

The Dogumentary

30th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

February 2012

Winter has Bottomed Out.

The February meeting will be at Tuttle's Bowl and Soup Bowl at the regular time of 6pm for dinner, with the meeting starting at 7. Our speaker will be Steve Carney, who is a Minnesota fishing and hunting guide and also a weekly writer for Outdoor News. Steve has talked to the club before and always brings a good deal of knowledge and opinion to share with the club.

2012 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

Feb 2	Monthly Meeting
Mar 1	Monthly Meeting
Mar 17	Trout Tournament
Apr 5	Monthly Meeting
Apr 14	Trout Tournament
May 3	Monthly Meeting
May 19	Walleye Tournament
June 1	Bass Tournament
June 7	Monthly Meeting
June 23	Multi Tournament
July 12	Monthly Meeting
July 21-28	LOTW Rock'nRoll Musky Tour
Aug 2	Monthly Meeting
Aug 17	Multi Tournament
Sep 6	Monthly Meeting
Sep 8	Multi Tournament
Oct 4	Monthly Meeting
Oct 6	Bass Tournament
Nov 1	Banquet

See the last page for 2012 Tourney Details

From the Desk of the President, Greenstick – Dave Haberle



Wow, it's February already. I don't know about you, but my spare time has been divided between trying to clean out my tackle box, prepare rods and respool reels for 2012, take down my Christmas light display and figure out what the heck to write for the February newsletter... Then I found out this old picture of me outside my grandparent's house when I was about 8 years old after fishing at Sauk Lake (Sauk Center, MN) with my parents. Those were happy times and I still remember that particular day. But more than that, I think back to those times as the start of the fishing adventure I'm on right now -- being a member of this wonderful group of guys called The Waterdogs. And that leads me to my next thought...

I want to publicly thank all the club members who spent time at the St. Paul Sportsman's

Show helping Ron Shara promote fishing to the attending kids. This year we were a bit oversubscribed as a Boy Scout troop was also there to help out, but even so, “we done good” even though public attendance was a bit light, at least on Saturday. After the kids stopped coming, it was fun to see Suzy and Bud nail the “baittraps” one after another with their casting prowess at the casting clinic room. For me, it was a hoot working the “Baiting Game” booth with Banana Boy, Janitor and Kojak. I found it fascinating to witness some of the overenthusiastic fathers goading their eye-rolling children into putting a rubber worm on a hook, but when *one of us* would make personal eye contact with the youngsters and give them a big smile, they seemed much more eager to give it a try. So a personal thanks goes to Janitor, FD, Carmen, Banana, Perp, Sticky, Felix, Mama’s Boy, Chips, OJ, Bud, Shatner, Juan Valdez, Nasty, OF, Kojak, Little Angel, Suzy, Hilary, Farm Boy and Helen for spending time away from home on a January weekend to support both this great sport and the club. And thanks again to Chainsaw for organizing it again this year, too. You’re all rock stars in my book!

You’ll most certainly want to be at February’s meeting – Steve Carney, writer for *Outdoor News* magazine will regale us with some very timely fishing information. We are incredibly fortunate to enjoy such presentations from knowledgeable fishing enthusiasts so next Thursday after the break, please take a moment to shake Steve’s hand and thank him. And while you’re at it, thank Suzy for once again securing our “entertainment.”

Here’s a little recap from the January meeting where Steve Chesky, head of maintenance from Dan’s Southside Marine related some astounding information about “fuel.” Seems like a simple enough topic, but he put some real meat into it. For example, some of our captains now know that there’s a thing called a **fuel filter** that should be changed *annually!* A few dogs (who will go unnamed for the time being) were heard muttering things such as “...Geez, over ten years and I’ve never changed it!” or “...I figure if it runs it must still be workin’...” Your’s truly, who was sitting next to our speaker, heard him chuckle a little bit... but he turned to me and said, “It’s really not so funny.”

Other fun facts: SeaFoam fuel additive is better for 2-stroke engines but not so good for 4-strokers; it’s better to use products that are designed for your engine than some generics; gasoline that is partly ethanol (like almost all our fuel here in Minnesota) is “fresh” only for about 30 days; it’s a mistake to use high-octane fuel because it’s the oldest fuel at a gas station and is more prone for its ethanol to absorb water and make it less combustive; fuels with ethanol (E-10) are predominant in Minnesota but all such fuels tend to separate the older the fuel gets and that an alcohol/water mixture winds up at the bottom of the tank while the gasoline floats above it. Steve said a telltale sign of fuel problems are poor performance out of the hole as the motor bogs down, etc. He said that brand-name fuel stabilizers help a lot but only if formulated specifically for ethanol-blended fuels. He also recommended emptying your boat’s tank before winter storage instead of topping-it-off; even pumping it out can be good as it will also remove the “crud” mixture that accumulates at the bottom of the tank.

