

# Visitor

*A Spectator's Guide to the  
American Birkebeiner*

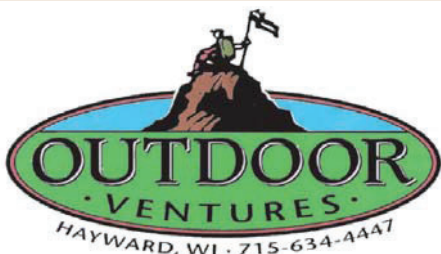
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**[www.BirkieStore.com](http://www.BirkieStore.com)**

**Celebration Zone - Feb 21-24**

- Thursday & Friday - 10am to 5pm
- Saturday - 9am to 5pm
- Sunday - 9am to 1pm



# COMMENT

Well, it's Birkie time once again. And this is our special Spectator's Guide to the Birkie edition of the Visitor. In it you'll find everything you need to know to have a great time over Birkie weekend. Plus, flip this book over and it's the Slumberland American Birkebeiner Official Race Guide. Two books in one, all for one great weekend.

If you're visiting for the weekend, thanks for coming. And feel free to check us out in the summer and fall. You don't need snow to have fun in Hayward.

Have fun, be safe, and give 'em plenty of cowbell!

— Paul



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# Visitor

Your Guide to Wisconsin's Northwoods

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# WELCOME TO THE BIRKIE!

**The Slumberland American Birkebeiner ski marathon — the Birkie — is North America's largest cross-country ski marathon, and the third largest in the world...**

The course spans 50 kilometers from Cable to Hayward for skaters, and 55 kilometers for classic skiers.

- The 29-kilometer Korteloppet — scheduled on Friday this year — is the second largest cross-country ski race in North America.

- In 2019, approximately 11,000 skiers will participate in the Birkie, Korteloppet, and 15-kilometer Prince Haakon (pronounced “HO-ken”).

- The Birkie is part of the Worldloppet circuit of 20 international ski marathons.

- Over 250,000 skiers have finished Birkie ski events — the Birkie, Korteloppet, and the Prince Haakon — since the races began in 1973.

- An estimated 40,000 spectators and skiers gather in the Hayward and Cable area for this annual celebration of winter Nordic sports. Spectators join in the celebration on Hayward's Main Street by ringing cowbells and cheering on skiers.

## The History of the Birkie

The Birkie was founded in 1973 by Tony Wise who patterned the ski marathon after the Birkebeiner Rennet, which had been held in Norway since 1932. Both events honor and re-create a historic Norwegian event — in 1206 two warrior soldiers (called “Birkebeiners” because of the birch-bark leggings they wore) skied infant Prince Haakon to safety during the Norwegian civil war. Prince Haakon subsequently became King of Norway, and the Birkebeiner soldiers became a Norwegian symbol of courage, perseverance and character in the face of adversity.

The first American Birkebeiner Ski Marathon had 35 participants, as compared with nearly 11,000 today. Wise's vision also shaped cross-country skiing when he brought the world together with the founding of the Worldloppet, an international sports federation of cross-country skiing marathons. Since the Worldloppet's inception in 1978, 2.5 million skiers have finished Worldloppet races.

In honor of the Birkie's roots, each year three skiers and an infant dress as the original Birkebeiner warriors, Inga (mother of Prince Haakon) and Prince Haakon. The warriors and Inga ski the Birkebeiner Classic from



Cable to Hayward on traditional wooden skis and in full-period costume. A baby doll is carried along the trail to symbolize wee Prince Haakon. In the final stretch of the race, a real infant Prince joins Inga and the Warriors for the race to the finish line in downtown Hayward. It is a true celebration of the roots, legacy and traditions of the race.

## A Legendary Trail

The Birkie Trails is a 100-plus kilometer trail system that weaves its way through these north woods. Used year-round by skiers, runners, bikers, trekkers, and hikers alike, this trail is groomed by the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation and is available for use by outdoor enthusiasts nearly 365 days a year. The Birkie Trail was named the Number 1 cross-country ski destination in the US by USAToday/10Best.

## The Birkie Mission

The mission of the American Birkebeiner Foundation is to promote and conduct the finest international cross-country ski competition and healthy, active lifestyle events; to serve as good stewards of the American Birkebeiner Trail; and to support healthy and active lifestyles among people of all ages and abilities.

Today, the Birkie has grown into much more than just a race. Today the Birkie represents a year-round, healthy, active lifestyle that provides events for thousands of outdoor fitness enthusiasts of all ages and abilities.

From the iconic Birkie race that started it all, to the Birkie Trail Run Festival and the Fat Bike Birkie (the world's largest fat bike race), the Birkie Trail has become a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts year-round. In fact, over 100,000 visitors utilize the Birkie Trail each year. •





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# SPECTATORS' GUIDE TO EVENTS

The Birkie Celebration and events begin on Thursday and include activities for all ages and abilities.

## Thursday, February 21

### **Barkie Birkie Skijor – 9:30 a.m.**

- Skiers & dogs enjoy the sport of skijoring and show off their “Barkie Fever” as they race down Hayward’s Main Street in 3K sport or 5K expert events. Presented by Northern Lakes Cooperative Feed Mill

### **BarneBirkie Youth Ski Tour- 11:30 a.m.**

- This is where Birkie dreams begin! Imagine 1,000 youth skiers, ages 3-13, skiing from the Hayward Intermediate and Primary schools and finishing on Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street. Three race lengths for different ages and skill levels. Presented by Johnson Financial Group and Swiss Miss

### **Birkie Expo - 10 a.m.-8 p.m.**

- Home to bib pick-up, this two-day event finds over 11,000 skiers and vendors galore preparing for the largest cross-country celebration in North America. Located at Hayward High School

### **Junior Birkie – 1:30 p.m.**

- The next generation of passionate skiers, between 6 and 19 years of age, charge their way toward Main Street in 1.2K, 3K, or 5K races. Races begin behind Intermediate and Primary schools. Presented by Gear West and Rossignol

### **Junior Birkie Team Sprints Relay – 3:45 p.m.**

- Junior Team relay sprints on Hayward’s Main Street make for an afternoon of action-packed excitement. Presented by Gear West and Rossignol

### **Birkie Giant Ski - 5:30 p.m.**

- Under the twinkling Lure of Lights, skiers and non-skiers alike compete in teams of six on giant 25-foot long skis on Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street. Sponsored by Hayward Area Chamber of Commerce

### **Birkie Bash Celebration 2019 – 5:30 p.m.**

- Kick-off Birkie week at Birkie Bash 2018, with a pasta and salad buffet, live music by Molly and the Danger Band, tasty food and Birkie Brew-Ski! Meet Olympic gold-medalist Kikkan Randall and support her on her journey to #FINISHCANCER. Tickets available at the door, \$25 per person. The Steakhouse & Lodge, Highway 27 South.

## Friday, February 22

### **Birkie Expo – 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

- Home to bib pick-up, this two-day event finds over 11,000 skiers and vendors galore. Located at Hayward High School

### **Birkie Adaptive Ski Events – 10 a.m.**

- Adaptive athletes ski in one of three categories: sit-skiers, standing adaptive skiers, and visually impaired skiers. Begins at Wheeler Road and finishes on Main. Presented by Becker Law

### **Kortelopet – 29K Classic & Skate – 10:15 a.m.**

- North America’s second largest cross-country ski race departs from the Highway OO Trailhead and ends on Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street. Title Sponsor Slumberland Furniture, and Presented by L.L. Bean and Salomon.

### **Prince Haakon 15K – 1:15 p.m.**

- In honor of the infant Prince Haakon, a future Norwegian King, who was rescued and skied to safety by Birkebeiner warriors, this exciting race ends amongst cheering fans and the ringing cowbells in downtown Hayward. Title Sponsor Slumberland Furniture, Presented by Northern Lakes Co-op Corner Deli

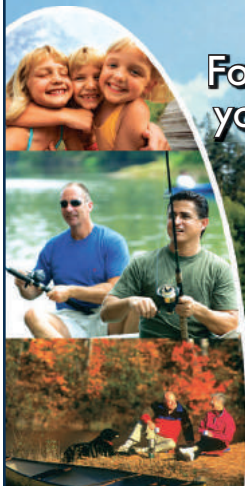
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# SPECTATORS' GUIDE TO EVENTS

## Saturday, February 23

**45th Annual Slumberland American Birkebeiner – 50K Skate/55K Classic – 8:15 a.m.**

- The “Birkie” is North America’s largest ski-marathon. Skiers make their way from the American Birkebeiner Trailhead in Cable to Hayward on the legendary Birkie Trail. Skiers will make their way up and over the Birkie Bridge and finish on Hayward’s snow-covered Main Street. The Greatest Show on Snow! Title Sponsor Slumberland Furniture, Powered by SWIX.

## Sunday, February 24

**Sunday On-Snow Ski & Fat Bike Demo – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

- Everyone from newbie skiers to elites can try out the latest in new equipment

— skis, poles, boots, bindings, and fat bikes — at the American Birkebeiner Trailhead in Cable. Vendors galore!

