

The Dogumentary

25th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

May 2007

May Meeting

The May meeting will be held at the Hopkins VFW on Thursday May 3, with dinner at 6:00 and the meeting starting at 7. Our guest speaker will be Mark Fisher of Rapala and KFAN radio who will talk about bass and other metro fishing opportunities.

The 2007 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

May 3	Monthly Meeting
May 5	Crappie Tournament
June 2-3	Walleye Tournament
June 7	Monthly Meeting
June 15-16	Bass Tournament
July 5	Monthly Meeting
July 21-28	LOTW Rock&Roll Musky Tour
August 2	Monthly Meeting
August 18	Multi-Species Tournament
Sep 6	25 th Anniversary Party
Sep 15	Musky/NP Tournament
Oct 4	Monthly Meeting
Nov 1	Annual Banquet
Dec 6	Monthly Meeting

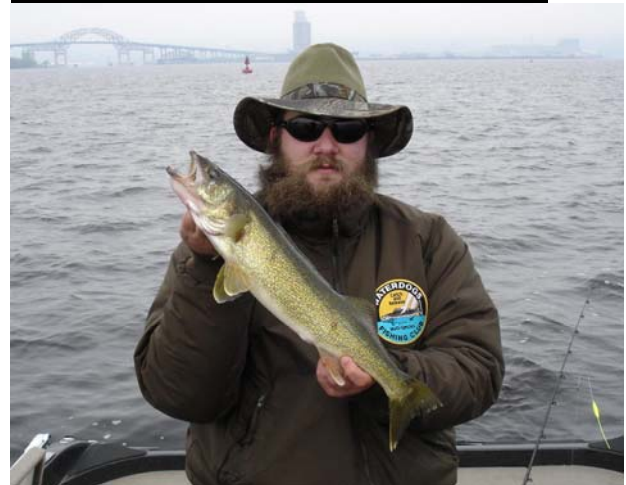
The tournament details are on the last page of each Dogumentary.

Upcoming meeting seminars include the following:

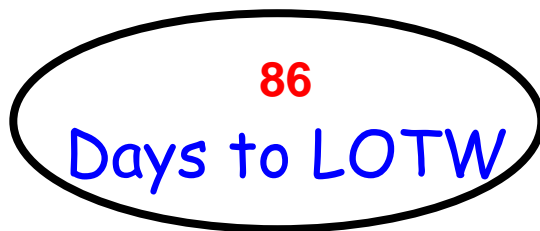
May: Mark Fisher – Rapala
June: Wayne's World talks Muskies
July: Thorne Bros pre-LOTW
August: Tackle Terry Tuma
Sep: Farm Boy hosts the Waterdogs 25th Anniversary party
October: open – working with Schara



President's Corner – James Ferstenou



It's that time of the year again, time to get the boats out of storage and get them ready for another season on the water. For me it has always been a fun process because it means that the water is open and that the season opener is that much closer. Even though I do not currently own a boat; I still have the pleasure of using my parents' boat in Wisconsin whenever I'm back home. In return for their hospitality I have taken on the tasks of readying the boat for fishing in the spring and winterizing it in the fall.



I'm hoping to get out on the water back home this weekend to do some crappie fishing, but first I'll have to go through my usual routine. I'm sure you all go through similar processes, but here are a few of the key points from mine.

To start with I need to switch around the positions of the utility trailer and the boat in the third stall of the garage. Then I'll begin by checking over the trailer. Check the bearings and replace or re-grease if necessary. Check air pressure in the tires and spare. Check the electrical system and make sure that all of the lights function properly. Verify that the trailer license has not expired.

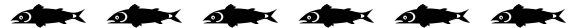
Next it's on to the boat. Verify that the boat registration has not expired. Charge the batteries. Put the life vests, the net, my parents fishing equipment, the electronics and other miscellaneous items back into the boat. This year I also plan to modify the electronics setup in the boat. I'm moving the Lowrance X-85 from the console to the bow and installing a Lowrance fish finder/GPS combo at the console. It should prove to be a more useful system on the water this year. Hopefully it won't take more than a few hours to make the switch.

