

The Dogumentary

25th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

June 2007

June Meeting

The June meeting will be held at the Hopkins VFW on Thursday June 7, with dinner at 6:00 and the meeting starting at 7. Our guest speaker will be our old friend Wayne's World, who lives and breathes for muskies. He's one of the most entertaining speakers that we've ever had, and will be sure to whip you into a frenzy for the musky season. You don't want to miss it!

Dinner at the meeting will be different this time also. In order to speed up the service and cut the confusion, a pre-selected dinner will be offered to members. For the June meeting it will be roast beef, potatoes, vegetable and salad. The price will be \$9, which includes tax and tip. We can still order from the menu but as we know that can definitely be slow.

<u>The 2007 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar</u>	
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.

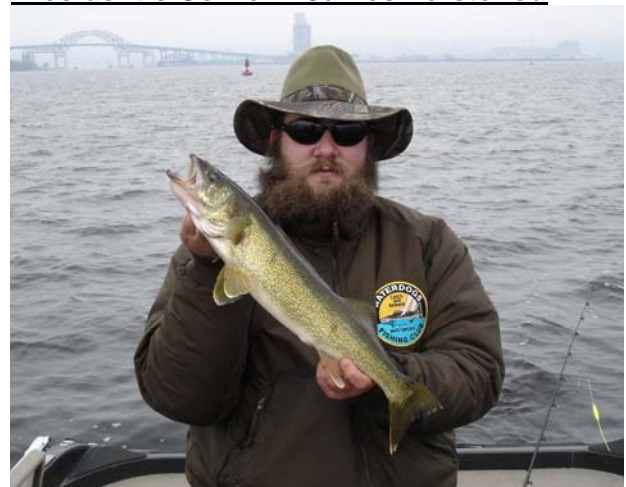
48!
Days to LOTW

Upcoming meeting seminars include the following:

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



Two more tournaments have passed and another in two weeks the tournament season is passing by quickly but not without incident. We started the season with the trout tournament. The weather was good and many fish were caught, but Dave Haberle broke his leg. Next came the crappie tournament. Again, there were many fish caught but the weather turned bad toward the end of the tournament and many 'Dogs were forced to take shelter while a thunderstorm passed. Congratulations to the team of Doug Squire and Dave Anderson on their win in less than ideal conditions.

That brings us to the most recent tournament, walleyes on the St. Louis River. "Incidents" seemed to abound on this outing. I'll let the parties involved relate their own versions of the stories later, but here is a preview are some of the highlights. Last minute changes to pairings due to a few late dropouts had us with three-three man teams, which is a bit unusual, but perhaps foreshadowed more unusual things to come.

The teams of Little Angel, Kevin Miller (now with the tentative handle of "Nubbie" since Saturday night's dinner) and Griz and Sticky, Nasty and Carmen headed up on Friday to pre-fish. Little Angel has a flat tire on his trailer when we return to the landing in the evening and a second flat tire on the same side of the trailer as the boat is being pulled from the water. Saturday morning at the hotel Sticky has a flat tire on his trailer as well and the team gets a late start.

On Sunday as boats head out for the morning Little Angel "lightly" beaches his boat on a sand bar near Spirit Lake and receives a tow from Perp and Helen to get back to fishing. Sticky "not so lightly" beaches his boat on a sand bar on his way out as well. The boat was apparently nearly 100' up on the bar and into the sand according to the rumors at the dock after to tournament. Close to two hours later, and with a lot of help from the U.S. Coast Guard, Sticky's boat is free and the team can begin fishing. Carmen later assures the group at the landing that many good pictures will follow.

Who knows what the next tournaments will bring, but hopefully we have a lot of the incidents for the year behind us. They may make for good stories, but I'm sure that we could all do without more of these types of headaches. Good luck to all in the upcoming tournaments.

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

Griz

Mama's Boy and Felix Find the Hot Minnetonka Crappie Hole

The year's second tournament took the club to the nearly-annual tournament site of Lake Minnetonka, this time for crappies. True to form, the weather committee brought in a mid-day thunderstorm that caused the 26 dogs in attendance to scramble for cover for an hour, but otherwise it was a good day to be on the water.



