistee River Watershed Conservation Council.

"The course has covered outdoor subjects like fishing rules and regulation given by a DNR officer, pond

exploration, spinner and crawler harness making and fish identification," said Amanda Bultema, after-school and summer program coordinator. "We've had great support from the community. Gordon Parks of Andy's Tackle Box in Brethren went out and caught fish and froze them for the identification portion of the course. It's just overwhelming the support we get."

The boats used to fish Monday morning were provided by experienced fishermen, Dan Delman of Irons, Eric Harris of Kaleva and Brent Benson of Kaleva, who is a fishing guide.

The Little Manistee Watershed Conservation Council works to maintain water quality in the Little Manistee River, but it has a much broader agenda when it comes to educating youth.

"Though we are a little river association we promote fishing everywhere, especially among the youth,"

said Marion Belding, board member. "Operation Fish at Michigan State, which I attended, is a course which trains people to go back into the community and teach kids to fish."

She said she finds the community here is very receptive to supporting fishing programs.

"We didn't catch anything," said Jesse Ketchum of Kaleva. "But we got a few bites and had a good time."

"It was really cool," said Jessica Monnot of Manistee. "It wasn't like normal fishing. I caught a sunfish, and our boat caught lots of small perch and pike that was just a little too small."

Belding reported that while taking the Operation Fish course at Michigan State she was informed that on average nationally, kids only spend 10 minutes a day outdoors. She hopes that programs like this will help to reverse that trend in youth by developing interest in the outdoors.

**GANDER MOUNTAIN WILL PLEDGE
SALES PROFITS TO PROJECT FISH**

Contact: Bob Neumann

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Gander Mountain stores in Michigan will pledge 10 percent of their profits made from 5 to 9 p.m. June 1 to Michigan State University's Project Friends Involved in Sportfishing Heritage (Project FISH).

Currently, Gander Mountain is donating \$5 from each sale of Bobber the Gander Dog -- a 12-inch stuffed animal that resembles a Labrador retriever -- to the project.

Gander Mountain stores are in Lansing, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Flint, Sterling Heights, Utica, Pontiac and Taylor.

Mark Stephens, MSU Extension Project FISH program coordinator, says the money will be placed in an endowed fund to sustain the program, which so far has reached more than 12,000 youngsters and has 200 trained adults who serve as sports angling mentors.

Project FISH is managed by the MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. It was begun in 1998 with support from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust.

The purpose of the project is to introduce youngsters and teenagers to Michigan's fishing resources and its history. Besides learning to fish in the Great Lakes and on inland waters, program participants are taught how to make and use fishing tackle (wet and dry). They are also introduced to environmental practices that sustain the sports fishery.

(over)

"Most kids don't realize that fishing is a wholesome pastime that gets them out-of-doors to enjoy one of Michigan's great natural resources," Stephens says. "Even if they don't catch a fish, being outdoors in a peaceful atmosphere can do wonders, and a lot of kids -- and adults -- have no idea how beneficial that can be."

The program continues to look for adults or organizations interested in mentoring young people in the project.

"We are basically looking for folks who have an interest in the environment, like the out-of-doors and want it to be managed wisely in future years, and the way to do that is to teach kids how to appreciate the resource," Stephens says.

Adults interested in the project need not be anglers but be willing to learn about and explore Michigan's fishing resource -- from smelt dipping to salmon fishing -- with kids.

Of course, the project would be delighted to attract experienced anglers who want to pass their knowledge and skills on to a group of youngsters.

"That would be ideal, but those persons are not too plentiful," Stephens says. "If someone, a school or a community organization -- Lions Club, Jaycees, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls -- doesn't have the skills but wants to join Project FISH, we'll provide the training and help garner the supplies and contacts to get started."

More information about Project FISH can be obtained from Stephens by writing to him at 13 Natural Resources Building, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824, accessing the Internet at <www.projectfish.org> or calling 517-432-2700.

Project F.I.S.H. Workshop



Wittenbach AgriScience & Environmental
Center and Wege Natural Area.
11715 Vergennes
Lowell, Michigan

March 6th, 8th, 13th, 15th

5:30 to 8:30 pm each night

Project FISH (Friends Involved in Sportfishing Heritage) invites teachers, educators and volunteers to four evenings of:

"Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education."

Coordinated by Michigan State University's, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Project FISH has partnered with schools, agencies, sportsman organizations and communities throughout Michigan to educate young people about our natural resources through "FISHING."

Attending this workshop will provide you with materials and partnerships to assist you in developing hands-on outdoor community education. This workshop will offer activities in Aquatic Ecology, Tackle Crafting, People and Fish Management and actual Angling Skills. ***"All activities are designed to the Michigan MEAP & DOE Frameworks."*** Participants will come away with activities, equipment, even a fishing rod & reel and an awesome curriculum/activity guide. Workshop is partially funded through a grant from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust. A light dinner will be provided.

