

Yes, it's Elvis, and he caught that all by himself!

FISH TALES

Spring 2017

NEBRASKA

— GAME  PARKS —

LINDSEY CHIZINSKI

lindsey.chizinski@nebraska.gov

402-471-5591

LARRY PAPE

larry.pape@nebraska.gov

402-471-5447

NATE KLAR

nathanklar@nebraska.gov

Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming Spring Events

YOUTH FISHING INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

Saturday, April 1

Join us 9 a.m.-noon for a new instructor training workshop at 4703 N 44th St, Lincoln, NE 68504

TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

Thursday, April 18

Tuesday, April 25

Wednesday, April 26

Thursday, April 27

Thursday, May 4

Friday, May 5

Wednesday, May 10

Tuesday, May 16

Wednesday, May 17

All TIC field trips will take place 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Aksarben Aquarium and Schramm Park located at 21502 W Hwy 31 in Gretna. Elementary aged students will rotate through four activity stations, up to 35 kids per station. We are seeking assistance with the fishing and macroinvertebrate sorting stations.

ROD-N-REEL MAINTENANCE

Saturday, April 22

Join us 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Kearney field office 1617 1st Ave. to assist with

maintenance of the Kearney based Fishing Activity trailer.

FISHING WITH WALT DISNEY

Friday, April 28

I am seeking an instructor who is willing to transport a fishing trailer to and from Walnut Creek Lake in Papillion for an a.m. fishing event with 50 3rd grade students.

FISHING FOR ALL WITH MILLARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Friday, May 19

Millard Public Schools special needs students will be fishing for trout at Two Rivers SRA 27702 F St in Waterloo. A total of 250 students will fish in two groups from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. NGPC staff will attend this event and many parents also attend, but we rely on our Certified Instructors to make this one a success!

FISHING WITH ARNOLD ELEMENTARY

Wednesday, May 24

250 second and third graders from Arnold Elementary will be fishing with us in rotations from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at their annual end-of-year outing. NGPC staff will attend this event, but

we need all the help we can get to assist the students on the water!

Lunch is provided at each of these events, but you must RSVP. Please contact Lindsey if you would like to attend any of these events.

FAMILY FISHING NIGHTS

Family Fishing dates are scheduled and on the outdoor calendar! We have events scheduled in Lincoln and Omaha and elsewhere from Norfolk to Broken Bow to Scottsbluff. Visit

goo.gl/DhSEyD for details about this year's events and to find one in your area. Please consider joining us at these casual events to offer your angling expertise to the public and simply spend an evening at the lake with friends and family! You can also find these and additional fishing events on our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/familyfishinebraska/>

We also host a calendar dedicated to volunteer opportunities. Check here regularly to look for events in your area: <https://goo.gl/Cd82q4> If you need assistance with one of your own events, please submit the details to Lindsey to have your event added to the calendar.

Staff Updates

In February, Marissa Jensen took a permanent position with a veterinary clinic in Omaha. She is utilizing her education skills to help them develop training curriculum. While she is no longer part of our staff, expect to see Marissa in a volunteer capacity at this summer's Family Fishing Nights!

We were fortunate to fill the vacant Aquatic Education position with one of our own at NGPC. Meet Nate Klar!

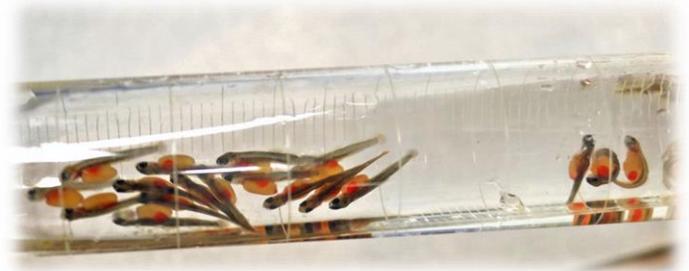


I was born in Northern Kentucky where I grew up hunting, fishing, and generally doing all things outdoors. I completed my bachelor's degree from Thomas More College while studying fish populations on the Ohio River and teaching school groups about macroinvertebrates and water quality. From there I headed to Lexington, KY (GO Big Blue!) for my graduate work on rusty crayfish, *Orconectes rusticus*. In addition to my field work I spent a great deal of time teaching and working on curriculum development. I landed a position working for Trout Unlimited in West Virginia in 2014 in the Monongahela National Forest. It's beautiful out there, if you ever get the opportunity to visit. Be sure to bring your fly rods!

In 2015, I was brought out here by Game & Parks to assist with the pallid sturgeon recovery program on the Missouri River. I had a blast and saw some incredible things, but it's time for me to hang up my captain's hat. Larry and Lindsey are willing to let me try to replace Marissa Jensen. I'm

cautiously optimistic because I have heard great things about her. I'll be assisting with all of our aquatic education programs and will get the chance to interact with many of you. I'm pretty excited about it. See you soon!

Trout in the Classroom



Rainbow trout fry in a test tube. Photo: Susan Skinner, Gretna Breeze

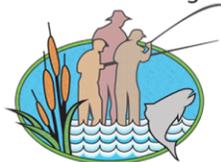
Trout in the Classroom is wrapping up its third season as a program funded in partnership with the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET). We have been extremely fortunate to work with so many dedicated teachers over the past three years! The program is currently active in 62 elementary, middle and high schools all over Nebraska. The Gretna Breeze recently ran a great story about the program. Read it here: <https://goo.gl/p8vBiH>

I am excited to announce that we are recipients of another NET grant to continue expanding this program over the next three years! New developments will include the establishment of a scholarship fund as a resource for new schools to obtain funds for equipment as well as the development of an intermediate- and high-school level curriculum.