Dogs Wait Out the Storm on Dry Dock

Six teams 'filled out' their 15-fish cards for the day, but the team of Mama's Boy and Felix had a total weight that was more than a pound ahead of second place, and nearly a double of the sixth-place team with the same number of fish. The boys got their fish in Peavy Lake off of Brown's Bay, on the standard jig-and-minnow, and also a jig and twister. Their limit included a tournament-largest pair of 12.5 inchers caught by each guy, which count twice as heavy as a standard 10-inch crappie. The winning team will spill their guts with the details of their strategy at the next meeting.



Mama's Boy with a 12.5"

The second place team was Nasty and Helen, who caught most of their limit in West Arm. In third was Kojak and OJ, with fourth going to team Sticky/Suzy, fifth was Janitor/Wagner, and the sixth-place limit was Chainsaw/Griz.



Crappie Contest Winners

In all, 126 crappies were 'weighed-in' at the tournament. This does not count the culling done by the teams that caught limits, and also does not include the fish from the two teams that DQ'd due to lateness.



Bonus Walleye

St Louis River – Less is More

Club Tournament Number Four took place this last weekend on the St. Louis River in Duluth. This was the third time that the club has fished the river in a tournament, and although the fish were fewer this time, the average fish was about 3'-4" larger than when we fished the river two years ago.



Dogs in the Mist

In typical Duluth fashion, the weather was cold, windy, foggy and rainy the first day, but overcast and calm the second day. The fishing remained slow but steady on both days, despite the unsettled weather conditions. Some day, the Weather Committee will get it right, hopefully in time for our upcoming two-day bass tournament.



Easier Boat Control on Day 2

Last-minute cancellations left the club scrambling for partner match-ups a day before the tournament. We ended up with three 3-man teams for a total of 8 boats fishing with 19 members participating.



Six Lines Can Cause Calamitous Clusters

On the water, more lines proved to be better odds for fish, when a 3-man team could have a total of 6 lines dragging the bottom for walleyes. After the first day of fishing, the three 3-man teams were also 1-3 in the standings, but 'The Incident' possibly cut into one of the 3-man team's success on day two. More on this event is detailed below. In all, 59 counting walleyes were caught in the tournament, along with fish of other species, including smallmouth, muskies, and the ruffies and gobies, along with a selection of mollusks and arthropods. The walleyes did run bigger than in previous years, where to years ago, the biggest fish were 20"-21", this year they were 23"-25".



Wagner with a 22

For another example, the second place team caught a total of 11 walleyes, all of which were from 18" to 24".



OF with a Leech-Caught 24

At the end, it was the 3-man team of Scott Squire, Kevin Miller, and James Ferstenou that led after day one, and also held on to take first place for the event. They caught their fish on the typical variety of live bait, and at the not-so-secret locations of the various flats that everyone else was fishing. Kevin 'Nubbins' Miller got the big fish of the tournament, a 24.5", by dropping his bait right under the boat when they were sitting still. It's that easy. More details of the winning team's strategy will be told at the upcoming meeting.



Winning Team Members Little Angel and Nubbins celebrate Angel's Birthday

Sticky Gets Stuck – “The Incident”

By Carmen – A Survivor

It was about 8:30 Sunday morning on the St. Louis River Walleye Tournament when, Sticky Fingers, Nasty Boy and myself agreed we should take a ride downstream from walleye alley to the harbor area. The wind was calm and there were few boats along the way. As we got to Spirit Lake, the river widened and Sticky moved past buoy 59 and straight onto a sand bar at a speed of 35 mph. We could feel a drag on the hull and Fingers shut down the motor as we slid to halt about 150 feet from the buoy, hard aground. Fingers jumped into the water and Nasty and I pushed with the paddles. The blade on Nasty's paddle flexed from the pressure. The boat was not moving. About that time Felix and Dr. Meat came from downriver and I shouted, "Get your cameras out!" Nasty and I untangled the anchor rope and Sticky walked it out to as close as Felix could get. Felix tried to pull us free but the Lund didn't budge. After an attempt to contact help via cell phone, Sticky reluctantly dialed channel 16 on the marine band and called for the Coast Guard. Coast Guard Station Duluth responded by asking our position. None of us could read the numbers on the buoys; they were too far away and our maps didn't have them!

