

The Dogumentary

27th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

June 2009

June Meeting at Hopkins VFW

The June 4 meeting will be held back at the Hopkins VFW at the usual time of 6pm for dinner and 7pm for the meeting. The VFW has a special selection of S-O-S is on the menu for those who dare.

2009 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

<u>May 30-31</u>	<u>Walleye Tournament</u>
June 4	Monthly Meeting
June 19	Bass Tournament
July 2	Monthly Meeting
<u>July 18-25</u>	<u>2009 RockNRoll Musky Tour</u>
August 6	Monthly Meeting
August 22	Bass Tournament II
Sep 3	Monthly Meeting
<u>Sep 19</u>	<u>Multispecies Tournament</u>
Oct 1	Monthly Meeting
Nov 5	Banquet

See the last page for 2009 Tourney Details

Only 36 Days til LOTW!

Almost Time to

Panic!

*From the Desk of the President,
Helen Tom Keller*



Likeness by Annika and Sam Keller

Once again we'll be meeting at the Hopkins VFW. Dinner is at 6 and the speakers are at 7 pm.

The seminar committee has arranged to have our Florida Chapter speak about their recent Tarpon fishing experiences. I am looking forward to hearing what they have to say about this premier game fish. I have always wanted to fish for Tarpon.

The fishing opener has come and gone and it's nice to get back on the water. I hope all of you have worked out the winter kinks and are getting prepared for the Big Stone Lake tournament. The most recent weather forecast indicates we should remain dry.

Speaking of the opener, Perp, Chips, Mama's Boy, Chainsaw, Juan, GMI Mark and I volunteered at the Governor's Fishing Opener held on White Bear Lake. A good time was had by all and was much bigger event than expected.

We all arrived early, signed in and had time for some coffee and donuts. There were a few Vikings and the ex-Twins great, Jack Morris working the crowd. Some of the dogs got to talking with Jack, and learned he's pretty outspoken about baseball, among other things.

A bit latter, we gathered the kids and marched parade-style about a block past the TV and newspaper cameras. Like any public event with politicians, the demonstrators showed up, trying to get in the background. It was the typical cast of characters from PETA to the "give me this and give me that" crowd. Everyone was well behaved and it just added to the experience.

After the parade, we located our boats and got situated and went out onto the lake. I had Eric Frampton, a Viking, two *Fishing with Daughters* anglers with their Dad and a *Boys Club* kid named Kyle. It was windy and cold, and like many 14-year-old boys, Kyle was not prepared for the weather. I brought a bag of extra cloth, which Kyle gladly accepted.

We had a plan to go out and find the nearest weed bed and scrounge up some panfish. It took little hunting, but we ended up on a spot out the wind that held enough fish to keep the group entertained.

Kyle was a bit of a complainer with low self-esteem. He'd make statements like "I can't catch a fish; I'm no good at this; I don't – I can't, etc, etc". Eric, the Viking, caught on to this and positioned himself next to Kyle. It was great to watch this kid change in an hour. He went from afraid of baiting his hook or touching fish to baiting hooks, helping others and kidding with Eric. Kyle caught 18 fish, three times more than anyone else. When it was time to go, he started to complain again, but this time it was about going back to shore. It was great to see this kid open up and I'm sure he was feeling pretty good about himself by the end of the day. This was a kid who didn't think he was good at anything and he beat the Viking.

The DNR made sure these kids got new rods and reels, and I think Kyle might use his.

Waterdog's Fishing Reports:

Lake Independence

By Perp

My oldest daughter and my son asked if we could go fishing on Memorial Day. How could a Dad ever not jump at a request like that. We went to Lake Independence and fished from 8:30 to 11:30. We fished the NW side of the Island to keep out of the wind. We fished in close to the reeds. I used a chartreuse and white spinner bait and my son and daughter each fished with Senko's. The fishing was good with 17 bass and 1 sunny in the 3 hours we were out. We saw one boat with 2 dad's and 4 little kids fishing for sunny's and watched the excitement as the kid in the front kept calling his dad to come take off his latest catch. My comment to him was that some kids never grow up as I was taking one of the bass off my daughter's line. (In all fairness it was hooked thru the eye socket and was difficult to get off.) We had a great time with the spinner bait out-fishing the Senko's (or Dad out-fishing the kids) two to one.