He related shocking news with this sentence: “E-15 fuels are harmful to motors.” He cited a test with many different brands of motors, both 2 and 4-cycle, and all of them had catastrophic failures with problems such as bearings or overheating because the ethyl alcohol in the fuel mitigated the effects of motor lubricants in 2-cycle engines (thus the bearing problems) and piston burning problems in 4-cycles because alcohol burns hotter – about 70 degrees C hotter than non-alcohol blended fuels. The upshot of this was that non-alcohol blended gasoline (i.e. no-alcohol at all) is the best thing for your engine even though it’s more costly than the blends as it may reduce expensive maintenance costs down the road. So scope out a station near you that sells pure, non-blended gasoline and use it in your boat (not legal for your car, sorry). He also said that pure gasoline doesn’t get “old” so there’s no worry about the separation issue because there’s no alcohol to cause the separation.

Another interesting comment Steve made was that if you run your engine more than 100 hours a year, you should probably replace the water pump annually, too. If your usage is closer to about 50 running hours/year, a water pump seems to last about 3, maybe 4 years. I

don't know about you, but I'll bet my total runtime last year was less than 10 hours – and I filled my tank only once, to boot. But that trolling motor sure got a workout!

Steve's bottom line advice: "Fuel is an often-overlooked issue as it relates to boat maintenance, but it's an extremely important part of your boating experience. Pay attention to it." By the way, Steve provided a \$9 bottle of a new fuel treatment product called **Star-Tron Enzyme** for each dog in attendance, so if you weren't there to get one, *tough rocks!*

Speaking of rocks, the seminar committee has contacted the agent representing the captain of the Costa Concordia cruise ship and has requested that he make a presentation to the club at our July LOTW pre-meeting at Thorne Brothers. His tentative topic will be "Navigation Do's and Don'ts." The seminar committee is currently waiting for confirmation...

FD has provided the most recent trout fishing reports in the Open Forums on our web site – give it a look sometime and add your own comments and questions. Its there for your use and has tremendous potential to provide helpful insights into fishing hotspots. If you haven't used the forums, it's easy to do: just choose the Open Forums button on the left side of the member's only page, and then look for the "register" option on the Forum's opening page. You can self-register yourself and start using it right away. If you don't register, you can't post anything. Sorry, that's the way forum software works.

Well that's all for now, but here's something for you to think about: I, the Greenstick, who almost climbed into 33rd place in last year's tournament series, am currently TIED for the lead this year. Will wonders never cease?

Sailfishin' By Fluffee

I had the good fortune to have a four day business meeting in Key Largo, FL over the second week of January. It was the usual business; corporate performance, returns on investment, yada, yada. I have no complaint about a free trip to Florida in January, but business meetings don't necessarily get my

blood flowing as quickly as fishing. Luckily for me, we were afforded an afternoon off to go either golfing or fishing. I took the latter and was quite pleased I did.

Our meeting organizers had arranged for charter boats to take 4 to 6 people out for a catch-of-the day fishing afternoon. This was the season for Sailfish and that would be our quarry. The Warbird was our boat. Nothing fancy, but worthy. We put out around 1:00pm on slightly overcast day with a slight breeze and temperatures in the mid-to-upper 70's. Perfect by any stretch. The first order of business was bait. The preferred bait for Sailfish is Ballyhoo, which in themselves look like a mini-Sailfish without the sail but a long bill or beak. This required a 3 mile run to an area of reefs. I was told that at times the schools of Ballyhoo are up on the reefs and easy to net. This day they were not. Some chum had to be let out to attract them. A myriad of fish, some dull and gray, some bright yellow quickly showed up and were easily visible in the 12 feet of cerulean waters. Eventually Ballyhoo did make their way near enough to be caught on light tackle rods one at a time. These fish seemed to run from 9 – 14" in length. A small piece of cut shrimp on a hook with a bobber was all it took – just like Crappies on 'tonka. That was a slow process but eventually schools were enticed close enough to net. A few dozen in the bait tank later and it was another 3 miles to the fishing grounds.

The Gulf Stream comes so close to the Florida coast here that even in January we were encountering water in the low 70's. By time we hit 6 miles out we found a cluster of boats all after the same thing. One great aspect of ocean fishing, which those of you who Tarpon fished with Shorty can attest – you never know what's going to come out of the water. In this case we got lucky though, our first line in had a Sail take the bait.

