

## WHAT TO EXPECT when attending a Walleye for Wounded Heroes Event!

This document will provide information on what an attendee to a Walleye for Wounded Heroes (W4WH's) event can generally expect.

Registration – Upon arriving at the event site, attendees are directed to a registration area where they will receive various materials and information including: ID lanyard, bunk location, itinerary, staff contacts, rules and site information. The size of events vary, and during some events attendees may be expected to interact with over 100 other heroes, volunteers and support staff. Any questions attendees have can be answered by registration staff at this time.

Rooms / Lodging - Each attendee is assigned a bunk upon registration. Please use the bunk you have been assigned unless other arrangements are made with W4WH's staff. In some cases special accommodations have been made for individuals and taking an incorrect bunk may seriously inconvenience an attendee. You WILL be sharing lodging space with others; private lodging should NOT be expected. Since you are sharing space, please be considerate of others. Early mornings are the norm so respect quiet times. Smoking is NOT permitted in lodging facilities, only outdoors. Respect the lodging facilities so owners will continue to allow their use by our organization. Pick up after yourselves.

Meals – Food and drinks are provided throughout the event and are handled differently depending on the specific situations. In most cases there is a meeting location designated for group activities and food is typically distributed at this location.

*Breakfast* - Coffee and other beverages are available each morning. Depending on the day, a full breakfast is typically packed in a bag and may be eaten where it is served or taken to go. Only coffee and donuts are served on the final morning.

*Lunches* – Bag Lunches are typically packed for each attendee. Each person should obtain one bag lunch and a drink or 2 for consumption later that day.

*Dinners* – Buffet style meals are typically provided each evening in the designated meeting location. Group discussions may take place during

meals about events of the day, future happenings and other issues important to the event.

*Drinks/Snacks* – Coolers full of soft drinks and snacks are available at a designated location throughout the event. Attendees are free to enjoy these at their leisure.

Your Captain – Captains are the lifeblood of W4WH events. Without these captains our events could not take place. They are volunteers. They offer their boats, fuel, equipment, expertise and more...free of charge to you...so you can experience the thrill of fishing on Lake Erie. Listen to these captains; they are extremely knowledgeable about safety and fishing. They put safety first and foremost above all. Captains have been directed to immediately return to shore should they determine any unsafe condition or act exists. Your captain will keep you safe. You undoubtedly will learn new fishing techniques from your captain as most welcome teaching inexperienced anglers. You will be using equipment unfamiliar to you. Please respect your captain's equipment, it is expensive and can be lost when used incorrectly. Again, listen to your captain. When possible, you will meet your captain on the first evening of the event during dinner. At that time, they will explain the what, when and how of what you can expect. If your captain cannot attend that dinner, W4WH staff will coordinate with you.

Fishing – Depending on the time of the year along with captain preferences, you may be jigging, casting, drifting or trolling. Each method has advantages and disadvantages depending on conditions, and each uses different equipment. Your captain will explain what to do and how. The common goal is to boat as many big fish as possible, within state limits. Walleye is the primary target species followed by perch, although many other species are often caught. Only walleye and perch are kept, other species are returned to the lake. In many cases trolling minnow-looking lures is the preferred method as trolling covers more water, faster, and typically boats more fish. These lures have many sharp hooks and anglers are reminded to wear glasses, keep hands in safe places and watch for hooks in the air. Each captain may keep as many fish per person as the state limit allows. These fish are returned to the event location for weighing and measuring, then sent to a cleaning facility. Clean fillets are separated, bagged and sorted so each attendee leaves with a similar amount of fish. Lake Erie weather is fickle and sometimes does not allow safe

lake access to occur. Should this happen an announcement will be made of a "blow day".

Clothing – The weather along the Lake Erie and on the boat are extremely varied, **pack for all conditions**. Especially bring quality rain gear and a windproof / waterproof outer layer (jacket and pants). Even if it does not rain, spray from the boat should be expected. Rubber or waterproof boots are encouraged as it is likely that at some time during the weekend you will be exposed to water. Be prepared. Dress in layers.

Blow days – Blow days are days considered unsafe to have a boat on Lake Erie. This unfortunate determination is made daily by staff with input from captains. Announcements are made when a blow day is called. Blow days happen with regularity so arrangements are considered prior to each event for such occurrences and alternate activities are available to attendees. These alternate activities vary and are specific to each event. They are discussed with attendees when blow days occur.

Evenings – After dinner attendees have free time. They are encouraged to mingle with other Heroes, make new friends, and share experiences with like minded individuals. In some cases, formal entertainment is provided, but there is no obligation to participate.

Closing ceremony – On the final evening of the event, in conjunction with dinner, a closing ceremony is held. It's the culmination of the event. Fishing achievements and honored guests are recognized, awards are presented, and sponsors and volunteers are thanked.

Final morning – Attendees gather for a light breakfast. Each attendee returns the lanyard they received at registration along with an "After Action Report" detailing the positive and negative experiences related to the event and suggested changes. Upon receipt of these 2 items and after arriving with a cooler, each attendee receives an equal portion of filleted fish that were caught by all attendees.

Safety – W4WH staff take safety very seriously and will address any unsafe act

they find and ask your assistance in remedying the matter. Should you question or observe any unsafe situation you are asked to notify a staff member. The most common health related issue to occur at W4WH events is sea-sickness. For those who may get sea-sick, or if you are unsure, it is strongly recommended you take actions to prevent it. There are many medicines and some methods to prevent or limit sea-sickness. Talk to your doctor prior to attending our event and determine a method acceptable to you. Should you decide to ingest medicine, we recommend you take one dose the evening before your trip and one the next morning prior to launching.

Problems – Any problem experienced while attending a W4WH event should be directed to a staff member. It is recognized that some attendees may be affected with unique problems due to activities they performed or experienced. However, those problems may not be so unique given the individuals who attend and sponsor W4WH events. Many at W4WH's share the same or similar experiences that others may refer to as unique or problematic. It's this shared bond that makes W4WH's events unique. Nevertheless, attendees are encouraged to see a staff member with any problems; no one is judged. We are one!

Rules – Each attendee is expected to abide with the Code of Conduct document they signed prior to being selected to attend. Respect to others is key to the mission of W4WH's and we expect each attendee to respect all other and themselves. As a reminder, unprescribed and non-over the counter drugs are prohibited. Alcohol is also prohibited. Deviations from these rules will result in an attendee being asked to leave!