

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Heidi Hoffecker
hhoffecker@orangegrove.org, (423) 664-4805

46 TEAMS CAST FOR A CAUSE AT ORANGE GROVE FISHING TOURNAMENT

Chattanooga, TN - Orange Grove Center (OGC) hosted its 4th Annual Fishing Tournament on Saturday, April 18, at Nickajack Lake, drawing 46 teams for a day of competition under clear skies. The event brought together anglers, sponsors, and community supporters to raise funds benefiting OGC's Georgia Services program.

Since launching in 2012, Georgia Services has grown to support 125 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) across Catoosa, Dade, Floyd, Gordon, Murray, Walker, and Whitfield counties. Services and programs offer a wide range of daily opportunities, including volunteering at community-partner sites, participating in book clubs at the library, art instruction, human rights education, recreational outings, and employment in the community. In 2023, Orange Grove opened the first group home for this population in Catoosa County, opened its second and third homes in 2025, and will be opening a fourth home in 2026.

Proceeds from the Fishing Tournament directly sustain these programs and also support Georgia Services' self-advocacy group. Individuals with IDD are often excluded from civic engagement and lack accessible pathways to participate in decision-making. Through experiences such as Advocacy Days in Atlanta and involvement in the Rise Up and Speak Out Coalition, participants and staff collaborate with peers and providers, exchange ideas, and build leadership skills. Most importantly, individuals are empowered to speak about their own goals and priorities, helping shape policies and services that impact their lives.

"Events like the Fishing Tournament make it possible for us to continue expanding opportunities for the people we support," said Tera Roberts, Chief Executive Officer. "The support we saw this weekend translates directly into more access to these programs."

Winners of the Tournament were as follows:

- 1st Place: Zack Kinsey and Ryan Gazaway (Bag: 25.17 lbs)
- 2nd Place: Ronnie Sexton and Scotty Gilley (Bag: 24.7 lbs)
- 3rd Place: Josh Beagan and Cody Cordell (Bag: 23.91 lbs)
- 4th Place: John Dickerson and Johnathan Alonzo (Bag: 19.94 lbs)
- 5th Place: Ricky Murphy and Jeff Roper (Bag: 18.12 lbs)
- 6th Place: Blake Teeters and Alex Spires (Bag: 17.9 lbs)
- Big Fish Hour 1 and Biggest Fish Overall: Josh Beagan and Cody Cordell (Fish: 10.27 lbs)
- Big Fish Hour 2: Ronnie Sexton and Scotty Gilley (Fish: 8.34 lbs)
- Big Fish Hour 3: Matt Howell and Matt Gowan (Fish: 5.92 lbs)
- Big Fish Hour 4: Ricky Murphy and Jeff Roper (Fish: 5.46 lbs)

Orange Grove Center extends its sincere thanks to all participants, sponsors, and volunteers who made the 2026 Fishing Tournament a success.

About Orange Grove Center

Founded in 1953, Orange Grove Center is a private, non-profit organization that serves 1,000+ adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the Chattanooga and North Georgia areas. For more information about programs and services, visit <https://www.orangegrovecenter.org/>. For weekly updates, follow @orangegrovectr on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

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