The method our Captain was deploying, which seemed to be what everyone was doing, was a shallow, slow troll with the Ballyhoo. The tackle was a very forgiving 50lb mono with the Ballyhoo baited on circle hooks. Rods were fairly soft, again, more "give" as with the mono, and large arbor Penn spinning reels. They run anywhere from 4-8 of these rigs about 30-60

yards behind the boat. By the way, Penn is the King of the Coast. Everywhere you go, Penn Reels are used for Inshore, deep water, you name it. They make everything from some impressive thousand yard capacity bait reels and to excellent spinning units. Seems like the only reel they don't make is a high speed baitcaster for muskies.

So, first line in is Sail-on and I am the lucky recipient of the rod. My one issue about charter ocean fishing is you don't catch the fish, you just land it. It's always a mate setting the hook. In part I understand this; different fish hit differently, etc. And with big fish in big water hook set is half of your lost fish. Captains want to have better catch records, want their clients to boat a fish, I get it. This first fish does some dancing but is a smaller one and comes to the boat fairly readily. In about 10 minutes the leader is showing. They break it off, and call it a catch. This was not the 100lb+ Mack Truck that I saw with tarpon 2 years ago. Fun nonetheless.

The Captain and any extra crew, spend their time in flying bridge, navigating but also keeping an eye on the lines for hits. Sailfish thrash at their prey and generate surface action that gets the mates hustling and ready for hookset. After a lull, this is what happened. A false hit or two with missed fish wasn't a bad thing as this told us the fish were in the area. Better than the last few days I was told as they were scarce. Second fish on is also a smaller one but quite demonstrative with plenty of leaps in the air. Our third man up actually boats a Blackfin Tuna. We were all pretty stoked about this because we could take it back to the dock and give it to the restaurant next door to prepare. The following day we had all the tuna we could eat. It was dynamite. First time I ever left any on the plate.



Lunch

The rotation has me in the batter's box and the next fish is a honey. After 25 minutes of runs and much dancing a big Sailfish is pulled alongside the boat. I heard "mount worthy" from the mate and we also see she is tagged. Because of her size and the tag we bring it alongside and land it. I was told it might have run 6 feet and 50 pounds or so. We bring her up, snap the photo, cut the tag and release it for another day. The tagging was done in cooperation with NOAA. I call the number and get a few basics on the fish; tagged about a year ago 60 miles north after a 45 minute fight as she was tail wrapped. The guy I spoke to commented how encouraging it was that those who revived her last time did a good job with the fish that she was healthy and well a year later. I will receive a free hat for turning in the tag information and be entered in to drawing for a \$500 cash prize!

We had one more Sail on that day but lost it half way to the boat. Still a good day as we were able to motor in to the Ocean Reef Club flying three flags.



Matt and Marlin Mueller

I have had a Penn International baitcaster (4.5-1 ratio) for 15 years. Great for slow presentations. Has never hinted at a problem. Penn now make some high speed, low profile reels with 200yd/12lb capacity. The Sargus model may be worth a look.

Stu's Stirrings

Greetings from Southwest Florida! I went out in the gulf 50 miles to catch red grouper a couple of days ago with three friends aboard a 28 foot center console Grady White boat. They have closed the season here on gag grouper and will be closing the season on the red at the end of February.

Armed with 30 pinfish (a grouper delicacy) we drifted some hard coral bottom in 60 feet of water using 4oz. weights. There was a slight breeze so we used 2 drift socks to slow us down. Red grouper need to be 20" to be legal. We caught numerous gags which had to go back and a number of undersized reds. The one pictured I caught and he was 21". We also landed a 24" red.

These are very strong fish that do not want to see the surface. Great rod-benders and delicious eating. It was a great day on the water. We even had a loggerhead turtle pop up within 10 yards of the boat. He turned his head towards us and headed back down. We

also had a loon (maybe came from Minnesota) that was looking for a free lunch. He would dive down and attempt to steal our baits but was smart enough to never get himself hooked.

If any of you guys are down here this winter or spring give me a call and I would be happy to take you fishing!

Stu(Spanky) 952-738-1544.



Six Weeks till Tournament One!

More Tournament details will be explained at the February meeting.

2012 Tournament Schedule

Gentlemen, Mark Your Calendars!

Date (Saturdays)	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
Mar 17	Trout	Wisconsin	Fluffee – Shatner
Apr 14	Trout	Wisconsin	Fluffee – Shatner
May 19	Walleye	St Louis River	Little Angel – Chips
June 1 (Fri)	Bass	TBD	Felix – Banana
June 23	Multi	TBD	Perp – Carmen
Aug 17 (Fri)	Multi	St Croix	OF - Janitor
Sep 8	Multi	Pepin	Suzy - Hillary
Oct 6	Bass	Clearwater	Griz

Seen at Schara

