

Sioux Falls Area Brain Injury Support Group visits My Fishing Pond

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By Troy Schwans

On Saturday, September 15, the Sioux Falls Area Brain Injury Support Group made its annual trek to My Fishing Pond on the Alvarez farm near Bridgewater. This is the fifth year the Brain Injury Support Group has made the trip. It has been attending since My Fishing Pond opened the pond in 2002 to give brain injury survivors as well as the aged and special needs populations they opportunity to enjoy building relationships as well as self esteem through the recreational activity of fishing. As a brain injury survivor himself, John recognizes how important it is to have the opportunity to socialize and engage in meaningful activities.

The Sioux Falls Area Brain Injury Support Group, which has been in existence for over 20 years, meets monthly from September through May and gives brain injury survivors and their friends and family the opportunity to share experiences and support each other, as well as gain information about brain injury and resources available. The group looks forward to the fishing trip and picnic John provides and feels it is the perfect way to kick off the start of support group meetings after the summer break.

This year the support group was joined by some members of South Dakota Achieve as well as some staff and patients from the rehabilitation unit at Avera McKennan Hospital. Everyone enjoyed the fishing and the wonderful picnic lunch provided by John. One of those attending had the additional excitement of having the first catch of the day and became the winner of a fishing pond t shirt.

My Fishing Pond operates entirely on donations and John's annual raffle fundraiser and all at no charge to the anglers that attend. The Sioux Falls Area Brain Injury Support Group greatly appreciates the service that My Fishing Pond provides to the support group. We all thank John and as one group member stated, "I am already looking forward to coming back again next year."



BOB'S BIG DAY: Bob has been coming to My Fishing Pond since it opened 6 years ago. He has caught lots of fish but due to his physical problems he has always needed help to reel them in. On his last outing Bob surprised everyone when they turned around from helping another angler and he had managed to reel in his fish all by himself.



FIRST CATCH: This angler had a very good day on her first outing to My Fishing Pond. Not only did she catch the first fish that day, and the first fish she had ever caught, but she also won a t shirt from My Fishing Pond.