Nasty's News

Hay Creek Cabin

Nasty Boy and my two brother-in laws stayed at the fabulous Hay Creek Cabin on May 13-15. Crappies and Walleye were our targets for the few days spent fishing on the Flowage. In Wisconsin everything opens at the same time. That's kind of nice. Bass are catch and release. We started out on Wednesday evening just down from Duper's cabin. Nasty nails a nice smallie right off the bat. That provided hope for the trip. Unfortunately, things really slowed down and the wind picked up. We went to nearby Sibley Bay where several other boats were also hiding from the wind. We didn't see anyone catch a single fish. We went to the very back of the bay and Nasty caught a Crappie, two Northerns, several LM bass, and some Perch. One brother-in-law caught a northern and perch. On the way out we saw another boat land a big Northern. I slowly trolled, no that's illegal, I slowly positioned my way over towards that boat and noticed that he started catching Crappies. We switched to the smallest tackle we had and also started catching Crappies. They turned on during the

last hour before sundown. They were so active that when you cast, fish boiled around you bait. We went home just before sundown with 15 keepers. We ate them all. The next morning the wind was howling. We went back to the same spot and caught 18 in 3 hours. I had two anchors out and was still unable to hold position. We cleaned those fish and ate them all. During the morning and during the previous evening we watched Eagles, Osprey's, and Otters all hunting for fish. We saw several birds hit and take fish, that's how thick the fish were in the bay. That evening we went back to the same spot. Three other boats and us. The wind was even stronger. We were drifting over the spot dragging two anchors. The fish were on fire. We caught 45 in a couple of hours (our possession limit). With the wind fishing was tolerable because it was 70 degrees. Saturday morning the wind remained but we woke up to 30 degrees and snow. No fishing! I recommend Duper's cabin to everyone. What a well supplied cabin, great accommodations and a new dock.

Lake Waconia

I went out on Waconia on the Sunday before Memorial day. My neighbor came over and talked my wife into letting me fish for the morning. He just got his boat repaired and said he needed someone to go with him for a test run. We went to the north reed bed. No luck. We then went to the sunken island right behind the reeds and caught a half a dozen pike. Really nice ones....18-20 inchers. They hammered the bait when they hit. There were quite a few boats fishing the reeds but nobody fishing the deeper structure. We didn't see another fish boated all morning. On the way in we tried the east side near the rocks and by the marina. No luck in either place. The weeks were still pretty sparse. My neighbor said maybe I should let him catch more than me next time. What do you think?

Fishing is a lot of 'Work'

I was up at Madden's for a conference last week Wed - Friday. Of course, I pulled my boat. We tried Gull lake for a few hours 8am til noon on Thursday. My conference was afternoon and evenings so we could just fish a few hours in the morning. We caught mostly Largemouth Bass while fishing for Walleye. No

Walleyes were caught and the bass were average at best. We did get into some Crappies and Sunnies later in the morning. All released since we were working.

A Most Memorable Fishing Opener

By the Analyst

Opening morning found my brother and I on our traditional body of water—Blueberry Lake near Menahga, MN. The lake is fairly shallow (18' max) and stained which allows it to heat up faster than other lakes in the area. Water temps that morning were around 54 degrees. We got on the water around 7:30 am and began our quest for the wily Walleye. We began slow trolling just outside the weed line (7-9 ft) with 1/8 oz jigs tipped with minnows and popped 3 nice crappies (11-12 inchers) and a couple decent walleyes. As boat traffic increased over the area (guys running big motors) fishing slowed. We decided it was time to go after some pike. We grabbed our bait casters armed with a yellow jig and sucker minnows. We trolled with my big motor (3.5 mph) over the emerging cabbage beds and quickly caught our limit of slot-sized pike. This is a great technique and rarely, if ever, fails to produce. We probably caught over 20 pike in less than 2 hours. We went back for walleyes but the bite was slow. We decided to head and clean our fish and have a quick fish fry before heading to another lake for the evening bite.