I'll probably spend a good part of the day on Saturday getting everything taken care of, but it is fun to me, and it's a small way of saying thanks to my parents for letting me use their boat as often as I do. Besides, that leaves Sunday afternoon for fishing and hopefully finding a crappie pattern that could help for the Minnetonka tournament. I'm really looking forward to getting our tournament season into full swing with the crappie, walleye and bass tournaments all coming up within the next nine weeks. The arrival of the Rollie and Helen's Musky Shop catalog in the mail a few weeks ago already has me thinking about the LOTW trip as well.

A few final notes. If you plan to attend the St. Louis River walleye tournament please reserve you room at the hotel no later than 4:00 PM on 5/2/07 if you have not already done so. Please let me know if you need additional contact information for the hotel. If you plan to attend this year's LOTW trip, please take care of any related paperwork for that trip as well if you have not already done so.

That's all for now. Until next month, keep your lures in the water and your hooks sharp.

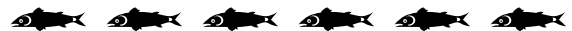
Griz



The Board Has Spoken:

There was a Board meeting on April 5, 2007, and here are the quick minutes of that meeting. If you have any additional questions or comments, bring them to the May meeting.

1. The Board approved donating \$100 to Fishing For Life. This is in memory of Kevin Millers father. The Miller family matched the memorial money sent by the Dogs and asked that it all be donated to a charity that encouraged youth fishing.
2. The Board affirmed the by-laws tournament rules that all participants must be at the tournament ending location by the tournament close time or be disqualified. A friendly reminder will be made to all at the April meeting.
3. The Board approved an initial budget of \$300 for the 25th Anniversary Committee.
4. In an earlier vote by email, the Board approved the discontinuance of the Liability Insurance policy. Sorry, Carmen, hope you can still go to LOTW!



Joy Fandrich Memorial

We were all saddened by the news from our hosts for our annual Lake of the Woods trip about the loss of their daughter. After an email discussion by the board about how we might best express our sympathy and show our support for the Fandrich's, we decided that we would like to present the family with a tree in memory of Joy. At the next few meetings, we will provide an opportunity for anyone to contribute to that memorial. If you are not able to make the next few meetings and would like to participate, you can send your contribution to Old Fart with a note indicating that it is for the memorial.
Farm Boy

25th Anniversary Celebration

Plans are rolling for the momentous September celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Waterdogs. We are reserving the Bryant Lake Regional Park Pavilion in Eden Prairie for our regular meeting night on September 6th. I have heard from a number of past Waterdogs that are very excited about the event and have already booked it on their calendars. If you would still like to help with planning and hosting the event let me know. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Our most urgent need right now is finding email addresses for the past members. Please review the email with the past member list and let me know if you can fill in any of the blanks. If you need another email file, just let me know.

Farm Boy



Walleyes on the Big Lou



In anticipation of the upcoming walleye tournament on the St. Louis River, scheduled for the first weekend of June, the Dogumentary asked a handful of Waterdogs about how they plan to approach the tournament...

What makes fishing the St. Louis River for early season walleyes special for you?

Griz: The sheer abundance of walleyes in the system at that time of year and the backdrop of Duluth and the ships off of lake superior make it a fun and unique experience. There is also a lot of trophy potential in the river.

Nasty: Waterdogs have actually caught fish there -- that's the draw. Personally, I have yet to have a great day on the Old St Lou.

Fluffy: I am so looking forward to fishing this river again.

Suzy: The setting is what makes this a fun tournament for me. Watching the big ships come in from Lake Superior. Fishing the harbor and the slips. Maybe slip over to fish the waste water treatment plant area. Further

downstream, it's wilderness. It's a weird, wonderful place to fish.

Do you think you'll pre-fish the St. Louis River in advance of the tournament?

Griz: Yes, on the Friday prior to the tournament.

Nasty and Fluffee: Can't this year. No extra time.

Suzy: Planning to pre-fish the Friday before.

Janitor: No comment (but it's a good bet you'll see him up there)

How do you approach pre-fishing vs. tournament day?

Griz: I'm more apt to move around more while pre-fishing since I want to find fish in multiple spots and avoid "burning" a spot for the tournament. On tournament day, I usually will not leave fish to find more. I'll stay in one spot all day if it is productive.