We eventually were able to communicate our whereabouts and the Station directed us to another channel where we were asked about the size, description and name of our vessel

while their rescue craft got underway. I was surprised to hear Sticky say the name of his boat is 'Dad's Relaxin' and thought to myself, "Did he just make that up?" Nope that's its name. Note to all captains: give your boat a name in case the need arises. For the next 30-45 minutes, we were in contact with the Station and their vessel sent to assist us. Once on the site, they confirmed with Captain Sticky that they would not be responsible for any damage the tow might due to his boat and proceeded to tow us off the sand bar.

Once we were free and floating, they tied Dad's Relaxin' to their vessel and performed the standard inspection. They observed that Chris had taken a Coast Guard Boating Course (Thanks, Kojak) and noted that his flares had year old expiration dates and should be replaced. Note to captains going to LOTW: check the expiration date on your flares.



Dr. Sticky takes the Coast Guard Tow Line Out to His Boat

So, another nominee for Weenie of the Year is made, although Sticky thinks this was a learning experience for all of us, so his nomination really should be for Captain of the Year. 29 others will decide his fate.

Waterdogs Members Fishing Reports

Here are some early-season fishing reports from club members. Most of these stories are probably true!

Shatner – Big Brownie

Here is a cell phone picture of the 20.25 inch Brown I caught 4/30 while on a turkey hunt. It was caught in the Root River just upstream from Preston, Mn. on an F-9-S Rapala. It was hiding next to a large boulder in the center of a wider slower stretch of the river. About 20 minutes before being caught it made pass at the lure and missed. When returning back down stream, it took just one cast to that same spot to hook up.



19.5" in the Picture, but 20+ in Real Life

Nasty Boy - Memorial Day Bass

I went fishing on a west metro lake the Sunday after the bass opener. I was trying a lake I hadn't fished for about ten years and only for Walleyes. My first spot, I got a little bass 7+ inches, second spot the same. The wind picked up so I decided to float a shoreline with the wind. 25 bass (10-18 inch range), two crappies, six bluegill, and a Walleye later I was done. Not a bad three hours. All on one secret bait using one technique.

The Rocky Report for 5/25-5/27:

I spent the Memorial weekend at the sister/brother - in - laws at their place on Whitefish Lake near Hayward, WI. (the annual family reunion for my wife's family). I got out fishing each morning & evening with some bros. in law & last afternoon with my wife. This is a small 800 ac. lake which is 100+ ft. deep and very clear so walleyes are tough to come by but the bass usually cooperate in the shallows. Tried 8-10 ft. weedline w/ slip bobbers for crappies but only 1 runt would commit. Bass were doing ok considering water temp was 59 - 61 (falling during my stay). Each morning 10 - 15 bass were brought to the boat by 3 fisherman over 3-4 hrs., with the usual 5-6 lost. What surprised me was the musky activity. Figured we wouldn't see many big girls with the cold clear water but my swab on Sat. morning had a mid - high 30" fish on for a short time on a beetle spin. Also had 3 - 4 follows in 8 - 12 ft breakline areas with similar sightings by other boats in our party. Weather wasn't great but could always be worse this time of season. Ate too much, per usual, and had a good time.

Janitor's Minnetonka Walleye Update

I was able to fish for Walleyes on Mtka Saturday and Monday am (Memorial Day). Dragging my crawler rigs in 15-17 ft mostly in Browns Bay produced 4 walleyes on Saturday (up to 23" with a much larger one lost at the net) and 3 walleyes on Monday. An interesting pattern was passed on by Wayzata Bait. The walleyes are on the deep weed edges feeding only for the first few hours of sunlight and then instead of heading to a traditional deep pattern, they are going shallow - 6 feet and hiding under the milfoil. This is to avoid muskies!