We were back on the water around 7pm. We decided to try Lower Twin Lake, which is just a few miles from our cabin. The lake is actually connected to Blueberry via the Fish Hook River. There is a tight bottleneck between the upper and lower lake through which a heavy current flows. There is a steep break where the incoming water from the upper lake dumps into the lower lake. The break goes from 3 ft to 19 ft in the distance of a cast. To fish this area you anchor on the edge of the break and cast Lindy rigs into the deep water and slowly drag--*and pause*--the bait back to the boat. Shiners stage in the deeper water awaiting warmer temps during which they spawn in the shallows. Lots of Walleyes and Smallmouth Bass hang around and enjoy the feast.

Because of the moving water, these fish are extremely finicky. They act a bit like stream

trout—they are used to food coming down stream, so when you are dragging past their tails first you must pause frequently (to allow them to settle down) or you will not get bit. The technique requires a subtle sense of touch (you do not feel a “bite”, you simply feel weight after resuming the drag portion of the retrieve) and a lot of patience. One boat anchored close to use and was using the same technique and several other boats were nearby. The boat next to us held a father son team we have seen in the same spot for the past 4 years. We watched them boat several decent Eyes and several pig Smallies (18-19 ¾ inch). After an hour and no fish I paid close attention to their terminal tackle. I noticed they had long snells (4-5 ft vs. 18 inches on ours) plane hooks and huge leeches. I quickly lengthened my snell, removed my colored bead and began hooking 2 medium leeches (the largest we had). Walleyes were soon filling our livewell.

It was near dark when the familiar boat next to us decided to call it a night. We decided to stick it out a while as we were one fish short of our limit. One of the boats nearby quickly took their place--they had been circling the deep water hole for several hours and had yet to boat a walleye. Around 9:45 I felt weight on the end of my line and paused to let the fish eat. When I set the hook I knew was hooked into a good fish. With only 6 lb test line and a tiny fine wire hook I had to play the fish out thoroughly. After about 10 minutes the fish was near the surface. It was a big old Eyeball! Even though the fish was tired I had a hard time getting the fish to the boat due to the strong current (I had to use 2 anchors to hold the boat in place). When I finally succeeded my new personal best taped out a 30 inches! After a few quick pics she went back to her watery haunts. While more than satisfied, we were still one short of our limit.



Lifetime Best 30” Walleye for The Analyst

My next cast I hooked up another solid fish. This one taped out at 24 inches. Still too big. Two casts later a 22” fish. While larger than I like to keep, we figured there were enough spawners around to propagate the species so in the livewell she went. We discussed staying put to see if my brother could tie into a good fish, but he chose to hit the hay and come back early to try again. As we were pulling up our anchors the boat next to us (no more than 15 ft away) asked us “what are you using for bait”...as they had yet to catch a single fish. I thought of making up a good story, but told them the truth. While they were using the right bait, there technique needed some help.

We got back on the water around 7am. My brother tied into a big Eye, but broke his line—*I suggested he loosen his drag while fighting the fish, but he accidentally tightened it. Twice!* Oops, my bad. He boated one nice Smallie (18”) but after 2 hours we called it quits. Next year we plan on sticking it out later. Lesson learned.

More Carver County Madness

By FD

I took my daughters Susan and Kathryn out fishing on Memorial Day to yet another Carver County Lake, Lake Susan. It’s a small 150-acre lake in Chanhassen that was a good choice on this day, as the wind was really blowing. We started shallow and picked up a

small largemouth and northern, but after checking the likely shallow spots on the lake, moved out to the 5-8' breakline, which seems to go all around the lake. That's where more bass were located, and we caught 13 on senkos on 1/8 oz jigs with 3/0 hooks. The girls had the method down of casting out the lure, and then do something else while the senko stuck or dragged across the bottom. Susan ended up catching the most, which is logical, since the lake was named after her.



Susan Senko's up a Bass on Susan Lake

Waterdogs Visit the Wizard of Oz

By Suzy

The following is a long-winded way of saying that me, Shorty, Carmen and Felix had a super blast fishing for tarpon a couple weeks ago in Ft. Myers. Shorty has booked at least two guides for a week of tarpon fun next year, from May 17 – 21, 2010. The cost of the trip was about \$1,200 (\$200 for flight, and \$325 per day for a guide). If you can go for a whole week, or even a few days, let Shorty know ASAP so he can book more guides. You have to fish for tarpon at least once in your life. Tangling with one of these silvery giants is simply incredible and you will never forget it.

