

## Kids and fish Saturday



### Outdoors

By Joel L. Evans

Calling all kids! You're busy with school and sports and activities.

There is so much to do. Yet, I'm betting that more than a few of you will make plans to come out to Chipeta Lake this Saturday for the Rotary Kids Fishing Day.

This annual event sponsored by the Montrose Rotary Club brings out the families for a day of free fishing at Chipeta Lake, south of town near the Ute Indian Museum. The lake will be stocked with catchable-size trout.

Members of Rotary, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the Gunnison Gorge Anglers will be on hand to provide youths with instruction for those who may need some assistance with casting, hooking and landing a fish.

CPW provides several hundred spinning rods and reel outfits and kids get to keep their fishing setup. These are available free while supplies last. Setups include bait and floats and hooks and other assorted tackle.

This annual event can get a little crowded. After all, who could turn down a day of free fishing on a freshly stocked lake with all equipment provided? As an added bonus, lunch will be served. Drinks and hot dogs cooked on the spot will be provided when you are ready for a break after landing that big one.

In addition to the pan-size catchable trout, the CPW usually sprinkles in a few large trout, usually fish that will be measured in pounds rather than inches. In years past, when someone latched onto one of these "pounders," all attention moved to the kid trying to land the big one. Some fish get away, but a few get landed after much splashing and whooping and generally wild confusion. Although this is not a contest with prizes, just landing one of those big ones is prize enough.

Rotary members share in the fun, helping the kids who may have never fished before, knowing that they've helped them get outside and learn about the outdoors, an experience they might not otherwise have.

The free fishing day is open to youths age 15 and under. Anyone 16 and older needs to possess a Colorado fishing license. That includes parents if they intend to fish.

The action starts at 9 a.m. and volunteers will be on hand until noon. To get things started, kids form a line to receive their rod and reel setup and a small cup of worms. They then head out to find a spot along the lakeshore.

Volunteers will walk along the lake, assisting with casting, baiting the hook, or whatever else may be needed, such as undoing the dreaded tangled line. Kids are also schooled in fish habitat, taking care of our environment, fishing ethics, and fishing regulations.

Judging from past response to this event, if the weather is good, expect a large turnout. Parking around the lake can be challenging, so expect to walk a short distance. Whether you come in the morning or in the afternoon makes no difference, but what does make a lifelong difference is the experience for the kids. Bring 'em out and have some fun!

Chipeta Lake, now one large lake,



This Saturday, Chipeta Lake will be the scene of a free kids fishing day, sponsored by Rotary. In preparation for the waves of little kids, some big kids from VISTA charter school volunteered to spread bark along the lake path as an activity for the recent Earth Day. (Submitted photo/Jeff Butterbaugh, VISTA Charter School)

used to be called Chipeta Lakes, which consisted of three separate ponds. Decades ago, a high-water year brought so much water down the adjacent Uncompahgre River that it washed out the dike that borders the lake and the river. With the dike gone, the lakes drained to the river.

A community effort, led by the Gunnison Gorge Anglers chapter of Trout Unlimited, raised money and in-kind donations of heavy equipment to rebuild the exterior river dike and remove the interior dikes that separated the three ponds, making it one larger lake. Grant money from the Colorado Division of Wildlife (now CPW) completed the project.

Chipeta Lake has been a state wildlife area owned by CPW. An agreement with the City of Montrose allowed the city to take ownership of the property as a city park. In exchange, the city gave access to CPW to the city-owned property at Cerro Summit, including the reservoir at the top of the hill.

The reservoir has historically been closed to the public due to its use as a water supply, but will now be stocked and is scheduled to be open to fishing in the summer of next year.

Joel Evans is an avid fisherman, and outdoor writer and photographer, having explored Western Colorado for decades. He works as a financial adviser with Wells Fargo.

# Create a 72-hour emergency survival kit

I often get accused of being a doom-and-gloom naysayer just waiting for a zombie apocalypse, but in reality, I am far from it.

