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Local Little Angler Lands First Fish

By Cathy Tyson



Fortunate Kate Widmann (front, in blue) along with her aunt, Michelle Donaldson, uncle, Colin Parmelee, and cousin, Ashton Donaldson-Parmelee, are ready to fish at the Lafayette Reservoir Photo Andy Scheck

Diego. The group, including Kate's mom, came for a walk on July 4th, and the kids had so much fun, they wanted to return the next day to fish. Unbeknownst to all, July 5 is one of only two days per year when a fishing license from the Visitor's Center isn't required - a possible omen that the fish would line up to bite that day. The fish had no comment, but perhaps it's just good business on the part of reservoir owner and manager, the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

John Zarich and his two boys, Michael and Nicolas, came to the reservoir from San Ramon on a father and son outing. They come out to the reservoir several times a year. Two years ago, little Nicolas caught his very first fish here - a trout - but although they were out for three hours on their most recent trip, they came up empty.

Was it the two large coffee drinks and a bag of Noah's bagels in Kate and Ashton's boat that led to fishing success? No one is quite sure, but a good time was had by all, including the Zarich family. Perhaps they'll have better luck next time.

Conditions are officially "favorable" and the Lafayette Reservoir will be stocked with a total of 6,000 pounds of catfish "planted" over the summer. The last deposit is slated for July 28. Optimistic folks might think that bodes well; all it usually takes to find out is a \$5 daily access permit from the Visitor's Center, along with a valid California fishing license for those 16 years old and up. A maximum of four children under the age of 16 can share a permit with a licensed adult. EBMUD plants trout during the fall, winter and spring months, and catfish during the summer. The second and final free day at the reservoir is Saturday, Sept. 6.

The Lafayette Reservoir is open every day of the year, at 6 a.m. in July and 6:30 a.m. in August. There are limits on how many fish you can catch per day depending on the type of fish, so ask the friendly ranger on duty for specifics. Row boats, pedal boats and kayaks are available for rent at the Visitor's Center - gasoline engines and trailers are not allowed.

For information on a California fishing license, go to www.wildlife.ca.gov. For information on Lafayette Reservoir recreation, go to www.ebmud.com or call (925) 284-9669.

With the Lafayette Reservoir stocked with trout and catfish, not only is this gem of Lamorinda a great place to walk and hang out, but also a great place to fish. Unfortunately as many fisher-people know - even with the best of intentions, a favorite fishing pole, and the right kind of bait - sometimes an outing is more about relaxing than actually catching any fish.

On a recent sunny Saturday morning, soon to be second grader at Burton Valley Elementary School, 7-year-old Kate Widmann, hit the jackpot and caught her very first fish at the reservoir. She hauled in a total of two and a half fish - she had a little help with the last one. Her mom Janet Widmann said it was "a fabulous day;" family members in the boat caught a total of eight "little bitty" fish and released them all. They could see bigger fish swimming around, but Widmann figures they knew better than to nibble.

Kate was out on the reservoir with her aunt, Michelle Donaldson, her uncle, Colin Parmelee, and her cousin, Ashton, who were visiting from San



Kate Widmann with her uncle, Colin Parmelee and her first catch. Photo provided



No luck this time for Michael, Nicolas and John Zarich. Photo Andy Scheck

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