Our trip to see the Great Wizard of Oz started on a bright, but cool morning when Suzy, Carmen, and Felix met at the Humphrey Terminal on Monday, May 11, and grabbed an Airtran flight to Ft. Myers, with a one-hour layover in Atlanta. Except for Carmen who fondled a hardcore rapper magazine that was left on a previous flight, the trip down was uneventful. The three Dogs arrived in Ft.

Myers at 5:30 p.m. and walked into blistering hot weather – 96 degrees.

After a quick stop at Costco to pick up some fresh shrimp and Bass Pro Shops for some Florida-weight fishing apparel, the guys head to Shorty's immaculate Floridian palace (which was spotless!), located in a 50+ gated community in Estero, a suburb of Ft. Myers (about a 10 minute drive from the airport). As African animal heads gaze on, the Dogs grill up some juicy ribeye steaks and jumbo shrimp on Shorty's outdoor kitchen, right next to the pool and hot tub. Over in the corner a little gecko cocked his head and asks us in a strange little voice about insurance, and above us, a mockingbird sings out a lovely tune. Frank, one of Shorty's former clients, and now a permanent resident of the Cascades, visits us over dinner to basically tell us that we were a bunch of girly men who would soon be humiliated by the mighty silvery giants, affectionately called tar-poon.

The next morning, we wake up at 5 a.m. Suzy knocks out some of his unique Suzy Sandwiches. We grab a bowl of cereal, then load up the cooler, jump in Shorty's Acura and head for the landing located next to the bridge that crosses from the mainland to Sanibel and Captiva Islands.

Our guides, Ozzie Lessinger, who recently won the first tournament in the Redfish Cup, and Kelly, a guide that Ozzie recommends, meet the group at the landing at about 6:30 a.m. Within 15 minutes, we're scanning the water on the Gulf side of Sanibel for signs of tarpon rolling (or flying as they say down there) on the surface. Needless to say, Suzy, Carmen and Felix basically make complete idiots out of themselves for the first hour as just about anything they spot is worthy of pointing to the guide and saying, "there's one." The guides would patiently reply, "no, that's a bird," "no, that's bait fish", or "no, that's a dolphin." Later, we come to realize that "There's One," is completely inappropriate for tarpon. "Here they come" is more accurate to describe the schools of five to six feet tarpon that fly down the beaches and flats.

We continue our way around Sanibel and Captiva Islands in 18-foot white flats boats powered by 150 hp Mercury engines. There's

very little clearance on these boats, so they're not great in windy conditions, but can zip up to 40 mph in 2 feet of water in the back Bay. We then go through Redfish channel between Captiva and North Captiva Island. And, there, in the channel, are these massive, five to six feet long silvery fish rolling here and there, and everywhere it seems, within feet of our boats.

The captains go crazy, grabbing rods and poking the circle hooks through the nostrils of the pinfish, tossing the bait out to these fish and then handing us the rod and telling us to hang on should one bite. Our breaths are taken away. What the hell would we do if one did hit?

We see one small group of four or five fish roll after another. And yet, after flinging bait after bait, we get no hits. This goes on for at least an hour until finally, it seems the tarpon weren't rolling anymore. During this time, a mother dolphin and her baby come up to the side of the boat that Shorty and Carmen are in to steal a bait fish from Carmen's hook. And, the mother dolphin does — just plucks it off. Oz pokes the fish with the rod and says "get the heck out of here or I'll catch your ass."

That morning the two guide boats try different locations. A large flats area called Fosters. Another place called the Clam Beds. About noon, we meet up again on the Gulf side of Captiva. We station our boats about 50 yards from the beach in crystal pure water. Then, we watch as small groups of tarpon swam by.

One boat casts its bait, then the next, then the next. After a while, the boat that Suzy and Felix are in, with Kelly as guide, leaves the area. Kelly wants to try something different. Not more than 10 minutes later, Carmen ties into the first tarpon caught on the trip. An 80 pounder, that was one of several tarpon that were cruising down the beach and heading north to Boca Grande.

As Carmen recounts it: Captain Ozzie casts the bait just ahead of the small school of 'Poon and then reels the bait in to get it in line with the path of the school. The first fish goes by, then the next, and then the last fish in the school slams it. And the fight was on...

Twenty minutes later, Carmen pops his 'Poon cherry (as Shorty would say).

