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Loon Lake Fishing Derby

Kathleen Cook Weldon
Dean Griffiths, illustrator
Orca Book Publishers (September 1999)
Unknown $14.95 (32pp)
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The feel of a small vacation village or quiet hideaway is what Loon Lake seems to be. This story talks of life, in what has been referred to, as a simpler time, with nothing to worry about but the weather forecast and the temperature of the lake for swimming. Then the residents of Loon Lake decide to have a fishing derby, and the sleepy town is turned into a frenzy of eager fishermen, upset neighbors and numerous worms.

The tale unfolds mainly through the eyes of Wally, an entrepreneurial squirrel. When the fishermen come to town, Wally devises a plan to profit from the anxious anglers. When his plan goes awry due to competitive friends and an overabundance of derby participants, Wally decides to put a new plan into action. His creative solution not only makes a hero out of Wally but returns serenity to Loon Lake.

Waldron's simplistic story line is enhanced by Griffith's humorously detailed depictions of Loon Lake and its townsfolk. Her descriptive language, while basic, would appeal to early elementary aged readers. Waldron's story happily reminds the audience of childhood lemonade stands and other creative summer business ventures. Loon Lake Fishing Derby can bring the carefree possibilities of summertime to life for its readers, anytime of the year.
JULIE SANTILLI (August 16, 1999)

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