**Fast & Female Champ Chat – 9:30 a.m. to noon**

- Join elite athletes, including Olympic Gold Medalist Kikkan Randall, for a morning of games, fitness, inspiration, and more. Designed to encourage young female athletes. Elite athletes will mentor younger female skiers through training tips, inspirational encouragement and the importance of embracing a healthy active lifestyle. Located at the NEW Samuel C. Johnson Family Outdoor Center on Hwy. 99 outside of Seeley. Advance registration is recommended and tickets available at [www.fastandfemale.com](http://www.fastandfemale.com)

## More Birkie-inspired events throughout the year!

**Lumberjack 5K Run/Walk – Aug. 3, 2019**

- Channel your flannel at the Lumberjack Run/Walk. Held in conjunction with the Lumberjack World Championships — another iconic Hayward festival. This 5K run/walk is a great way to embrace your inner lumberjack. Run/Walk starts and finishes in legendary Lumberjack Bowl on the shores of Lake Hayward. Yoho! Info at [www.lumberjackworldchampionships.com](http://www.lumberjackworldchampionships.com).

**Fat Bike Birkie – 47K and 21K – March 8 & 9, 2019**

- March 8 Expo & Demos, March 9 races, post-race and after parties. The Fat Bike Birkie is the largest Fat Bike race in the world. Fat biking is the fastest growing sport in cycling, so enjoy this once-a-year chance to ride fat bikes on the groomed, snow covered American

Birkebeiner Ski Trail. Three race options: 47K, 21K, and NEW 10K tour.

**Birkie Trail Run Festival – Sept. 27 & 28, 2019**

- Make it a weekend! On-site camping, great events, expo, vendor demos, food, cold beverages, bonfires, turning leaves, stars, and more. September 27 – Expo begins, camping & north woods fun! September 28 – Ultra, Marathon, Marathon Relay, NEW Ultra Marathon Relay, Half-Marathon, Nordic Trek, 5K, 1K for kids. Details on all Birkie events are available at [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com).

For additional information on these and other American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation events, visit [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com).



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# Descendents of founding skier carry on Birkebeiner tradition

The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of the trio of cross-country skiers who will depict two Birkebeiner Warriors and Inga, the mother of baby Prince Haakon. William Andresen, David Andresen and Carolyn Andresen Warren, all of Ironwood, Mich., will portray Torstein, Skjervald, and Inga, respectively.

Each year, in homage to the legacy of the race, a trio reenacts the historic trek of warriors Torstein and Skjervald, and Inga (mother of Prince Haakon) on wooden skis and in full costume along the entire 55K classic American Birkebeiner cross-country course. Inga and the Warriors will carry a baby doll along the race course, and pick-up a real baby “prince” prior to skiing down Main Street to the finish line. The portrayal is a true celebration of the roots, legacy and traditions of the race.

What makes this year’s Inga and Warriors selection all the sweeter is that the trio are the descendants of Karl Andresen, one of the original 35 founding American Birkebeiner skiers from 1973. Karl’s son, William (Torstein), skied in the first Kortelopet at the age of twelve and has since racked-up a total of seven Kortelopet races and 18 American

Birkebeiner races.

Karl’s grandchildren, David (Skjervald) and Carolyn (Inga), have never experienced a year without a Birkie, including skiing in 11 Barnebirkie races each. David went on to ski one Kortelopet and six American Birkebeiner races, and Carolyn with one Kortelopet and nine American Birkebeiner races.

Founding skier Karl Andresen’s great grandsons, Axel and Sten, will portray the infant Prince Haakon throughout Birkie Week too, continuing the family’s deep-rooted Birkie tradition

“My fondest Birkie memory was skiing with my Dad (Karl) on his final 9-hour Birkie finish at the age of 79...ignoring his doctor’s advice because 30 finishes sounded so much better than the 29 he had already completed,” said William Andresen.

In addition to skiing the 55K classic race on Saturday, the trio will act as Birkie Ambassadors at multiple events throughout Birkie week.

William Andresen said, “This year, we look forward to supporting our Birkie friends as they ski by in their own race journey and to honoring my dad’s legacy and continuing our family’s ongoing Birkie journey since 1973.”

## Buy, shop and you could win

Buy, show... win!

Want to win great prizes from area businesses and the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation? Simply make a purchase at ANY Hayward, Seeley, Cable or Stone Lake area business from Thursday through Sunday of Birkie Week.

Then to enter, keep your receipt, grab your race bib from any Thursday, Friday or Saturday event and stop at one of the drop off locations listed below. It’s that easy! Whether you’re dining, shopping, stopping for gas or grabbing a cup of coffee, any purchase qualifies — as long as you have your receipt.

Bring your race bib and all your receipts to any of these drop locations during Birkie Week:

- Hayward Area Chamber of Commerce: Thursday-Saturday 9am to 5pm

- Cable Area Chamber of Commerce: Friday 8am to 5pm & Saturday 10am to 3pm

- The Whistle Punk in Stone Lake: Saturday 8am to 7pm & Sunday 8am to 2pm

You’ll be entered to win one of many great prizes, including a free entry into any 2020 American Birkebeiner event, \$250 in Birkie Merchandise from the Birkie Store, \$200 in gift certificates from Outdoor Ventures, or \$100 in gift certificates from Caribou Coffee, Coop’s Pizza, Hayward Mercantile Company, Lake Kids, Lynne Marie’s Candies, Marketplace Foods, and The Whistle Punk. Lots of winners, lots of terrific prizes!

Every receipt turns into one entry for the drawing, which will take place the week of February 24, 2019. Winners will be notified by email. Don’t miss out on a chance to win big!



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# HISTORICAL VIGNETTES

In early February 2000 writer Jim Bailey interviewed skier and local historian John Dettloff about the 19 Birkies he'd skied at that point. At the time trail conditions were on everyone's minds due to the weather. In the story, it's stated that the Birkie had never been cancelled due to trail conditions. Well, three weeks later Birkie 2000 was cancelled due to a lack of snow. It happened again in February 2017. Trail conditions are always a hot topic. This story gives interesting insight into Birkie conditions from 1981 to 2000 and is sure to stir up a lot of memories of those years. And yes, Dettloff is still skiing. Last year he completed the Birkebeiner 50K skate.

## Trail Conditions Make Each Birkie Unique

As remembered by John Dettloff in February 2000

From the Sawyer County Record, Feb. 9, 2000

WRITTEN BY JIM BAILEY

Remember the time that there was so little snow that the Birkebeiner went around and around Mt. Telemark? How about the year of the "great crash" following a Rosie's Field start, or the year that it snowed an inch an hour all race-day long?

If you are John Dettloff, you not only remember these occasions, but you also have detailed notes from each year's Birkie, starting (with 1981).

This probably has something to do with the fact that Dettloff is also a writer, along with being a resort owner, fishing guide and historian. Included in his race notes, each year's weather is a subject that he documents with great care.

Our notoriously fickle winter weather can and does give Birkebeiner organizers world-class ulcers to match this world-class race.

"We had an unusually good snow year in 1994," said Dettloff. "It was great all winter. Then, 10 days

before the Birkie I went to Milwaukee for a sports show. When I came back the snow was almost gone. That goes to show how quickly a good snow base can disappear.

"When they groom the trail and people ski on it, a compacted 41 kilometer strip of the Birkie trail is usually the last discernible snow in Sawyer County."

Dettloff skied his first Birkebeiner in 1981 when he was 19 years old. In those days that was the required age, with younger skiers only allowed to compete in the Kortelopet. Now 18-year-olds are Birkebeiner eligible.

The year 1981 was memorable for John's first Birkie, being the closest we have ever come to the big race actually being canceled. True, in 1998 rapidly deteriorating trail conditions forced the cutting of the Birkebeiner in half, running only 25 kilometers from Cable to Seeley. (Since this article was written, the Birkebeiner has been cancelled twice: in 2000 and in 2017.)

But in 1981, on the originally scheduled day, only a few of the international elite skiers participated in anything resembling a race. This was the famous "skiing



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# HISTORICAL VIGNETTES

around the hill” Birkie.

It had been a very mild winter from the beginning, with only a modicum of snow. Then came the dreaded January thaws, which destroyed just about every trace of what little snow had fallen.

An early February blizzard raised a little hope, which was bolstered by Telemark’s snowmaking efforts. The resort’s able snowgunners made literally tons of the white stuff, stockpiling it near the pump house at the base of the Valhalla ski run where it was easily made and accessed. Without lucky stretch of cold weather this would not have been possible.

Perhaps it was an ominous portent that Telemark’s owner, Birkebeiner creator Tony Wise, was to fly to a ski race in Canada on Friday the 13th of February, 1981. Things looked good enough for the upcoming race until, from the aircraft he was in, Wise could see a warm front passing over the Twin Cities, headed for Cable.

