

Families converge at derby

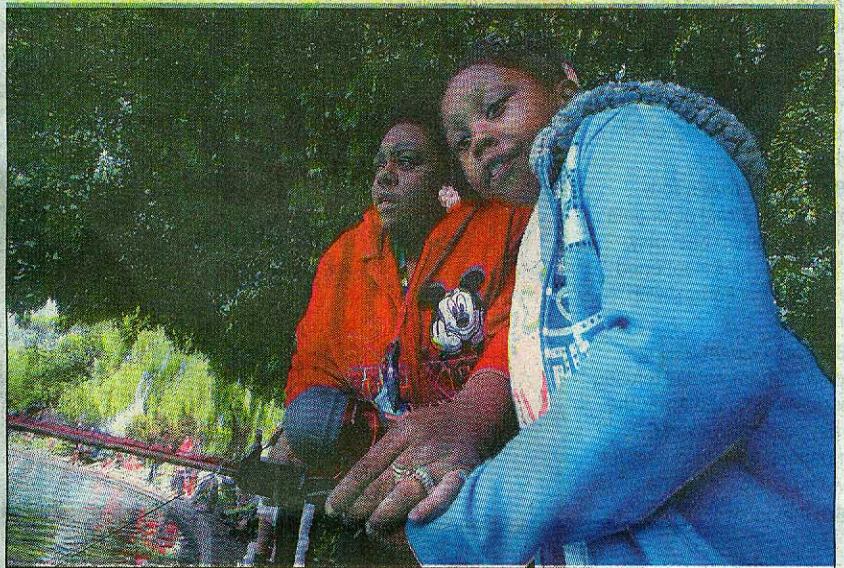
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DAILY REPUBLIC

FAIRFIELD — Natalie Bailey, 11, still has the trophy she won after taking third place in the Kids Day of Fishing derby a few years ago.

Her dad, Mike Bailey, said she proudly displays the trophy on a her dresser. However, Bailey said his daughter looks forward to Kids Day of Fishing every year, whether she wins a trophy or not. He said it's a great event for children with special needs such as his daughter.

"She enjoys holding onto the fishing pole . . . being outside and active and with other kids," he said. "I like to support her in any way I can."

Dozens of families crowded the Civic Center pond Saturday for the annual derby, which is co-hosted by Kids Day of Fishing Inc. and the Kiwanis Club of Fairfield. Free food



Aaron Rosenblatt/Daily Republic

Valerie Dade, left, of Suisun City, helps her granddaughter, Keyera Nolan, 7, during Kids Day of Fishing, Saturday, outside the Fairfield Civic Center.

was provided by the Fairfield Police Officers Association.

Nearly 400 children showed up to try to snag catfish or bass that were placed in the pond just for the event, said Mike Johns, president of Kids Day of Fishing Inc.

This year's event coincided with Fairfield's Earth Day event. Local organizations such as Solano Garbage Company, the Lawrence Hall of Science Inventor's Lab in Vallejo and Pacific Gas & Electric Co. were available to talk about

green services.

Johns said the event is open to all children, though he only offers pre-registration for special needs children. He initially hosted the event just for special needs children because he said it's a great way to empower them and build confidence.

Kids Day of Fishing Inc. provided the first 200 children with free fishing equipment for the event.

See Derby, Page A12

Derby: Kids Fishing

From Page One

Catherine Swin showed up with her three children at 7:45 a.m. in the hopes of getting free equipment, but she said she was too late. Instead, she and her family went to the store and bought some fishing poles and other equipment. Though this was the first time she and her children fished as a family, she said they seemed to be catching on.

"We're definitely going to fish again," she said.

Her 5-year-old daugh-

ter Ellen Swin said she caught a big catfish and she was waiting to catch another one.

"I like going fishing," she said. "We wait . . . then we get to see what we caught, like the catfish."

To learn more about Kids Day of Fishing visit its website, <http://www.kidsdayoffishing.org>.

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