

OFF THE DOCK

WITH D. A. MANN

~ Flying Wallendas ~

6/25/26

Within the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus, The Wallenda family was by far the most famous of the traveling acts. Known for their high-wire and aerial stunts, they were legendary for defying gravity without a safety net.

Last Friday, I met some members of their troop who have taken to the water. At full cast with a single “pop”, one hit my Willy and took off. With the drag still pulling, he went airborne – not once, not twice; but three times. Each flight was concluded with him smacking down sideways on the water with a splash that rivalled a Spotted Ray. It was a spectacular performance. But he wasn’t done. Swimming just below the surface aiming to circumference the boat, he leapt several more times showing his talent to passing boaters. He continued to dance and jump until his last flip landed him in my net. For ten minutes, he defied gravity; hence, he earned the nickname “Wallenda”. This Pompano belongs in the circus. Rarely do they take to the skies in an effort to hear applause. I was impressed. The Pompano of late have, for the most part, been frisky. Even the babies have been drag-pullers which can fool even the seasoned fisherman into thinking he has something substantial on the Willy.

Now, if you want to see the Flying Wallendas perform, be very patient, Grasshopper, for you must search for them; and, remember, occasionally, they like to play small venues. Go to your favorite spots and if you are not lucky, then move over a little and fish a new area.

Read the tides, study the wind, and watch for changes in the current. Follow your instincts and when you smell success, start casting. Not all *good* spots are *good* all the time. I decided to purchase season tickets to watch the Wallendas do their thing. I have seen shows in Blackburn Bay between markers 17 and 19; Roberts Bay by marker 14; and most recently, in the middle of the basin on the east side of Snake Island.

I didn't travel more than twenty minutes to any show.

Your price of admission is a Silly Willy.