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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** So I guess let's start back that you have a long history of being in this area, right?

[00:00:04] **Speaker 2** Yeah, yeah. So, well, like I said, my great grandpa and grandpa started coming to visit here shortly after the Great Depression. That's what grandpa would tell you when we were driving around the lake, and that's when they came up. And this was, if you look back at the history, there is dozens of different resorts on Big Cedar Lake, and they would come up, and this was the up north for Milwaukee, you know, back then. And then in the early 50s, they purchased the family cottage, and then eventually my family moved into that when I was younger. Um, and then after college was able to move on the, would it be the south end of the lake on the other side of the Lake? We didn't have Lake frontage at the time. And then about 12 years ago, we were fortunate enough to purchase this place and be on the water full time. So, you know, we can go fishing whenever we want.

[00:00:50] **Speaker 1** So I mean, your girls have grown up on the watch.

[00:00:53] **Speaker 2** Yes.

[00:00:54] **Speaker 1** That's got to be an experience that you had that you want to pass on.

[00:00:58] **Speaker 2** Absolutely. I mean, I don't know, it's very, very fortunate, very fortunate, and they love it. And just being able to get up, you know, you look at the water, it is very soothing, you come out, you go swimming. In the winter, you can go for hikes and walks. And yeah, there's just, I know you can't beat it. Some people want a bunch of land, which I get that too. I don't t need a lot of land. I just want to have the water. That's kind of our backyard then is the water

[00:01:21] **Speaker 1** So how would you describe this, like, because most people, if they've heard of it, would say, oh, that's, you know, over by West Bend and it's a little skinny.

[00:01:29] **Speaker 2** It is a little skinny lake. People ask me to describe it very clear. I would almost call it two lakes. If we're talking about fishing, the way it works is two lakes, right? We're on the peninsula, and the north side of the peninsula deepest part's only about 30 feet. It warms up really quick and gets cold really fast. And then the south end, you know, is 100 feet deep in the deepest spot. So it takes a lot longer to warm up and cool down. So there'll be fish on the north end of the lake who are done spawning. And on the south into the lake, they haven't even started. Spawn yet so if you're looking to fish it you have to treat it almost as two different lakes and especially in those beginning and end of the season times a year because it'll change quickly. So the other thing I would say which is a good part of it is it's so deep fish can hide in it and there's always that chance for those trophy fish because they're hiding in that deep just locating them in that deep waters is really tough because I mean it's big wide and just as big huge expanse of water that they can hide in and not necessarily relate to the structure that you're used to fishing.

[00:02:32] **Speaker 1** When your grandparents or even beyond that were coming up, was this fishing part of the resort experience or was it kind of a recreational resort?

[00:02:41] **Speaker 2** Um, so my grandparents, my grandpa Welch fished. He was a big fisherman, but then my grandpa Haldeman, so some of the fish we have on the wall, he was even bigger fisherman. So I kind of got it on both ends. Grandpa Haldemen was a really big fisherman. Grandpa Welch, who he fished quite a bit and would tell me stories of fishing too. I think grandpa Welts just showed me to like the whole part of whether it's just driving around and hanging out on the boat and talking, whether it is fishing or swimming. He really showed me that. Part of how great it is to be on the water, not just fishing, but the whole experience of it.

[00:03:13] **Speaker 1** So, was this a walleye lake at that time, or was walleye, how does that species history kind of go?

[00:03:19] **Speaker 2** So there's always been walleye in this lake. However, the DNR would say it's not a naturally sustaining population of walleye because of the pressure it gets. There's gonna be more taken out than they can naturally sustain. So that's why the Thursday Night Fishing Club has been helping to stock walleye. We do it in the fall where we put extended length fingerlings in and then where we met at the walleye wagon where we've been putting the wall eye fry in to try to help with that just so there's more more walleye. Um, currently we are looking, currently there are no Cisco in their lake. There was Cisco in this lake, if you go back. And then I think it was the early 2000s. There was a, one of those really hot drought years, there was a Cisco die-off. Since then we have not netted any Cisco and no one's been able to find any. Um, I'm currently working to try and work with the sewer pack and the DNR. And we're doing studies right now to see if we could restock Cisco, if they'd be able to. Maintain and live again or if this lake has changed to the point where they can no longer survive. So we'll see, fingers crossed that we could restock. If that's the case then we'd work to maybe see about stocking a Cisco too to really help those fish you know become bigger and better fishery, more fun to fish.

