

Children fish

Continued from Page One

these kids' faces," said Mimosa member Wayne Whisenant.

Whisenant was referring to kids like Stephanie, 16, and Toya, 15, and Crystal, 12, and Amy 12, and Logan, 6 — kids who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to ride in a boat, let alone drive one and fish from one.

"She 'bout gave me a heart attack," Toya said about her friend Stephanie. "She was driving that boat and she can't drive. It was fun, though."

While fishing didn't appeal to Stephanie and Toya, they drove a boat, with guidance from one of the many volunteers, and delivered drinks to others like Crystal and Amy who did fish.

"It was fun going fast and doing the curves," said Amy.

"We didn't catch any fish,"

Crystal added, "but my bait got stolen by a fish."

Six-year-old Logan was luckier than Crystal and Amy. He caught a bream but refused to give it up, carrying the dead fish around all day, even after getting stung by a bee.

"They get to keep the fish, they get to keep the rods and reels and we gave them drinks and candy and then feed them lunch," said John Hightower, also of Mimosa.

Besides Mimosa, the Morganton and Gamewell Optimist clubs helped sponsor the outing, Pepsi and Coca-Cola provided drinks, and individuals as well as the Bass Masters and Blue Ridge Bass clubs provided a total of 16 boats Saturday.

"This is something the kids really look forward to each year," said Chris Jernigan, associate executive director of Southmountain Children's Home. "We're really grate-

ful for this. A lot of these kids never had the opportunity to ride around on the water. This is extra special for them."

Ralph Peeler Jr., also of Mimosa, said the 320-member, family-oriented club plays host to the children because, "We want to assist the community and help out wherever we can."

"We like to see the kids have a good time and enjoy themselves," Whisenant added.

Peeler and Whisenant said they would like to provide more children with the same opportunities and have the club's annual event grow each year.

They invite anyone involved with underprivileged children to call the club at 584-1886, Whisenant at 433-9251 or Peeler at 584-2537.