Hello, Youth Fishing Instructors!

For those who haven’t heard, Andrea Faas has left NGPC and is now a Naturalist for Pioneers Park in Lincoln. Allow us a moment to express our appreciation for Andrea, and all that she has contributed to NGPC, the Youth Fishing Program, Volunteers, and our lives. Foremost, she has been a wonderful friend and a person who enriched our lives. What a wonderful smile! Andrea took the Fisheries Division Outdoor and Aquatic Education programs to a new level of excellence by demonstrating how a professional educator should do it. We now have wonderful tools, curriculum, exciting programs, and the most helpful fishing instructors ever. Thank you Andrea! You will be missed.

We are in the transition process with a new Aquatic Education staff, and we want to introduce ourselves to those of you we haven’t had the chance to meet yet.

Larry Pape  
Aquatic Ed. Specialist  
Lincoln, NE  
Phone: 402-471-5447  
Email: larry.pape@nebraska.gov

I have Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Fisheries, and have been with NGPC since 1995. Fisheries management has been my primary duty, but all along I have been involved with my other passion, outdoor education. The Fisheries Division humored me when I started events such as Carp-O-Rama and Family Fishing Nights. They even called it my job when I facilitated fishing events for the Urban Fisheries Program, and most recently, have been in charge of NGPC recruitment efforts involving fishing. You can only imagine how excited I am now, to actually be called an Outdoor Education Specialist.

Andrea has done such a wonderful job organizing the Certified Fishing Instructor program that I plan to continue without much change. Please stick with me as I learn the job, and your names and faces. It is going to be a very busy season! Please feel free to contact me with any questions, ideas or concerns.

Lindsey Chizinski  
Fisheries Biologist  
Gretna, NE  
Phone: 402-332-3904  
Email: lindsey.chizinski@nebraska.gov

I have been employed with NGPC in Fisheries Management since 2006 and worked from the Southeast District office. I recently completed a Master’s degree at UNL studying channel catfish populations in Nebraska’s reservoirs and sand pits. In late March, I was selected to fill a biologist position stationed at the Aksarben Aquarium. My primary responsibilities are aquatic education. As Larry said, I am very excited to devote my time working with you to promote fishing to our youth! I’ve been involved with aquatic education throughout my history with NGPC, developing activities for our Outdoor Discovery Programs, giving presentations about fish biology, and conducting fishing clinics.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me at the Aquarium if you have any questions or just to say hello. I look forward to meeting each of you in person! Stay tuned for opportunities to meet and socialize in our summer edition of Fish Tales.

In addition to our new faces, Sue Josoff has been hired to replace Barb Fougeron, our staff assistant at the Aquarium who resigned in March. Sue will coordinate your requests for equipment, and is very efficient, so have no fear that she will take good care of you!
Youth Protection Training Requirement

Before Andrea resigned, she instituted a requirement for all volunteers to complete the Boys Scouts Youth Protection Training. We feel that this training is very valuable to anyone working with youth, but we’ve heard from many of you that the online training is difficult to navigate. For those of you who were unable to complete the online training, we are in the process of creating an alternative for you, probably in the form of a written document that outlines the concepts of the Boys Scouts training. In the meantime, you do not need the certificate to volunteer and/or conduct fishing clinics. Please continue to fill out your reporting forms, and you will remain eligible for incentives. Look for more information in our summer edition of Fish Tales.

New Volunteer Certifications

Great News! We have had many new contacts from folks interested in becoming Youth Fishing Instructors. We thank you for spreading the word about this program to your friends and families! We are revising our certification process so that we can get people started right away on the path to becoming certified instructors. With this process, new instructors won’t have to wait until we schedule training. Instead we will immediately deliver an introductory packet with our Policies and Procedures manual and all of the necessary application materials. Once we have received and processed the application, new instructors will receive a materials package and the instructor handbook. Certification will be completed when the new instructor apprentices at an NGPC hosted fishing event. We plan to have the new certification process in effect by late spring. Please spread the word!

Reporting Events

In response to your feedback, we have revised our Activity Report Form, and hope that it is now easier for you to fill out. For future events, please use the form included with this letter to report activities. Remember that all ALL instructors and volunteers need to sign this form.

Volunteer Opportunities

Please take a look at the flyer included with this letter for our Family Fishing Events. In addition to these dates, we are looking for volunteers at the following upcoming events:

- **May 17 & 18:** Fishing For All with Millard Public Schools
  (please contact Larry for details)
- **May 19:** Free Fishing and Park Entry Day
  (inquire online or at your local NGPC district office for scheduled events)
- **June:** Several Summer School fishing events at Schramm Park
  (please contact Lindsey for details)

Instructor Database

We are continuing to develop our volunteer database. If you have not done so already, please visit the CERVIS website at [http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/admin/cervis/](http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/admin/cervis/) to register. In the near future, this will be our primary method of communicating events and recording your involvement. Look for more details in our summer edition of Fish Tales.

Thank you for all you do! Respectfully,

Larry Pape and Lindsey Chizinski