I spent 24 years in exile in South Florida before returning home to Colorado. During that time, I saw dozens of hurricanes and tropical storms, even surviving a half-dozen direct hits. A guy really learns the importance of having a stash of supplies.

One particular hit left us without power, water and just about everything else for better than six weeks. Ice and drinking water were precious commodities.

When you have a family to care for, you prepare for times like these. Never say "It won't happen here." Though a hurricane is unlikely here, other disasters do happen.



### Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

Colorado residents face mandatory evacuations every year for a variety of reasons that could include wildfires, suspicious packages, accidents, power outages or gas line breaks.

Last August, a large portion of the town of Debeque was forced to evacuate because of a wildfire. Residents were forced from their homes and businesses

and many had to seek shelter in Palisade High School.

There could be other events that can cause an interruption in our daily lives, including a blizzard or a pandemic. Either of these could cause us to be unable to leave our homes and force us to "shelter in place."

A disaster supplies kit is a collection of the basic items you and your family may need in the event of an emergency.

You may need to survive on your own for some time after an emergency. This means having the food, water and other supplies necessary to take care of your own during that period.

The federal government recommends a supply that will last for at least 72 hours. First responders will be on the scene on an emergency immediately after the event, but cannot reach everyone right away. It may take several days for help to reach you.

Your kit should be assembled well in advance of an emergency. For an event such as a gas leak, you may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take the supplies with you. You may not have time to search for the supplies you need or be able to shop for them.

Store the kit in a designated place in your home and be sure every member of your family knows its location so they can grab it quickly in an emergency.

I like to assemble the kit in backpacks and duffel bags. This makes it easier to carry and protects the contents from the elements.

Consider having multiple

kits made up, keeping one in every vehicle or at work in case an emergency prevents you from getting home.

You and your family need to do some planning together so everyone is on the same page when an emergency strikes. Everyone should know of a designated meeting place in case you can't get to your home. Have a family action plan in place and be certain everyone understands it.

On the home front, you should be prepared to shelter in place. Consider storing extra food items, paper goods, drinking water and necessary medications at home.

Foods that are canned or dehydrated, survival foods, are best in the event power is lost. We keep these foods in stock and rotate the inventory, so nothing goes out of date.

Here is a list to get you started on your family 72-hour emergency kit:

- Water — A gallon per day per person; more in the summer months.
- Food — Non-perishable high-protein foods, energy bars, Meals-Ready-to-Eat (MRE), dehydrated foods or other items that do not require cooking or refrigeration.
- Flashlight — Headlamps and lots of extra batteries.
- First-Aid kit — Include any needed prescription medicines.
- Cellular phone — Keep turned off to conserve power, portable radio or battery-operated TV.
- Tools — Basics like pliers, screwdrivers, vise grips, handsaw, hammer, knives,

multi-tools, etc.

- Tarp — Garbage bags, blankets.
- Clothing — Extra change of clothes, including underwear, socks, and footwear for everyone.
- Personal items — Passport, insurance papers, eyeglasses, important papers.
- Sanitary — Toilet paper, feminine hygiene supplies, soap, etc.
- Money — Credit cards and cash, because ATMs may not be working.
- Contact information — Phone numbers and email addresses of family members
- Special items — Formula, toys, needed items for kids and pets. Remember, your furry family members will want to eat as well.

The website [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) has a great deal of additional information you might find helpful. Colorado has a website that is also worth looking at: [www.readycolorado.com](http://www.readycolorado.com).

Part of being a Coloradan is to be self-sufficient and able to handle an emergency. Having a 72-hour kit is necessary to provide for your family. Maybe you will never need it, but my constant companion, Mr. Murphy of Murphy's Law fame, tells me otherwise. Be prepared and I'll see you on the trail.

Mark Rackay is a freelance writer who serves as a director and public information officer for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. For information about the Posse, call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email [info@mcspi.org](mailto:info@mcspi.org).



Preparing a 72-hour kit and stocking up on supplies, in case you have to shelter at home, is a good step toward emergency preparedness. (Submitted photo/Mark Rackay)

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