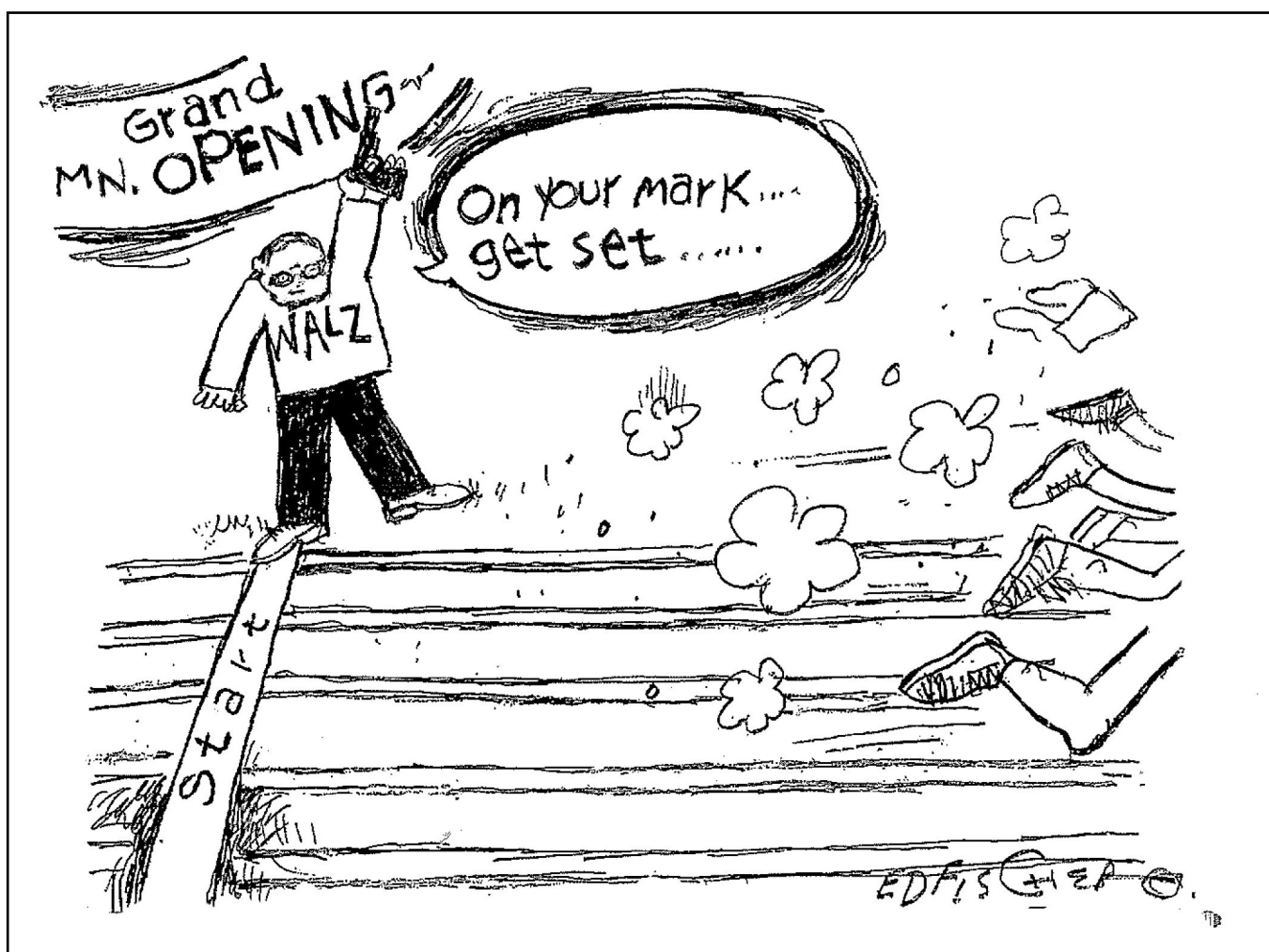


OPINION



Keep the fish, give me a good fishing story

There is, perhaps, nothing more important when fishing than coming up with a tall tale to go along with the adventure. After all, catching a fish is fun, telling a good story to go along with the adventure—now that is legendary.



Henning Happenings
Chad Koenen

Do you remember the time I battled a 20 pound walleye, only to have it snap my line when Brandon couldn't handle a net?

