

The Buckhorn honored as one of state's best supper clubs

Adapted from press release from the office of Gov. Scott Walker

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker joined Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett and Cabinet leadership Aug. 31 in presenting honorary plaques to several of the top ten winners of the Travel Wisconsin Supper Club Showdown. Among the supper clubs in the top ten was The Buckhorn, which is located on Lake Koshkonong in rural Milton (11802 N Charley Bluff Rd.).

Governor Walker also declared Aug. 31 as Supper Club Day throughout Wisconsin to honor the state's iconic supper clubs, their history, and their contributions to the tourism economy.

"Supper clubs are an iconic part of Wisconsin, and one that has played an important role in our state's tourism economy for more than 100 years," Governor Walker said. "Food and beverage spending in Wisconsin continues to rise thanks in part to the hard work and dedication of supper clubs and all restaurants throughout the state, many of which are locally owned and operated. Their hospitality is just one of the reasons why visitors come back to Wisconsin year after year."

Located on Lake Koshkonong, The Buckhorn is run by Chico and Dawn Pope, with the help of their children, Kevin and Shelley. The supper club has been decorated with many other honors over the years, including being featured in Ron Faiola's book, "Wisconsin Supper Clubs."

Governor Walker and Secretary Klett kicked off Supper Club Day with a lunch visit and plaque presentation at Lehman's Supper Club &

Cocktail Lounge in Rice Lake, followed by a stop at Ishnala Supper Club in Lake Delton, and dinner at Pinewood Supper Club in Mosinee. The Governor presented the Travel Wisconsin Supper Club Showdown award to the restaurant's owners, Secretaries Neitzel and Gutierrez, Commissioner Nickel, and Deputy Secretaries Klavas and Maxwell visited five of the remaining supper clubs to commemorate their top ten wins.

"We know from our research that food is a big driver of tourism," said Klett. "When travelers visit a destination, they want an authentic experience, and food is a big part of that. Wisconsin is home to more than 250 supper clubs that not only provide an authentic dining experience, they've shared it with residents and visitors for generations."

The Travel Wisconsin Supper Club Showdown, a month-long online contest, encouraged residents and out-of-state-visitors to vote for their favorite supper club in Wisconsin. The contest brought in nearly 400,000 votes, with Ishnala Supper Club in Lake Delton taking home the top prize. The Buckhorn finished sixth statewide with its impressive vote total eclipsing 6,000.

Culinary tourism is a top travel motivator, and supper clubs have been a Wisconsin tradition for more than 100 years. In 2016, Tourism launched its supper club-themed marketing campaign, which pays homage to this long-standing cultural icon and the fun that can be had when dining at one of the hundreds of supper clubs throughout the state. The campaign commercial is the most successful in Travel Wisconsin history, reaching 1.4 million views.



In honor of The Buckhorn's standing as one of Wisconsin's top ten supper clubs, Wisconsin Department of Administration Secretary Scott Neitzel (far left) presented a plaque to Buckhorn owners, Chico and Dawn Pope (seated in front) and their children, Kevin and Shelley (standing in back), who are also involved in running the business. Ron Faiola (far right), author of "Wisconsin Supper Clubs," features The Buckhorn in his book.

Edgerton Reporter photo