Nasty: When I pre-fish any tournament, I try new baits, presentations and tactics. I also try new spots during the pre-fish. No sense in fishing the same old places.

Suzy: Try different places to give yourself more options on tournament day. Fish close to the locals to see what they're using, and to understand why they're fishing certain spots. Stop at several nearby bait shops to see what's selling.

The St. Louis offers a long stretch of water to fish, from the dam to the Duluth harbor. What do you look for to put you on fish fast?

Griz: After fishing the river several times, I have a few different areas that I like to fish, but one thing to keep in mind in this case is that the walleyes are migrating into the river to spawn and then back out to Lake Superior. As odd as this may sound, if I were not familiar with the river one of the best ways to get started would be to simply look for a concentration of other fishing boats and start near them. Chances are there are many local boats on the water and the fishermen will follow the walleye migration. I'm not saying you should go and fish in the middle of all of them, but using them as a point of reference to get started could prove useful.

Janitor: Fish shallow. So many of us are used to fishing deep for walleyes. But on the Big Lou you have current and stained water (root beer appearance). Both are contributors to walleyes being shallow even in daytime hours. The other thing we need to be aware of is the weather. Last year was no fluke. Wet, cold and windy should be expected at that time of year (according to my barber who is from Cloquet).

Suzy: Don't forget to try a boat slip (where the ships unload their cargo) – that's where I've caught my largest walleyes on the Big Lou (a 26 incher and a 24 incher).

Nasty: Fish the conditions. Cold and windy stay away from the big lake.

Fluffy: I agree. As much as a pain in the keester as it is, wind exposed areas have always produced the most fish for me. Sometimes you have to duck around a bend just to get out of it and give your body a rest, but get back out here the wind meets the current. No wind? Find the strongest current and work the seam.

What do you use for bait?

Griz: Live night crawlers, Gulp! crawlers and Rapala lures.

Nasty: Be ready for anything. Bring an assortment.

Fluffy: Leeches – Jumbo are the best – most fish boated per bait then the others for me. Crawlers – except for those danged Ruffe always munching on them, most of the bigger Wallys I've seen are on these. If you're a minnow kind of guy, use chubs, never caught much on those fat shiners. In all the times I've fished the Big Lou, I've spent maybe 5% of my time dragging cranks or any other artificials. Not worth the time usually. But you never know.

Suzy: Nightcrawlers. But I've noticed that minnows seem to work better in the harbor.

How do you present your bait?

Griz: Bottom bouncers/crawler harnesses for the Gulp! and live night crawlers, and either long line trolled or trolled behind a planer board for the Rapalas.

Nasty: I change many subtle things such as color of hook, color of line, weight of line, fast, slow, live bait, artificial bait, type of bait. I rule things out during the pre-fish.

Fluffy: No ifs, ands, or buts: bottom bouncers on every rod -- ¾ oz., 1 oz. or sometimes 1 ½-oz. weights, depending on the current, wind, depth and troll speed. Bring a lot of each. You will lose plenty. Don't even bother rigging a Lindy, too much junk in this water.

Suzy: Bottom bouncers with spinner rigs. Make sure to bring a variety of sizes of spinner rigs, and make sure to stock up – you'll lose plenty.

What type of rod/reel will you use?

Griz: 8'-6" St. Croix Avid w/Shimano spinning reel is my favorite for bouncers. 9"-0" Daiwa planer board rod and reel combo (line counter reels) for bouncers and trolling cranks.

Nasty: I bring 6-8 set ups, all different.

Suzy: 7 foot medium action rod with baitcasting reels (easier to use with rod holders)

What type of line will you use?

Griz: Fireline.

Nasty: Several different colors and weights

Suzy: Fireline

Fluffy: Fireline

Will you use a leader -- if so, how long?

Griz: I use a 6' crawler harness with three hooks. No leader when trolling cranks.

Nasty: No leader or extra terminal tackle....just more to lose in the rocks.

Suzy: About 3 or 4 foot leader (part of the spinner rig).

Fluffee: 3-4 foot snell off of my bottom bouncer

Will you make your own presentation (such as a spinner/live bait combo) or buy a pre-packaged presentation?