With less than 90 minutes to go in the day, Oz,

Shorty and Carmen go into the Bay area between Captiva and Sanibel Islands and the mainland. This bay area is easily the size of a Lake Mille Lacs, and yet, most of it is no more than 6 feet deep. They head to the mangrove islands that dot the bay. Kelly decides to follow suit. Carmen picks up a 27-inch redfish, just within the slot limit (a keeper for dinner). Felix picks up a snapper, but it's too small and tosses it back. After both Felix and Suzy lose their baits, Kelly suggests working the bridge near the landing for tarpon while Oz' boat messes with the redfish.

When Kelly's boat arrives at the bridge, it is shortly after 2 p.m. and it is sweltering. 98 degrees. Humidity. Feels like mid-July in Minnesota except with a salty seawater smell.

Kelly baits Felix' rod, and then Suzy's, and tosses the bait out as we slowly troll between the bridge pilings. On one side is Pine Island Bay, and the other, the Gulf. Felix has a hit and promptly reels in a seven pound jack cravelle. After he releases it, Suzy tossed his bait back in again off the back of the boat toward the bridge. Something very long and white swims through the water near Suzy's bait. Possibly a shark. The line tightens, and it's fish on. This one pulls much harder than what Felix had on, and keeps digging down. After about five minutes, Suzy brings up a big jack cravelle, maybe 10 lbs., and surprise, a dolphin is following it, ready to snatch it off the hook!

After a few photos, Suzy releases the fish to a hungry dolphin who promptly gives chase and flings the startled jack cravelle out of the water with his nose like some sort of toy.

After a brief ride, the boys head back to Shorty's where they jumped into Shorty's pool and knock down a couple of ice cold Coronas.

Later that evening, Shorty, chef extraordinaire, grills up the redfish, accompanied by a delicious fresh vegetable medley, grilled sweet potatoe, and tomato cucumber salad.

On Day 2, Carmen and Suzy are paired together with a new guide, Randall, while Shorty and Felix head out with Oz. After hitting a bunch of familiar spots, both Randall and Oz set up their boats just off of Captiva Island, on the Gulf side. Randall misunderstands when

Duper says his nickname and all day long, he calls him Grouper.

The fun starts at about 10 a.m. when the schools of tarpon cruising and rolling about 150 yards off the sand in about 10 feet of water. Randall puts floats on the lines of Suzy and Carmen's rods to keep the bait off the bottom, away from the sharks, barracuda and Spanish mackerel. This is where 'Pooning gets especially frustrating as you watch these schools of 'Poon swim within inches of your bait. On several occasions the floats would disappear, and then Randall would just start screaming "Reel, Reel, Reel." But the lines would come up empty.

Then, around 11, as another school approaches, Randall tosses out both baits ahead of the school. The school blows by Suzy's bait – a 'Poon top fin goes right over the bait and Randall gets really excited. As Randall is waving his arms and basically talking to himself, "I can't believe that fish didn't hit it," Suzy asks Carmen where his float is, and then, surprise, Randall starts screaming, "Reel, reel, reel!" Carmen reels as fast as he can and he's on fish!

Suzy grabs his camera, puts it on video, and starts recording Carmen's battle. The fish seems like it's ready to jump, but stays down as it pulls the boat. As Carmen wrestles with the fish, it suddenly bursts up and then, we hear the sickening sound — zing. The fish is off. Aaarrggghh... Randall quickly chastises Carmen. "You need to bow to the fish when it jumps!"

There's hardly time to lick our wounds. More schools of tarpon approach. One after another. About 15 minutes later, our baits are out and in the path of another school of passing tarpon. They pass right over Duper's bait and then as they're going by Carmen's bait, one turns and launches itself head first and down on his bait. It was an amazing sight. Even Randall can't believe it.

Carmen, no longer a 'Poon virgin, meets up with a fish that is larger and has far more attitude than the fish he hooked into the day before. Every time Carmen gets the fish near the boat, it takes off on one run after another. The fish doesn't jump much, but it makes a

run for deeper water. In Oz's boat, Shorty and Felix watch as Randall releases his anchor when Carmen hooks the fish and they slowly fade nearly out of sight into the Gulf chasing the Tarpon. It probably seemed longer in this boat as school after school of Tarpon swam Northbound without a single strike. Randall sees its going to be a long fight, and actually sits back while Carmen battles the fish for what seems eternity. Actually, it's an hour and 15 minutes, at which point, Randall, finally grabs the leader and gets his hand on the fish's mouth. Carmen promptly takes off the rod belt, which he requests half way through the fight, sits down and bars off the side of the boat.



