



**Canadian Birkie E-News:  
March 24, 2017**

Canadian Birkebeiner Society  
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## The 29<sup>th</sup> Birkie is Feb 9-10, 2018



Long start



Short Start

The snow has settled and we are basking in the post-Birkie glow of a well-skied, well-organized, well attended and successful event. We are still receiving positive feedback and are using this momentum of positive results and energy to plan the next Birkie February 9-10, 2018.

We were so very fortunate to be able to present the Birkie considering the weather pre and post event. Thanks again to our volunteers and Alberta Parks staff who worked tirelessly to provide a full range of trails that were in very good condition.

Our US colleagues were not so fortunate and had to cancel because of days of unseasonable weather, rain, and a predicted snow storm front missing the Hayward and Cable areas. They decided to go ahead with another kind of celebration: BirkieStock 2017! Please visit [www.birkie.com](http://www.birkie.com) for more information on the Birkie party. We applaud their resiliency and ingenuity and wish them all the best in 2018.

The Norwegians had a different result altogether. Almost 16,000 skiers participated last weekend at the Birkebeinerrennet from Rena to Lillehammer in Norway. 8,000 skiers participated in the main event - over 54 km classic style. Congratulations on this great event.

Back in the Edmonton area we have lots on the go including board meetings, our annual general meeting in May, strategic planning



sessions, engaging with sponsors, vendors and donors as well as numerous odd and ends that will keep us busy for a while. You can expect an update from time to time.

We thank you all again and wish you an active and safe spring/summer. See you at Birkie 29!

### Unique Awards

The Canadian Birkebeiner Society is proud to offer awards that are unique to our Festival. They are presented to those skiers, founders and builders who have demonstrated dedication to the Birkebeiner tradition and who have contributed to growing and developing the Birkie in numerous ways. The following awards pertain to this year's festival.

### Haakon Haakonsson Award



The Haakon Haakonsson award recognizes dedication to the Birkebeiner tradition. It is an award that is presented to skiers who have completed the long distance events in all three International Birkebeiner Events - the Norwegian, American and Canadian.

Recipients receive a hand made pottery stein featuring hand written text and Viking runes and their names are added to the CANBi Shield on display at our office. The CANBi acronym stands for Canadian, American, Norwegian Birkebeiners. From 1991 to 2017 this award has been presented to 158 skiers! Click [here](#) for more information and to see past recipients.

Congratulations to this year's Haakon Haakonsson Award Winners:

- Priscilla Craven, Boulder, Colorado
- Mark Helgeson, Park River, North Dakota
- Tom Jones, Calgary, Alberta
- Brian Larson, Park River, North Dakota
- Ian Leighton, Burnaby, British Columbia
- Brian Ouellette, Colonsay, Saskatchewan
- Donald Quinn, Leadville, Colorado
- Steve Recca, Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Gunnar Unneland, Edmonds, Washington
- Norm Vaughan, Calgary, Alberta
- David Wagner, Park City, Utah
- Deborah Wagner, Park City, Utah



CANBi Shield

### Ole Hovind Award



The Ole Hovind Award is presented annually to the skier who best represents the spirit of the Birkebeiner and the things which Ole Hovind valued – skiing for the sheer joy of it, having fun, joking a lot, achieving something and just getting out there and doing it. Click [here](#) for more information and to see past recipients.

This year's recipient is Don Mallon. Don has been skiing the Birkie for many years and his joy, energy, knowledge and sheer love of skiing makes him the ideal recipient of this years' award. He shares his passion willingly and has influenced and informed countless skiers teaching Birkie Learn to Loppet courses over many years. He has brought the joy of the Birkie to so many and we congratulate him on receiving this award.

### John Toonen Memorial Award



John Toonen was born in Holland in 1944 and came to Canada in 1965 where he learned to cross country ski. It became a passion with him that lasted the rest of his life. He was one of the original participants of the Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival. Click [here](#) for more information and to see past recipients.

This award is presented annually to the oldest skier in a 55 km event and their name is added to a plaque in our office.