Griz: I buy pre-packaged rigs, but I look for crawler rigs made with better materials like fluorocarbon line, smaller diameter line, quality hooks and a quick snap clevis for easily changing blade color. I stay away from the cheap crawler harnesses with 20# test line and poor quality hooks.

Nasty: I make some of my own spinners and snells, different lengths and different size spinners. Different color hooks too (Walleye size).

Suzy: I buy the cheap crawler rigs. Usually buy fluorescent green and pink/white spinner blades.

Fluffee: I make my own leech and minnow rigs and use the “quick change” clevis so to swap blades easily. Store bought crawler rigs.

Most guys will use a spinner/live bait combo -- have you had any luck trying something else, like a crankbait?

Griz: Yes. Dankert and I placed third in a World Walleye Association tournament a few years ago and trolling cranks made up a big part of our catch for the tournament and during pre-fishing.

Suzy: Have never used a crankbait on the St. Louis.

What suggestions do you offer in terms of boat control?

Griz: Keep the current in mind and use it to help present your lure and control your boat. Be aware of your speed when you catch a fish, a GPS is handy for this. I have seen several occasions on the river where speeding up or slowing down by a small amount made a big difference in the number of fish caught. Also, remember that you'll need to adjust your troll speed when you change direction relative to the current.

It seems like everyone winds up in the Spirit Lake area -- are there other areas that offer good potential?

Griz: I've had good luck on one of the sharp bends in the river just downstream of Spirit Lake, near the "Tin Shed" and on the final stretch of river between the last bridge and Lake Superior. The last stretch has some nice trolling flats on the outer edges of the channel and the channel itself can be good. Troll the flats in low light periods and move deeper into the channel when it is brighter.

Fluffy: This river is packed with fish and I have caught them all over; from the big lake to the dam. Anyplace where there is a seam or channel. Sometimes a depth variation on the seam of just 2 feet can be where they hold. Spirit Lake is hard to refuse and a great place to fill you card. I also have found it worthwhile to stop at any of the many bridges and fish above, below and through the bridge channel.

Nasty: Yes, I fish Spirit Lake but have not spent extended periods of time there.

Suzy: I've caught fish with various captains from the harbor back to the dam. The three areas I've had the most success are in the Harbor (fishing the bouys), the Spirit Lake flats, and the buoys along the river channel. The biggest fish I've caught came from the boat slips.

Do you fish two lines or concentrate on just one line at a time?

Griz: I've done both. For me it depends on the setup of the boat that I'm in, what technique that I'm using and if I'm running the boat or not.

Nasty: I fish two lines, but concentrate on one.

Fluffee: Two lines -- always.

Do you use rod holders or do you prefer to hold your rod and keep a finger on your line?

Griz: Trolling cranks I prefer rod holders. Pulling spinners I'd rather hold the rod.

Nasty: I am the rod holder. The other guy is the netter.

Suzy: I've had my most success using rod holders and concentrate on the boat control (speed, drift, etc.)

Fluffee: If between landing my partner's fish and general boat control I can manage it, I will hold both rods and “finger” the line. Otherwise one in hand; the other in a rod holder.

If you're fishing four lines (two lines per partner), how do you keep things manageable in your boat?

Griz: Planer boards help a lot if you are trolling cranks. Pulling spinners can be a little trickery, but you can usually work something out with your partner.

Nasty: I only fish two lines. The other two are my partners problem. The key is to keep a bait in the water so if your two lines get tangled, put one away.

Suzy: Because I've mostly used leeches and nightcrawlers, it's helpful to have bait for the captain (at the bow) and for the Little Buddy (stern). Bring lots of bait – you'll use it...

Fluffee: It's not so hard, as long as boat control is OK. Sometimes you can't help but get an overlapped line. What's really a hoot is when you have a multi-fish hook-up with all those lines in the water.

Hot Flats Reds and Snook

By Suzy

During the first week of April, Rebekah, my wife, and our two daughters, Anna, 6, and Rachel, 4, headed to Captiva Island, Florida, for our first-ever Florida spring break vacation. We chose the Captiva, which is located next to Sanibel Island, because it is well-known for its nice beaches and its legendary sea shells. Throw in a nice swimming pool, the little variety-pack boxed cereals each morning, and a ice cream treat in the afternoon and you've got heaven on earth to a six- and four-year-old.