Carmen Meets his Match

The fishing slows down the rest of the day and at about 2:30 p.m., the boats head in.

Arriving back to Shorty's it's Corona again, although an ice-cold Lakemaid would taste especially good tonight. This evening's menu includes an absolutely delicious pork tenderloin and salad that is a staple of the Party Cabin. Another dip in the perfect temperature pool and a cocktail or two. Stu Pagel joins us for supper and stories about fishing adventures! Later than evening, as the temperature drops to a very comfortable mid-70s, the boys relax with Captain Morgans on the rocks.

Day 3 begins on Thursday morning at 6 a.m., when the Dogs meet Oz and Kelly at the landing. Today, Shorty and Suzy go with Oz, and Felix and Carmen go with Kelly. Felix, Suzy and Shorty are still 'Poonless. Both boats head to Fosters, a big flats area on inside of the Bay, near the north tip of Captiva Island. The fly fishers have already been out for an hour, looking for an opportunity to cast

to small schools of tarpon that cruise this area in the morning. The water is crystal clear and is only about five feet deep. Baits are tossed out. Shorty catches a saltwater catfish, maybe about 2 or 3 lbs. In the other boat, Felix adds to his collection by picking up a mackerel and a sea trout. Tarpon are spotted here and there, and by this time, all of the guys are getting better at actually spotting tarpon. But, it's still quite amazing how the guides seem to see fish in spots where none of us see any.

At about 9:30 a.m., Oz decides to head to Captiva Beach. Word has gotten out about the fish being seen along the beach, because there are already a handful of boats set up on the beach. Oz goes the furthest down the beach, to be the "first" boat to intercept the north-bound tarpon. Not much further down, Kelly sets up his boat with Felix and Carmen.

Sporadic schools of tarpon start to show up. Unfortunately at times, mackerel chase the baits in the water and the line tangles up around the floats. Not good when a school of 'Poon are starting to roll. Later, Suzy loses his casting privileges when he casts his line too close to Shorty's, and the two lines get tangled up.

Oz spots another school and tosses Shorty's bait out just ahead of the school. The line tightens and a huge, six-foot long 'Poon jumps clear out of the water. The fish comes down on Shorty's line and snaps the 60 lb. fluorocarbon leader.

The fishing slows down. Kelly leaves the beach to find another spot. Oz decides to go down the beach, near Redfish Channel. Just before the channel, there's a large flats area, where the water is maybe six feet deep and crystal clear. So clear, that Shorty and Suzy watch a 10-ft. bull shark swim by and later, leopard rays and a barracuda.

At about 1:45, with the end of the day fast approaching, a group of five tarpon approach the boat. Oz spots them, tosses the bait, and hands Suzy the rod. The lead tarpon, typically the biggest fish of a school, hits the bait head on. Like a Mack truck. The fish jumps! Suzy bows. The water explodes with the crash of the large tarpon. The fish jumps a second time. Oz screams "bow." Then "reel, reel,

reel." Then, the fish jumps a third time, all six feet flies out of the water, the head of the fish pulls away and against the hook. Suzy bows, but the hook flies back at them. Oz says, "I think that about about a 130 to 150 pounder."

In other words, big fish. It all happens in just 15 seconds and Suzy is shaking.

Guides like Oz are very intense. They want that fish just as much as you want. So, with just about a half hour left in the day, we continue.

Meanwhile, in Kelly's boat, Carmen and Felix see isolated tarpon near Sanibel Island and Felix catches his fifth fish, and fifth species, a catfish, right in front of the multi-million dollar mansions lining the beach. The dolphin are swimming all around us.

Again, Oz positions the boat. Shorty tells Suzy to stay up front and take the rod if another group comes in. Shorty stays in the back of the flats boat, with a bait on his circle hook, ready to cast at Oz' direction. The boat is positioned so we can cast to the 'Poon just as they're coming out of deeper water (about 10-12 feet) onto the sandy flat. You can tell this by the distinct color of the water.