[00:04:33] **Speaker 1** Now, when you were a kid learning to fish, what were you going for?

[00:04:37] **Speaker 2** Boy, anything that would bite. I think mainly though, a lot of bass. Me and my buddies would always come out, we'd go bass fishing, we'd fish the shoreline, we'd fishing inner tubes, you know, and then we got a boat and we'd be out bass fishing. Probably just because, and I still like bass fishing because you know you're gonna catch them and you know that, you go out and you're going to be able to catch a handful of bass generally and have some fun. And then you know as you get older you start fishing more for the northern pike and then you start fishing for the walleye and you see the challenge of fishing the wall eye just like there's challenge you know fear it's musky there's no musky in this lake but you go to other that's the challenge and that's why it's really fun to catch those also. But yeah started out bass fishing I would say.

[00:05:20] **Speaker 1** Is that kind of a regular evolution, like pan fish to bass, and then, you know, some people work their way up, or do some people get caught in that, either the muskie or the walleye thing early?

[00:05:30] **Speaker 2** That's a great question. I think that is a bit of a natural progression, right? You set it on the pier, you start on the shore just catching little panfish and then you catch a big bass, you're a lot of fun. Some people stay there and then people really like to, you know, what's that next challenge and that's the walleye and then some people stay their, next challenge musky and it seems like really most people I talk to, right, you are targeting bass, walleye or musky depending on who you are, but. I guess really all the fishermen, it's like, what are you targeting now? And you go by season. I mean, later in the fall, I'll head up north and try to catch some musky. I do that once or twice a year, but usually I'm gonna be staying here, looking for bass, walleye, and then, well, big northern, and there are big northern around too. And those can be a lot of fun to catch when you find those also.

[00:06:15] **Speaker 1** So how much has the lake changed just in terms of the shoreline and the housing and all the things from when you were a kid to what it looks like today?

[00:06:24] **Speaker 2** I would say from when I was a kid, there'd be a lot of small cottages and it's definitely becoming more of an urban lake, a lot more, you know, big houses, two or three cottages get tore down, one big house gets put up. I mean, that's a southeast Wisconsin thing, I think they're becoming more and more urban. As we work through sewer pack, you see more and less structure for the fish along the shorelines, more of them are getting called what's armored, which would be all or riprap going around or seawalls. Which can be tough on the fish population. I think there's a lot more fishing in general too, and as electronics get better, there's lot more fish in too. So right, there's always that influx of more people fishing, people becoming better at fishing. Heck, when I was a kid, if you saw someone with a fish locator and a trolley motor, you're like, whoa, this guy must be a professional. Now it's, you know, all of us have that, everyone does, who goes out fishing regularly. So I think, you get a lot pressure on the fishing. As long as we're doing a good job, you know, the way we harvest them with the rules of DNR put in place, and then like the fishing club, like I'm a part of and restocking them, it's not a problem. I mean, just everyone's responsible.

[00:07:32] **Speaker 1** Has the lake use changed in terms of the number of skiers, or tubers, or jet skis, or the enjoyment, the recreational aspect?

