



If you're having fun, Stephanie Klett is having fun.

As Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, her job is to show the world how fun is done by inviting visitors and residents to travel Wisconsin. After a quarter century of logging enough miles on Wisconsin's state highways to circumvent the earth 83 times, she has first-hand knowledge of every nook and cranny of the state from Bayfield to Beloit.

Stephanie was the Emmy-winning television host of the long-running Discover Wisconsin when she was plucked to fill the Governor's cabinet position of Tourism Secretary in 2011. Since day one on the job, she's tirelessly promoted the state's \$19.3 billion tourism industry, one of the top economic engines in Wisconsin. The industry has grown 30% in the last five years alone, and today supports 191,000 jobs. Because Stephanie believes no idea is too big or too out there, the Tourism Department has managed to enlist celebrities including basketball legend Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Green Bay Packer Jordy Nelson, UW Men's Basketball Coach Bo Ryan, and actors Henry Winkler and Tony Shalhoub to star in its TV ads.

She cut the ribbon on a Travel Wisconsin Supper Club concession stand inside Lambeau Field, the first of its kind in any NFL stadium, and gave her stamp of approval to transform Chicago metro buses into virtual Wisconsin campsites. No surprise marketing and public relations awards for the Department have piled up. Many are national and international in scope and the total is at 78 and counting.

As one of the original hosts of the Discover Wisconsin Television & Radio series, she helped pioneer its success and honed her personal brand of on-air storytelling and humor that can be heard alongside the likes of Matt Lepay and NFL sportscaster Wayne Larrivee. On any given day her voice can be heard on everything from Wisconsin Public Radio to Pandora Radio.

She can hold her own, whether fishing with the Governor on opening weekend or appearing at a legislative hearing for the Joint Committee on Finance. She has an uncanny ability to remember people's names (she can recite the name of all her nine brothers in three seconds flat) and has never met a State Fair food she didn't like – a prerequisite for her role as a State Fair Park Board Member. She knows just how to get people to strike funny poses in photos and could write the book on how to incorporate bling in one's wardrobe. She's an AIDS activist, volunteer for hospice causes and a proud alum of Beloit College.

While Stephanie's appointment to the Tourism Department didn't come with a crown and a sash, this former Miss Wisconsin has still managed to collect a few new sashes along the way including Wisconsin's Limburger Queen, Musky Queen, Venison Queen and Loon Queen.

More than anything, she connects with people in the tourism industry, respects their hard work, innovation, and customer service that make visitors want to return to Wisconsin year after year. They embrace her as one of their own. As for being able to keep up with her, that's a whole other story.