How about the time when a northern the size of a freakin' hammerhead shark chomped down on a crappie right as I was about to land it in the boat? We lost them both, but we almost got the classic two-for-one switcheroo in the process.

Did you ever hear about the time that Nick forgot to fill up the boat with gas and we were stranded in the middle of Otter Tail Lake with only a paddle in pouring rain. Oh yeah, we also had to paddle up hill both ways with the wind and snow blowing in our face to get to shore.

Alas, open water fishing season is upon us and it is time to start brushing up on your storytelling skills. It's a lesson that is nearly as important as tying a fishing knot or how to get the hook out of the mouth of a walleye or sun fish without cutting your hands.

Of course, many of these tall tales come without pictures, which is a bit hard to believe given the access to technology in today's world. The stories are sprinkled with the truth, while being heavy on the embellishments. After all, as someone once told me, "Never let the truth get in the way of a good story."

As a semi-dedicated, fair weather fisherman, I have a few of my own stories to tell from over the years. When I was in high school I lived near the Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota border, which meant we got to go fishing two weeks earlier than everyone else on the border waters.

For several years in a row a group of us would go fishing on the Mustinka River near Wheaton, Minn. In those days we were more concerned about the food we brought, chugging Mountain Dew and stuffing our faces with junk food than actually catching fish.

One year in particular we got sick of fishing after an hour or so of not getting a bite, and decided to jump off the nearby bridge that felt like it was 100 feet in the air (might be a bit of an embellishment, but who's counting). We called the old rickety bridge the "Silver Bridge" based on its color, we were really creative back in those days.

Anyone who thought jumping off the bridge was a good idea should have been hit with a dose of reality when you realized you need-

ed to drop a rock the size of a small boulder off the bridge and into the water before jumping in to scare off the fish.

Perhaps the best fishing story I ever had, other than going to Lake of the Woods up north, was on one of my first ever fishing trips with my grandpa. A group of us fished a small lake in southwestern Minnesota for hours. To be honest I don't remember if we actually caught a fish at all up until we tried to get our boat back on the trailer to go home.

As with many good stories there was a twist, this being a group of, lets call them idiots, who struggled to get their boat back on their trailer to leave. After sitting in line for what seemed like forever, we made one more pass to see if we could get a bite. My grandpa's patience was good, but never something to write home about.

That's when a northern took the line on my old Zebco fishing pole and swam away. Had it not been for my grandpa's planning ahead of time, he tied a rope around our fishing pole to his fishing boat, the fish would have taken the rod right out of my hand. Convinced we just caught another rock we stopped the boat and I tried to reel in whatever had my line. I was younger than 10 at the time and after reeling for a good 10 minutes or so, I handed the pole to someone else who tried to reel in the fish.

I bet we battled this 30 inch freakin' monster for half an hour (in fishing time and length of course) before we finally got it to the side of the boat. When we got back to our house we had one heck of a story to tell my parents and took more than a few pictures, which featured me struggling to hold the fish up.

Of course, I can't find that picture right now that had been in our entryway for years, so I guess you will just have to believe me that the fish was at least 30 inches long and looked like a whale (I wanted to use the word freakin' again but thought twice, make it three times would be enough for one column).

And that's the joy of fishing. The time on the boat, the catch, the open water and the stories that you can tell afterwards—which are sprinkled with small nuggets of the truth.

Recalling the good old days

Although we all hope for the "good old days," those days when people could be people and behave accordingly, perhaps those days weren't all that good.

Here are some of the medications we used to take a hundred or so years ago. They're not listed in any order, because all of them are about as bad as any of them.

"Norodin" was the brand name for a medicine that was touted to "dispel the shadow of mild mental depression," and even better, with "relatively few side effects." Wow. Wouldn't we like to have that? It sounds pretty good. Oh, by the way, it's chemical name was methamphetamine, and it turned out to be, well, not so good, didn't it.

This next drug had been popular since the 1700's, and was touted as a cure for everything from malaria to menstrual cramps, and was especially effective at alleviating teething pain in infants. It was called "laudenum," and what it was? Opium. I'll bet there were indeed a lot of quiet



The Prairie Spy
Alan "Lindy" Linda

babies.

No list of drugs can omit one that ever since the mid-1800's was touted to cure asthma, along with a host of supposedly beneficial effects. That would be tobacco. Which, if you can give it no other credit, has been around legally the longest. It's one of the few that weren't prescribed for babies, at least.

