



**Greetings fellow Birchleggers,**

Here is my standard opening line: Ready or not, our mega annual event is again just around the corner. This winter has again been somewhat strange, depending on where you live. My family has moved to Eau Claire, so at least

we are reasonably close to our cabin in Cable, where skiing has been good to excellent since early December. I am also proud to report that I have been elected to the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation Board of Directors. I am looking forward to working closely with the great staff and the volunteers to keep up the high quality of our event. I also hope that I can provide a good channel for all of you to contribute your constructive input. Here is some pertinent information for this year.

First, and most important, we will again have our **Annual Birchleggings Awards Breakfast on Sunday, at the Lumberjack Steakhouse**, next to Ramada Inn (formerly Country Inn and Suites in Hayward). Upon requests from many of you we will keep the **9am** time. This will give everybody a little more time for travel. The arrangements are similar as in the past, i.e. buffet style breakfast (at approximately **\$10 per person - tickets purchased at the door**), followed by award presentations and a short business meeting. We hope to see most of you there, particularly the new inductees and those of you who missed us last year. Any number of guests is welcome.

After this race the number of Birchleggers is expected to reach 700. We need volunteers to help us function more effectively and to carry out some missions that we have identified over the years and others that we may still develop. I would like volunteers to step forward for the following functions: treasurer, web page developer, Birchleggings garments and other merchandise. In addition, Steve Carmazon has volunteered to chair a small "committee" whose task would be to explore potential projects that our Club would undertake or support. Full membership will then vote on the committee's suggestions to set priorities. If you would like to participate in such a group please contact me.

*Wishing you lots of joyful skiing and will see you at Birkie XXXIII*

John Kotar, President

**If this will be your 20th Birkebeiner please read on:**

**Dear Birkebeiner Veteran,**

Upon completion of this year's Birkebeiner you will have earned the privilege to become a member of the Birchleggings Club, an informal, but prestigious organization of 20+ Birkebeiners. We congratulate you for your achievement and welcome you to our group, now numbering over 500 committed Birkie veterans.

Starting with this year's race you will have a privilege of wearing a special purple and gold Birchleggings race bib. You will also receive a classy award. If you have not seen one, it consists of 4.5" x 5.5" clear acrylic plate (looks like glass) with attached brushed-gold coin with a multilevel die image of our logo. A brass plate on the walnut base includes your name and the year of your 20th finish.

We cordially invite you to attend our Annual Birchleggings Award breakfast where you will be individually recognized. The awards will be mailed to those who could not attend our Sunday event.

The Birchleggings Club is a group of enthusiastic and creative skiers. You will learn more about our goals and projects at our Hayward event and in future newsletters.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the race and our awards event.

**CONGRATULATIONS  
2006 BIRCHLEGGERS**

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Horst Abel</b>           | <b>Per Johnsen</b>         |
| <b>Daniel Anderson</b>      | <b>Loren Johnson</b>       |
| <b>Peter Anderson</b>       | <b>Gregory Jones</b>       |
| <b>Fred Axelrod</b>         | <b>Michael Jordan</b>      |
| <b>Dellin Bakkum</b>        | <b>William Joy</b>         |
| <b>Charlene Barron</b>      | <b>Thomas Kalwitz</b>      |
| <b>John Barten</b>          | <b>Andy Kangas</b>         |
| <b>Nancy Bauer</b>          | <b>Robb Koebert</b>        |
| <b>William Bedford</b>      | <b>Timothy Koschmann</b>   |
| <b>Richard Besser</b>       | <b>Darrell J Kurth</b>     |
| <b>Howard Bichler</b>       | <b>Richard Langer</b>      |
| <b>Kevin Bohrer</b>         | <b>Lynn Larson</b>         |
| <b>Charles Brandt</b>       | <b>Jeffrey Loss</b>        |
| <b>Timothy Bray</b>         | <b>Richard Luedke</b>      |
| <b>Nancy Carlson</b>        | <b>David Lundberg</b>      |
| <b>Stephen Casey</b>        | <b>John McKenzie</b>       |
| <b>Michael Choate</b>       | <b>Joseph Medlin</b>       |
| <b>Tim Clason</b>           | <b>Michael Meissner</b>    |
| <b>Michael Craemer</b>      | <b>David Melcher</b>       |
| <b>Jeff Cummisford</b>      | <b>Ethel Morse</b>         |
| <b>Steve Dittrich</b>       | <b>Ken Muszynski</b>       |
| <b>Richard Dix</b>          | <b>Cheri Nehl</b>          |
| <b>James Duffy</b>          | <b>David Paulson</b>       |
| <b>Thomas Duffy</b>         | <b>David Pramann</b>       |
| <b>Eugene Dumas</b>         | <b>Daniel Purpura</b>      |
| <b>Bruce Fiedler</b>        | <b>Jeffrey Roberts</b>     |
| <b>Richard Francois</b>     | <b>Larry Saeger</b>        |
| <b>Harold Friestad</b>      | <b>Kevin Schilling</b>     |
| <b>Kent Fulton</b>          | <b>William Schneider</b>   |
| <b>Paul Gabriel</b>         | <b>Charlie Shahbazian</b>  |
| <b>Mark Gherty</b>          | <b>Duane Tate Jr</b>       |
| <b>Cynthia Gokoo</b>        | <b>Robin Tedlund</b>       |
| <b>Gerald Green</b>         | <b>Jay Tegeder</b>         |
| <b>Calvin Groshek</b>       | <b>Tom Tennesen</b>        |
| <b>John Grum</b>            | <b>Michael Van Sicklen</b> |
| <b>Thomas Gustafson</b>     | <b>Tad Van Valin</b>       |
| <b>Basil Hansen Jr</b>      | <b>Tolly Vollen</b>        |
| <b>Gary Herdrich</b>        | <b>James Walker</b>        |
| <b>Diane Holliday-Welsh</b> | <b>Karen Weium</b>         |
| <b>Alan Hutton</b>          | <b>Scott Williams</b>      |
| <b>Dale Janz</b>            | <b>Andrew Wood</b>         |
| <b>Peter Jennik</b>         | <b>Mark Ziegler</b>        |