Shatner and FD Open Bass on Schutz

Schutz Lake is out on Hwy 5 in Chanhassen, and would be part of the bass tournament waters, except that it has no official public access. Instead, a small private access is available, where the owner, an old codger named 'Artsie', will let you park for \$5 and a Dr Pepper. No kidding. His property only holds 4 trailers, and by then, things get real tight. Shatner and FD fished from 5:30 to 12:30, and basically covered the lake twice. We started out with spinner baits, but after an hour of nothing, switched to weightless plastic worms, and found fish in 1'-3' of water. The fish were post-spawn, but still close to the beds, and could be easily seen before they spooked, in many cases. We caught around 25 bass total, and all were nice ones from maybe 13"-19", with no dinky ones.

Gull Ghosts Beguile Bud

I went out on Gull Lake memorial weekend, trolled the rock reef that Buick and I caught most of our fish on and came up empty. Trolled the reef Janitor and James did and came up empty. Same lures we used last year. I tried lindy rigs with minnows and leeches and came up empty. I fished two mornings and caught no walleyes. I did not see a single boat bring in a Walleye either day. I did catch some nice bass and some northerns, but have no pictures, dropped my digital camera, it refuses to take pictures.

Helen and Juan Crunch the Competition

Our esteemed Helen has started a fishing tournament series at General Mills. The 1st tournament of the series was held Tuesday the 22nd. Juan Valdez was his intrepid sidekick. The tournament was on Waconia and walleyes

were the prey. Thunderstorm warnings were out and the winds were at 47 MPH out of the southwest as we headed onto the lake. Just getting the boat in and the swabbie on the boat were an adventure!

We had only 4 hours to fish so decided to give 1/2 hour to a spot before moving on. We started on center reef, just letting the wind drift us across. Juan got a 14" bass on a leech and bottom bouncer but no walleye action. We moved to cemetery reef and drifted over that using leeches and fatheads and had no luck there.

Getting tired of being beaten around by the wind, (Which had switched from the SW to SE we moved to the backside of Coney Island, Juan caught a 16 1/2" bass on a jig and leech there. Our next approach was to fish along the wind shear line as it whipped around the east end of the island. We used the big motor to move into the wind and let it drift us back across the shear line to the calm water on the backside of the island. Helen landed a 23" walleye and Juan hauled in a nice sheepshead with this technique. The tournament ended at nine. Not a lot of walleyes were caught and Helen's 23" was the tournament winner. A few whiners thought it had been fixed.

No Show at Lotus for Father Bertha

Since the Duper dumped me and canceled the St. Louis pre-fishing, I decide to try bass fishing on Lotus. I was on the water before 5:00 am. It was a beautiful calm day. I thought that would be the perfect day for those big pigs to be up shallow choking themselves with the newly hatched mallard chicks. I fished for about 4 hours on all my hot spots with different baits and only caught one 14-incher. So I thought if you cannot catch them...shoot them. I went back and got my brother's bow and went carp hunting.

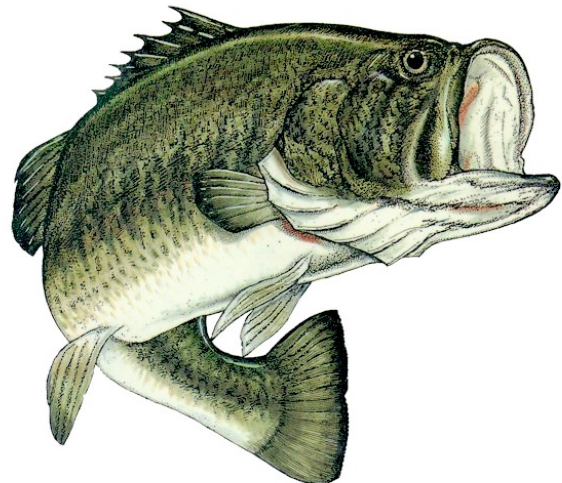
Shorty and Fr. Bertha get "smoked" in Florida

After Duper invited the whole club down to Shorty's new palace, I decide to buy a plane ticket quick. A week in Florida with two days of tarpon fishing, and unfortunately Shorty also made me chase around a little white ball on a couple of the days also. The middle of May is "supposed" to be the peak of the tarpoooooon migration in the Fort Meyer-Naples area where

we were fishing. However, in true Waterdog fashion, it was not the case this year. However, we did find a school of tarpooon to harass both days. The first day we had about 2 hours of sightings, and I had two hook-ups. The second outing we had probably a half hour of sightings. Shorty had one hook-up. The tarpon are a game fish that has beat me on two different trips. They think that they are a hundred pound smallmouth, and act just like one. You usually lose them when they are dancing on the water, and if you do not, it is a good hour or hour and half fight. I'm coming after you Mrs. Tarpoooooon! Maybe this was the problem, I do not have a name for her.