[00:07:42] **Speaker 2** Um, I don't know. You know, I, when I was a kid, right. And I'm, I'm 47 now single back, you know, 20, 25 years ago. I can remember people complaining about the jet skis on the lake. Now that's a normal thing. Um, you. The big question now would be, you, know, talking about wake surfing. Um, and that's, that's big question that we could talk forever about that I'm not sure I really want to dig into right now. Because that probably is a legitimate problem, at least with the bottom of the lake, if you're following some of the studies that just came through. Lakes like Big Cedar though, they do have areas that can handle that. Some lakes cannot, depending upon the size of them, or really the depth of them and the size. But when it comes to actual, just regular boating, sailing, skiing, I personally don't see that big of a change. Fourth of July weekend, it's really busy. It's always been really busy, You come out on a day like today, on a Monday? It's not gonna be bad and you know those certain days that are gonna be really, really busy and you plan accordingly.

[00:08:45] **Speaker 1** So for you, getting back to the water, there's a lot of reasons why the water is a part of your life and why you wanted to be here. Yeah, yeah. And you obviously tried to pass a lot on to your girls. When did you first start introducing fishing into that little aspect with them?

[00:09:03] **Speaker 2** Day one I think you know I mean I got pictures or videos of the of the oldest one who is you know about to turn 15 when she was I don't know two you know playing in the middle bucket when I was about to go ice fishing and talking about it I got picture of the other one Reyna when she probably was four or five out ice fishing with me so that's been something since day one that you know it's a big part of my life and it's something and you want to share and. So you share it with them and they just learn to grow up with it and enjoy it. And there's different aspects of enjoying it, which we talk about all the time. You know, it's not always about catching fish. It's being on the water. And what I say is catching the fish is the icing on the cake when you're out fishing. Just being out there, being with your friends, being with your family, enjoying the outdoors. That's what it's about. And then if you catch fish, all the better.

[00:09:52] **Speaker 1** I mean, just hearing them talk, it seems like they've taken a lot of that message to heart. It's not just how I'm bored, put my pole down, nothing's biting kind of thing.

[00:10:01] **Speaker 2** Yeah, I think so, I mean, you know, they'll come, they bring a book out and just sit out there or you know that's your time to really talk too. Sometimes I've had some really good conversations and not just them, my friends, my family. When you're out in that boat and you're hanging out, you now a lot of times that's where you have some fantastic conversations. There's no getting away. You're right there, you're together. So you're either, you gonna talk things out or you're not or you gonna have a good conversation and you know if I want to be quiet I go fishing by myself quite a bit too. I don't mind fishing by my self and that can be my quiet time also.

[00:10:31] **Speaker 1** When did you notice that they were actively engaged in fishing? Like this was more than just, oh it's fun to be out or I get some time with dad. They're like, I'm doing this to be with Mexta, my dad because he likes it, but it's like they like it.

[00:10:46] **Speaker 2** Um probably when they start picking up the pole and fishing by themselves or asking to go and setting up their own things um I remember the younger one You know We were just hanging out and she was just sitting there fishing by herself and one of those bluegills that are on the wall Was from her and she's catching them and you know She's probably four years old baiting her own hook I was still taking the fish off but she'd bait the hook put it down catch a fish bring it to me And I was just in there talking with the rest of the family and that's when she caught like and she brought in like an eight inch bluegill. I'm like, well, you catch a 10 incher, we'll put it on the wall. And then she caught a nine and a half incher. I'm, like, all right, that's close. You're doing this all on your own, you're four, we'll it on a wall, good enough. So, I mean, I think that's when you see them starting to do it on their own or asking to go. Or like, you know, we do the, we go with our friends and they'll ask to come with, you know. Hey, can I go out fishing? I'm, like, okay, yep. And I get part of it's, you, know, cause they just want to be part of hanging out, but then they're out there fishing too and having a good time pulling them in, so.

[00:11:41] **Speaker 1** And they're aware of what they're doing. It's not just, oh, dad told me to do this. Like, you can see that they have a perception of how to feel.