## The Tony Wise Legacy Fund

### An opportunity for the Birchleggings Club to make its mark

The Tony Wise Legacy Fund, established by the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, is an accumulating fund from which only the earnings will be used to support Foundation programs. In the past this program has not been aggressively promoted and currently is not well funded. I propose that the Birchleggers, as a Club, and individually, adopt this program as one means toward achieving our goals. The broad categories the fund supports are: The American Birkebeiner Trail; Youth Nordic Skiing Programs; Capital Fund Support and General Support of the Foundation. We have an opportunity to become a major funding entity for the program and be strongly involved in directing the use of its earnings.

### Paying your membership dues is crucial to the functioning of your club.

Annual membership dues are our only source of income. The funds are used to produce awards for new members, postage and copying of newsletters, printing of stickers (number of Birkies completed) to go with your bib and for any other expense. We need to generate additional funds to support projects we have identified in the past.

### Request for old photos

My wife Nina has just created a fabulous family show, covering 32 Birkies, on a CD, complete with well-chosen music segments. This gave us an idea for creating a truly super Birkie show that every Birchlegger would love. I know that all of you have a photo or two of some favorite Birkie moment of the past. Please send us a couple of your favorite photos (we obviously will not use every photo, but will select them to fit the theme). We will scan them and return them to you. If we can pull this off we will have a great show next year at our awards event and CDs could be made available.

### New wave for some classic skiers:

As you probably know, this year, the classical skiers 65 years and older will start just behind wave 3 (they call it 3.5). 72 skiers fall into this category and 30 of them are Birchleggers.

Total number of skiers 65 and older (Birkie and Kortie): 182

### IN MEMORIAM

We have received sad news that **Kurt Kleinhans**, our fellow Birchlegger (No. 313) of Slinger, Wisconsin passed away last summer. He was regarded by his family and friends as one of the most enthusiastic Birkebeiners. We will keep him in our memories as we glide the tracks he covered twenty times in this, his favorite event.

### AMERICAN BIRKEBEINER BIRCHLEGGINGS CLUB

JOHN KOTAR, President  
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2662 W. Princeton Ave.  
Eau Claire, WI 54703  
715-835-1246

DAVID BALSIGER, Treasurer  
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Oregon, WI 53575  
608-835-8410



### CLASSICAL SKIING SURVEY

In order to better serve classical skiers the Foundation is conducting a special survey. From the broader survey I have pulled three questions, which I feel, will interest many Birchleggers. Also, we would like your opinion about changing membership dues. I urge you to complete this survey and return it to me.

#### 1) Age range (circle one):

18-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

#### 2) I would like to **classic ski the Birkie**, or enjoy it more, if (check all that apply):

- There was an early wave start for classic skiers only
- There was a Birkie classic-only race on the Birkie trail the day before, or after the normal Saturday freestyle race
- There was a separate classic-only trail on at least portion of the course
- Classical skiers were seeded in start waves by their finish time relative to other classic skiers
- Monitoring was in place to make sure no one cheated
- There were two tracks on the right all the way to the race finish

#### 3) I would likely **classic ski the Birkie** (circle one)

Every year Once every few years Just once Never

#### 4) Should our **dues be increased?**

In order to be an effective organization, what should Birchleggings Club membership dues be?

\$20 \$15 \$10 (current rate)

### SEND SURVEY TO:

**John Kotar**  
2662 W. Princeton Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54703

2006 BIRCHLEGGINGS CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEE **\$10**

BIRCHLEGGER \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (S) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

### SEND DUES TO:

**Dave Balsiger**  
5703 Lincoln Rd, Oregon, WI 53575