

Gary Knowles' Wisconsin Event Sampler

A smorgasbord of events with a bit of flavor from all over Wisconsin!

End of January

by Gary Knowles © UPDATED 1-25-12

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BEFORE YOU GO: Avoid disappointment. Always check for schedule changes before heading to events. For more events: www.TravelWisconsin.com or www.WisTravel.com

NOW to March 4, 2012

WINONA, MN

On Native Waters

He was born in Wisconsin, raised in Minnesota and he left us some of the finest images of Native Americans. Edward Curtis (1868-1952) is one of the most recognizable names in American photographic history. Photo-historians praise his artistic mastery, his work in preserving Native American heritage and cross-cultural understanding. This exhibit is featured at the extraordinary Minnesota Marine Art Museum at Winona, Minnesota on the Mississippi River. 1-866-940-6626 www.MinnesotaMarineArt.org

JAN 27

Green Lake

John Gorka in Concert

Singer/songwriter famed for his rich, expressive baritone, New Jersey native John Gorka was one of the leading lights of the new folk movement. His songs have been recorded and/or performed by Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Mary Black and Maura O'Connell. Thrasher Opera House, 506 Mill St. Event starts at 7:30PM. PH: 920-294-4279 ext 101.

JAN 27

Appleton

Swan Lake

The State Ballet Theatre of Russia invites you to enjoy one of the most beloved ballets of all time. Fox Cities Performing Arts Center. Event starts at 7:30PM. PH: 920-730-3760.

JAN 27

Rhineland

The Second City

Second City brings to the Nicolet stage unbridled delight in the foibles of our politicians, celebrities and even our significant others. From the blowhards of the Beltway to the Hollywood elite, no institution escapes this troupe's satiric eye. Get ready for a hilarious, irreverent ride through present-day America. Nicolet Live!, 5355 College Dr. Event starts at 7:30 PM and ends at 10 PM. PH: 800-544-3039.

JAN 28

Bloomer

Bloomer Rope Jump Contest

20-35 participating schools and approximately 240 jumpers try to break the records in the Jump Rope Capital of the World. Bloomer High School. PH: 715-568-3339.

JAN 28

Crivitz

Caldron Falls Fishoree & Drags/Radar Runs

All runs and raffle proceeds benefit Town of Stephenson Volunteer Fire Department. 1000' track, \$100 cash top speed, trophies for all classes. 100% payout for fish-o-ree, food, beverages, raffles in heated tent on ice. Call for more information. Caldron Falls Lake - Boat Landing #9. 8 AM to 4 PM. PH: 715-757-3311.

JAN 28 - 29

La Crosse

Great Tri-State Rail Sale

Model railroad show, flea market, swap meet. Buy, sell, trade. Model and toy trains, railroadiana, railroad exhibits and displays. La Crosse Center, 300 Harborview Plz. 9 AM to 3 PM. PH: 608-582-4761.

JAN 28

Kansasville

Owl Prowl

Discover why the owl is a perfect night hunter. We will go outside to search for these predators. Dress for the weather. Meet at the Visitor Center, but be prepared to drive. Richard Bong State Recreation Area, 26313 Burlington Rd. Event starts at 8:30 PM and ends at 10 PM. PH: 262-878-5600.

JAN 28 - 29

Wausau

Wisconsin Kids Snowmobile Racing Association

Ovalice racing for kids 4-15. Kitty Cat's, 120's, Juniors. Trophies/Medals awarded to the top six drivers in each of 20 divisions. Wausau 525 Snowmobile Championships Race Track. PH: 715-848-1047.

JAN 28

Phelps

Great Northern Ice Fishing Tournament

Held on beautiful Lac Vieux Desert and sponsored by the Phelps Lions Club. Two contests - morning and afternoon. Prizes and raffles. Tickets include evening meal. Event starts at 8 AM and ends at 4 PM. PH: 715-545-3327.

JAN 28

Prairie du Sac

Port Celebration at Wollersheim Winery

A break from Wisconsin's winter to celebrate red Port 2010, plus the new White Port 2010. Take a behind the scenes look at the making of Port wines. Sample both the red Port and White Port, along with other Wollersheim wines available for tasting and by the glass. Enjoy live jazz, light food and insights on Port wine from winemaker, Philippe Coquard. (No admission fee. Open to the public.) Wollersheim Winery, 7876 Hwy 188. Event starts at 10:00AM and ends at 4:00PM. www.wollersheim.com PH: 608-643-6515.