On his return flight two days later, Wise was dismayed to observe the nearly total lack of snow over northwest Wisconsin.

Starting on Monday, Feb. 16, succeeding “rescue” plans for the race were first formulated, then junked due to rapidly deteriorating trail conditions.

First an alternative route was sought. Employing a helicopter brought from the Twin Cities, race officials scouted the woods between Cable and Seeley looking for a possible trail route with adequate snow.

Yes, they were able to map out an alternate route of roughly 45 to 50 kilometers. Volunteers worked feverishly to patch bare spots on the alternate route, but even the mountain of man-made snow at Telemark wasn’t adequate to the task, what with daily temperatures reaching 50 degrees.

Come Tuesday, Feb. 17, the alternate route between Cable and Seeley was abandoned and shortened further. “Operation Save The Birkebeiner” was announced on local radio stations.

WRLS and WHSM put out the word that every able-bodied person in the area was needed to shovel what snow could be found onto the re-abbreviated race course. Local high schools closed so students could assist in the effort.

With that plan in place, the volunteer army went to bed on Wednesday night the 18th. As they slept, torrential rain fell, destroying even these meager hopes.

It was then announced that the race would be postponed until March 7. However, elite skiers were already arriving. Eventually, despite temperatures approaching

65 degrees, a seven-lap 42-kilometer citizens’ race around Mt. Telemark was held on Friday of that week.

Despite more pouring rain, international skiers who had traveled from afar skied a 23-lap, 1.3 kilometer loop around the beleaguered Mt. Telemark for a distance of 42 kilometers on Saturday, Feb. 21, 1981.

Ironically, that night the rain turned to snow, with 20 inches of heavy, wet snow accumulating. It readily lasted until March 7, when Dettloff skied his first

Birkebeiner.

That year was the only one in the record books in which the Birkebeiner races were designated “A, B, C and D.” There were elite, foreign and USA races on the dismal first weekend. The longest winning time on record was the USA race, with the winner coming in at four hours and seven minutes. Two weeks later, the full citizen race was the last one to finish at the now long-gone Historyland.

Never missing a race since 1981, Dettloff continues to chronicle race course conditions.

When the race still ran north from Hayward to Cable, the status of the ice on Lake Hayward sometimes precluded a Main Street start. One such year was 1987, when the start was moved to Rosie’s Field.

Two high-capacity deep wells had been installed there the previous year in response to a miserly snow season in 1985, when the race start had been moved from Duffy’s Field to Rosie’s Field.

1987 was the year when Telemark Resort was closed all winter. The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation spent nearly \$140,000 to rent the resort and open it up for one week.

The snow cover had quickly diminished during the week prior to the race and the event’s fate was once again questionable. Using the newly installed wells, snowmaking equipment was used to blanket the start area. Snow was also trucked in and dumped.

“This was the year of the famous ‘great crash’ when about 150 first-wave skiers got involved in a massive pile-up at the bottom of the first hill following the start,” said Dettloff.

“Like many other skiers behind the crash, I took off my skis and walked through the woods around the fallen mob.”

It was the last year when elite skiers, both men and women, started in combination with the first wave, which added to the melee. The following year the elite wave was instituted.

About an hour later heavy wet snow began to fall, lasting the rest of the day and slowing participants down considerably.

Not as considerably as in 1990, however. That year, according to Dettloff’s records, snow fell during the race at the rate of an inch an hour — all day long! Starting in Hayward at Baertch’s Field, the racers slogged along northward to Telemark in what Dettloff called “a death march.”

That year Austrian Manfred Nagl came in with an uncharacteristically slow winning time of two hours and 30 minutes. And he had completed the course before the majority of the soon-to-accumulate 10 inches of snow had descended.

Another memorable “iffy” snow year was 1991, nearly requiring a second-ever postponement of the race until March. The last time when the race ran from south to north, once again a modest snow year was coupled with the dreaded February thaw. The big, open fields became devoid of snow.

Worse yet, many spots along the trail itself became



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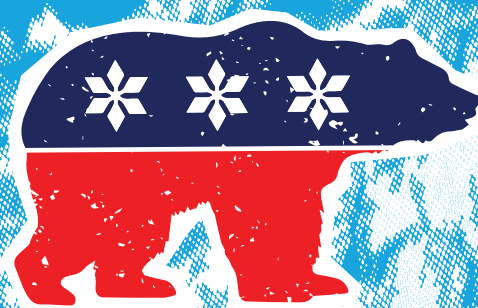
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# HISTORICAL VIGNETTES

bare. An inspection of the course two days after the Pre-Birkie revealed 26 places that were showing bare ground. The rest of the trail was “a sheet of ice that was nearly unskiable,” said Dettloff.

“In some of the bare spots, there were narrow ribbons of ice down the middle of the trail, but in others the ground was completely exposed. One bare spot was as large as 25 by 50 feet. Rosie’s Field had more grass showing than snow.

“So (Birkebeiner Foundation director) Tom Duffy hired me to organize groups to rebuild the Birkie Trails — shovel by shovel — reminiscent of the scene 10 years earlier.”

Ever the meticulous note taker, he provided the shovelers’ names for this article nine years after the fact: Deno Mense, Dale Pederson, Barney Morgan, Beth Morgan, Duff Melhus, Rick Olson, Colleen Furguson, Cory Slayton, Ryan Kline, Mike Hoff and, of course, himself.

This crew hand-shoveled more than 4,000 cubic feet of snow, an heroic effort. And, once again, fickle Mother Nature did whatever she felt like, then laying down a nice six inches of snow. Typically a tease, she next brought along 45-degree temperatures on the heels of that snowfall.

“We were back to trucking in snow by the ton for another Rosie’s Field start,” said Dettloff.

For John, 1997 was the fastest race ever. There had been a mini-thaw, not enough to ruin the trail, but enough, once it was re-frozen, to make it as slick as glass.

“I never saw K markers go by so fast. The entire race was like a sprint. I turned in my personal-best time of two hours and 22 minutes,” he said.

“A disadvantage of a race that fast is that it is difficult to drink. Your heart is pounding from the pace. When the snow is softer, you’re not working your heart as hard. You can eat, drink and talk to people as you race,” he said.

In recent memory, 1998 stands out as another unique Birkebeiner whose fate was determined by weather and trail conditions. It was the year of the “half Birkie.”

The saving grace of snow cover on the Birkebeiner Trail has always been the fact that it runs mostly through the deep woods. That and a hilly topography that is unique to World Loppet-series races tends to preserve any small amount of snow cover far beyond when it has melted away from the open areas around Hayward.

EI Niño had reared its ugly head. The struggle was on once again to salvage the American Birkebeiner. The by-now familiar sequence of announcements came from the Birkie Foundation’s new headquarters. With only 31 inches of snow having fallen all winter, the first plan was to shorten the race to 48 kilometers, ending it at Duffy’s Field.

Ultimately, the race was shortened to 25 kilometers, the same distance as the Kortelopet. “It was an awe-

some race, all things considered,” said Dettloff. “What snow there was froze up good, making for a really fast track. I finished in one hour flat.

“It seemed like the race was over before it started. Everybody was in a really good mood, just glad to be there racing at all. About the only trouble came at the start. It was the first time using the Cable airport, and at one point everything bottlenecked down about 10 feet wide.

“I had to do some fancy dancing and footwork to get through there, and wiped out twice in the process,” he said.

There were many changes in 1998. Telemark’s Coliseum was being dismantled and moved, the race started at the Cable Union Airport for the first time, the finish was in Seeley, and the race headquarters had, fortunately, moved to a new building before the Walker Hotel/Hayward Inn fire.

Dettloff dubs 1999 a “miracle year” when it comes to the preservation of snow on the trail. Once again nature had been stingy with the snowfall, but the trail was adequately covered. A few inches of snow fell early enough in the week that officials were confident in announcing that it would go the full distance.

Then on the night before the race it rained hard, complete with thunder and lightning. “They did a superb job of grooming the trail in the middle of the night,” he said. “There was good coverage with no bare spots to worry about.”

“The last part of the race, once you got to Hanson Hill by Highway 77, was almost like a mud slide, though. The snow was just brown. The only thing that saved me there was the Cera F wax that I had put on. It repels dirt and water,” he said.

The weather during (the 1999) Birkebeiner was warm with fog that much of the time verged upon drizzle. Racers arrived at the finish line stripped to the minimum of clothing and drenched with sweat.

Before they got to the finish, however, they had one last challenge to face. Although the ice on Lake Hayward was deemed safe at 16 to 20 inches in thickness, it sure got soggy. By mid-afternoon racers were slogging through an inch or two of water on top of the ice.

“When you got to the lake it was black ice and it was hard to see where the trail was. I found the right zone of the glare ice portion where there wasn’t standing water,” said Dettloff.

Of course, when you are an elite skier like Dettloff is, you finish the race early enough in the day that things usually haven’t melted too badly.

In its entire history the Birkebeiner has only been cancelled twice. Somehow we can almost always manage to eke out just enough snow cover to pull it off.

