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"Fishing Fun with Family Camp Friends"



Synergy Sports, a division of Synergy (www.synergybusiness.net) in conjunction with Joni & Friends (www.joniandfriends.org), an international non-profit ministry dedicated to helping kids, individuals and families affected by disabilities, recently partnered together to offer fishing clinics and fun with the support of several professional anglers at this year's Family Retreats held at Camp Allen in Navasota, TX July 1st thru the 15th.

From 9:00am through 12:00pm each day several groups of disabled individuals, kids, their families and short-term missionaries would take a hay ride to one of the camp lakes to hear fishing stories, learn tips and fish for bass, bluegill and catfish under the Texas sun.

Prizes provided by supporting sponsors Bass Pro Shops (www.basspro.com), Strike King Lure Company (www.strikeking.com), Plano Molding (www.planomolding.com), Kistler Rods (www.kistlerrods.com), Cracker Barrel (www.crackerbarrel.com), Sports Spectrum (www.sportsspectrum.com), Timberland (www.timberland.com), Yamaha (www.yamaha-motor.com), Fuji Film (www.fujifilm.com) and Hamby (www.hamby.com) were given out over the two weeks to both adults and kids alike.

On top of Synergy Sports and Dallas area Joni and Friends staff attending, official Joni and Friends pro-team members David Meeks and Wesley Burnett were on hand to provide specific fishing instruction and even bait some hooks with worms.

"Every year I am amazed at how God brings people together through these camp activities" stated Doug Goddard President of Synergy Sports. "The cool thing is that no matter how much the pros and staff give at these events, the blessings received back through the disabled individuals, kids and families is always greater".

At this year's first camp session there was a special "wish grant" drawing where two families were chosen at random to spend a day on the water fishing with a Joni and Friends pro on nearby Lake Conroe. The winning families the Rackels and McMillans were paired up with Joni and Friends pro-team members David Meeks and Rob Jasper respectively and from all confirmed rumors had a blast before the start of the second camp session.

"It has been an honor and blessing to be able to share some of God's great outdoors and my experience fishing with these kids and families this year" said David Meeks Joni and Friends pro-team member. "This has really become a personal ministry and joy for me and I look forward to doing more every year".

A special treat for all at the second camp session this year was the attendance of ministry founder Joni Eareckson Tada herself. Joni even donned a team jersey, posed for a few pictures and interviewed several pro-team members for her nationally distributed radio program. She also received some personalized one on one fishing instruction from team pros and staff and was able to hold a fishing rod for the first time.

"Meeting Joni and having her thank us personally for what we have been doing really meant a lot to me" stated Wesley Burnett Joni and Friends pro-team member. "She is such a gracious lady...even when I asked if I could have her fried frog legs at one of the banquet meals we had one night...I think I ate about 10 pairs that evening".

More Joni and Friends pro-team and wish grant activities and events are being planned for Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas and if you are interested in becoming a wish grant participant, volunteering or learning more about sponsoring the Joni & Friends Pro-Team and "Fishing with Friends" wish granting program please contact Doug Goddard at doug@synergybusiness.net or Barbara McNeely at bmcneely@joniandfriends.org.