[00:11:50] **Speaker 2** When I go fishing with them, I want to go fishing also. And if you want to teach them how to go fishing, then all I'm doing is taking them fishing. And I don't, I don't get to go fishing. So yes, I've been training them for a long time so they know how. Um, but that's really changed too, though, in the last probably two, three years, cause it was still for a long time, like they knew what to do, but I was still helping a ton. Lately the last couple years it's been great because I'm like, all right, you know, they get a tough one hooked deep Yep, I'll take it out for you or something like that. But for the most part right there, I'm, like, cast over there They're casting over there put it on you know They can take most of the fish off on their own the northern I'm still gonna help with but they're getting there

[00:12:29] **Speaker 1** they do have some mounted here like what is the the element of mounting what does that do

[00:12:35] **Speaker 2** All right. So I think, you know, a lot of people don't, you know, you don't always want to kill fish, right? I think it's okay to have one of your biggest real fish on the wall, because it's a story. Every time you look at that fish on the wall. It's a storey. And I have bigger fish on the wall now and I'll get a replica made of them that I've caught. I've caught bigger fish than the ones that are up there. But from now on, they're replicas. But that's a story and you can tell it when you look at it. Some of the ones that are my grandpas that are on the walls, my uncles. Or my grandpa told me the one, and the other one, the musky, but the walleye and the largemouth, those are my uncles telling me when they caught that with their dad, and they could tell the story up and down. We were on what lake they were on, how it was caught, what they were doing, and that's really what those fish on the wall become, it's just a story, and a way to pinpoint that story in time, remember that story, and go back through it. And we start looking at them that way, it's a lot of fun. One of the fish on my wall was the first fish I've caught here. My buddy said, hey, just give me that fish. I didn't know why at the time. And he took it and he mounted it. He's like, dude, this is the first fish you ever caught when you moved into your house. I'm like, that's a great story. And every time I look at it now, I remember that. I'd probably have forgotten about that fish in that moment in time, if he hadn't done that for me. That bluegill I just told you about, that rain I caught, that moment and time will be captured forever because of that fish, one of the Northern over there was the first Northern I ever caught. It was the first time I ever caught ice fishing all by myself. Drilled my own hole, put my own tip up out, and I caught it. And then my parents are like, it was a nice northern. It's not a classic mount there, but my parents mounted it because they thought it'd be nice. And now I remember that forever. So it's a way to remember time. It's a to capture those moments.

[00:14:18] **Speaker 1** It looks like Sage has the northern right there.

[00:14:21] **Speaker 2** That was the first time she set everything herself up and she won a fishery. It's not the biggest northern ever that you normally mount, but she won the fishery on this lake, against all the other adults. She drilled a hole, she picked a hole. She put the tip up down, did everything herself, pulled it out, and then she was able to win. I'm like, and she asked, hey, can I put that on the wall? Because they understand now when you tell those stories of those fish, she's like, I want my story up on that wall, too. And that's what that's become for her.

[00:14:49] **Speaker 1** Do you think people who don't fish understand the emotional connections and the bonds that are created in a boat or in that activity?

[00:14:58] **Speaker 2** Probably not because just I have this I have this conversation with other people and they'll ask me about that. You know, what do you think? And when I explain it to them, they get it. But they don't, you know, they're just imagining you're just out there just fishing to catch the fish. But for me personally, it's a way more than catching the fish is just being out in nature like like we just said about just being with people or being with your friends or being with family and remembering those things. And like even as I talk about that fish and that just, you know, brings a smile to your face because you remember in those those points and times and then you're. And there's times like, I wish I would have kept that fish. But like I said, now we can get replicas. I caught a great bass last year and I can remember everything about it. I'm gonna get that replica maids. So now I have another one on the wall.

[00:15:39] **Speaker 1** I mean, it's kind of a fascinating link, too, of your grandpa, his walleye, and your daughters have fish on the wall, all in the same space.

[00:15:47] **Speaker 2** Well, no, right, the hope is they're gonna keep those fish, you know, when I pass, they're gonna keep these fish and then maybe get them to my grandkids and then they'll always have those memories. Because you can't have a ton of fish, but if you can have those memories and then you remember, you, know, like, they know Grandpa Marvin because of that fish more than they know him. He was, you now, Rayna wasn't even alive before he passed. So she hears about him and knows that story from that and that's just a way. With fishing and all of this that people can kind of keep those memories alive.

