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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**GOVERNOR WALKER ANNOUNCES TOURISM AWARD WINNERS AT TOURISM CONFERENCE**

**MADISON, Wis. (March 8, 2011)** – Governor Scott Walker presented five recipients with the Governor’s Tourism Award for their contributions to the industry. The awards were presented at the closing dinner at the Wisconsin Governor’s Conference on Tourism at the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells.

“The Governor’s Tourism Awards is an important opportunity to recognize our industry’s highest achievers, who day in and day out, put Wisconsin on the map as a premier destination,” said Secretary Klett. “Each has made an impact on tourism through their achievements, innovation and dedication to excellence. They exemplify the best of the best in our state.”

The awards recognize individuals and businesses for their achievements, dedication, leadership, and commitment to excellence that have resulted in a significant impact on Wisconsin’s travel and hospitality industry.

The five recipients are as follows:

- The **Legacy Award** was presented posthumously to **Dick Kloplic**, founder of The Fireside Dinner Theatre, for his ingenuity, creativity and hospitality that turned The Fireside into one of Wisconsin’s top destinations. From the time he built The Fireside in 1964 to his retirement in 1998, Kloplic helped put Fort Atkinson on the map. His long-lasting vision and leadership garnered many awards for The Fireside and furthered Wisconsin’s tourism industry.
- A second **Legacy Award** was presented to **Ed Lump**, President and CEO of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA) for his long-lasting contributions and leadership that furthered Wisconsin’s tourism industry. Lump’s 30-year career at the WRA and his leadership role with the Tourism Federation of Wisconsin is marked by many initiatives and legislation that furthered the state’s tourism industry. He was recognized for his long-standing dedication, service and guidance to Wisconsin’s tourism industry.
- The **Rising Star Award** was bestowed on **Jean Galasinski**, representing Trempealeau County Tourism Council and the Trempealeau Chamber of Commerce. This honor is awarded to an individual who is new to the tourism industry and has shown leadership, commitment and a passion for tourism. Galasinski’s enthusiasm and dedication to grow tourism in Trempealeau is exemplified by her service on numerous committees and councils including her appointment to the Mississippi Parkway Commission. Jean has tirelessly spearheaded multiple projects to raise the profile of Trempealeau County and in the process has quickly evolved into the “go to” person for this growing tourism community.
- The **Stewardship Award** was given to **Bayfield, Wisconsin**. While it may be one of the state’s smallest communities, it’s the biggest on progressive sustainability. Legions of tourists, community and business leaders across the country recognize Bayfield for its unified and community-wide approach to sustainability. It is widely regarded as the “greenest community in the Midwest.” Bayfield County has the most Travel Green Wisconsin certified businesses of any community in the state.

- The **Service Excellence Award** was presented to **Mike Goodrich** of Potawatomi Bingo Casino. The award recognized his dedication to customer service as exemplified through his exceptional leadership and employee development practices. The award acknowledged the Potawatomi Bingo Casino enduring commitment to charitable and community organizations.

More information about the Governor's Tourism Awards is available on [www.wigcot.org](http://www.wigcot.org).

Wisconsin's tourism conference is the largest of its kind in the nation. The annual, three-day event attracts Wisconsin innkeepers, restaurateurs, community tourism officials, tourism attraction operators, state agency officials, tourism educators, and other representatives of the hospitality industry.

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