

Jan Guenther

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Membership years – 8+ Event Sponsorship – 10+ years

Owner Gear West Ski Bike Run

Why Am I Interested in Renewing my Board Position?

I absolutely love xc skiing and am passionate about all aspects of keeping the Nordic sport alive. What I so very much enjoy about my past 6 years on the board is the interesting mix that makes up the American Birkebeiner. The organization embodies ski racing and touring for all ages, sponsorship support, general business knowledge and specific industry knowledge. I know a lot about the sport of skiing in all those areas. I have raced 27 Birkes, cheered on my boys in the Barnebirke, and raced dogs in the Barkebike. For nearly a decade I have sponsored the Birke and the Junior Birke thru my retail store Gear West and have been in the ski industry for over 29 years.

Skills I bring to the Birke Board are specifically 1) Sponsorship representation. My experience as a retailer represents many opinions of other Birke retail sponsors. I can be the eyes and ears of the ski industry and suggest what might be helpful in continuing positive relationships among all parties. 2) Skiing public representation. I and the Gear West staff, experience daily, the desires and sentiments of the master skiing enthusiasts; men *AND* woman. We hear what our customers like and what they might want changed in the world of skiing and racing. I try to be that voice who suggests to the board what is happening in the land of Minnesota skiing and what skiers might expect the Birke to be doing, such as snowmaking. 3) Business sense. I understand small business. I live it and breathe it and make difficult decisions on a budget like the Birke's, all day long. I am aware of the challenges and opportunities the Birke faces to expand their business in this difficult snow sport landscape. I can offer helpful suggestions and support choices the Birke must make to continue growing.

Lastly, I enjoy Hayward, Cable and the Birke Trail. I love to create ways to bring skiers to the area, like the Gear West / Riverbrook Women's Wine Chocolate and Ski weekend which hosts 80+ women skiers of all abilities. I love coaching and I just appreciate everyone who supports the ski world.

Thank you for considering keeping me on the board for one more three-year term.

Jan Guenther