This year the award was presented to Gunnar Unneland from Edmonds, Washington who is 87 years old and participated in the 55 km Birkie Lite.

### Founders and Builders Award



The Founders' & Builders' Award is presented annually to an individual who has worked to create the Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival and/or who has been a key contributor to growing this event over the years.

#### Founder and Builder

**Brian Lucas** has been involved in the Birkie for many years and has held every board and Loppet position imaginable! He is a Volunteer Coordinator extraordinaire, served as Chief of Loppet, announcer, bon vivant and tireless motivator. He also provides the artwork that we give to our sponsors in appreciation of their support and engagement. His knowledge of the event and network within the skiing community is so helpful in our ability to provide a successful Birkie.

	<p><b>Builders</b></p> <p><b>Rob Faulds</b> has been a selfless and tireless Food Station Volunteer for over 25 years! His positive attitude, work ethic and genuine good spirit has been well appreciated by the skiers who pass by his food station. We thank him for so many years of assistance and with sharing his love of life and Birkie spirit with thousands of skiers over the years. Congratulations Rob and Thank you!</p> <p><b>Rod Jaeger</b> is a retired Alberta Parks employee who has provided great assistance in all aspects of tracking, grooming, logistics and communications for the event for many years. We thank him for helping us grow the Birkie into the world class event that it is today. Congratulations Rod and Thank you!</p>
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<p><b>Board and Loppet Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Board</b></p> <p>If you would like to get involved with the Birkie, please consider joining our awesome Board. Click <a href="#">here</a> to see Board Positions. Several spots are up for election at our Annual General Meeting in May.</p> <p><b>Loppet</b></p> <p>We have over 20 of these critical volunteer opportunities that deal with everything from Stadium set-up to Timing, Transportation and beyond. The “Chiefs” typically start meeting in the fall and the action really heats up closer to the event. A great chance to use your skills, meet new folks and make a contribution to the 2018 Birkie! Let us know if you are <a href="#">Loppet Chief</a> material!</p>
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<p><b>Birkie Board Member</b></p> 	<p>The Birkebeiner Society is very thankful to have dedicated and capable board members. Joining the Board is not only a great deal of fun – just ask ANY Board member – but a wonderful way to contribute to the Birkie.</p> <p>We would like to recognize the CBS President <b>Cameron McGregor</b> with his constant support and engagement in all things Birkie!</p> <p>An avid cross country skier, Cam has been a member of the board for 3 years and has also volunteered in numerous Loppet Chief Positions including: Chief of Loppet, Stadium, Assistant chief of Course and Transportation.</p> <p>His term as president is ending this year but he will remain to cajole, motivate and keep us on track. Thank you Cam!</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Photos</b></p> 	<p>2017 photos taken by Birkie Photographers, JaN Studios are available on our website <a href="#">here</a>. Participants can view and purchase other images on JaN Studio's <a href="#">website</a> under Proofs. Visit their Blog first at <a href="http://www.janstudios.com/news">www.janstudios.com/news</a> to get login and password information for each gallery (start, on course, finish, etc).</p> <p>We would love to hear about your Birkie weekend! Share your favourite Birkie memories with the community on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) by using the #BirkieSpirit hashtag or submit your stories for the Birkie Blog to our email: <a href="mailto:canadianbirkie@gmail.com">canadianbirkie@gmail.com</a>.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sponsors</b></p>	<p>We thank our sponsors for their support and contributions to the event. We are always on the lookout for new sponsors so if you, your company, your vendors/suppliers are interested in joining the Birkie please let us know. We have great opportunities for business engagement in this Capital Region Marquee event...one of only three Birkebeiner Ski Festivals in the world.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Birkie Office</b></p>	<p>The office will not have regular office hours now that most of the year end items are finished but we will be checking email and phone messages from time to time. Please <a href="#">contact</a> us to set up a meeting.</p>
<p>Please <b>do not reply</b> to the newsletter; that email goes to an unmonitored address. You can email the office <a href="#">here</a> (<a href="mailto:ski@canadianbirkie.com">ski@canadianbirkie.com</a>)</p>	

