



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 23, 2018  
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## **Chefs take home top prizes at annual Zehnder's Squashtoberfest competition**

FRANKENMUTH – Chefs and bakers from across Michigan competed Monday, Oct. 22, at the annual Zehnder's Squashtoberfest at Zehnder's of Frankenmuth.

The contest was sponsored by Zehnder's, WSGW, Tomac Pumpkin Patch, Le Creuset and Michigan Sugar Company.

Twenty-eight participants took part in the event, competing in three categories: Soup, Sweet and Savory. Volunteer judges chose the top three dishes in each category.

Here is a list of the top three finishers in each category. Each of them received a prize package, including white granulated sugar from Michigan Sugar Company.

### **Soup Category**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – **Pam Hornbacher-Retzler**, Caro – Chipotle Butternut Squash Soup
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – **Richard Rizzio**, Troy – Squash Chowder
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – **Rhonda Marvin**, Laingsburg – Sauerkraut and Squash Soup

### **Sweet Category**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – **Susan Nickels**, Farmington Hills – Chocolate Zucchini Praline Torte with Pumpkin Caramel Buttercream
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – **Carol Socier**, Bay City – Harvest Time Pumpkin Cake
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – **Donna Bardocz**, Howell – Well-dressed Pumpkin Cheesecake

### **Savory Category**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – **Sally Sibthorpe**, Shelby Township – Chicken, Squash and Swiss Strudels
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – **Melissa Kildow**, Grand Blanc – Sizzling Squash Dumplings
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – **Linda Schmidt**, Kawkawlin – Zucchini Wrapped Chicken Enchilada Supreme

In addition, two other competitions took place during Squashtoberfest. The first was The Best Creative Homemade Jam, Jelly or Preserve contest with the winners selected by a vote of those in attendance. Here are the winners:

### **The Best Creative Homemade Jam, Jelly or Preserve contest**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – **Pamela Gilbeau**, Dearborn – Michigan Sour Cherry Vanilla Bean Preserves
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – **Pam Hornbacher-Retzler**, Caro – Santa's Fuzzy Navel Jam
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – **Cheryl Williams**, Bay City – Pumpkin Pie Jam

New this year to Squashtoberfest was the Pati Lalonde Culinary Stars Competition, featuring students from the Bay-Arenac Career Center, Saginaw Career Center and Tuscola County Technology Center competing for cash prizes. The competition honored **Pati Lalonde**, a longtime reporter and writer for The Bay City Times who was dedicated to coverage of the culinary arts.

Each team prepared a cake, pie and bread for the panel of judges. The first-place team received \$1,000; second place took home \$500 and the third-place team won \$250. The event was sponsored by Zehnder's, WSGW, Michigan Sugar Company, MLive Media Group and Best Real Estate Janca & Associates.

Here is how the teams finished:

**Pati Lalonde Culinary Stars Competition**

1<sup>st</sup> Place – **Saginaw Career Center** – CaDora Bailey, Deavian Smith and Santiago Tillman (Julie Ivan, instructor)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – **Tuscola County Technology Center** – Kayla Carter, Lexie Gast, Shaianne Laughner, Gabrielle Lesko and Trisha Vanderpool (Bob Zehnder, instructor)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – **Bay-Arenac Career Center** – Ashley Avery, Kristen Holsworth and Victoria Toureau (Denise Fahrenbruck, instructor)

Other Squashtoberfest activities included a cookie-decorating contest, free samples of soup, sweets and savory dishes for those in attendance and a presentation about gourds by Tomac Pumpkin Patch.

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