

Press Release – January 22nd, 2011

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GOVERNOR MISSED A FISH BUT CAUGHT THE EXTRAVAGANZA SPIRIT

Brainerd, MN—Preliminary estimates indicate that over 10,000 people were in attendance at the world's largest charitable ice fishing tournament Saturday for the 21st annual Brainerd Jaycees \$150,000 Ice Fishing Extravaganza. Participants came from as far as Sweden, plus many from across the country – Texas, Florida and New York to name a few.

In amongst the sea of anglers was Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton, the first sitting governor to attend this unique winter tourism event. He was invited to the Extravaganza by Minnesota State Representative John Ward, a Brainerd native, and spent the morning discussing the economic impact of tourism in the Brainerd-lakes area. Although he didn't catch a fish, Dayton stated that he enjoyed the Extravaganza experience and said, "This is what Minnesota tourism is all about."

At 12:03 p.m. the first angler was welcomed to the weigh-in tent by on-lookers ringing cow bells. There were 724 fish registered this year. Andrew Schultz landed the winning fish, a 7.18 pound Northern in 11 feet of water using a minnow and a tip-up. A first-time Extravaganza attendee from Dousman, WI, Schultz had this to say, "I was really excited because this was the biggest fish I've ever caught." Schultz had his choice between a Ford or GMC pick-up truck – he chose the Ford. In 100th place, winning an Ice Castle Fish House was Brandon Popp from Sauk Rapids, MN. He caught a .55 pound Walleye. In last place (150th) was Bill Werner from Cloquet, MN, and he landed on the leader board with a .43 pound Perch which won him an Arctic Cat ATV 550 Power Steering.

There are two notable characteristics about this event – it is completely volunteer run and 100% of the proceeds are donated to area charities. The Brainerd Jaycees invests more than 20,000 hours in the planning of the contest. Amongst the 400 volunteers was Roberta Jay, the chairman of the contest this year. She said, "I grew up around this event and am amazed every year at its success and the commitment of our volunteers." The largest beneficiary is Confidence Learning Center, an outdoor recreational facility for people with developmental disabilities, but it's estimated that 50 charities will benefit from the successful event. The Brainerd Jaycees have donated \$2.6-million to charities since the first Extravaganza was held in 1991.

All of the official event information can be found online at www.icefishing.org including a complete winner's list. Next year's event will be held on Saturday, January 21, 2012.