

## Fishing not just a hobby; it's a lifelong passion

**By Debra Valine**  
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From the time he went fishing with his great-grandfather at age 2 and caught his first fish, one Huntsville Center project manager has been hooked.

Brandon Price, with Huntsville's Range and Training Land Program, is passionate about fishing.

Price, 26, grew up in Decatur, Ala., in a house two miles from the river. He graduated from Decatur High School in 2000, went to the University of Alabama in Huntsville and graduated with a degree in civil engineering in 2004. He is working on his master's degree in business administration from the University of North Alabama in Florence.

As a project manager, Price oversees the design and construction of all Army Reserve projects for the Range and Training Land Program. He's been with the Huntsville Center for five years, starting out as a co-op student, then an intern and finally a full-time employee.

And while he likes his job, it's fishing that he loves.

"My great-grandfather, Lee Price, lived on the Tennessee River in Lenior City, Tenn., and we would go fishing when I visited him," Price said. "I have a picture of the first fish I ever caught framed at my desk. My great-grandfather, my grandfather, my father and I would hook worms and crickets and fish for whatever fish was biting."

Price has many fishing stories to tell, and there is one theme that runs through all of them: family.

"My great grandfather started a tradition in the 1930s with our family. He would take my grandfather camping and trout fishing on the Tellico River in Tennessee every year. Since that time my grandfather regularly took my dad as a child, and soon some of my fondest childhood memories were forged on the banks of the Tellico River when my dad would take my brother and me. When I have children one day, I will continue the family tradition," Price said.

Fishing is no longer just a hobby for Price. He said along with a few other things in his life, it is truly a passion.

In addition to fishing for fun with his family, Price fishes in the amateur bracket in bass tournaments and is lobbying in Montgomery, Ala., for catfish restrictions and for conservation of natural resources.

Like most fishermen, Price tells fish tales. He likes to tell the story of the giant catfish that didn't get away, but came a day too early to count in a big tournament.

"My friend, Allen Neuschwander and I qualified for the 2006 Cabelas King Cat Classic, which is like the world series of catfishing on the Tennessee River," Price said. "We were practicing for the tournament, looking for a new area to fish. It was getting late and we had had a pretty rough day.

"We decided to pull up to a point – a place where land juts into the river and where fish like to hide – in about 108 feet of water and drop our baits down to the

bottom. We were cleaning the boat, getting ready to go home. I looked at my rod and the end was moving. I thought I had a small fish nibbling on the bait, but then the tip of the rod went down.

“About a seven-minute fight ensued,” Price said. “Once we got the catfish in the boat and put it on the scales, it weighed 68 pounds. That was a new personal record for me.”

Of the 250 boats entered into the Cabelas King Cat Classic, Price and Neuschwander finished a respectable 75th.

“It was a tough two-day tournament,” Price said. “We caught more than 100 pounds of catfish, but it wasn’t enough to get us any money. We were excited going into the tournament because we had just won \$1,000 in a Guntersville tournament. Our confidence was knocked a little.”

Of course there are other stories as well, such as the time Price fell into 45 degree water and the times he had thrown his rods out of the boat only to have them sink to the bottom.

Price said he likes fishing with friends and introducing newcomers to fishing, but that he tries to fish with his dad, grand-dad and brother whenever possible.

“Spending the time with my family on the river is a better experience than catching a big fish,” said Price, who dreams of one day having his own guide service on the lakes in Northern Alabama.

“Overall I just love it,” Price said. “When I put my boat in the water and take off, the feeling is unreal. There are no words to describe it.”