Cost for the Workshop is only \$50.00

**And may be partially covered with Eisenhower dollars*

For registration information contact Mark Stephens 517-432-2700; steph143@msu.edu or Tammy DeBaar 616-987-1002. Registration Deadline is February 28th, 2001. Early registration will insure your participation, as space is limited.

Project F.I.S.H. Workshop Registration

Lowell Michigan

The workshop will begin at 5:30 pm each of the days, and will conclude at 8:30 pm

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: *Must be received on or before February 28th, 2001*

NAME _____ MALE OR FEMALE _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ APT# _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

COUNTY _____

ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION _____

PHONE _____ (HM) _____ (WK)

EMAIL _____

Special Needs

If you require any special arrangements for the workshop please state those needs below:

I would like to purchase an embroidered:

100% Cotton T -Shirt \$12.00 (size) _____

Hat Beige w/dk green bill \$12.00 _____

BOTH Extra \$24.00 _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____.00 . This includes the registration fees and ha/ t-shirt costs.

*additional clothing items will be available for purchase at the workshop.

Refund and Cancellation Policy: \$20.00 of the \$50.00 registration fee is non-refundable under any circumstances and cancellations after March 1st, 2001 will receive no refund.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS CONTACT MARK STEPHENS AT: steph143@msu.edu or 517-432-2700.

RETURN THIS FORM WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER BY February 28th, 2001 TO:

MARK STEPHENS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
NATURAL RESOURCES BLDG. RM. 13
EAST LANSING, MI 48824

PROJECT FISH COMES TO LOWELL (WEST CENTRAL), MICHIGAN

There is a lot to be learned in a weekend training session. Project FISH (Friends Involved in Sportfishing Heritage) will be in the west central Michigan (Lowell) on March 6th, 8th, 13th, 15th to educate interested teachers and volunteers on the fine art of fishing and the importance of caring for Michigan's vital aquatic resources. Each training session will have the same theme "Let's get kids to care for our aquatic resources by learning to fish".

Project FISH is a mentor based community supported program that will involve many partners including schools, 4-H, sportfishing organizations, and mentoring groups within the community. Project FISH is a Michigan State University, Department of Fisheries & Wildlife education program in cooperation with the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan State University Extension and Michigan United Conservation Clubs. Our goal in Michigan communities is to educate interested teachers and volunteers with our very exciting and hands on activities and lessons and leave them with the materials and resources to get kids excited about fishing. Here are the main components of Project FISH:

Michigan Aquatic Ecology: Learn about the things that make our aquatic ecosystems tick by using some very interesting activities involving our Great Lakes watersheds, invertebrates and neat sampling experiments designed to get you INVOLVED. Participants will be given many education materials for use in their programs. Additional resources and contacts will be given to teachers for follow up and continued support.

People and Fish: "How many fish are in that pond and what effect do I have on them?" These are the types of questions that will come up in this fish management and ethics session. What is the difference between an ethic and a regulation? You'll learn this as well as come up with your own code of ethics. You may learn more about a person by exploring their tackle box. Find out about Great Lakes issues and human involvement, like commercial vs. sportfishing, allocation and game laws. You may even say "hmm" a few times. Catch a fish, put it on your shirt, permanently!

Tackle Crafting: This session will get you making the equipment you can use to catch fish. You will use what you learned in aquatic ecology to reproduce an artificial tool for your attempt at catching fish. Fly tying, jig making, snelling hooks and creating worm/crawler harness are only a few ingredients of this part of Project FISH. Each participant will be given the materials for making fishing baits and the knowledge to make these and other look-alikes. In addition, resources for expertise and partners will be given to all participants. This class is a lot of fun.

Angling Skills: This class is the bread and butter. How do I use this fishing pole? Pop can casting and basic skills will lead to proficiency with a variety of rod and reel types. Learn how to catch bass in your backyard and receive the game to teach you and your youth. You will also find the sources of materials to get kids actively involved with fishing, and they can do it in their own backyard. Take home a fishing rod for inspiration and a learning/teaching tool.

During your Project FISH training, you will be introduced to a variety of individuals and organizations in your area to call on for assistance and expertise. Don't miss this chance to become involved in introducing this education style to your community. ***"IT'S FOR THE KIDS"!***

Project Fish angles for kids

MSU program gives younger generation chance to go fishing

By ERIC SHARP
FREE PRESS OUTDOORS WRITER

LANSGING — While manufacturers spend billions on advertising aimed at selling dedicated anglers everything from sunglasses to boats, others are concerned about a disturbing trend.

Fewer people are fishing, and the drop-off is particularly noticeable among children.

It's not that they don't want to fish. It's largely a product of urbanization, which has concentrated a once-rural population in and around cities.