As Dettloff so aptly puts it, “Birkie skiers are a rare breed, and as long as the race is held, many of the event’s dedicated participants would show up — whether they would have to do a dozen loops around Telemark or race down Highway 63 on roller skis.” •



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# VISITOR MAGAZINE'S **Backyard Birdwatcher**



BY PAUL MITCHELL • VISITOR PUBLISHER

## *The Great Horned Owl*

**A**fter living here for 25 years, I've sadly learned to take a lot for granted. Being in such close proximity with the wildness of northern Wisconsin doesn't fascinate me as much as it did when I first moved here.

But there are still moments.

Take, for instance, a still winter night. As I've grown older, I've grown less tolerant of the cold so I find myself outside in the winter much less than I used to. But there are still moments when I'll step outside at night, stare up at the stars, and listen to the stillness. Yes, you can hear quiet, and no quiet is as loud as a still winter's night when the temperature is about zero.

And nothing thrills me more than having that deafening silence broken by the howl of a coyote, or better yet, the hoot of an owl.

There's something so mysterious about owls. They're like the living shadows of the bird world. I vividly remember driving home from work late at night, back in my early days here. The pitch darkness of the rural roads was such a contrast to the city streets I was used to. I was driving south on 27 and a small animal shot across the roads, dashing through the light of my head lamps. And then the shadow — a huge shadow, almost spirit-like — passed just over my windshield following after the hapless critter.



PHOTO BY JOHN KEESE

My heart nearly jumped out of my chest.

An owl.

I'm not going to pretend to know what kind of owl it was, but for this winter edition of Backyard Birdwatcher, we'll get the scoop on an owl that's pretty common in these parts: The Great Horned Owl. So here goes...

It's the owl we saw in our picture books as children. It has long, ear-like tufts on the top of its head. A deep-throated hoot. A foreboding yellow stare.

The Great Horned Owl is a powerful predator, and it's right at home in our backyards. It can take down birds and mammals larger than itself, but it also fills its plate with smaller critters like mice and frogs. It's one of the most common owls in North America, and its range spans the continent, from the Arctic to the tropics.

The Great Horned Owl is a large, thick-bodied bird with broad and rounded wings. It's slightly larger than a red-tailed hawk, 18 to 24 inches long and weighing two to five pounds. It has a fairly broad wingspan, from 40 to 57 inches.

Great Horned Owls are a mottled gray and brown color, with reddish brown faces and a white throat patch.

You'll find them most often in the woods, particularly young forests in proximity to fields and open

**CONTINUED ON PAGE SG48**



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# DETOURS AND ROAD CLOSURES

## Detours

**Tuesday** 7 am to Wednesday at 8 am - Highway 63 closed at Main St for Bridge installation. Detour on Dakota/5th St/ Kansas.

**Friday** 11:30 am to 4 pm – Highway 77 closed at Hatchery Park Rd for the Kortelopez. Detour on Highway 27/County Highway B/County Highway K

**Saturday** 11:30 am to 4 pm – Highway 77 closed at Hatchery Park Rd for the Birkebeiner Race. Detour on Highway 27/ County Highway B/County Highway K

**Monday** 8 am to 10 pm - Highway 63 closed at Main St for Bridge removal. Detour on Dakota/5th St/Kansas.

**Friday and Saturday** - Truck Detours, 8 am to 5 pm, STH 77-CTH K to CTH B to STH 27 to USH 63 to 77

## City of Hayward Road Closures

### Tuesday

All Day - Main Street between Highway 63 and Railroad Street

### Wednesday

All day - Main Street between Highway 63 and Railroad Street

After 5 pm – Main Street between Railroad Street to 5th Street

After 5 pm –Railroad Street between Kansas Street and Main Street

### Thursday

Railroad Street between Kansas Street and Main Street

Main Street between Railroad Street to 5th Street

8 am to 4 pm only – Main Street between 5th and 6th Streets reduced to one lane. No

crossing Main Street at 5th Street

### Friday

Railroad Street between Kansas Street and Main Street

Main Street between Railroad Street to 5th Street

9:30 am to 5 pm - 5th Street from Main Street to Minnesota Avenue. East 5th Street to Nyman Avenue open all day.

### Saturday

Railroad Street between Kansas Street and Main Street

Main Street between Railroad Street to 5th Street

7:30 am to 6 pm - 5th Street from Main Street to Minnesota Avenue. East 5th Street to Nyman Avenue open all day.

# DURING THE KORTELOPET AND BIRKIE

Road Closures			
Friday	Kortelopez/Prince Haakon	Closed/Restricted Times	Township
	Hwy OO	8:30-11:30 am	Lenroot/Spider Lake
	Pit Road	9:00am-3:00pm	Round Lake
	Mosquito Brook Rd	10:30 am-2:30 pm	Lenroot/Spider Lake
	Hatchery Rd	11:00am-4:00pm	Hayward
	Hwy 77	11:00am-4:00pm	Hayward
	Wheeler Rd	11:30am-4:30 pm	Hayward
	Duffy Rd	11:30am-4:30 pm	Hayward
Saturday	American Birkebeiner		
	Randysak and Phillipi	5am-10:30 am	Cable
	McNaught Rd	5am-10:30 am	Cable
	Timber Trail Rd	5am-11:30am	Cable
	Randysak Rd	5am-12pm	Cable
	Short Rd	one way	Cable
	Pit Rd	8am-4pm	Round Lake
	Mosquito Brook Rd	9am-4pm	Lenroot
	Hatchery Rd	9am-5:30pm	Hayward
	Hwy 77	9:45am-5:15pm	Hayward
	Wheeler Rd	9:45am-5:30pm	Hayward
	Duffy Rd	9:45am-5:30 pm	Hayward



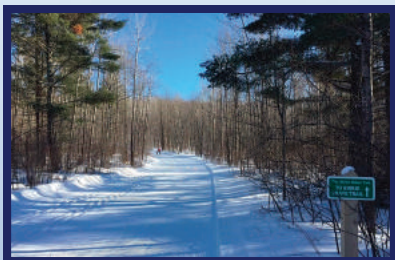
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# SPECTATOR Q & A

## Everything you need to know Birkie week... and perhaps some things you don't!

### **Q: What events are there this weekend besides the Birkie on Saturday?**

A: There are many great events for spectators, such as the Barkie Birkie, the Birkie Giant Ski, the Barnebirkie, the Junior Birkie, the Slumberland American Birkebeiner Expo, the On-Snow Ski & Bike Demo, and much more! Check out the calendar of events on pages SG8, SG10, and RG4.

### **Q. Where is the Birkie office? Is it open?**

A: The Birkie office is located at 10527 Main Street in Hayward. Hours Birkie week are Wednesday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thursday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Sunday 8 a.m.- 1 p.m., Monday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

### **Q. Can I find out if someone I know is registered for the race?**

A: Confirmation of registration can be found online at [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com). Click on the race registered for. Under Registration, click on "Am I Registered?" A new tab will open and then you can search by first and last name to see if you or anyone else is registered and what race they are registered for.

### **Q: Can I follow my skier's progress during the race?**

A: Yes! Track an athlete on your Smartphone. First, download the RTRT.me Mobile App at <http://rtrt.me/app/birkie2019> or search for "rtrt.me" in your App Store. Once the app is downloaded to your phone, search for and select the "2019 Birkie" event. Participants, family, and friends can use Live Tracking to get status of participants in real-time using the Live Tracker & Leaderboard. Users will get details such as time, pace, position on the map, and estimated finish time.

### **Q: Is there any streaming trail video?**

A: Yes, you can watch streaming video of Kortelopet, Prince Haakon and American Birkebeiner skiers at points along the race course. Check out [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com) to watch the streaming video from four stationary cameras capturing the Kortelopet and American Birkebeiner race start areas, and Prince Haakon, Kortelopet, and American Birkebeiner skiers approaching the American Birkebeiner International Bridge, and cross-

ing the Finish Line.

### **Q: Where and when is the Birkie Expo? Can I go even though I'm not a skier?**

A: The Birkie Expo is in the Hayward High School, 10320 Greenwood Lane, Hayward. It will be open on Thursday, February 21 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Friday, February 22 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Birkie Expo is open to anyone.

### **Q: What roads are closed and when? Are there detours?**

A: See page 22 of this edition of the Visitor.

### **Q: Can someone pick up a bib for a registered skier?**

A: You may only pick-up someone else's bib if you are picking up your own bib. To do so, you must have a paper or electronic copy of the other skier's bib pick-up confirmation email and a signed note from the other skier authorizing you to pick-up their bib.

### **Q: What is the Finish Zone?**

A: The Finish Zone is a secure space for skiers and extends from the Finish Line to down 5th street after they finish the race.

### **Q: What is at the Recovery Zone?**

A: Recovery Zone is the first opportunity to reunite skiers with friends and family after the finish. There is a changing tent for skiers, ski racks, a food tent (only for finishing skiers), an Elevated Legs recovery zone (skiers only), Gu Recovery, and a Results Kiosk.

