



Fish Tales

SUMMER/FALL

2014



NEBRASKA
— GAME  PARKS —

Update on Family Fishing Nights

This spring, we introduced eight trout themed Family Fishing Nights to correspond with statewide spring trout stockings. The events proved to be a great opportunity for over 100 fresh anglers to get their first taste of what our urban lakes have to offer. Additionally, our three new Fishing Activity Trailers (page 2) made their maiden voyages to these events.

As summer Family Fishing Nights kicked into gear, even more enthusiastic families got involved. Event surveys indicated that over 2000 participants attended Family Fishing events in 2014. The July event at Halleck Park in Papillion attracted over 450 participants. For many anglers, this was the first time a member of the family had attempted fishing, and many caught their first fish during a Family Fishing Night. One participant stated: "It was the first time I ever fished with my three boys. It was a day I will never forget." The educational

benefit was evident from the feedback we received. When asked what they liked best about the event, another participant said: "The teaching aspect! The youngest in our group had never touched a fishing pole before and a young man helped her learn how to cast her line! I also liked the family friendly aspect of it and the attention the kids got."

As the summer comes to a close and cool weather sets in, we are excited to add eight additional trout themed Family Fishing Nights. These will be hosted by NGPC Staff and Youth Fishing Instructors during the second half of October to correspond with the annual fall stocking of trout. Join us at events in Scottsbluff, Curtis, Kearney, Grand Island, Lincoln, Nebraska City, Auburn, and Papillion. For detailed information, visit: FamilyFishing.OutdoorNebraska.gov or contact Matt to sign up as a volunteer.

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Help Needed at Cops-&-Bobbers

We are partnering with the Omaha and Columbus Police Departments to offer Cops-and-Bobbers neighborhood fishing events from 1 PM – 4 PM on Sunday, October 19th at Benson Park in Omaha and Sunday, October 26th at Pawnee Park West in Columbus. Please contact Lindsey for more information if you would like to assist at these events.

Fishing Activity Trailers

The Youth Fishing Program currently has four Fishing Activity Trailers on the road. And, two more in the planning stages. I mean on the road literally, because these trailers have been going non-stop since their launch this spring!

These four trailers were made possible through generous memorial donations. The first, located in Scottsbluff, is in memory of Youth Fishing Instructor, Jerry Tallmon of Mitchell. The additional trailers were built in memory of Don Squires and Richard Hogue, both of Lincoln, and Jack Peterson of Bennett. These are located in Lincoln, North Platte and Kearney, respectively. The interior cabinetry and rod racks of these three trailers were built by Hunter Gasper of Columbus and Jared Weyrauch of Papillion (pictured below and at right) as Eagle Scout projects.



Two additional Fishing Activity Trailers will be completed this coming winter. The home-base locations are yet to be decided and will depend upon the use-history of the current trailers and interest expressed by individual Youth Fishing Instructors to act as Trailer Stewards.

One of the new trailers is made possible by a very generous personal donation from Mary Ann Niemoth of Hastings. Mary Ann has been an

active instructor for 14 years and is instrumental in presenting the Fish Printing Activity at the Fort Kearny and Platte River Outdoor Discovery events annually. Thank you, Mary Ann! The second addition is made possible by a combination of memorials honoring Brad Thompsen of Omaha, Robert E. Oberg of Fremont, and John Lund of Pleasant Dale.

By the end of the year, the trailers will have traveled to over 65 events including church, scout, civic and family activities. Matt Gruntorad is currently developing a summary report on trailer usage and estimates that over 2,000 participants were engaged in fishing through trailer activity.

A special thank you to our Trailer Stewards, Sharon and Dennis Gregory of Gering, Harold Fankhauser of Kearney and Julie Geiser of North Platte for their investment in maintaining the trailers. Thank you, Matt, for making the coordination of the trailers organized and sane. And, last but not least, thank you to each of the users who returned the trailers in excellent condition!