As I didn't know much about the area, I called up Shorty several months ago as Rebekah and I were planning the trip. As Shorty was already going to be down at his house for business at the same time, he quickly suggested a day of fishing for redfish and snook in the large, mangrove-island studded bay between Captiva and Sanibel Islands and the mainland (Fort Meyers). Shorty said he had the perfect guide -- Ozzie -- whom he has used several times before.

The big day arrived. Shorty picked me at the resort at about 8 a.m. in his red hot Beemer and we cruised over to the marina. The day was off to a gorgeous start. Bluebird skies complemented by a nice warm, 80 degree breeze. Because I didn't have any breakfast, I threw an apple, a Power Bar, a banana and a couple Gatorades into Shorty's cooler. Big mistake. As Ozzie opened the cooler to transfer our goodies into his cooler, he growled, "Banana." "Well guys, you can keep this banana on here, but I take no responsibility for the rest of the day." I thought he was just joking because I thought that whole banana thing that we do as a club was just one big joke. Well, I grabbed the banana and raced to the garbage can.

We set out for the day, hitting one small mangrove island after another. Most of the time, we fished in no more than 5 feet of water. We used medium-heavy weight rods and large spinning reels that contained 20 or 30 lb.-test braided gold line. We used large, may size #1 or #2 circle hooks with live bait caught by Ozzie earlier in the morning. The

baitfish was a shiny, tarpon-like fish, no more than three- or four-inches. For the redfish, Ozzie ripped off the tails, apparently because redfish are strongly attracted to scent.

On our second spot, Shorty nailed two or three seven pound snook before I encountered my first one. I cast out to this spot where a large mangrove tree was sticking out, to a trough-like trench that surrounded the island. It was about 35-feet away from Ozzie's 17-foot white fishing boat. The snook didn't hit hard -- but it did take the bait and immediately started running with it. It ran hard and line screeched off my reel. The fish jumped several times, too. After we got it to the boat, both Ozzie and Shorty assured me that they get much larger. Later in the day, Shorty and I caught about a dozen more snook off an oyster bed. What a hoot.

But the real fun was just another mangrove island away. As Ozzie stood on his perch, poling Shorty and I through a flat, he spotted a group of 30 or more redfish. Even though the water was gin clear, Shorty and I both had difficulty seeing the fish. No matter. Ozzie baited our hooks and yelled, "toss over there." After several misses, Shorty and I both tossed our bait near the edge of an oyster bar, just as this school of redfish was coming up to it.

A redfish hit my bait -- and I mean it hit it. It was like a freight train. I was on. As the line was screaming off my reel, Ozzie was screaming in my ear... "don't reel, don't reel." "Okay, reel, reel." "Don't reel against the drag." "Use your rod." Shorty offered lots of encouragement, too. My arms aching, I finally got my first redfish, a beautiful 31 incher (about 12 pounds), into the boat 10 minutes later. We released it as it was too large (outside of the slot limit). It was the first of three reds for me for the day.

If you ever get down that way, I strongly urge you to try it. I was shocked at how hard redfish fight. In addition, I saw sharks, stingrays, and manatees. Overall, it was just amazing. I shouldn't forget to mention that the tarpon are just coming in... And of course, Shorty extends an open invitation to any Dog who wants to come down. His house is just a few minutes away from Fort Meyers.



Maybe a snook/redfish tournament for next March is in order?



The Buick meets the Caddis Fly:

By Ron Reigle

Saturday, April 14th Peter Bachman (Tulip) and I fished the Rush River in Wisconsin south of Martell, around the Stone Hammer bridge. We got out there around 8:30 and fished until 4 in the afternoon. It was a great sunny and warm day, but we didn't see a soul until around 2 PM, when Goplin and his daughter showed up. Peter and I had a great time. I caught a nice fat brown right under the first bridge while Peter spotted me from the top of the bridge. I was of course casting spinners all day, while Peter used his fly rod with a little nymph thingy. We fished together for most of the morning and had plenty of action. Since the sky was bright and the water clear - the fish were very spooky. We discovered that there is a place and time for both fly rods and spinning gear. A good example is some pools we could see up stream but were afraid to walk up too close to for fear of spooking fish. I was able to cast upstream to these pools and caught some nice browns. Peter couldn't reach these pools with his fly rod because of overhanging branches. Overall, Peter easily out fished me 10-to-1, but my fish on average were larger.