[00:16:19] **Speaker 1** So what is it about walleye that's different from other species?

[00:16:24] **Speaker 2** Walleye I think is the challenge. They're tough. I can come out here, you know, and I can catch bass. I don't want to say every time it's fishing, but most of the time I can catch Northern most of time. I can, I can catch bluegill almost all the time. If not all the time, but a walleye, you know, it's different on each lake, but on this lake to catch a wall eye, you have to really have it dialed in, really know where they're at. June earlier in the season it can be easier and then they change and you have to follow their patterns and it's it can, be really difficult. And I think another part of that is we this is it might be a silly conversation but we'll talk sometimes like what's the prettiest fish? Well I often come up when I'm talking other fishermen as one of the prettier fish they're a beautiful fish if you like fish they can be a really awesome looking fish and well they delicious too, right? I can, I have to go catch myself, you know. Ten bluegill to make a meal for a couple people. I can catch one walleye and have that meal also for eating.

[00:17:24] **Speaker 1** Do you keep the walleye to come out of here at times of year to have a fish fry?

[00:17:28] **Speaker 2** I generally don't. I have sometimes, usually I'll go bluegill fishing if we want to have a fish fry a couple times a year. I'll keep one or two or ice fishing. We'll keep on or two to eat. Like for the walleye and a lot of fishing, I'm putting them back. I'm just looking to, you know, to have that experience for someone else to hopefully catch that trophy fish that they can either put on the wall for themselves or something back. It's really easy to go up to the local place and get a really good fish fry too. Nothing better than a fresh made fish fry of your own. But yeah, the walleye. And maybe partially because I do such so much work stocking them also that I'm like, all right, I'm just going to throw that one back.

[00:18:03] **Speaker 1** It almost feels counterproductive.

[00:18:06] **Speaker 2** A little bit. I know other people are taking them and keeping them, but I'm like, that's alright, that's why we do it, and so I write so people can take and keep them. I'm almost like, yeah, we'll put that one back.

[00:18:15] **Speaker 1** So tell me a little how you got involved with Walleyes for Tomorrow and the Fish and Grove.

[00:18:20] **Speaker 2** So. 10, 12 years ago after college when we moved down on the north end of the lake, I got my first fishing boat and I had heard there was a Thursday night fishing club out here, so me and my buddy started, you know, we'd come out on Thursdays and we'd fish and we do the bass portion of it. And then after getting to know the guys for a while, we started talking to someone, we're like, okay, well, what's really going on here? And they said how they started donating, how we donate the money to stock walleye. And then, you know if you care about something, right, I care about this lake, you should give back, right? I'm part of the PRD because I want to give back. No other reason. I do the walleye stocking because I want to give back because you care about something. And so then, you know, just being, getting to know all the guys, they're a great group of guys. They started hanging out. So we just started giving, that's how they started it. And I've just helped to contribute since is like, all right, let's stock walleye in the lake. So then we've been doing the fall stocking of the extended lake fingerlings. We had the walleye wagon here, I don't know, maybe 10 years ago, and then the last two or three years we brought it back again. I mean, it's a lot of work, and you have to have a lot guys willing to step up and help and pull the nets and put the fry in and check it, and now we have a good group of guys again who really want to kind of put that time in, so we brought the wagon back and hopefully we'll have it here to the foreseeable future, or until, you know, clubs kind of grow and, you know, as people get older and things change.

[00:19:47] **Speaker 1** But your daughters have gotten involved as well. Was that just them following you along, or what are you gonna do?