Preparing for the Carver County Shoot-Out II: Bass fishing tips from the Dogs

Compiled by Suzy



Q. Are you looking forward to the upcoming Carver County bass fishing tournament?

Captain Kirk: Definitely. After being introduced to these lakes last year and having spent a lot of time on them since then, I don't think there is better bass fishing any where in Minnesota.

Old Fart: Yes, anytime I can get out bass fishing in June is a good time.

Q. What do you find interesting about this tournament compared to previous club bass tournaments?

Captain Kirk: Having a number of lakes to fish and two days to fish gives you a lot more opportunity to test your fishing skills. I have not experienced other bass tournament formats

since I joined the club last year but, I can't imagine one better than this. I have heard some stories about how few fish were caught in some of the previous tournaments. Last year there was a tremendous amount of quality fish caught in the Carver lakes making it more fun for all.

Q. How will you approach the tournament? What do you think will be your basic strategy?

Captain Kirk: With it being a team tournament you will certainly want your partner's input as well, but I think you will want to start each day on a lake that will give you the numbers of fish and then try to upgrade your catch. You may want to change lakes part way thru the day to focus on larger fish.

Old Fart: Depends on the weather but probably start with a spinner bait or buzz bait. Go to plastic if that does not work. Catch a limit then work on improving size.

Q. Do you think not being allowed to fish Waconia will be a huge factor in this year's tournament?

Captain Kirk: It shouldn't because it is the same for everybody and last year it didn't seem to be a big factor with the top scores. There are more than enough other lakes to fish.

Old Fart: I don't think it will be a huge factor. I wish it was in the tournament because it is a very fun lake to fish in June.

Q. Do you plan to prefish before the tournament?

Captain Kirk: I already have done some this last weekend when the bass season opened and will probably get out a couple more times before the tournament.

Old Fart: I went out on Auburn, Bavaria and Zumbra over the Memorial Day Weekend. The fishing was pretty slow but it is going to get better.

Q. Do you approach pre-fishing a bass tournament differently in comparison to the actual tournament?

Captain Kirk: Pre-fishing is a good time to force yourself to experiment with different lakes and techniques, which you don't always want to

take time for. I think pre-fishing just prior to a tournament can be beneficial as well because patterns can change fast and be totally different in just a couple of days. I also like to use my underwater camera to check out bottom conditions in some of the deeper water spots I fish.

Old Fart: I try to use pre-fishing to eliminate parts of lakes or lakes that I won't fish at the tournament.

Q. Which lake(s) do you think may make the biggest difference in the tournament results?

Captain Kirk: Last year I believe Steiger and Auburn were good and I think they are good bets again this year. Some of the other lakes though are certainly capable of producing a winning bag. Parley is the only lake I have never been on and I hope to check that out in the next couple of weeks.

Q. What's your preferred method for fishing for largemouth bass at this time of year?

Captain Kirk: Fishing very shallow with weedless rubber baits was successful this last weekend (Memorial Day) but that could change over the next couple of weeks.

Old Fart: Spinner Bait or top water in the slop.

Q. What are your go-to baits?

Captain Kirk: I would have to say Texas-rigged weightless rubber baits in various colors. You always have to have a white spinner bait (white skirt and white blades) available as well.

Old Fart: White spinner bait and buzz bait.

Felix: Scum frog.

Q. What type of rod and reel do you use for bass fishing?

Captain Kirk: I started using a 7 foot Gander Mountain-brand heavy action spinning rod with a Shimano 2500 reel this last year and find it works well in the heavy cover.

Old Fart: Bait casting reel and medium heavy rod for frogs and buzz baits. Bait casting reel and medium rod for spinner bait. Medium action rod and spinning reel for plastic baits.