Those little brookies were all over Peter's little nymph thingy. We got into a number of pools where you could look down and see 20 - 30 or more trout and suckers swimming together. Man, there were some really big browns swimming around! I've never seen so many fish! Overall it was a great day spent with a good friend. I might even have to get me a fly rod and a box of those nymph thingys.



Homily from the Fishing Father

I went to Wisconsin and fish a small private lake on April 16-20. The lake had some great structure with lots of sunken trees etc. I fished all around most of the shore line and did not catch anything until I went into a finger on the lake that was shallower. The crappies that I found were in some cabbage weeds that were starting to grow and close to the edge a deeper hole in the weeds. The largest crappie that I caught was 14½ inches with about 5 between 12 and 13 inches. Lots of 10-11 inchers. White worked best in the sunlight and black and chartreuse in the dark part of the day.

On the 23rd, I tried Washington Lake down by St. Peter, with a priest that fishes the lake a lot, and there was nothing going on. It was a bigger lake and really nobody was out fishing.

Fr. Bertha

Good News from Greenstick:

(Still looking forward to completing his first tournament)

The New Waterdogs Web Site:

It was a week after the Trout tournament and as I began my recovery from the broken leg I suffered during the tournament (geez, those trout are *MEAN!*) I thought to myself, "What can I contribute to the club now that I won't be fishing for at least a couple months?"

Being a software designer by trade, I thought it might be fun to assemble a simple little web site that the club could use as a central repository for information and results during the spring/summer and possibly as a focal point to keep club members engaged in club activities during the winter months when members may travel to warmer climes. Not everyone attends every meeting so it's easy to miss getting a copy of tournament information handouts. Perp, Fishdick and Griz do a great job of emailing information around but sometimes, you need to refer to the info and it's back home on top of your dresser or at the office on your desk. A web site can make information available to everyone with the click of a mouse no matter the time of day or where you are.