I would like to thank our local Trout Unlimited Chapter 710 for their continued support of this program. They have generously donated \$2,000 to the new scholarship fund annually over the coming three years. Please contact Lindsey if you would also like to contribute to this fund.

Angler Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation

www.aneanet.org



AREA

Founded 1994

Aquatic Resources Education Association

In late October 2016, Lindsey, Larry and Marissa attended the Aquatic Resources Education Association (AREA) bi-annual conference and meeting in West Virginia. This is a

professional organization made up of aquatic educators from across the country doing all sorts of aquatic education, from sport fishing to resource conservation. At this meeting, Lindsey was elected Secretary and Larry was elected President Elect. This group is important for its sharing of ideas and collective support of our programs. Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) of anglers is the current hot-topic this organization is addressing.

The fishing resources maintained by state wildlife agencies are largely funded by fishing permit sales and an excise tax on fishing equipment (US Fish and Wildlife Sport Fish Restoration Program). A gradual decline in angling participation has resulted in reduced funding for fisheries management. Many state agencies are reacting by making investments to recruit, retain and reactivate anglers. Nebraska started our effort in 2005 with programs including Family Fishing events and EXPOS. Larry represents Nebraska on an AREA R3 working-group that is defining best management practices for these types of activities. We will continue to share details about the results of this work and how this will affect our fishing education activities.

Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) is a national marketing organization for state fishing and boating agencies. We (NGPC and other state fish and wildlife agencies) contribute by sharing a portion of our Federal Sport Fish Restoration dollars and participating in an annual planning meeting. RBFF created the popular TakeMeFishing branding that you will often see on television and printed media. The TakeMeFishing.org website is a wonderful resource about all things fishing (check it out and pass it along). The above mentioned AREA R3 working-group and our recent Family Fishing participant data collection effort are made possible by grants from RBFF.

In 2016, we used RBFF grant funds to electronically collect data on participants at Family Fishing events. Our objectives were to develop an on-site electronic survey system that will allow us to stay in touch with participants and continue to engage people in angling and other outdoor recreation. We used email campaigns to invite past participants to events such as the Missouri River (Ponca) EXPO and notify them of seasonal trout stocking. We found that Family Fishing participants were more likely to visit suggested websites when compared to randomly selected email addresses from NGPC customers. We find this encouraging and plan to continue the data collection project.

Family Fishing Memories



Yes, it's Elvis again. This is not the boy Larry refers to in his story below, but Elvis was also fishing that night and had a blast catching bluegill!

As the last 2016 Family Fishing Night wound down on a cool and rainy evening at Holmes Lake in Lincoln, I remembered back to several similar nights I had spent with my father. What struck me is that now, 40 to 50 years later, I still remember them well...Pawnee Lake on a cold spring night and my first walleye...Harlan County and a stringer of white bass on a warm but rainy June day.

On this Family Fishing Night we had about 20 participants show up, but for me a few participants were as memorable as the fishing memories from my past. In particular, a young mom and dad with a 3 or 4 year old, who was determined to catch a fish on his brand new Spiderman fishing pole. They arrived just at six with hopes of a quickly caught fish and then home to warmth. In spite of the rain, they ended up staying until after eight and left only because it had gotten dark. The little boy, and mom, each caught several fish and insisted on "one more cast". Dad just smiled as he baited hooks and took picture after picture.

There were over 40 of these events held statewide this past summer, and I estimate that over 2,000 people attended.

From previous surveys we know that a family looking to help their children learn how to fish is why they come to us for help. This, and the thought of the family described above, is what keeps me enthused about continuing these events.

Thank you to those outside of the Lincoln and Omaha area for keeping the mid- and western-Nebraska Family Fishing Events going. Julie Geiser, Harold Fankhauser, Sharon and Dennis Gregory, Aric Riggins, Jamie Bachmann and many others made possible over 25 events at locations from Scottsbluff to York.

The 2017 Family Fishing Event Schedule can be found on the NGPC Outdoor Calendar goo.gl/DhSEyD. Brochures will be available in April. If you want to host a Family Fishing Night in your hometown, please let me know about your ideas or possibilities for your community. Feel free to call anytime. Larry Pape. 402-471-5447

The Mayfly Project



"Everyone needs an escape. For me, my escape is fly fishing. During some of the most trying times of my adult life I have used a fly rod as a coping mechanism. The river is a place where I can immerse myself in God's creation and forget about everything but mending."

*Jess Westbrook, Mayfly Project
Founder*

Calling all fly-fishers! Do you have a passion for helping kids who need a little something more in their lives? The Mayfly Project (www.themayflyproject.com) is a non-profit that uses fly fishing as a catalyst to mentor children in foster care. From their website: The standard program is to mentor a foster child through five sessions we call "stages", just like the life cycle of a Mayfly. Within these stages, the children learn line management, casting techniques, knot tying, some etymology, river safety, mending tactics, hook setting, catch and release tactics and the value of conservation.

Marissa Jensen recently started a local chapter of the Mayfly Project and is looking for mentors in Nebraska. If you're interested, Marissa would love to hear from you. She can be reached at mjensen490@gmail.com. By the way, Marissa made this lovely rainbow trout collage. ☺



Project Healing Waters



Are the fly fishers still with me? In 2016, John Wright started a local chapter of Project Healing Waters, a fly fishing outreach program that is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and

disabled veterans. John coordinates semi-weekly fly-tying and rod building meetings at veteran's homes in Lincoln and Omaha. He also plans numerous fishing excursions during fishing season, some of which coincide with area Family Fishing nights, and he organizes a tournament series that culminates in a guided fly-fishing trip to Colorado for the winning vets.

If you are interested in working with John and Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, he'd love to hear from you at jwright@midlandscc.net.