### **Q: Where is Celebration Zone and what happens there?**

A: Located between Main Street and Dakota Avenue, skiers, friends, family, and fans are invited to gather at Celebration Zone to watch the live race on the jumbo screen, share stories, shop in the Birkie Store, and celebrate with food and drink. Open Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., The Birkie Brew-Ski Beer Garden will proudly be serving Birkie Brew-Ski – A Legendary Amber Ale crafted just for the Birkie by Lucette Brewing Company. There will also be Food Trucks serving a variety of delicious hot food options – pizza, burgers, & brats, to name a few.





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# SPECTATOR Q & A

**Q: Is there anywhere to charge my phone?**

A: There is a Free Charging Station at the Celebration Zone Information Booth, courtesy of our friends at People's Bank.

**Q: Where (and what?) is the Birkie Store?**

A: The Birkie Store is home to all official Birkie, American Birkebeiner, Kortelopet, and Prince Haakon gifts and items to commemorate your race. Birkie Week Store hours on Celebration Zone are: Thursday & Friday, 10 to 5; Saturday 9 to 5; and Sunday, 9 to 1.

**Q: Where is the Champions Stage and when are the champions awarded?**

A: Join in the celebration! Join in congratulating the champions of the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon, and American Birkebeiner as they take to the podium and receive their awards. Friday at 12:45 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; Saturday at 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

**Q: Where is the Tony Wise Museum of the American Birkebeiner?**

A: The Tony Wise Museum of the American Birkebeiner is free to the public and is located at 10527 Main Street, at the foot of the International Bridge. Birkie week hours are: Wednesday 8 to 5; Thursday 8 to 5; Friday 8 to 5; Saturday, 7 to 7; and Sunday 8 to 1.

**Q: I'd like to try skiing or fat biking. Is there a time or place where I can try these sports?**

A: Head to the American Birkebeiner Trailhead near Cable for the Birkie On-Snow Ski + Bike Demo, Sunday from 9 to 2. Try the newest skis, boots, poles and fat tire bikes. Vendors galore!

## Race Day:

**Q: Can I sign up for an event the day of?**

A: Yes, for some events. You can sign up for the Barnebirkie, and Giant Ski (if there is room) the day of. You can register online at [www.Birkie.com/ski](http://www.Birkie.com/ski) or the site will provide you with information on how to sign up in person. **You cannot sign up for the Birkebeiner, the Kortelopet or the Prince Haakon on Saturday.**

**Q: Where is the start? The finish? Parking?**

A: The Slumberland American Birkebeiner starts at the American Birkebeiner Trailhead near Cable. The Kortelopet starts at the Highway OO Trailhead east of Seeley. The Prince Haakon starts off of Phipps Road outside of Hayward. All three races finish on the snow-covered Main Street of Hayward. See Where to Park on page SG30.

**Q: Can I park at the start areas to watch the races begin?**

A: Although there is no spectator parking at the start areas, spectators may ride skier buses to the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon and American Birkebeiner starts. Preference will be given to skiers boarding the bus. Buses will return spectators to designated skier parking lots after the start of each race (See the map in the Official Participant Guide [you're holding it... just flip this book over]) for a map that shows parking and busing information. Access to the starting areas for all races is restricted to buses and permitted vehicles only. Spectator access is by bus only and from designated skier parking lots.

**Q: What time do I really need to be on the bus to see a wave start?**

A: Total time 1 hour 15 minutes from arrival at parking lot. 15 minutes to park, 30 minutes on the bus, 15 min to navigate to the start area, 15 minutes to settle in and watch the spectacle and see the waves start the race! This may be more time than necessary, but better safe than sorry!

**Q: Where is the official Lost & Found?**

A: Check for missing items at the Veteran's Community Center, Highway 63 and Main Street, at the base of the International Bridge. Hours: Friday 1 to 6; Saturday 11 to 7; Sunday 8 to 1; and Monday 8 to noon. Upon request, found items will be shipped to the owners, at the owner's expense, until March 31, 2019. Call 715-634-5025 should you desire to find a lost item. Each year, thousands of skis, poles, sunglasses, and more, are lost during Birkie week. And they all look the same! Please label all equipment and clothing before coming to the Birkie. You'll be glad you did!

**Q: Where will the results be posted?**

A: Personal results print outs are available at kiosks located in Recovery Zone and Celebration Zone. Remember, there may be finishers from later waves who may displace your result as printed. Online results will be available at [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com). Pick-up a copy of the Sawyer County Record commemorative results issue available throughout the Cable and Hayward areas available early Sunday morning. Note: There will not be a Birch Scroll published until Fall 2019.



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# SPECTATOR Q & A

**Q: As a spectator, how should I dress?**

A: Dress in layers. Although we cannot predict weather, standing around for hours in the snow or in the cold means your body will need an extra layer or two to stay warm. Focus on keeping your extremities, like fingers, toes and your nose, warm throughout the day.

**Q: Where can I park on race day?**

A: See Where to Park on page SG30.

**Q: How will I know when the first finishers are headed to their Main Street finish?**

A: Listen for the bells! Churches throughout Hayward ring their bells to herald the arrival of the first finishers: a wonderful, small-town tradition.

**Q: Is there a good place to watch the big race on Saturday?**

A: The best vantage point to watch any of the races is from downtown Hayward.

**The Finish:** You'll see skiers as they make their way over the International Bridge to the sounds of ringing cowbells, cheering crowds, and witness their anticipation as they near the finish line. It is an exciting and moving experience for all. There's plenty of space for spectators along Main all the way to the finish.

**The Start:** If you choose to watch the start of the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon or Slumberland American Birkebeiner races, please see Where to Park on page 28 for details on how to access the start areas. You can't park at start areas; you will have to take a bus. But you'll still have fun.

**The Middle:** With many road closures and limited access, spectators are strongly discouraged from attempting to watch any race at any mid-point along the course route. You can, however, watch the LiveStream of the start of the Kortelopet and American Birkebeiner, and the finish of the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon and American Birkebeiner at [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com).

**Q: What do the different colored bibs mean?**

A: Good question! See pages SG38-39 for a key explaining the bibs of many colors.

**Q: What's up with the cowbells?**

A: You can't hear clapping when people are wearing mittens, can you? Rumor has it that the cowbell tradition started in Switzerland. Cows were kept in barns in the winter, so

their bells were available as noise makers at ski races. And hey, who doesn't have a fever for more cowbell?

**Q: Where is a good place to eat?**

A: Just about everywhere. The Hayward, Cable and Stone Lake areas are a year-round tourism destination, and there is a surprising variety of wonderful restaurants in the area. Or, if you're in downtown Hayward, swing by Celebration Zone for tasty fare from a variety of food vendors including pizza, brats and burgers. Try something new!

**Q: I'd like to become a Birkie volunteer. How do I do it?**

A: Sign-up for volunteers is on [www.birkie.com/volunteer](http://www.birkie.com/volunteer). There are oodles of jobs and hundreds of shifts to choose from.

**Q: Where do I find a good post-race wrap up and results, and get a souvenir of a fun weekend spent in the Hayward and Cable areas?**

A: The local newspaper, the Sawyer County Record, publishes a special, free Results Edition! It is printed and distributed early Sunday morning, so look for your copy in Hayward and Cable area stores, gas stations and restaurants on Sunday morning. Copies are also available outside the Birkie office and outside the Sawyer County Record office, located at 15464 County Highway B, Hayward. The official results issue of the Birch Scroll will be published Fall 2019.

**Q: I had a great time in Hayward. Where can I find information on things to do here during the rest of the year?**

A: There are lots of ways to keep up with what's going on in Hayward

- Subscribe to the local paper, the Sawyer County Record, 715-634-4881 or [hayward-wi.com](http://hayward-wi.com)
- Visit the paper's website often, [www.haywardwi.com](http://www.haywardwi.com)
- Subscribe to a 10-issue season of the Visitor, \$20, by calling 715-634-4881
- Visit the Birkie's website, [www.birkie.com](http://www.birkie.com)
- Visit the Hayward Area Chamber of Commerce website, [www.haywardareachamber.com](http://www.haywardareachamber.com)
- Visit the Hayward Lakes & Convention Bureau website, [www.haywardlakes.com](http://www.haywardlakes.com).
- Visit the Cable Area Chamber of Commerce's website, [www.cable4fun.com](http://www.cable4fun.com)

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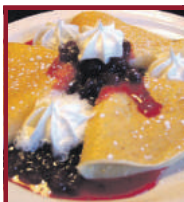
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# WHERE DO SPECTATORS PARK?

To make navigating Birkie week easier for spectators, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation has designated one lot specifically for spectator parking. There will be continuous shuttle service to and from this lot.

