

Candidate Name: Andy Ubel
Address: Saint Paul, MN
Are you an ABSF Member? Yes, three years
Occupation: Attorney

ABSF BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATE PROFILE

There is no Vaccine for what I have.

About a dozen years ago my three kids (Cameron, Erik and Elsa) became heavily involved with their HS Nordic teams. Meg and I wanted to be in on the fun and not just frozen parents standing around the start/finish line. We were fortunate that their team had a great community of Nordic parents who not only taught us how to skate ski, but also taught me the all-important differences between the low-fluoro, high-fluoro and no fluoro waxes they were using and the "off-the-floors" wax I had suggested we use.

Boy was it hard work! How could the other parents ski so effortlessly? I soon succumbed to peer pressure and "raced" in my first Korte. A fantastically fun Wave 8 experience. And I finished!

At that first Korte weekend I witnessed some ski crazy people. Lots of pre-race wax talk, "strategies" how to best handle aid station stops, discussion about which magic goops are the best, and bombastic post-race bragging and then pizza at Coops. It seemed weird, but almost immediately after my first Korte **something happened to me** that caused me to sign up for the following year's full Birkie. I was placed in Wave 5, went out too hard for my skill level and nearly bonked on Lake Hayward. Fan encouragement helped me to the finish line where a dedicated volunteer had to help me take off my skis. Whew. Despite that struggle I signed up for another Birkie, and another, and another...

What had happened to me? Was it **Birkie Fever** that caused me to:

- Join the Endurance United ski club and learn to classic ski (Thanks Margie!);
- Buy roller skis and start regularly roller skiing to-and-from work;
- Fall a lot but always get up; and even
- Go to Australia to ski in their Kangaroo Hoppet?

Wave 5 became Wave 3, then Wave 2 and I even trained my dog Ruby to skijor with me in the Barkie Birkie.

My Birkie Fever had become a chronic condition, but along the way **something else happened to me**. I had always been immensely grateful to the many fantastic Birkie volunteers and staff who supported my fever, but I came to realize that I had do more to repay the great ski community that had infected me.

I became a volunteer Endurance United learn-to-ski instructor and a Loppet Foundation team leader responsible for the electrical infrastructure and key vendor contracting for the recent Covid-cancelled World Cup event. I also joined the Birkie Foundation and contributed to the Birkie trailhead snowmaking project.

I may never qualify for Wave 1, but I am confident I can help spread this wonderful Birkie Fever to others. If elected as a Birkie Foundation Board member I would seek out the opinions of fellow Birkie skiers and help the Board develop the Telemark property accordingly. My past work experiences will help me be an effective and useful Birkie Board Member. My career began in 3M's laboratories, where I was an inventor and scientist. Later I became an in-house attorney for 3M and then for Valspar, where I retired as Chief IP Counsel. I have also had some prior non-profit board experiences, including helping an organization transition from being an afterschool tutoring program to a successful K-8 charter school serving inner-city kids, and am currently serving as a board member for two startup companies in the Twin Cities.

Meg and I have a residence near Cable WI and I definitely have both the time and skills to help the Birkie Foundation. For example, my experience helping the Loppet Foundation prepare for a World Cup event would be invaluable in the event the Birkie community considers hosting a World Cup event at Telemark. My legal training would also be helpful as I have developed a keen eye for legal land mines and a practical sense of how to work around such issues.

In summary, I am grateful there is no vaccine for Birkie Fever. Please support my candidacy and I will work towards continuously improving the Birkie events and organization and thereby spreading this fever to as many others as possible.

See you on the trails.

Regards,

Andy