Here's one with a wonderful name: "Mrs Winslow's Soothing Syrup." One mother wrote in, around 1850 or so, that "the effect on her son was "like magic. He went right to sleep." It would cure teething miseries, according to the literature, and I guess it did. It was called a "baby

killer" in 1911. It's main "soothing" ingredient? Morphine. Ah, yes, I guess one could call death an end to pain.

Kimball White Pine and Tar Cough Syrup. Hmmm. That sounds earthy enough that it must be good for you. It was called an effective tonic for colds and flu and coughs and bronchitis and a whole list of other ailments. Plus, it was really effective when given to patients before surgery. It, of course, was chloroform. I guess it would relieve just about anything you had wrong with you. It wasn't banned until 1976. White Pine and Tar. Who named this stuff?

Bayer invented this next drug in 1898, and once again, it was really effective against coughs and was better for you than morphine or cocaine, according to Bayer. As those two were effective in their way, so was this one. It made you feel better no matter what you had. It just turned out to be a bit addictive, since it was really heroin. It was banned in 1924, so it had a

good 25-year run.

This next drug was good for children and toothaches and depression and impotence and a whole list of excuses to get some for whatever ailed you. It was so good for you that Coca Cola even put it in their soda pop for a while, at least they did until everyone figured out that cocaine caused psychotic delusions and hallucinations. If there is one soda pop I wish I could try, I guess it would be that first Coke. I'll bet it was goooooood!

Myself, I always think back to those days before antibiotics were discovered, when every cut or scrape called for a massive splash of liniment (well, it was good for both man and beast, right?), followed up by lots of iodine or mercurochrome. At the time, that treatment seemed more of a reminder not to do whatever damage to yourself you did, again, rather than a fix-you-up to make you better.

Those were the good old days, all right.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

He wanted a family

To the Editor,
He created man in his own image, with free will.

Man was perfect, until he disobeyed. When he sinned, he lost the dominion God had given him over the earth, but, more important, he lost his relationship with God. Satan, who tempted Eve, became the God of his world.

God wanted to regain his relationship with man and the dominion he had given him. In order to do that a price had to be paid for justice to be satisfied.

God knew that man would fall, so he made a plan, even before he created the world...He...Himself...would pay the price to restore man to his position of relationship and authority.

"It was God, in Christ Jesus, redeeming the world

to Himself." Such a terrible price!...Such an AWESOME LOVE!!

Who could refuse such a gift? What if a very wealthy person said, "I would like to give you \$1,000,000,000 if you will accept it. What if you said, "No thanks, I want to do it my way." Then later you became angry at the benefactor because you were poor, your way didn't work. What kept you from enjoying the wealth that was offered to you? Was it pride? Was it rebellion? Did you believe a lie about the benefactor?

The person who invents a game is one who writes the rules. It is amazing to me that many people believe they can write their own rules. Do they really believe that the God of the universe says; "I just love you; can I come in? I will take all of your lack and give you of my abundance."

Accepting God's offer means that you want Him to be the Lord of your life

and are willing to obey the dictates of LOVE.

God is Love,
Love is what everyone is looking for.

Who could refuse an offer like that?

Mirradel Cordes
Henning

Honoring the fallen on National Poppy Day

To the Editor,
National Poppy Day is May 28th as poppy day is always the Friday before Memorial Day. The motto of the poppy sales is "Honor the fallen and support the living." The poppy is the official flower of The American Legion Family. The poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle. This focus occurred after the death and destruction

of World War I especially in the battle fields of Belgium and France and made famous by the poem, In Flanders Field.

The Deer Creek American Legion Auxiliary Post 283 has recently sent out letters to area businessman in the Deer Creek and Henning areas to support the poppy sales. Henning does not have an auxiliary so this post includes women from Deer Creek, Henning, Ottertail, Wadena, and Parkers Prairie who want to support the future of veterans, active military personnel and their families in this area. Due to the pandemic, we will not be offering poppies on the street. If anyone would like to contribute to the needs of our veterans, please send your donation to PO Box 158, Deer Creek, MN. Thank you.

Deer Creek American Legion Auxiliary Post 283
Jeanette Polzine,
Secretary

CITIZEN'S Advocate
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