## Thursday, February 21

### Parking

- The Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot is the designated spectator parking lot during Birkie week.
- Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot is located off Hwy. B. There will be signs to direct traffic. Follow the signs to the lot's entrance.
- On Thursday, families on their way to the Barnebirkie or Junior Birkie may catch a shuttle from the Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot directly to registration and bib pick-up in the Recovery Zone tent. Shuttles will run continuously from Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot to the Recovery Zone and back again. Shuttles are available from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Shuttle buses will run continuously from the Celebration Zone on Dakota Avenue to Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot after Thursday's events. Shuttle Buses will run from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- Municipal Lots – On Dakota Avenue and Second Street in Hayward; Highway 63 and Main Street near the base of the International Bridge

## Friday & Saturday, February 22 & 23

### Where NOT to Park: DOWNTOWN HAYWARD!

- Spectators of the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon, and Slumberland American Birkebeiner should not plan to park in downtown Hayward. Personal vehicles are not allowed on the streets in the vicinity of the Main Street corridor.
- The spectator parking lot must be used for those planning to spectate on Main Street. Please obey all signs, posted road closings, and detours.
- Access to the starting areas for all races is restricted to buses and permitted vehicles only. (Info on how spectators can get to start areas is at the end of this section.)

## Friday, February 22

### Where TO Park:

- Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot - See Thursday above.

### Shuttle Buses:

- Spectator shuttle buses will run continuously between Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot and the Celebration Zone on Dakota Avenue. Shuttles will run from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Shuttle buses from the Recovery Zone to Birkie Ridge, the dedicated Kortelopet and Prince Haakon skier lot, will run continuously between 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Volunteers will assist you in getting on a bus that will take you back to your parking lot. Please do not use this area as a skier pick-up location.

## Saturday, February 23

### Where TO Park:

- Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot - See Thursday at left.

### Shuttle Buses:

- Spectator shuttle buses will run continuously between Downtown/Spectator Parking Lot off Hwy. B and the Celebration Zone on Dakota Avenue. Shuttles will run from 9:00 am to 6:30 pm.
- Shuttle buses from the Recovery Zone to Birkie Ridge and the Como Lots, the dedicated American Birkebeiner skier lots, will run continuously between 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Volunteers will assist you in getting on a bus that will take you back to your parking lot. Please do not use this area as a skier pick-up location.

### What if I want to cheer on my skier at the START of the race?

- Spectators may ride skier buses to the Kortelopet, Prince Haakon, and Slumberland American Birkebeiner start areas.
- Preference will be given to skiers boarding the bus.
- Buses will return spectators to designated skier parking lots after the start of each race.
- Please see "Getting Around On Race Day" for details (flip book over to find skier busing information in the Race Guide).

## WHERE CAN I GO TO THE BATHROOM?

Please do not rely on local businesses for the use of their restroom facilities. There are many places to go ... when you have to go!

- Porta-potties, off Main Street at all the cross streets from Railroad to 4th
- Celebration Zone and Recovery Zone

## WHERE CAN I MEET MY SKIERS AFTER THE RACE?

### Celebration Zone

- All are welcome to come to Celebration Zone to watch others finish, share their race stories, and fuel-up
- Downtown restaurants will also be open for both the spectators and skiers alike

### Recovery Zone

- The first opportunity to reunite skiers with friends and family after the finish.
- Skier Food tent (food is for skiers only!), results kiosk, ski storage racks and more!





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**Reporter and Lake Living columnist Kathy Hanson interviews the 2010 Birkebeiners, Gale Otterholt (left) and Marv Franson (right).**

## My first Birkie... no, I didn't ski

**I**t was my first Birkie. I had only been a spectator in the past, so I was nervous.

No, I didn't ski it. I reported on it as a newspaper reporter for the Sawyer County Record. It is a day in my life that I will always remember: Saturday, Feb. 27, 2010.

For several weeks we had been planning the coverage for the Birkie. Terrell and Paul knew the drill but I was a fledgling.

I could hardly sleep the night before. Paul wanted me to get there early and interview spectators on Main Street in Hayward, lined up early to get good positions. It was a new feature, and I think we called it "People on the Street," or something like that.

And then—horror of horrors—he wanted me at the finish line. I couldn't believe it.

I drove in to Hayward early, found a parking spot in front of a house on Dakota Avenue where the owner came out and told me I couldn't park there. I stood my ground.

It was cold but I had thermal underwear on and a ski jacket I had used when I used to downhill ski. The problem was the hands. Try approaching strangers on Main Street and talk them into telling you why they're there, who do they know who's skiing the Birkie, where they are from, etcetera. Then take notes as fast as you can on a little reporter's notepad, without gloves on your hands, using a pen that is freezing up. Then snap photos with the heavy camera around your neck (no iPhones back then) and make sure you get the names right.

Actually, people were quite friendly. The fact that

**CONTINUED ON PAGE SG50**

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# Pasta nosh and carbo load

Local spots are hosting pre-Birkebeiner dinners:

- Birkie Bash Pasta Buffet, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21. Kick-off Birkie week at Birkie Bash 2018. Live music, tasty food, cold beverages, Birkie Brew-Ski, good company, and meet Kikkan Randall, Olympic champion. Tickets available at the door for \$25 per person or register online at [www.Birkie.com](http://www.Birkie.com).
- St. Joseph's Catholic Church on Dakota Avenue in Hayward annual spaghetti feed from noon to 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22. Spaghetti with meat or vegetarian sauce, salad, bread, cake and

beverage. Adults \$9; kids 6-12 \$4; 5 and under are free. All you can eat.

- Cable Community Center Spaghetti Feed, Friday, Feb. 22, 4-8 p.m., Cable Community Center, Hwy. M. Spaghetti, bread, refreshments and desserts. Hosted by the American Legion, a fundraiser for Northwoods Preschool.
- Carbo load and fuel your engine at any of a multitude of great local restaurants in the greater Hayward and Cable area. Restauranters are eager for your business, and hope to see you return at other times of the year.

# Fast and Female empowers

The Fast and Female Champ Chat on Birkie Week will empower young girls to stay active and participate in athletics throughout their lives.

Join elite Birkie racers for a morning of fun on Sunday, Feb. 24, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the new Samuel C. Johnson Family Outdoor Center on Hwy. OO. Young women from ages 8-18 are invited to learn from elite female Birkie racers during a morning of ski games, technique tips, and inspirational

stories. Connect with professional athletes, meet other girls interested in sports, and hear about life as an athlete! Gold medalist Kikkan Randall will be there. Champ Chats are held throughout the United States and Canada to keep girls in sports while they are growing up and to encourage them to continue working hard in healthy lifestyles.

The cost is \$25 for participants, and includes a T-shirt and snack. Sign up at [www.fastandfemale.com](http://www.fastandfemale.com).

# Somewhere for the kiddos

Hayward's First Lutheran Church will provide childcare on Friday, February 22 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturday, February 23 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Pre-registration is required.

Contact [tchipman@firstlutheranhayward-wi.net](mailto:tchipman@firstlutheranhayward-wi.net) for details and registration forms. Registration forms also available at [birkie.com](http://birkie.com).

# The Birkie by the numbers

'How many \_\_\_\_\_ does it take to put on the Birkie?'

## Based on Birkie 2018

- 13,500 Skiers (all events)
- 1 American Birkebeiner International Bridge
- 1 Key Log Crossing Bridge at OO Trailhead
- 8 Aid Stations
- 2,845 volunteers
- 25,000 to 30,000 Spectators
- 5 Dump Trucks
- 1 Really Big Snowblower
- 68 Dump Truck Loads of Snow for Main Street

- 2 Helicopters
- 8 Forerunner Skiers
- 1 Birkie Brew-Ski Beer Garden
- 92 National Ski Patrol Skiers
- 26 Tents of all Sizes
- 2,300 Oranges
- 5,500 Bananas
- 5,200 Cups of Hot Chocolate
- 680 gallons of soup
- 5,700 gallons of water
- 1,700 gallons of sport drink
- 42,000 cookies

- 220 portable toilets
- 50+ miles of snow-covered, forested trails
- 30-foot wide course
- 13,500 Bibs
- 8,000 Medals
- 9,000 Pins
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# If you see something... SAY SOMETHING!

Safety of spectators and participants is always foremost in everyone's mind.

To send an anonymous tip to law enforcement officials for activities related to and during Birkie week events, please text: TIP BIRKIE (followed by a message or report) to telephone number 888777.

Phone: 888777

Text: TIP BIRKIE (followed by a message or tip for law enforcement)

Or, on Twitter, send a message to @birkiealert

## WHEN WILL THEY FINISH?

BE READY TO RING THOSE COWBELLS WHEN THE SKIERS  
CROSS THE FINISH LINE.