[00:19:52] **Speaker 2** Um, yes. And now they asked to go. I'm like, you know what, I think you kids think this is pretty cool and they love going out and catching the walleye and looking and then watching them grow in the jar. And then, you know, they didn't get to come with this season to let them go. But they you know, they'll come and you have to check the jars and make sure the levels are right and everything's moving. They'll come with me in that and just watching that whole process. They really enjoy it more so than I thought. They'll even sometimes they'll say, you know what I like, I like doing that part more than even catching them, which surprised me, but they love just going there. When you pull the nets, it is a lot of fun because you never know what's going to be in there. You see all these fish, all the fish that are in there, and it's like opening a present every time because you don't know. You go up to one net and it is empty, and then you go to the next one and it is packed full of fish. You're like, oh my gosh, look at how big that one is. Look at that one, it's huge. You bring them back and then, you know, you get the eggs and everything else and go through that process and it' s pretty cool.

[00:20:44] **Speaker 1** And there's got to be a charge that comes with it. It's a bunch of crusty old guys, but then you bring two young girls along in there. I mean that's the difference that you can see, like the energy pick up for every book.

[00:20:55] **Speaker 2** Yeah, no, they really enjoy it when the kids come. When they come, they're always like, all right, and they really, what's fun is they just let them do as much as they can and everyone steps back. I know there's a couple other kids that'll show up too. There's one who lives right down the road and he'll show on his bicycle every time, be like, what time are you guys gonna be back? What time are guys gonna pull in those nets? And he just wants to come hang out and watch it happen. So it's really neat. And it's, I mean, it's just, you know, you got like two weeks where we do it. So everyone gets together as much they can. The girls are always asking to miss whatever other extracurricular activity they have going on so they can come do that instead and generally we oblige because right it's just a short window that you get every what every spring to do it.

[00:21:35] **Speaker 1** Well, I mean, it really fits in with the title of the group. I mean it could not be a more accurate title than the idea. It's not just for the old guys who caught a million walleyes. It's for everybody else.

[00:21:45] **Speaker 2** Yeah, right. It's for tomorrow, right? And it's for all the kids, all the people who can do it, and, you know, I don't know, enjoy fishing in the future and make those memories and, you know. Just take their kids out and have that chance. If we weren't, I don't, if the club wasn't doing the things they're doing, there would not be very many walleye in here to catch. And now, I do believe, now I know for the last few years you can see the difference being made and it's great.

[00:22:13] **Speaker 1** Talk to me a little bit about family dynamics and you talked a lot about fishing yourself or with the girls. You are married. Yep. How do those dynamics work when it comes to getting time to fish and then keeping a family or having a wife or a spouse and what's the involvement there?

[00:22:29] **Speaker 2** Well, you can think of family. I mean, my dad was a big part of me fishing, too. When I think about that, like we'd go out, we'd always go out. We'd have one night a week that he would take me out fishing. And usually, I mean I was young enough. I was bobber fishing then and my dad would be fishing for walleye. You mean, and that's, you know, over 20 years ago and now growing up. I mean the wife will come out, Jen will come out fishing with us and she'll just sit and hang out. She likes to fish, too, but not as much as us. But it's just a great time to have everyone out and be a part of it together, I guess, you

[00:22:58] **Speaker 1** I'm sure you've heard of guys that fish so much that their wives don't go walleye widows. What is the balance that needs to be struck for people to be able to pursue that passion?

[00:23:11] **Speaker 2** Well, it's different for everyone. I know some people go fishing a lot more than me and I know Really, I guess that ebbs and flows too, right? As your children get older and they're in more sports, right And you have to go to soccer you have, to go, to swimming or you have To go to football or whatever their sport is you might not be able to my one fishing partner I fish with a lot there was a you know a part where he was coaching his son in baseball and then in Football and he didn't fish with me watch and then as his kid now has graduated high school and he's fishing with Me a lot, more And I think you just have to find what fits for your family and what's going on at that point in time. When they were really little, like babies, I fished less because you had to be home to help more and it was just more difficult. And that's what's great now that they fish is I can go even more and more because they're with me now or they can take care of themselves at home if I'm out fishing.

[00:23:58] **Speaker 1** There's a lot of research being done across the state by a ton of different outlets and agencies, non-profit, for-profit that are all dedicated to walleye research, trying to figure out both for the commercial market or the tournament market or for the recreational angler. Do you think it's worth all of the money and the effort that's being put into that one species?