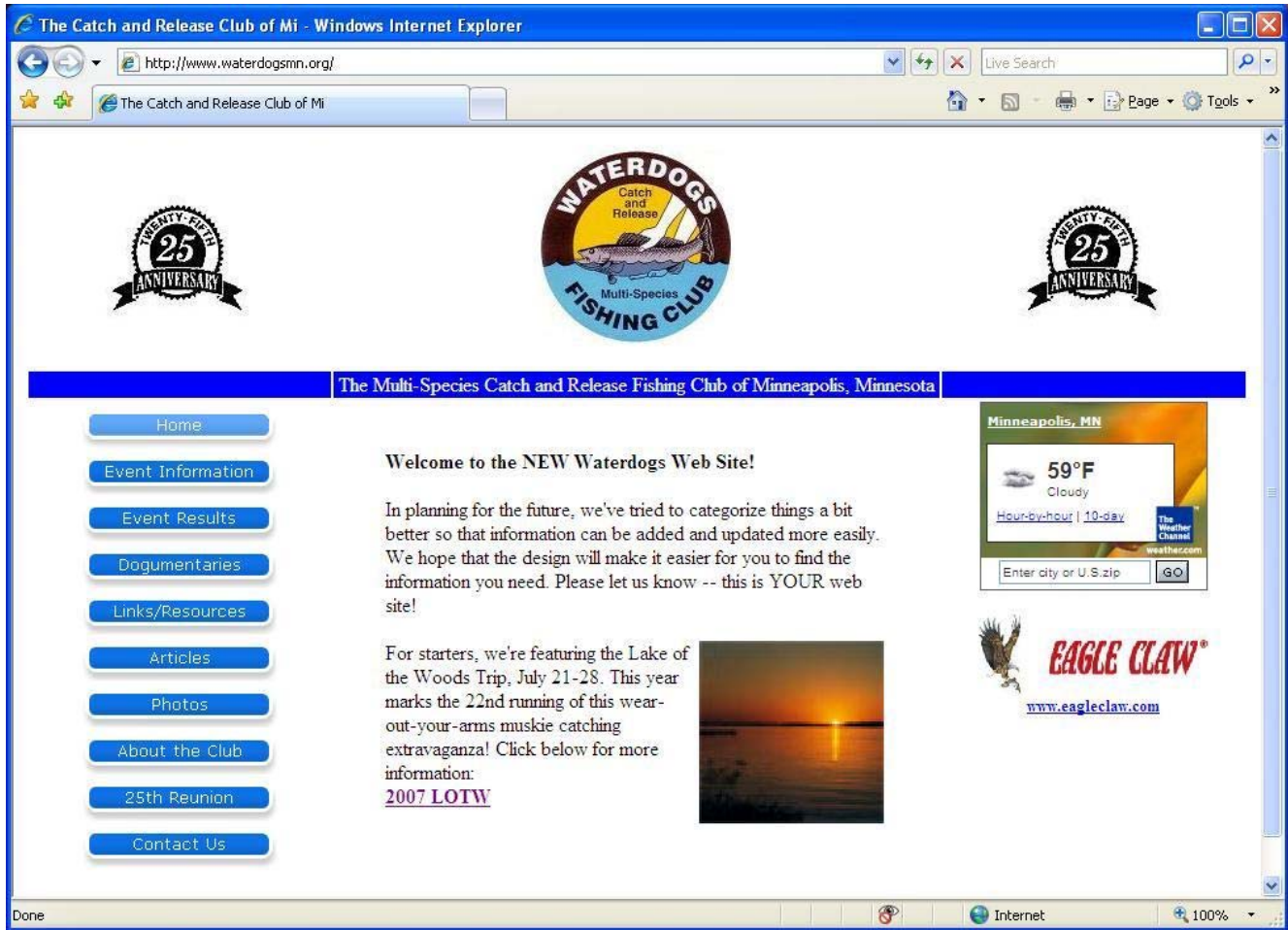
Another goal was to keep the cost to the club at zero dollars, and I decided to host the site on my company's web server and make it a FrontPage web site. Microsoft FrontPage is a Windows software program for managing and editing web sites. It's very powerful yet quite easy to use, and because I had several licensed copies of the software that I wasn't using, there was no cost to the club for the software, either.

It only took a couple hours and www.waterdogsmn.org was launched. However, I never really checked with anybody about doing it – I just set up a few sample pages and sent the web address to president Griz for his thoughts as to whether it was a good idea. The great bearded one informed me that the club had had a web site in the past but that it died a few years ago because of a lack of interest. He did mention that it might be a good idea to try again.

So apparently, the real trick is to have more than one person involved, and Farm Boy has already volunteered to help do some of the editing. We could use more helpers, too. He's not sure exactly what he'll add, but I've inserted several obvious tongue-in-cheek clinkers on various pages as examples of ways to keep it fun. In terms of keeping the information timely, we can usually copy text or photos right out of an email and paste them directly onto a web page – you send us the info and we'll get it up there on the web site. It's quite easy to do and really takes very little time. A lot of the "stuff" you'll read will come from club members, or at least we *hope* that most of it comes from club members. I know that *each* of you has something fun to share -- a joke, an idea, a new lure, a photo of you holding a 75 pound crappie or a rare wombat fish; please let somebody know. The web site will only be successful if YOU add something to it.

Well, I've just set my drag and pitched my lure along the weedline. Wonder if they're bitin' today...

Here is a picture of the front page of the new website:



Waterdogs Fishing Club 2007 Tournament Schedule

Gentlemen, Mark Your Calendars!

Date	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
✓ March 17	Trout	Kinni, Rush, etc – WI	Janitor, OF
May 5	Crappie	Minnetonka	Perp, Mamas Boy, OJ
June 2-3	Walleye	St Louis River (O/N)	Griz, Nasty, Chips
June 15-16 (Fri-Sat)	Bass	Carver Co Lakes	Banana, Carmen, Felix
August 18	Multispecie	Pepin	Bubble, Bertha, Bud
September 15	Musky/NP	Waconia + others	Suzy, Rocky, Buick