Significant social changes have had a bearing on angling numbers. Far more children are in single-parent homes, often with a parent with no angling background. Development has effectively cut off access to many lakes and rivers. And with so many other forms of entertainment, there's less incentive for children to seek outdoor activities.

Enter Project Fish. The Michigan State University Extension Service program aims to introduce children to fishing and, more important, teach adults how to teach kids to fish.

"Look at our outdoor clubs," said Mark Stephens, who heads Project Fish. "What's the average age of the club members? Fifty-six? One of my goals is to have the clubs set things up so that when the parents are at the club, there are things for the children to do here, too. Unless we get more young people into these sports, they are going to die."

Gander Mountain outdoor stores are supporting Project Fish and have hosted children's angling education and tackle-making sessions. Next Thursday, the company will donate 10 percent of the profits on all merchandise sold between 5 and 9 p.m. at all of its Michigan stores to Project Fish.

"So if you're going to buy a shotgun or even a fishing lure, buy it at Gander Mountain June 1 between 5 and 9, and you'll be helping us and the future of fishing," Stephens said.

Stephens believes the primary goal of Project Fish should be to train adults to set up programs to teach fishing to children around



Christopher Warren, 8, of Detroit, leans back to launch a cast during a Project Fish event at Palmer Park.



Glennis Holcomb, 17, of Detroit shows off an impressive stringer of 23 bluegills he and his mom, Alfreda Pearson, caught Saturday at Palmer Park.

from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. July 20-22 at the Wolf Lake Interpretive Center near Kalamazoo.

"Each day will focus on a different theme, from aquatic ecology to tack-crafting to a hands-on how-to-fish session," Stephens said. "Teachers can usually use these courses as professional development days, and a lot of them have found their school district will pay their fee."

Each instructor also gets a rod, tackle box, tackle and a game to teach casting.

"Eventually, we'd like to see every kid in Michigan go through this program," Stephens said.

But he added that's just the start: "We need to start a mentoring program of adults who will take kids fishing. It doesn't do much good to put kids through the course, teach them how to fish, then tell them they have to wait a year for another one-day event before they can go fishing again."

The Department of Natural Resources runs a Fishing in the Parks program, but it reaches relatively few people for the cost. There are exceptions. The DNR Bay City State Park program teaches almost every third-grade in Bay County about aquatic ecology, basic fishing skills, and they spend a day on a pond.

Last year the Fishing in the Park program drew 3,660, up 80 from 1998 but still averaging only about 20 per park per night. By contrast, Gander Mountain drew more than 5,000 children to a one-

a \$2.5-million endowment to keep the training programs going in perpetuity. Once that is achieved, an endowment will be created for shooting-sports programs.

While Project Fish has put a lot of effort into reaching disadvantaged inner-city children, "We got a real surprise to find that a lot of the really prosperous kids are in the same boat," Stephens said.

"We're sending an intern to teach a Project Fish course this

lives in the lakes, or how to fish.

"But when you think about it, even though their parents are wealthy, those parents mostly grew up as city kids, so they don't know anything about fishing either. They work long hours, and when they made enough money to move into a nice home on a lake, it was all new to them."

Project Fish has two adult teaching workshops next month, open to anyone for a \$45 fee. A

Photos by PAUL WARNER/Special to the Free Press

'Project' Not Just Another Project

By Mark Stephens

Memories before the age five are vague to me. I still remember a few little details like the infamous "Tony the Pony" that I rode around the neighborhood. Forward and reverse pedal and a very large battery that I drained weekly. I think I remember this toy the most because of the fuss the adults on my block made about me riding on this motorized "best friend." I guess we were inseparable.

This subject is still brought up when we look back on our childhood. Another detail that has hung around with me is standing on a dock with my sisters. I was

holding a huge cane pole with a small sunfish on the end of the line. I don't remember catching it but I remember all of the fuss the adults made about this little fish. I never realized how this memory would affect the rest of my life. How could I? I was only five years old.

Molly caught her first off of the dock at Camp Tamakwa in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada. It was a sunfish also but not caught with a cane pole. This smallmouth bass was 3½ pounds and 19 inches long and caught with a floating Rapala, orange if I remember correctly. Talk about adults making a big deal about something! She caught this on an ultra-light spinning rod at the age of 4 years old. I still get chills when I think of her excitement and that a big part of her life will include fishing. I make a big deal out of my little girl experiencing the things that brought me a lifetime of happiness as well as my career.

youth leaders. The goal of the program is to work with schools, the Department of Natural Resources, Cooperative Extension and 4-H, and local service clubs, businesses and sportfishing organizations, to set up a team of community individuals to get to the kids. "Hey I know a guy who loves kids and ties flies for trout fishing, I'm sure he'll help." This is the response we hope to and have received thus far.