Several schools of tarpon swim by, including a huge school of about 25 fish. Oz casts in front of them and in the middle of them, but they just swim by our baits. Then, the oddest thing happens, the school breaks up into two groups and start circling in what the locals call a "daisy chain." Oz casts one bait right in the middle of one daisy chain, circling off the bow of the boat, and Shorty casts right in the middle of the other, circling off the stern. The fish daisy for several minutes before starting to swim on. Oz alerts a fellow guide that the fish are coming for that guide's customer, a woman who is fly fishing. She casts out, and hooks up! But the fight is short when the fish leaps off the line.

Finally, we're down to the last minute. It's about 2:15 and we need to head back to the landing. Oz literally says to Suzy, "we have time for just one more cast." With that, Oz spies a group of four tarpon heading north, only about 50 feet from the beach. He casts and hands Suzy the rod. Suzy reels in the slack. Oz says, "steady, steady." Suzy is

counting...first fish, second fish...knowing that this is his last chance.

Suddenly, the third fish turns and hits the bait. The line immediately tightens. Oz screams at Suzy, "Reel, reel, reel!!!!" Suzy does. This fish is on. It starts to jump, Suzy bows again and again. Shorty snaps photos from the back deck stand. The fish starts to head out, pulling the boat. Oz tells Duper to turn his rod sideways and to start leveraging the fish in. Suzy pulls, reels down. Pulls, reels down. The fish comes in, but then pulls out again, and again. The fish turns direction and is now heading toward the beach. Very unusual. All of this takes place over 15 minutes until finally Suzy brings the boat close enough to the boat where Oz touches the leader, just below the float – an official catch. With that, Oz loosens the drag and eventually grabs the fish and releases it.



Duper Brings in a 100

It's the end of the day. We start heading back and even the Great Oz is shaking his head. The last cast of the day. Shorty of course, is saying, "that's f#\$*king unbelievable Suze" (in his own Shorty way).

Back at the landing we part ways with the guides. Suzy heads back to the Twin Cities on an evening flight home. He gets a 6 p.m. Airtrain flight and is walking through the door at his home around 11 p.m. Carmen and Felix take a flight the next morning. On Friday, Shorty goes out again with the Great Oz and tries his hand at fly fishing for tarpon, but the tarpon aren't as prevalent (or as hungry) on Friday. That night it rains 8 inches.

It was an incredible experience even for those that were not fortunate to hook into one of the

monsters! Shorty is an extremely gracious host and a tremendous cook. It is an experience that leaves you wanting for more!!!

You are invited to the next 'Waterdogs in the Land of OZ, STIFFLER Tour 2010' that will be in May of next year (also called Shorty's Tarpon Invitational for Fun Living, Eating, and Relaxing). Plan to attend. You won't be disappointed!

Other Dog News:

OF's Bike Sale

OF Rick Anderson put together a sale of used bikes to benefit the organization 'Kids 'N Kinship', which he has been actively involved with for several years. In all, Rick sold 43 bikes that raised \$1286 for the charity. Rick thanks the Waterdogs who participated either by donating bikes or by buying bikes. Now that he has the program and repair system going, he's planning another sale for next spring.

FD Mushes in the Woods

The opening week of the fishing season was also the opening of the Morel Mushroom season for FD and some other Waterdogs that took time off from work to hunt the woods for the delectable morsels. Although FD finds most of his morels close to home, forays were made with Perp, Juan, OF, and the Analist to the far reaches of the outback. It was a record year for FD this year, even though the rainfall totals were well below average, which generally limits the production of the 'shrooms.



Hauling out the Mother Lode

2009 Waterdogs Tournament Series

Date	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
√ Saturday, March 21	Trout	WI Rivers	Janitor, Nasty, Shatner
√ Saturday, April 25	Crappie	Washington Lake	Mama's Boy, Griz
Sat-Sun, May 30-31	Walleyes	Big Stone Lake	Duper, Analist, Perp
Friday, June 19	Bass	Clearwater Lake	Helen, Buick
Saturday, August 22	Bass	Chisago Lakes	Chips, Farm B, Fluffy
Saturday, Sep 19	Multispecies	Minnetonka	Greenstick, Shorty, Kirk