

# Millennium Bar & Marina

Story by Danny Fairchild  
Photos by Millennium Bar & Marina

My friendlies, have you ever been “boat hungry”? Yes, I’m going to explain what I mean by that! Let me have my damn intro, Mom!

Boat hungry is when you’ve spent all day out on the water having all the fun that comes with it, and SOMEHOW the coolers ended up with way more beers than food, so you just kind of forget to eat. Or that hunger is a thing. Not until you come into the marina and smell what’s sizzling in the kitchen do you realize you have probably never been more hungry in your life. And then you realize that this hunger has progressively been altering your mood for the worse all day. And then you realize that you owe your dear friends some apologies and appetizers. And you’re not getting off with an order of cheese curds, jerk. Oh, no. You’re buying steak bites for the whole table. AND cheese curds.

One might call it “hangry,” but that’s been trademarked, and I respect people’s intellectual property, dammit. And it isn’t nautically themed at all. Oh! We can portmanteau “hanker” and “anchor”! Starting again...

My friendlies, have you ever been hanchored?

I ask because when you’re hanchored... well... the food doesn’t HAVE to be all that great to satisfy, does it? Anything off the frozen food truck will be juuuuuust fine, thank you, and I’m not kidding, either. And so a marina restaurant is more than cool, in my book, to serve the same seasoned fries you’ve had at dozens of places before. They’re a classic for a reason, and running a marina can’t be all that easy, so why make it harder by instituting a scratch kitchen in your restaurant? Pretty much ALL food tastes a thousand times better after a day on the water, so why bother making it from scratch, right?

Right. But also wrong.

Because take that hanchored feeling we’ve been workshoping here. Imagine how eager you are and how you’re going to attack that burger or go into business with that steak, or jump that shrimp po’boy’s bones. Now imagine satiating that hunger NOT with “good enough” but with “Why would we stop at our food?” What if that hunger was reined in by a scratch kitchen that gives a damn?

That’s Millennium Bar & Marina.

As a man of the world, I have experienced this hanchored feeling I speak of and have also heard tell of and witnessed it. That said, I’m not a frequent boater. I like being on boats, but it’s just not the life I lead. The point is, if I’m at a marina, I’m probably there for the food. So as one of the guys who probably drove to get to the marina, I do appreciate the care with which Millennium prepares their menu. And I’m here to share with you some of my favorites from that menu. Ready? Go.

The Seafood Boil Bag. Ding-ding-ding! The match is over, and we have a clear winner. The seafood boil bag is my absolute favorite thing to get at Millennium. In my bill-paying life, I’m an advertising copywriter. Several of my clients are Louisiana casinos, so I’m forced to write dream-haunting things like “All-You-Can-Eat Crawfish Boil!” or “Add a pound of crab legs for...” whatever ridiculously low price. But that stuff is way down in Louisiana. I live in Dubuque. Not that we don’t have good seafood available around here. Fools will try to tell you we don’t. Don’t let them. It’s just not AS available around here. So when I get that feeling, Millennium’s boil bag is what gives me my seafood healing. And bonus: I don’t have to go anywhere near the state of Louisiana to do it. So what do you get in it? Well! For \$24, you get your choice of three: shrimp, mussels, sausage, mini scallops, or a whole catfish! You can add snow crab legs or another item for an additional charge. Accompanying your seafood on this journey will be red potatoes and a seasonal veggie. All that is boiled up to perfection, obscenely drizzled with butter, and seasoned with your choice of garlic, Cajun, or Old Bay seasonings. I mean, be sensible here. This is not a clean eat. Stuff is going to drip down your chin and possibly your wrists. But you just got off the river, and you’re famished. People here understand.

It’s not a regular menu item, but if it’s a special when you go, I also recommend the open-faced hot beef sandwich. Oh how I love a good hot beef sandwich. So friggin’ rib-stickingly hearty and savory! Yeah, hell yeah. Not familiar? See if you can follow: You take a slice or two of bread, sometimes toasted. Usually thicker than a regular white bread. Think Texas toast. Then throw some thinly-sliced roast beef on there. Or if it’s cooked to fall-apart yumminess, just let it fall apart. It’ll hardly be seen under the huge mound of mashed potatoes you’re about to scoop on top of it,



SEAFOOD BOIL BAG



OPEN-FACED HOT BEEF SANDWICH



FRESH PRESSED BURGER



FRESH MINI DONUTS

anyway. Then on top of all THAT, a healthy (and by “healthy” I mean “unhealthy”) ladling of brown gravy. Now... remember several years ago when people were making fun of the gluttony of KFC’s Famous Bowls? We’ve been making hot beef sandwiches like this for generations. So what did we expect? Anyway, you can see how you could easily put that dish together with ready-made components, right? I mean it’s a way to get rid of leftovers, for goodness sake. And it’s probably a way to get rid of leftovers at Millennium, too. No shame in that game. Wasting food sucks. But the roast beef, the mashed potatoes, the gravy? All made from scratch. No jars, cans, or dehydrated “buds.” And it’s so much better for it. The hot beef sandwich is one of the all-time classic sandwiches, in the hall alongside sandwiches like the reuben and the muffuletta. Respect it. Millennium does, and you can taste it.

Oh, but maybe you smelled someone grilling while you were boating, and now all you want in this world and the next is a friggin’ burger. Well, prepare to bless the day you docked up at Millennium. Because my friendlies... they have some darn good burgers. Now... when I’ve been hanchored or experienced a similar form of hunger, I’ve cried over how good the simplest fast food burger tastes. If I ever found myself moored at Millennium after getting hanchored, I might just find God in that burger. Let me lay down their no-frills burger option. And you can extrapolate from there what they can do when they get fancy. I’m talking about the Fresh Pressed Burger. Oh, man. Things get Pavlovian with words like that. Them’s droolin’ words. Lookit the picture! Them’s droolin’ pictures. Lookit the toasty edges of that butter griddled bun. Lookit how perfectly that cheese is melted. Lookit how juicy that patty is. And a good thickness too, right? Then a bed of fixins keeping those juices from sogging up the bottom bun. That, my friends, is a

paragon of burgerhood. From there, you can get schmancy with any classic burger toppings from bacon to mushrooms.

Friendlies, I just love eating here. Even if you don’t dig on boats, go for the food. Nobody will make you go on a boat. That would be weird. And if you ARE boat-inclined, well... set a course for Millennium Bar & Marina. Or whatever it is you do, Captain. ■



**Millennium Bar & Marina**  
 780 HARBOR DR, EAST DUBUQUE, IL  
 815-554-6196  
 MILLENNIUMMARINA.COM  
**Hours:** Wed–Thu: 4 PM–9 PM,  
 Fri–Sat: 11 AM–9 PM, Sun: 9 AM–5 PM,  
 Mon–Tue: Closed

**DANNY FAIRCHILD**

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