### KORTELOPET (FRIDAY)

	Men	Women
Lake Hayward	11:40 am	11:50 pm
Finish	11:50	12 pm

### PRINCE HAAKON (FRIDAY)

	Men	Women
Finish	2 pm	2:10 pm

### SLUMBERLAND AMERICAN BIRKEBEINER (SAT.)

	Women	Men
Highway OO	9:25 am	9:40 am
Lake Hayward	10:35 am	10:40 am
Finish	10:45 am	10:45 am

## Check out the Hospitality Zones!

Back in 2019: Need a space to warm-up and chill-out? Check out one of the three Hospitality Zones in downtown Hayward

• **Slumberland Furniture:** Warm beverages and plenty of comfortable places to rest when you come in out of the cold! All are welcome. Location: Slumberland Furniture, Hwy. 63

• **CLIF Lodge:** Warm up and enjoy complimentary snacks, drinks, and activities. After your race, get your finisher medal engraved and stay for the Apres-Ski party. Location: Corner of Hwy. 63 & Main Street

• **The Village at MarketPlace**

• Kemps Kids Zone—Free snacks for kids!

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• Brat Stand, featuring hot "Birkie Brew-Ski Brats," only from MarketPlace. \$5, cash only.

• Beer Station, serving the Birkie's own "Birkie Brew-Ski Beer"

• Sauna with Friends! Mobile Sauna and Hangout from Sauna Society Outfitters. Info and reservations: [saunasocietyoutfitters.com/birkie](http://saunasocietyoutfitters.com/birkie)

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**Spirit of 35: Commem-**  
**orating the original 35**  
**founding skiers, given**  
**to each year's 35 skiers**  
**who have skied the**  
**most Birkies**



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**WAVE 7:**  
**Skate Skiers**



**Wave 8:**  
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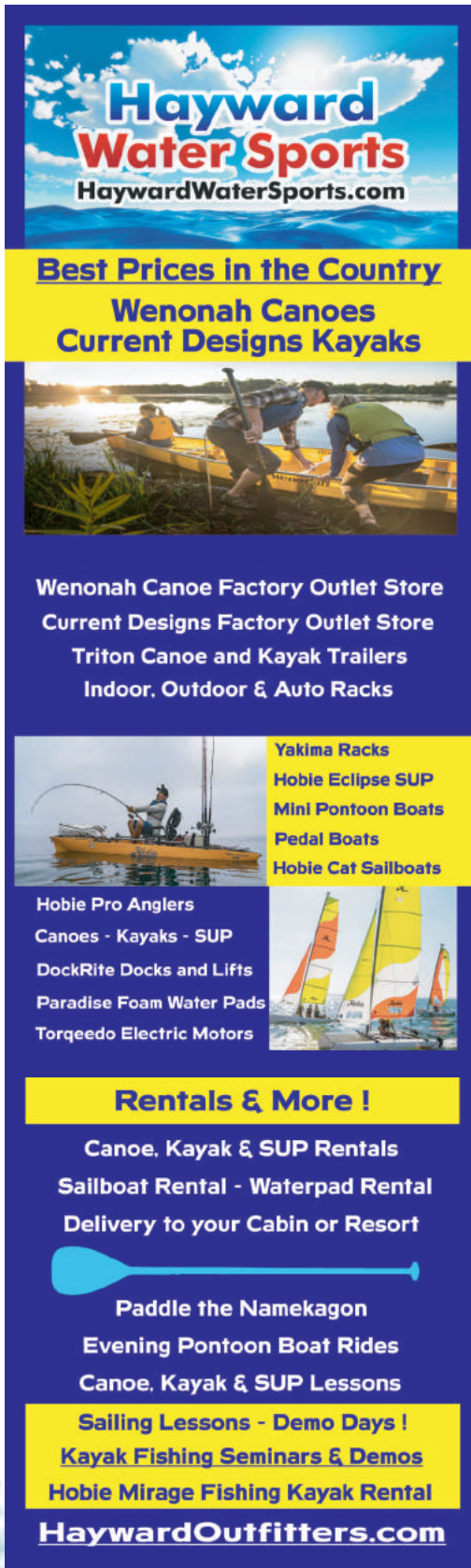
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# GET OUT & HAVE FUN!

## THE VISITOR WINTER CALENDAR

### February

- 16: Snake Feeding at the Cable Natural History Museum, 10 a.m. Info: 715-798-3890
- 16: Talon Talk Live Raptor Program at the Cable Natural History Museum. Learn all about the amazing world of birds of prey from Naturalist Haley Appleman. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Donations welcome. Info: 715-798-3890.
- 16: Glidden Snobears annual fundraiser, Toilet Seat Races with a Chinese auction and chili and soup cookoff. Roxy's Bar, Glidden. Registration at 11 a.m.; racing at noon. New this year: Turd Toss. (Don't bring your own!) Chinese auction at noon; drawing at 3. Info: Jeff Crom, president, Glidden Snobears, 715-264-6242.
- 16: Dummond Sno Jacks Bar Stool Races. Drummondwi.com.
- 16: Park Center presents Oscar Shorts, 7:30 p.m.
- 16: Walleyes for Northwest Wisconsin Annual Ice Fishing Event, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Lac Courte Oreilles.
- 21: Farmer's Market at NorthLakes Clinic, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 21-24: Birkie Weekend!
- 21: Thursday: Expo, Adaptive Birkie, Barkie Birkie Skijor, Barnebirkie, Giant Ski, Junior Birkie.
- 22: Friday, Kortelopet, Prince Haakon 15K.
- 23: Saturday: American Birkebeiner.
- 23: Snake Feeding at the Cable Natural History Museum, 10 a.m. Info: 715-798-3890
- 23: Camp Birkie for Kids. Children in kindergarten through 6th grade can participate in this day-long environmental education

- camp at the Cable Natural History Museum. Drop-off available at 7 a.m. and pick-up at 2 p.m. or when parents finish their race. Space is limited. Registration required by February 16 online at [www.cablemuseum.org](http://www.cablemuseum.org) or by phone 715-798-3890. \$80 per child.
- 24: Sunday ski demo, Fast and Female Champ Chats.
- 24: Celtic music session, Farmstead Creamery and Café. No cover charge. Participate in the music or just listen in. 4th Sunday of the month.

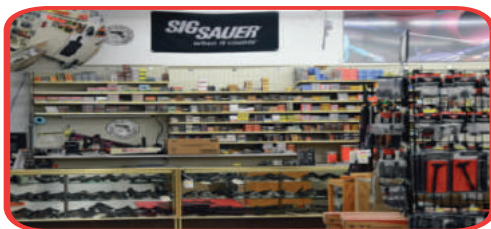
### March

- 1-3: World's Longest Weenie Roast Weekend at Lakewoods Resort, Lake Namakagon.
- 1: Northern Pike Harvest Tourney, Deerfoot Lodge, Hayward. For the Pike Improvement Project. Info: [chippewaflowage.com](http://chippewaflowage.com)
- 1: Community Skating Party, 7:30 p.m. at the Hayward Sport Center. \$4 admission; \$4 skate rental (if needed). 715-634-4791
- 2: Snake Feeding at the Cable Natural History Museum, 10 a.m. Info: 715-798-3890
- 2: Celebration of Christian Music, 2 p.m., Park Center, Hayward.
- 2: Park Center presents Oscar Shorts, 7:30 p.m.
- 2: Fishing Has No Boundaries Chili Cookoff Fundraiser, 2-6 p.m., Fishdales Grub and Pub, Hwy. B.
- 4: Paws of Appreciation, Northwoods Humane Society potluck awards. First Lutheran Church. Info: [northwoodshumanesociety.org](http://northwoodshumanesociety.org)
- 5: Preschool storytime at the Weiss Community Library, 10:15 a.m.

- 7: Park Center First Thursday music series, 7:30 p.m.
- 8: Hot Air for Hearts Balloon Rally, Lakewoods Resort. Weather permitting.
- 8: USSSA National Snowshoe Championships, Lakewoods Resort, Cable.
- 8-10: WWF (Wiwomenfish.com) Crappie Weekend at Deerfoot Lodge.
- 8-9: Fat Bike Birkie.
- 9: Barnes Area Historical Association annual Winter Fest Raffle and Fund Raiser, noon-5:30 p.m. Sat. March 9. Barnes VFW Hall on Lake Road in Barnes. Food and beverages available; silent auction; meat raffles; bingo; door prize drawings throughout afternoon. Raffle tickets at the door or from any member of the historical association. Only 500 tickets will be sold. Raffle drawing at 4:30pm. Need not be present to win the raffle drawing. All proceeds go to the Barnes Area Historical Museum Fund. For information or tickets, please contact Lu Peet at 715-795-3065.
- 9: Park Center presents Mick Sterling's "Eat a Feat." An Allman Brothers/Little Feat Celebration. 7:30 p.m.
- 10: Writer's Circle gathering, 1 p.m., Farmstead Creamery, second Sundays. Free. 715-462-3453.
- 12: Cable Community Dinners, 5-6 p.m., each second Tuesday through April, Cable Community Center. Freewill offering. Sponsored by CARE and other organizations. Questions: call Diane Stewart 715-798-4567 or [buyart@cheqnet.net](mailto:buyart@cheqnet.net).
- 16: Outdoor Ventures Shamrock Shuffle, Hayward.