Q. What type of line do you use?

Captain Kirk: Fireline in smoke color and 8-lb. diameter/20-lb strength.

Old Fart: I am trying Fireline on my worm rods this year. I use mono on everything else.

Q. Do you have any suggestions on how to best work with your little buddy in fishing this tournament?

Captain Kirk: I like to see us use different baits (or colors) since we are often fishing the same spots. This gives the fish a choice. If you are dealing with wind and boat control it is sometimes good to get your little buddy up on the front deck with you in order for them to get a better angle on certain spots.

Old Fart: Try different methods until you find one that seems to work.

Q. Any suggestions on boat control? On how you approach a new spot with your boat?

Captain Kirk: Not really, other than slow and quiet.

Old Fart: I like fishing shallow water. I think it is important to be quiet. I will start at the outside edge of the weeds, move to shallow, move to real shallow and then back and forth until I find a pattern.

Q. How do you change your fishing presentation from the start of the tournament (early morning/low light/cooler temperatures) to later in the day (bright sun possibly/higher temperatures)?

Captain Kirk: In general, I would say work shallower early in the day and deeper or in heavier cover as the day goes on and sun gets higher. But, there are always exceptions.

Felix: I agree with the Good Captain! I would say if the fish are not real active when you first start and you know it's good habitat for them to be in don't be impatient. This is easier to practice when you are pre-fishing. Having a two day format should also make this easier to practice. Be patient and go slow if the bite is slow.

Group Buying Power (by Greenstick)

If you've seen the web site, then you've also seen many corporate logos displayed on the site's home page. We've had mostly positive comments about them and only one negative

one, but it's probably time we let the cat out of the bag. Or the carp out of the live well... Or whatever...

Knowing what the financial structure is of the club – and *structure* may be overstating it a bit -- it was pretty obvious to me that the club is operated on a shoestring budget, which in turn doesn't really allow for much collateral support for events such as the planned 25th anniversary celebration scheduled later in the summer. So while I was sitting on my butt waiting for my broken leg to heal, I thought I'd take a flyer on an idea that wouldn't really obligate the club or any individual in any way: I contacted about 50 companies who are friendly to the sport of fishing about donating something – a little cash, a product or other item – that could perhaps be used in celebration of twenty-five years of promoting the sport of “catch and release fishing.” I did it the lazy way – I just went to their web sites, selected the “contact us” option, pasted my letter into the comments box, typed my personal name and other address information, and hit “send.” It wasn't the formal, professional approach like I would have made if I were back working in the association management arena (which I did for nine years), and I really didn't expect much would happen. After all, it was just a crazy idea. But experience has taught me that when dealing with corporations, there's always this underlying principle: *if you don't ask, you don't get.* So I asked.

About a week later, a box from Cabelas arrived at my house, addressed to “Waterdogs Fishing Club.” Then another box from Eagle Claw. Another from Ranger Boats. The folks at Gold Eagle Enterprises, makers of Stabil, sent us thirty coupons for free bottles of their gasoline preservative. I received calls and email correspondence from other companies who were eager to send us fishing stuff. Some companies replied that while they couldn't send product, our members could purchase their products at a discount over what might be available in retail stores. Most of the companies replied in some fashion – often to say that because they get so many requests, their policy is one of a much more formal nature and they directed me to where I could find the application information.

I haven't followed up on the formal requests – they require tax IDs, official letterhead and other information that must be designed as a deterrent to folks like me who just contacted them on a whim, and that's okay. But the point is that the club apparently has landed on the map in terms of the viability of the organization to provide additional value to its members beyond the obvious enjoyment of informal recreational fishing tournaments – which in and of itself is certainly enough.

So right now, the Mepps Lure folks have opened the door to club members on a group-purchase of their products. You can find their whole 2007 catalog at their web site

(www.mepps.com) as well as full information and a catalog in the private, members' only area of our web site as well. Another company is providing discount options for purchasing Aqua-Vu underwater cameras and other fishing electronics.

I have no idea where or how far this sort of thing can go, but the potential may be extraordinary for there apparently are many companies out there who seem to like clubs such as Waterdogs and want to help. If you're interested in finding out more, let me know.

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