



THOMAS M. DIEHL
President & Co-owner
Tommy Bartlett Inc.

Thomas M. Diehl is the president and co-owner of Tommy Bartlett, Inc., which is comprised of the Tommy Bartlett Show and Tommy Bartlett Exploratory in Wisconsin Dells, Wis. Tom has been a guiding force of the organization for 51 years and is considered a leader in Wisconsin tourism and economic development. Through Diehl's innovation, Wisconsin Dells has become the Midwest's #1 family vacation destination with more than four million visitors a year.

Tom pioneered efforts that gained national exposure for the area through marketing campaigns for the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau and Tommy Bartlett, Inc. One of his most notable efforts was establishing the first local room tax in the state in 1969 and designating that 90 percent of the funds collected go to the Visitor Bureau for promoting the Wisconsin Dells area. This has resulted in an annual budget that has grown to \$13.9 million and is the envy of the entire state and Midwest.

Another major state legislative effort took Tom 10 years to see to fruition. In 1997, the Premier Resort Area Tax legislation was approved, allowing tourist driven communities like Wisconsin Dells to levy a one-half percent special sales tax specifically for the purposes of developing infrastructure such as sewer, water and storm water systems, in order to allow the Dells area to develop beyond its traditional Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day season. Without this critical support, the area would not have been able to expand its offerings of elaborate indoor waterpark resorts, which has earned the area much notoriety and the moniker The Waterpark Capital of the World!®. In 2010, Tom guided efforts to have the tax increased to one percent to assist the Dells community in developing sporting facilities. And in 2014, Diehl successfully rallied for an additional 0.25 percent voter-approved increase to help support infrastructure developments in the Village of Lake Delton and City of Wisconsin Dells.

Tom joined the Tommy Bartlett organization in 1967 as manager of Housing and Food Operations and was promoted to general manager of Tommy Bartlett, Inc. in 1973. In 1981, he was named president of Tommy Bartlett, Inc. During his first year as president, he directed the expansion of the company by opening the \$2.2 million Robot World & Exploratory, which is now the Tommy Bartlett Exploratory. With the passing of Tommy Bartlett in 1998, Tom and his wife Margaret became the sole owners of Tommy Bartlett, Inc.

In 2006, Tom received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the state of Wisconsin for his vision, leadership and advancement of the tourism industry. In 2013, the Wisconsin Water Ski Federation inducted Tom into its Hall of Fame for his more than 45 years of contribution to the sport. Tom was named an Amazing Outside Bank Board Director for 2018 by Northwestern Financial Review magazine for his 27 years of work with Bank of Wisconsin Dells.

Tom has a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration and a Masters of Business Administration from the Johnson School at Cornell University with an emphasis in marketing and finance. He is also a proud grandpa of seven.

Tom currently serves in leadership positions with a number of professional organizations in Wisconsin such as:

- Lake Delton Village Board (1981 – 1991; 2001 – present)
- Director, H.H. Bennett Foundation (1998 – present)
- Director, Wisconsin Dells Visitor and Convention Bureau (1974 – present)
- Marketing Chair, Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau (1994; 1997 – present)
- Director, Wisconsin Tourism Federation (1985 – present)
- Director, Bank of Wisconsin Dells (1990 – present)
- President/Founder, Association of Wisconsin Tourism Attractions (1985 – 1989; 2002 – present)
- Director, Wisconsin Dells Education Foundation (2011 – present)
- Chair, Downtown Tourism Development Committee (2016 – present)
- Member, Tourism Economic Development Committee (2016 – present)
- President, Wisconsin DRIVE Coalition (2016 – present)

Tom also has served in leadership capacities with various other Wisconsin groups including:

- Chair, Governor's Council on Tourism (1986 – 1999)
- President, Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau (1982 – 1997)
- Taliesin Preservation Commission (1994)
- Governor Thompson's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Gaming (1991)
- Governor Thompson's Minimum Wage Advisory Task Force (1991)
- Governor Thompson's Clean Water Task Force (1987)
- Lt. Governor Flynn's Task Force on Funding for Wisconsin Tourism Promotion (1985)
- Director, Wisconsin Dells United Way (1984 – 1998)
- Governor Thompson's Task Force on the Stewardship Program
- Governor Earl's Task Force on Circus World Museum
- Midwest Coordinator, Cornell University's Capital Campaign
- Member, Leadership Committee for Restoration of Lake Delton (2008 – 2009)