

NO ORDINARY FISH

by Tammy Kovarik

Once upon a time there lived a king and a queen. Growing tired of the hustle and bustle of big city living in Roosevelt, Florida and the treacherous hurricane waters of the Atlantic Ocean, they decided to move. King William III and Queen Graceton had visited their cousins Tuddy, Al, Shirley, Ruth, and Dick several times in Baudette and loved the friendliness of the smaller community as well as the magnificent Lake of the Woods waters. They knew that this would soon be their new home.

Soon after settling in Baudette the king and queen had their first child, a son whom they named William IV. Even though William IV loved his parents dearly he disliked all the royalty attention and just wanted to be an ordinary fish. A few of his closest friends, Arnold, Walter, David, Russell, and George, nicknamed him "Willie" and soon that's what everyone called him.

Willie grew at an enormous rate and even the teachers at Lake of the Woods School had trouble finding him a desk that would fit. They had to have one custom made by the community. Willie was loved by all who knew him even if his size was a little intimidating. He loved school and especially his swimming class. He enjoyed entertaining people with all his aquatic stunts and was especially known for his "walleye choppers" which were said to cause major waves on the lake waters! Willie spent his summer lifeguarding and volunteering for the Coast Guard. He rescued many fishermen and received numerous awards for his heroic endeavors!

One day while enjoying some leisure time on the Rainy River, a ship of mean pirates came through. They had heard about the "famous Willie" and thought they could get rich by selling him to Sea World. The mean

pirates kidnapped Willie and kept him locked in a cage. His parents, friends, and community sent out a search team but were unable to find him. One day while the pirates were away Willie managed to escape from the cage and set out for home.

He had never been so far away from home nor was he familiar with the unkind, treacherous ocean waters. He became weakened and wounded by all the shark attacks. When he thought he couldn't go on, he met a mermaid named Finntasia. She nursed him back to health and agreed to go with him in search of his lost home. During their long journey they fell in love. Months later Willie was reunited with his family and friends in Baudette. Finntasia soon became his wife and they lived happily ever after.

Today people come from all over the world to pay tribute to Willie the Walleye! Millions of people have reported sightings of Willie on Lake of the Woods waters especially when experiencing those "Walleye Choppers"!