[00:24:22] **Speaker 2** That's an interesting question. I think, I would say yes, because I think it, you know, so many people go places just to go walleye fishing, right? So I mean, it can help an economy in general. I mean you look at, for instance, Lake Erie, the amount of people that come out to Lake Ery to go fishing, which I've done, and my friends have done, and I was just, I met a guy yesterday, or Saturday, who I was talking about, he talks about going out to lake Erie every year. So if you have that many people traveling to go to fishing. On money they bring into their economy and choose to spend their money. Yeah, it makes sense. I think it probably bears itself out that it's sustainable. If it wasn't, the money wouldn't be there to do it.

[00:25:00] **Speaker 1** What would be lost if there wasn't the effort put into making sure there were walleye to be caught? I mean because obviously another species would take its place in the lakes as it's done in some lakes all by itself Sure, but if there just really weren't walleyes there anymore

[00:25:16] **Speaker 2** Well, you lose history. I mean, you think about the history of how walleye have been important forever, and all of a sudden that changes to something else. You'd lose the history portion of it. I think, for whatever reason, different fish catch other people's imagination, right? And you're gonna lose a group of people, probably, who like doing that. Or, I understand I'll probably never catch a bigger fish than my walleye than my grandpa did, but just having that aspect of kids talking about it forever. And families talking about it and grandkids talking about, I think that would be lost if there's no more walleye to be caught. Not to mention delicious fish fries and walleye cheeks and every other part of it.

[00:25:55] **Speaker 1** So, when we were out on the boat, you had the northern on. Yes. There was a moment where you thought you might have a lie. What's that feeling like when you feel a bite and you feel the hit?

[00:26:07] **Speaker 2** It's exciting and it's great. I thought that was, because it was a little northern, I'm like this feels about the right size and it would have been the right side. Felt a little too aggressive for a walleye. He was pushing a little hard, but I have had some of them fish. Usually a wall eye is not gonna give the big head throws and the runs that a northerner bass are gonna do. When the girls caught a couple of their bass, I was like, oh, that's probably a bass, just the way it was taken off. But just even that when you're excited, especially if that's what you're targeting, and you're targetting a species, and when you can actually lock in and be like, all right, I'm gonna throw it this way for this fish at this time and this depth, it's a feeling of accomplishment. That's right, I did figure it out, at least for that moment.

[00:26:51] **Speaker 1** And then put them back? Yeah. What's that feeling like? Because for some people it is the catch, it's the possession. But for you it's...

[00:27:00] **Speaker 2** No, we don't even eat, really, we don't eat a lot of fish. We'll go for fish fries here and there. But I mean, my whole life has just been about catching and letting them go. And I don't want that excitement, like I've said, the excitement of being out there, of catching them, accomplishing what you're looking for. And, I don't know, I like letting them going, knowing someone else is going to catch that fish or maybe I'm going to catch them again next year and he's growing even bigger. And I don't know if this sounds right, but not wasteful. You know what I mean? Because sometimes I just feel like, you know, it's like, unless you know you're gonna eat that thing and it's not gonna sit in your freezer, yeah, let them go. Let them have another day, have more fish so we can all catch it and enjoy it. For me, it's always been more of the sport than eating. I mean, by far. I just like being out there and catching the fish. I don't necessarily like eating. I enjoy eating them, but that's not why I'm there.

[00:27:50] **Speaker 1** Anything else that you want to add along these lines that jump to your mind?

[00:27:55] **Speaker 2** Not this moment, but I'll think a little bit maybe while they're talking too if there's something else. I think we covered a lot. We did pretty good. I hope I wasn't talking, I'm not talking too fast.

[00:28:03] **Speaker 1** Can I get you to say and spell your name just so I have a correct answer?

[00:28:07] **Speaker 2** Sure, Matt, M-A-T-T, Haldeman, H-A L-D-E-M-A N-N.

[00:28:15] **Speaker 1** Great. Thank you. Thank you.