For information about checking out

the Fishing Activity Trailers, visit the Youth Fishing Instructor resource site at: fishingnebraska.wordpress.com. To find out if a trailer is available for your event, go to "[Click here to find out if a trailer is available](#)" on the Fishing Trailers tab. You may also simply contact Matt.

Trout in the Classroom

Check out coverage of Trout in the Classroom in the October issue of NEBRASKAland Magazine. If you can't find your copy (or aren't yet receiving it), you can read the entire issue online at <http://digital.outdoornebraska.gov/i/377644>.

For the upcoming season, we currently have plans to add aquariums in 21 new schools! Training workshops are scheduled for November 18th in Gretna and November 20th in Ogallala.



Jared Weyrauch of Omaha shows off his handiwork on one of the Fishing Activity Trailers.

FinS: Fishing in Schools (and elsewhere!)

We are launching a new program in 2015 titled FinS - Fishing in Schools. FinS will offer teachers the opportunity to teach basic fishing in the classroom. While best suited for PE programs, the curriculum is diverse and expandable to other classrooms. FinS will supply curriculum and materials to teach fish identification and biology, aquatic habitats, fishing ethics, rules and regulations and fishing basics covering equipment, knot tying, casting and technique. Participating teachers will receive a package that includes; fishing rods/reels, knot tying demonstration kits, casting demonstration kits (backyard bass and casting plugs), tackle box with hooks, bobbers and weights and a curriculum guide. The curriculum is designed so that taking a fishing trip is not required – there will be plenty of activities that can be completed in the classroom. Our motivation is to give teachers the resources to motivate students to go fishing!

Participating teachers will be trained to use the curriculum and equipment. The training is similar to YFI workshops, with an emphasis on classroom presentation. Teachers that successfully complete the FinS training program will be afforded the benefits of Youth Fishing Instructors and will be considered part of the YFI community. The first FinS training will occur in June 2015 during the NGPC Outdoor Educator's Outdoor Academy for teachers. If you are, or know of a teacher that might be interested in FinS for fall 2015, please contact us. We would also like to start several teachers as "test subjects" to present the FinS

materials during the spring 2015 semester.

An exciting aspect of FinS is the development of a publication that angling students will use as a guide to learn about topics related to fishing. While the motivation to create this was FinS, the publication will serve as a guide to angling for all ages. Our intention is to use this as a resource for YFIs, parents, mentors, and beginning anglers to teach or learn about fishing.

August 30th Youth Fishing Instructor Workshop

Over Labor Day weekend, 20 people gave up holiday time (ON A GAME DAY!!!) to attend an instructor workshop in Duncan, NE just west of Columbus. This workshop was a result of a partnership with the Columbus Police Department, who contacted us to help them organize a Cops-&-Bobbers fishing event. Please welcome the following Youth Fishing Instructors to the community! Many of these folks will be attending Cops-&-Bobbers on October 26th at Pawnee Park West in Columbus. This will be an excellent time to introduce yourself to a new instructor and lend a hand at a very cool event!

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mike Benner | Robert Runion |
| Logan Bronson | Lawrence Sinclair |
| Amanda Delancey | Susan Uhl |
| Tanner Heesacker | Jeffery Uhl |
| Aimee Heesacker | Troy Urkoski |
| Janelle Kline | Santiago Vasquez |
| Timothy Konecky | Lydia Vasquez |
| Ron Kosiba | Santiago Vasquez Sr. |
| Josh Loontjer | Roger Wemhoff |
| Tyler Prochaska | Mary Kay Wolf |

Instructor Spotlight: John Wright

Interviewed by Tori Mullins



You may notice that the newsletter has a bit more personality lately. This column will become a regular addition to our newsletter so that we can get to know each other a bit better. If you'd like to nominate someone to step into the spotlight let us know!

John Wright of Omaha, NE was nominated to go first! Here's what he had to say...

How did you get started fishing?

My Dad. He took my sister and me to Lake Delta in upstate New York all the time. We used a bait casting rod and reel that would backlash all the time. Finely mastered it thanks to Dad's patience.

