

## The North Forty

By: Bob Bryant

Greetings denizens of the North Forty. As you'll read below, Betty is going to take a little time off from writing so various community characters will be sitting in at the keyboard for a while. I'm glad to have another shot at informing and entertaining Journal readers.

Getting down to business, I would like to talk about one of my favorite subjects; FISHING! Its time to scrape the rust off the reels, spread a little lemon pledge on the rods and replace that old fishing line. The fish are biting. I know fishing isn't for everyone in the North Forty area, but some of us find the fishing to be one of the primary attractions of our beautiful area.

Although I'd caught a few fish here and there over the past four weeks, I knew it was time to really hit the water when my son and I joined six other teams to fish the Jason Fisher Memorial Vocational Scholarship Fund Team Bass Tournament on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Start time was 6:15 a.m. It was called "safe light" and it was cold. After a late start, due to my having to wait for my son to find his lost license, we made a bee-line for "Ballpark" where we found five of the other six teams already fishing. The water was a comfortable 46 degrees which is not optimal for bass fishing. Bass generally don't get active until the water hits 55 degrees.

Nine hours and just two fish later, Bobby and I returned to the Trinity Center ramp for weigh-in. After seeing some of the other stringers being weighed, we didn't even bring our fish to the scales. Bobby quietly slipped them back into the water without fanfare and we marveled at the size of the fish brought in by Tim Brady and Steve Gildesgard.

These two guys, Tim, who caught the California state record smallmouth some years ago and Steve from Creekside Sporting goods in Weaverville, brought in a four fish total of 19.73 lbs. Their big largemouth weighed in at 8.21 lbs and their largest of three smallmouth tipped the scales at 5.11 lbs. For their efforts they reaped first prizes in the total weight category, lunker largemouth category and lunker smallmouth category. Cash winnings of \$140.00. Not back for half a days work.

Second place went to Curt Gibson and Randy McDaniels who graciously donated their winnings back to the scholarship fund. Good job guys and thanks to John Gray for putting on a fun local tournament. The next three Jason Fisher Memorial tournaments will be held on April 7, May 6 and June 9. Call John Gray at 623-4352 if you want more information on these tournaments. Entry fees are only \$40.00 a team.

Just for the record, I have been on the water almost everyday since the tournament, the best day having been on Friday, March 16. The water had warmed up to 62 degrees by 2:00 p.m. and I landed six fish ranging from 2 lbs to a 5 lb 1 oz. smallmouth. With the

warming water the fishing is getting much better so that even I can land some decent fish. In my extensive research and in talking with other fishermen, I've found that the best bite has been on brown green and even purple tube baits fished very slowly. I've found the fish to be hanging around stumps, laydowns and dropoffs in pretty shallow water late in the morning and early to mid afternoon. Get on out and give it a try. If nothing else, its an opportunity to spend a nice day on the lake.

In other North Forty business, Chief Jimbo Dahm has retired from the Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Department. Jimbo had been the Chief for about 3 years and is succeeded by Roger Chatterton who is also the Asst. Chief at Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Department. Roger has some big shoes to fill. However, Jimbo, who is a valuable member of the department, will stay on board as a firefighter. Thanks Jimbo.

In other fire department news, Coffee Creek Fire has received \$30,000 in Title III funds to purchase a new engine. Chief Chatterton is currently shopping for a four-wheel drive engine and already has some leads he's working on. The Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary will be having a meeting on March 25 at 3:00 p.m. to discuss future fund raising efforts. The meeting will be at the TCVFD fire hall. Bring your ideas.

Finally, the Coffee Creek VFD Fund Raising Chili Feed and Auction will be held on April 21<sup>st</sup>. This is always a fun event with great chili and great auction items. I was the lucky auction winner of a Fish Cat 9 inflatable pontoon boat last year. My wonderful, thoughtful wife purchased it for me at the auction and I've used it over and over in the river and lake since. I have it from a good source that there may be another one available at this years auction. If so, have a shot at it, I know I love mine almost as much as I love my wife, (No crow for me for a while).

Coffee Creek Community Church will be presenting