

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds The Fishin' Magician

This was a very special week for me. On Friday I picked up an F-150 pickup that Town Ford found for me. It has some great features, including a back up camera that makes hooking up the boat a breeze. It's all logoeed up, so when you see it on the road be sure to wave. The next day I picked up a brand new Kingfisher 2025 from Bob Feil Boats and Motors. The boat is fully equipped and my wife, Eileen, and I put it on the water Sunday morning and tried it out.

Wow. What a ride. The F-150 pulls this boat easily and it's much bigger than the boat I drove last year. I'll be easy to spot on the water. This one has the FishingMagician and my sponsor's names all over it!

On Saturday morning Eric Granstrom brought the video gear and met me at Burke Lake in the Quincy Wildlife Area. The Quincy Valley Tourism Association was set up here and they were already busy registering entrants into their Annual Trout Derby. The lake was surrounded with anglers casting from the shore. At one point Kent Bacon, organizer of the event, counted 102 boats on the water at Burke. Now that's a crowd. Everyone was there trying to catch one of the two trout tagged for the derby that were worth big money. One was worth \$1,000.00 and the other a cool \$2,000.00! Over 500 people signed up this year, and as the weigh-in deadline approached derby headquarters got very busy weighing anglers' catches. When I left the biggest trout ever caught at the derby had been weighed-in at 6 pounds 8 ounces. I know that one tagged trout had been caught, but it wasn't a money fish.



Everyone really enjoyed the day at Burke. The weather was mild and the fishing was great. Lots of limits of rainbow were turned in and people are eager for next year's derby. The Quincy Valley Tourism Association does a great job.

Fishing was good at the other lakes that opened on March 1st, too. Granstrom and I made a road trip and visited almost all of the early-season opening lakes. Quincy Lake produced excellent catches of 12- and 13-inch rainbow. There were fewer than usual rigs parked at the trail head at Dusty Lake, but the lake was ice-free and I expect the fishing for big rainbow, brown and tiger trout to be good this season. There were big crowds of anglers at the lakes near George. Martha Lake, which is a long and narrow pond that always surprises me with the number of trout it produces. The size of the carryovers here amazes me. It always seems to top the list of numbers of limits taken on the opener. The

parking area at Caliche Lake was packed. I don't think I have ever seen as many anglers at Caliche on the opener as I did this year. There was a reason, too. Everyone we saw leaving the lake was carrying a nice stringer of 11- to 12-inch rainbow. Then we raced over the hill on the Beverly-Burke Road and hiked into Lenice. There were several float tubes on the lake. The wind wasn't an issue on Saturday and I think that the fly anglers that tried Lenice and Nunnally had one of the better opening weekends in a few years. Lake Lenore also opened on March 1st to catch and release fishing for Lahontan cutthroat, but didn't have the time to get there. Since the wind wasn't blowing anglers had good conditions, but fishing here hasn't been great in recent years.

Fishing will continue to be very good at the lakes that opened on March 1st, and anglers are eager for the April 1st opening of the many lakes in the Columbia Wildlife Refuge in the Columbia Basin, near Potholes Reservoir. All the lakes were ice-free in the Quincy area, so the trout in the Columbia Basin lakes will be feeding earlier than usual and anglers can anticipate great fishing on these lakes this year. I spoke to a couple of anglers that had fished Potholes for rainbow, and they caught some dandies. They showed me a photo of one that was 24 inches long!

The next big event in the region will be the Triple Fish Challenge at Banks Lake on April 6th and 7th. This is a brand new derby and the concept is very cool. The idea is that anglers will

try to catch the biggest rainbow trout, walleye and smallmouth bass over the two-day event. There will be prizes every day for biggest of the three species, heaviest stringer, etc. The grand prize is an inflatable Achilles boat and motor from Bob Feil Boats and Motors. They have done an excellent job of getting sponsors for the event, and I can't wait to see what the six-fish total weights of the catches of the three species come to when they are all added up on the last day. Lou Nevismal at Coulee Playland came up with the idea and it just took off. This will be a wonderful early-season derby for our region, and will call attention to the really good fishing we have on Banks. The bass and walleye anglers will be challenged at this time of year, but I think people will be amazed at how many big rainbow will be turned in. To learn more about the derby go to my web site at FishingMagician.com and click on the Pepsi logo.

Well, our fishing season is officially started with the early opener in Quincy. Steelhead fishing is still going on, and some of the best trout fishing of the year can be had on some of our area lakes. It just gets better and better!

Reach Dave at:
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