Generous stranger helps reel in a memorable
Father’s Day

By Richard Greene
Assistant Editor
 Nicholas Poppiano’s unexpected Father’s Day present from a stranger, a chance to take his son Christopher fishing on Ray Roberts, was everything he hoped for.

“I couldn’t ask for a better time,” Poppiano said. “I’ve got what I want as long as I get to spend time with him.”

Christopher, who lives in Mineral Wells and turned 9 Friday, has been diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. He has already received a lifetime’s dosage of radiation.

In April, Channel 11 did a story about Christopher, who lives with his mother, Christine, in Mineral Wells, and his missing beagle, Bentley. McKinney angler Perry Powell saw the story on the news and was instantly touched.

“I saw the story and it really got to me,” said Powell, who lost his father two years ago to brain cancer. “I wanted to do something for him.

“The older you get, the more you want to do things for other people. We can’t do enough for this little guy.”

Powell quickly sent an email to the Channel 11 reporter, telling him he wanted to do something for Christopher. Powell said in his email that he owned a bass boat and would be honored to take Christopher out fishing on Ray Roberts. His invitation was quickly accepted.

“His mother replied that he loved to do stuff like that,” Powell said.

The trip was originally planned for July, but all parties felt it would be best to move it up a few weeks. Powell made all the arrangements.

Fishing trip reels in lasting bond

Continued from Page 1

and Lantana Lodge donated rooms for the Poppianos during their stay.

Poppiano and Christopher drove in Friday from Poppiano’s home in Odessa to meet Powell for the first time at Lantana Lodge.

“We couldn’t get here fast enough,” Poppiano said. “When Perry sent the picture on the Internet of the boat, [Christopher] was all checking it out. He was pretty excited.”

Christopher had been fishing four or five times previously, most recently near San Angelo.

“I like it, but not as much as hunting,” said Christopher, who was in his Green Bay Packers jersey. Christopher got a chance to meet his favorite player, Brett Favre, at Lambeau Field in January.

The trio of Poppiano, Christopher and Powell hit the water Friday afternoon and early Saturday. They spent nearly 12 hours on the water the second day. Powell even gave Christopher a chance to drive the boat.

“It was Christopher who proved to be the boat’s best angler.

“Christopher is definitely the fisherman of the bunch,” Powell said. “He caught the most and the biggest. Once he caught that first fish, you could tell he was enjoying himself.”

Christopher recounted his success on the water: “I caught five. Some sand bass, a black bass and two others.”

Everyone in the boat caught the same thing — a new lasting friendship.

“T made two lifelong friends,” Powell said. “It was very emotional when we parted company.”

Poppiano added about his host: “Those kind of people are few and far between.”

Christopher gave Powell another compliment.

“He was cool,” Christopher said.

The trio is planning a fall trip out on Ray Roberts to try for a shadlunker, but they will all cherish their Father’s Day trip. Powell also believed he in a way also made his own father’s day.

“I think he’s very proud of me right now,” Powell said.

Nick Poppiano helps his son Christopher into Perry Powell’s boat Friday at Jordan Moore Park. The father and son were Powell’s guests at Ray Roberts last weekend.

Photo by Richard Greene

Nick is on our advisory counsel at U.S.S.A.