

The Mobile Aquarium's Wichita River Festival 2008

The Mobile Aquarium's (MA) test event at the Meade State Park OK Kids Day drew 1,400 people on May 3.



We have since taken the MA to it's "Grand Unveiling" at the Wichita River Festival "Riverfest." The MA was on display at the corner of first and Waco from Thursday May 15 until Sunday morning May 18.



We offered the public an up-close and personal view of wild Kansas fishes including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, spotted bass, black crappie, white crappie, channel catfish, flathead catfish, white bass, striped bass, hybrid striped bass (wiper), bluegill, redear sunfish, longear sunfish, warmouth, green sunfish, walleye, common carp, goldfish, fathead minnows, bullhead catfish, and 2 redear slider turtles. The public also were able to enjoy casting demonstrations where they saw different fishing techniques and how

fishing lures moved. Several of our staff were on hand giving the aquarium that personal touch, answering many questions, debunking several misnomers, and listening to many many fish stories. At the booth, visitors were offered copies of our fish identification guides, fishing regulations summary, fish atlas, fishing guide, KDWP sunscreen packets, measuring tapes, fish trading cards, and everyone's favorite...temporary fish tattoos (many of which were put on kids on the spot)



We also offered a free drawing for a Mark Susinno largemouth bass print and received 148 entries, which is more registrants than the Ford display received for their 2009 Escape Hybrid drawing. The winner was an angler from Wichita and he will receive the print in the mail soon.



During the 31 hours (over 2 and one-half days) the MA was available for the public to view, 4,617 (SE=1,692) adults, 3,858 (SE=1,612) children or teens, and 8,475 (SE=3,305) people overall were directly engaged with the MA and our agency. Many people helped to make this event a success and I want to thank all of them.

Cale Renollet

Our hatcheries helped to haul, hold, and/or treat fish, Leonard Jirak and Lowell Aberson for collecting the main attraction...the fish (which were in really great shape), Randy Nelson hauled fish to the aquarium and Doug Nygren for hauled them to their new home at Milford Hatchery, Mike Blair took excellent photos and video, thanks to Steve Price, Mark Goldsberry and Charlie Helms for help setting it up, Tom Swan and Doug Nygren for helping to tear it down, Scott Waters, Jessica Mounts, Tom Swan, Doug Nygren, Miguel Vega, Cole Kumberg, Bob Matthews, and non-agency volunteers for helping to operate it and interact with the public.



Brande Branine

Our next event will be the Kansas State Fair. The MA will be on display during the entire fair and will be located just inside the SE gate, in between the horse barns and the track/grandstand. We look forward to seeing you there. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the MA.

Tom

Tom Lang
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