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JUNIOR BIRKIE  
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 LAKE HAYWARD  
 MAIN STREET  
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# Backyard Birdwatcher

## From SG20

areas for hunting. Their broad habitat range includes deciduous and evergreen forests, swamps, desert and tundra. They can also be found in tropical rainforest and in less natural settings such as cities, orchards and parks.

Great Horned Owls are nocturnal. Your best chance of seeing them is just at dusk, possibly on fence posts or tree limbs at the edge of open areas. You may also spy them flying across fields or roads with stiff beats of their rounded wings.

And you'll certainly hear them, their call a deep, stuttering series of four or five hoots.

Great Horned Owls have a very diverse diet. Their prey can range in size from rodents and frogs to rabbits, skunks, geese and even other raptors. They eat mostly mammals and birds—rabbits, hares, mice, shrews, rats, bats, skunks, house cats, porcupines, ducks, loons, hawks, crows, ravens, and doves.

They supplement their diet with reptiles, fish, insects and sometimes carrion.

They are mostly nocturnal but can also hunt in daylight. After spotting their prey from a perch, they pursue it on the wing.

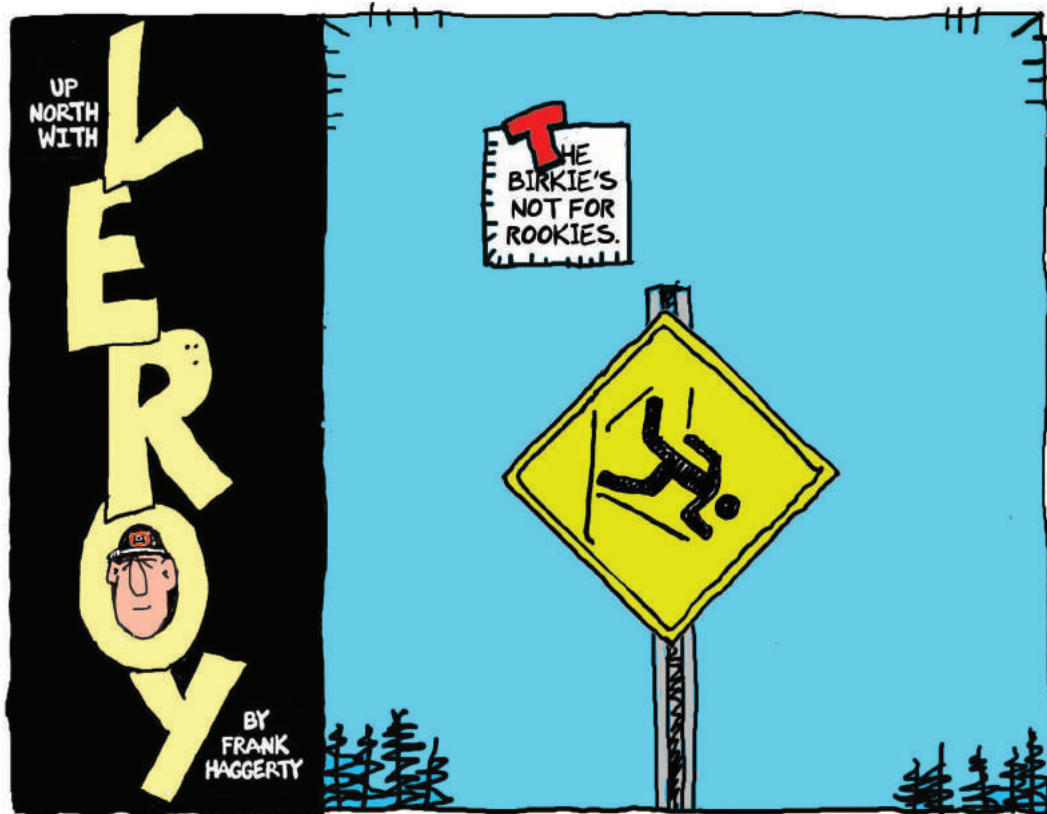
Great Horned Owl pairs are monogamous, and usually nest in trees such as cottonwood, juniper, beech and pine. They usually adopt an existing nest, left by another species, but they also nest in cavities in live trees, on deserted buildings or on human-made platforms. Pairs sometimes roost together near a nest site for several months before laying eggs.

Like other owls, when a Great Horned eats its prey, it eats it all — fur, feathers, and bones along with the meat and organs. Because they can't digest it all, they throw up pellets once a day that consist of the indigestible bits. Pellets are coated with a slimy layer of mucous to help them slide up and out. A pile of pellets at the base of a tree is a good sign of a nest or roosting site above.

Nests vary widely in size, depending on the species that originally built them. Once they've moved in, the owls may line the nest with shreds of bark, leaves, feathers plucked from their own breasts, or the fur or feathers from last night's dinner. Nests deteriorate over the breeding season and are seldom reused.

Owls nest in winter because the incubation and fledging time is so long. Clutches of 1 to 4 eggs are incubated for 30 to 37 days. Mom does all the incubating,

**CONTINUED AT RIGHT**





and Dad does all the hunting for her and their young brood. Male owls do not have a brood patch necessary for warming the eggs.

Once hatched, the babies remain in the nest for 42 days. Owlets have a voracious appetite and keep their parents busy hunting. At about six weeks, the babies start “branching” out onto adjacent tree branches or just the edge of the nest. They don’t begin to fly until they’re 10 to 12 weeks old.

The young stay with their parents until fall.

Mated pairs defend their territory with vigorous hooting, especially in the winter before their egg-laying begins, and in fall when the young are in search of their own territories.

The first year of life is the hardest and once owls reach adulthood survival rates are good. They really have no natural predators. Causes of premature death are often the result of human-caused problems.

Although there are many common myths about owls — that they are portents of bad luck or even death — consider yourself lucky if you see one.

They’re pretty cool critters.



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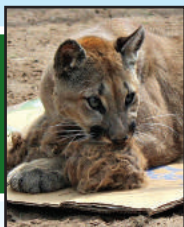
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## Lake Living From SG32

they already had bloody marys in their mittened hands helped. I'll say this: everyone was happy and Birkie fever was in the air.

After throwing my notes back in my car I headed for the finish line. There were all kinds of media types there, almost all of them men with big cameras.

I had my press pass on though and just boldly took a spot right behind the finish line. I acted like I knew what I was doing but I had no idea how I was going to get good photos and talk to the winners and other early finalists. My biggest fear was that I would be mowed over by the skiers coming across the finish line.

The moment arrived and the male winner was approaching. Those announcers at the Birkie do an amazing job. They announce all kinds of details that a reporter needs to know. I was scribbling madly.

And then Fabio Santus from Italy came over the finish line. His time was 1:56:58.6. I didn't give him time to stop before I was asking him questions. And he was as compliant as a little schoolboy. It was beautiful.

I stuck around and took photos of other skiers coming across and spoke to several.

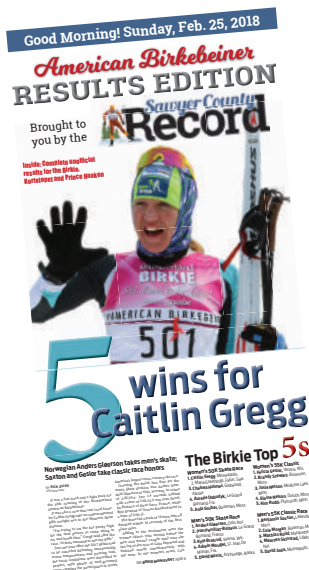
When you cover the Birkie as a reporter from the Record your real work starts when you head back to the office. You have to write like a madman. It's the busiest day of the year at the office. It's also the longest. No one gets out of there before 8 p.m. There is so much pressure—and results keep coming in from the Birkie

office, facts keep changing, phones don't stop ringing, pages need to be proofed. And meanwhile you've got to write copy that is accurate, interesting and most of all, fast. And download photos that you pray will please Paul.

I had one photo that year that he loved. It was a skier coming across the finish line who fell into the arms of a fellow skier. He was spent. He had a beard that had completely frozen over, coated and hanging down in big, very long icicles. His eyebrows were iced over. I shot it just once, without a clue that it might turn out to be as dramatic as it was. That may have been the first and last time Paul has ever liked one of my photos. "Hanson, you can write but you can't take a photo," he frequently says. That's OK. I'd rather write anyway.

When you think you've finished your writing on Birkie day you haven't. There is always one more story to get. One more interview. One more behind-the-scenes tale of a person who lives for the day when he or she can come across the finish line at the biggest cross-country ski race in North America, right here in Hayward, Wisconsin—no matter how long it took them to get there.

That excitement and sense of achievement is contagious, not just for the athletes and not just for the spectators who endure hours of freezing temperatures so they can witness a friend or family member complete the Birkie. It is contagious for reporters too. You want to get it right. You want to put into words the unique, almost unworldly, magical frenzy of this little town on Birkie day. You want to tell the story.



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