Project FISH utilizes five sessions in its programming. These include aquatic ecology, tackle crafting, angling skills, people and fish management and finally a coordinating session for the organizer of the team. These exciting and

hands-on activities are structured to give an all-encompassing education program, not only to teach fishing, but ethics, fish population management, careers, and stewardship of our water resources. Training workshops and development of education materials especially oriented toward Lake Michigan fisheries is supported in 1998-1999 by a grant from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust.

October Saturdays proved to be very entertaining as Project FISH offered its "Catch a Meal" program, at the Michigan State Fairgrounds in Detroit. These four Saturdays saw Project FISH, the Department of Natural Resources and Hook, Line and Sink, Inc.

partner with many dedicated volunteers from the Metro Detroit area to fish out the new Pocket Park pond before winter. Nearly 350 kids participated and took home over 2000 hybrid bluegills to eat. Many of these kids caught their first fish, learned to clean it, and received a recipe to cook it. These days reinforced the fact that fishing is infectious and can be a lifelong activity. These days also reinforced that in order for these kids to continue fishing, they need an adult/mentor with whom to fish and learn. Continued contact and adult support at a young age will solidify the desire to use leisure time wisely and in a learning environment, as seen in a

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A Special Program Indeed

Continued from Page 13
variety of 4-H programs. It is this philosophy upon which Project FISH builds.

As I look back on my childhood and why I enjoy outdoor recreation, my family supported my interests and made a big deal of the things I did. My father gave me things to look forward to in teaching me bits and pieces of activities that came later. I truly thank him for that. Daniel caught his first bluegill off grandpa's dock at age 3. His sister watched him catch his 14-inch largemouth as his second fish, she thinks she has one up on him.

I'll continue to introduce my kids to these very special activities. They are lucky in that way. Next time you are casting your thoughts back to growing up, picture who molded part of you. We often forget, unless repeatedly reminded as I am with "Tony," but I think you will feel the same as I do. Make a big deal of Fishing case at end of the line something positive a kid becomes involved in. Take the time to show them how to tie a certain knot, or to rig a pole or if you need some ideas, call me at 517-432-2700. Project FISH could use more mentors, so could the world. I apologize for the sappiness.

FISHES SPORT FISHING NEWS SPECIAL EDITION 1999 PAGE 13



Project FISH targets youngsters.

Study: Fishing a lost art among kids

By ERIC SHARP
Knight Ridder Newspapers

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It's not that they don't want to fish. It's largely a product of urbanization, which has concentrated a once-rural population in and around cities.

Significant social changes have had a bearing on angling numbers. Far more children are in single-parent homes, often with a parent with no angling

background. Development has effectively cut off access to many lakes and rivers. And with so many other forms of entertainment, there's less incentive for children to seek outdoor activities.

Enter Project Fish. The Michigan State University Extension Service program aims to introduce children to fishing and, more important, teach adults how to teach kids to fish.

"Look at our outdoor clubs," said Mark Stephens, who heads Project Fish. "What's the average age of the club members? Fifty-six? One of my goals is to have the clubs set things up so that when the parents are at the club, there are things for the children to do there, too. Unless we get more young people into

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Mark Stephens
Project Fish

these sports, they are going to die."

Gander. Mountain outdoor stores are supporting Project Fish and have hosted children's angling education and tackle-making sessions.

Stephens says the primary goal of Project Fish should be to

train adults to set up programs to teach fishing to children, including in schools.

Project Fish has worked on a grant, but that ends this year. The group is trying to build a \$2.5-million endowment to keep the training programs going. Once that is achieved, an endowment will be created for shooting-sports programs.

While Project Fish has put a lot of effort into reaching disadvantaged inner-city children, "We got a real surprise to find that a lot of the really prosperous kids are in the same boat," Stephens said.

"We're sending an intern to teach a Project Fish course this summer at a camp that's almost exclusively for kids from wealthy suburbs in Oakland County. A

lot of these kids live on lakes, but they know almost nothing about what lives in the lakes, or how to fish.

"But when you think about it, even though their parents are wealthy, those parents mostly grew up as city kids, so they don't know anything about fishing either. They work long hours, and when they made enough money to move into a nice home on a lake, it was all new to them."

But, he added, more is needed. "We need to start a mentoring program of adults who will take kids fishing."

On the Net

► Project Fish:
www.projectfish.org

Published In "The Birmingham News" Monday May 28th, 2001

FISHING LESSONS



RICHARD LEE/Detroit Free Press

Tanicel Arnold, 6, of Pontiac shows the bass she caught to Gary Williams, an outreach program coordinator at the Michigan State University Extension. Williams taught children how to bait hooks and remove the fish they caught Wednesday at Pocket Park at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. Tanicel's bass was released back into the pond.