

An Outdoorsman's Journal

Mark Walters, Columnist

Summer Days on the Wisconsin River

Hello friends,

This week's column is about a simple, do-as-little-as-possible camping trip on a sandbar on the Wisconsin River near Boscobel with my golden retriever Ruby and her four month old pup Red.

Friday, August 5th
High 89°, Low 62°

I would be using my 18.6 War Eagle and my goal was to have enough water on the very low Wisconsin River to find a sandbar that had deep enough water next to it to hopefully catch some walleye or catfish from shore. In reality, my only goal was to do as little as possible and have an enjoyable experience with Ruby and Red.

I found paradise about a mile south of Boscobel where I had 10 feet of water a short cast from shore and I then casually began setting up a screen tent camp with a kitchen, a cot, Coleman lantern, a cooler and a chair. Though I know it will pass — since Michelle passed away on June 15th my mood is improving, but I am very low key. In all honesty, all I wanted to do was sit on a lawn chair and watch the world while the pups took part in their always nonstop wrestling matches.

I did have two simple goals: one was to write as many thank you cards as possible, and the other was to do some serious water training with Red for the upcoming waterfowl season. Here is my situation with the training — I am not in the frame of mind to play hardball with a pup. I am

teaching the basics like sit, stay, down, go, and no but am not into the water training. I know this is not a good thing but at this month of my life all I want to do is hangout with her.

I have to tell you a story, three days ago my sister Chrissy Luke came and visited me, and we went on a 22-mile ATV ride. There was a monarch butterfly that wanted to hang out with us, and she told me a story about when a butterfly hangs out with you it is someone that has recently passed away. Today at my sandbar campsite I had a Tiger Swallowtail butterfly that stayed by me until dark. Red kept trying to catch and eat it, but my friend would always escape just in time

Saturday, August 6th
High 85°, Low 57°

Last night the river rose and just about flooded out my camp. What was really neat was that there was a major fish feeding frenzy that began about midnight and lasted until about dawn. I could literally hear fish catching minnows just a few feet away from my tent and it was nonstop. This morning I tried casting and dead sticks with crawlers and the bite the entire day was almost nonexistent, one sand sturgeon, a couple of small catfish and sheepshead. The real story for the day was my butterfly, from daybreak to dark it stayed within ten inches to ten feet of me and had at least 20 near misses with Red trying to eat it.

I worked on thank you cards, drank some always refreshing beer, read, cooked and trained the pup. There was a group of 15 young men that were brought to a neighboring sandbar, they



Photo contributed by Mark Walters

Our camp on the Wisconsin River near Boscobel.



Photo contributed by Mark Walters

Red had fun with this sand sturgeon.



Photo contributed by Mark Walters

This Tiger Swallowtail butterfly hung out with Mark Walters for three days.

were maybe 21 to 25 in age and it was a real hoot to watch these guys have an absolute blast.

Sunday, August 7th
High 84°, Low 60°

The river is dropping big time and I hope I have enough water to make it back to the landing. Last night there was no sound of fish feeding, but like the night before the pups and I listened to raccoons

fighting and in my opinion that is one nasty animal. This morning as soon as I got out of the screen tent my butterfly found me and today it would land within inches of my hand.

I have no idea about the story Chrissy had told me just a few days earlier, but I have to tell you, on this three day experience it sure had me thinking.

All's well that ends well and the War Eagle made it back to the landing and the Chevy made it home.

Thanks for reading,
Sunset

Follow along the adventures of Mark Walters, a syndicated outdoor adventure columnist who lives in Necedah, Wisconsin. He began writing his column, An Outdoorsman's Journal, in 1989. It includes hunting, fishing, lots of canoeing and backpacking. He currently writes for around 60 newspapers on a weekly basis. He hopes you enjoy reading about his adventures!

Want to read more?

Check out previous weeks' columns at www.outdoorsmansjournal.com

LEAH SPICER
FOR STATE ASSEMBLY

RURAL OPPORTUNITY • QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SENIORS • FREEDOM AND SECURITY FOR ALL

I grew up on a small farm here in the 51st. My partner Kyle and I live on that same farm and are raising our three little kids there. We own a restaurant in Spring Green and I am the clerk of my town board.

It would be my honor to go to Madison to fight for the rights of working people, for the future of our small businesses and farms, for our aging parents, and for the future of our kids.

★PUTTING PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS★

Paid for by Spicer for 51st, 7080 Leaches Crossing Road, Avoca, WI 53506