Tell me about how you first got involved with the Youth Fishing Program.

Through Trout Unlimited last year. I got an email about the Outdoor Discovery Day in Kearney and volunteered.

Do you have a favorite fish?

I guess from a fishing perspective I'd have to say Brown Trout. Of course King Salmon are pretty good too. But the Brown is most cunning and yet survivable.

How did you get involved in custom rod building?

In the 70's while in grad school, I joined a sportsman book club. One of the books I received was Dale Clemens' book on rod building. I read it and was hooked. Built my first rod that summer and have been building them ever since.

All anglers have a story about "The One That Got Away"- what's yours?

In the late 1970's I was teaching at the USAF Academy. A good friend and co-worker, Don Puterbaugh, had moved to Salida Colorado and opened a fly fishing school. One weekend I met him at the school and we fished the Arkansas River. After about an hour we got separated, as fisherman often do. I was using a #12 stone fly nymph pattern. I dropped it behind a rock and got one heck of a take. I set the hook and could tell it was a very big fish. I fought it for about 30 seconds and saw the tail only. It was the size of my hand. Then it was gone. He just shook his head and broke the two pound tippet like it was made from paper. I remember that tail like it was yesterday.

What is your favorite Youth Fishing Program event?

Cops and Bobbers! I think this program does more for our kids than any other program in the state. It gets kids out fishing and shows them that our Police are a bunch of really good men and women. In North Omaha, that is hugely important.

If you could have dinner with one famous person from history, who would it be and why?

Jimmy Doolittle. I'd like to swap war stories about the Tokyo raids and the 1972 bombing missions over Hanoi.

And last, but most certainly not least: what has been your most memorable fishing experience?

I've been fortunate; I have many. My most treasured are my trips with my dad of course, but my most memorable was two years ago. I was back in Colorado for a class reunion. I contacted Don Puterbaugh and set up a fishing trip to the Arkansas. We spent most of the day on the river reminiscing about past fishing trips and our time together at the Academy. We caught some nice fish and had a great day. Don's 86 now and we may not have many more of these trips left. It was a great day. I hope to do it again in a few years.

Staff news - it's a Family Theme!!



On July 12th, Matt missed Carp-O-Rama at Lake Maloney for a very legitimate reason! He was married to his fiancée at a lovely ceremony in Seward, NE. Immediately following the wedding was a super-fun reception at Matt's family farm. It was gorgeously decorated, and delicious food and drink were abundant. Yard games and tractor rides kept attendants entertained. It was a very charming family affair, and we are all so happy for Matt and Laura and excited to see what's in store for them next!

Our seasonal technicians are required to spend a month off work between employment sessions. We like to call these periods 'sabbaticals'. Tori went on sabbatical with her partner in August and spent two weeks in Colorado

trout fishing, camping in the Rocky Mountain National Park and participating in the marriage of good friends. After Colorado, she returned home to New Jersey to catch up on some family time. We are happy to have her back in the office to liven it up!



Larry's big summer adventure was his annual trek on the Bike Ride Across Nebraska, only this time he rode the entire 476 miles on a tandem bicycle with his sister Bonnie! Good job, Team Pape!

The Chizinski family took Elvis on his first big adventure. In September, Chris attended the Ecology of Fish in Lakes and Reservoirs (EcoFil) conference in Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic. We decided to make a family vacation of it and spent two weeks in Europe exploring Prague, CZ and Paris, France. It was an unforgettable experience. In Ceske Budejovice, I ate carp prepared in a variety of manners – sautéed, smoked and jellied amongst other strange concoctions – and I can say with full honesty that it was all very good. I understand now why settlers brought that darned fish to the United States. ☺

Natalie Luben welcomed her third beautiful grandchild, Elizabeth Jean, in July. Unfortunately, Natalie will be leaving us in October, and we wish her the best of luck in her next endeavor and hope to continue working closely with her!