



# CT VIP Fishing Tournament Senior Division

Connecticut's first Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) Fishing Tournament was held at Spring Pond in Windsor Locks on May 31, 2009.

Our eight senior VIP's came from Bethel, Cheshire, East Hartford, Hamden, Moosup, New Milford, Plainville, and West Haven. The tournament was funded by the Berlin and Windsor Locks Lions Clubs and strongly supported by the Terryville and Unionville Lions Clubs, The Lions Low Vision Center, the VA CT Healthcare System. and the Board of Education and Services for the Blind.



Fishing poles and tackle were loaned to the tournament by Connecticut's DEP's CARE Program. This program promotes fishing as wholesome family fun in the outdoors.

Our winners were Matt Gaudio of Cheshire, 1st Place, Carol Gillispee of West Haven, 2nd Place, and Alan Golabek of Bethel, 3rd place. These three state champions will be competing in the National VIP Fishing Tournament held as part of the North Carolina VIP Tournament on the Outer Banks of North Carolina in October 2009. In addition to Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts will be representing New England in the National Tournament.

The North Carolina VIP Fishing Tournament is the largest visually impaired persons fishing tournament in North America. Over 525 VIP's and 240 volunteers will be participating this year in the 27th annual tournament. State champions from Connecticut Massachusetts, South Carolina, Virginia and Rhode Island will compete for National honors

The VIP Fishing Tournament is not just about fishing. During the 3 day event, VIP's participate in educational programs, attend a VIP sponsored dance, and hear from motivational speakers. For the Lions that participate in hosting this event and the Lion volunteers that attend, it is an opportunity to walk with those that "We Serve".