February

FEB 1-5

Lake Geneva

Winterfest & National Snow Sculpting Championships

Approximately 150 tons of snow will be brought in to Lake Geneva for the National Snow Sculpting Championship. Music, hot air balloon rides and sleigh rides. PH:262-248-4416; www.lakegenewawi.com

FEB 2-4

Westby

Snowflake Ski Jump Tournament

Five teams of U.S. and international competitors fly down the 118-meter Olympic-sized ramp. Live entertainment and refreshments. 608-634-3211; www.snowflakeskiclub.com

FEB 3-5

Fish Creek

Fish Creek Winter Festival

Human foosball! The fruit-loop run, toilet seat throw, bike toss, snow shoe dance, sleigh rides, ice sculptures, chili cook-off & Parade. PH 920-868-2316; www.visitfishcreek.com

FEB 3-5

Bayfield

Apostle Islands Sled Dog Race

Cheer on the mushers! This race is a favorite among mushers in the Midwest averaging over 100 teams entered. Three main spectating locations with bonfires and warming tents. "Meet the Mushers" dinner on Friday and a mushers' mixer and awards ceremony on Sunday. PH: 715-779-3335; www.bayfield.org

FEB 3 - 5

Birchwood

Winter Rendevous

Do some winter camping at the 4th year at the Sawmill Lake Campground! You may camp in the campground or on any of the numerous lakes in the area. The campground has pit toilets and a hand-pump well. Bring a bowl of chili for the Saturday night "chili dump." Cost is \$10/person and all proceeds go to the Washburn County Forestry Dept. Sawmill Lake Campground. PH: 715-635-9696.

FEB 3 - 5

Hudson

Hot Air Affair

Torchlight parade with kazoo marching bands - Friday, 7:15PM, downtown historic Hudson. Moonglow or Field of Fire - Saturday, 6:30PM - balloons light up the dark for approximately 1 hour. Marketplace & Craft Fair (Saturday), pancake breakfasts, smoochboarding, volleyball in the snow, dances and other winter activities. Balloon launches Sat & Sun at 7:30AM. E.P. Rock Elementary School, 13th & Summer Streets. PH: 800-657-6775. www.hudsonhotairaffair.com

FEB 3-5

St. Germain

8th Annual St. Germain Radar Run

Held on Little St. Germain Lake's West Bay. Friday & Saturday race your snowmobile against the gun - 1,000' distance! 660' & 1,000' practice tracks. Sunday Snowmobile Drag Racing. West Bay of Little St. Germain Lake. PH: 715-479-2934.

FEB 4

Baraboo

Candlelight Ski, Hike and Snowshoe

Join the Friends of Mirror Lake and the state park staff for a beautiful winter night. Two easy 1-mile trails lit by torches – one for skiers only, and the other for everyone to enjoy. The Friends group will have food, hot beverages and goodies for sale. Keep warm and enjoy the company around the two roaring bonfires. A Wisconsin State Park Admission Sticker is required. Mirror Lake State Park, E10320 Fern Dell Road. Event starts at 6 PM and ends at 8 PM. PH: 608-254-2333.

FEB 4

Fish Creek

Wine Winter & Cherry Fest

The winter festival will include horse-drawn sleigh rides as well as wine and product tasting featuring the popular tart Montmorency cherry in celebration of National Cherry Month. One of the festivals many highlights is the annual cherry pit spit competition. The competition begins at 1:30PM and is open to all ages. Event starts at 10AM and ends at 5 PM. PH: 866-946-3263.

FEB 4

Black River Falls

Candlelight Ski/Hike

There will be 1.5 miles of trails lit with candle luminaries, with a shorter trail provided for snowshoers and hikers. Refreshments and food will be available and a raffle will be held inside the indoor heated shelter. The event is sponsored by the state forest and the Black River State Forest Trail Foundation. Black River State Forest, 910 State Road 54 East. Event starts at 6 PM and ends at 9 PM. PH: 715-284-4103.

FEB 4

Blue Mounds

Candlelight Ski / Hike / Snowshoe

Ski on one and two mile lit loops. Separate lit trail for hikers, snowshoers, and leashed pets. Guided interpretive hikes at 7 and 8 p.m. Bonfire, free hot drinks and marshmallows for roasting. Hot food and baked goods for sale. Blue Mound State Park, 4350 Mounds Park Rd. Event starts at 6 PM and ends at 9 PM. PH: 608-437-5711.

FEB 4

Milwaukee

Milwaukee Zoo Family Free Days

Bring a pack to the Zoo for free. Free admission for all, parking fee does apply. Milwaukee County Zoo, 10001 W Bluemound Rd. Event starts at 9:30AM and ends at 4:30PM. www.milwaukeezoo.org PH: 414-256-5412.

FEB 4

Plymouth

Budweiser Classic Race of Champions

USSA sanctioned professional snowmobile racing and Kitty Kat racing. Snow Ranger Park corner of Highway 57 and County Trunk C. PH: 888-693-8263.

FEB 4

Winter

Candlelight Ski/Snowshoe/Hike

A 1.8 kilometer loop of trail will be groomed, tracked and lit with over 600 candles. The trail is for skiers or hikers and winds through the heart of the forest. The trail is wide enough for diagonal striders and skate skiers. Hiking and snowshoeing are also permitted during this event. Picnic tables and a large barbecue grill will be available near the trail head for persons who wish to cook their food, and hot dogs, chili & spiced tea will be provided. Large warming fires will also be built and maintained throughout the night. Flambeau Hills Trailhead, County Road W. Event starts at 6 PM and ends at 9 PM. PH: 715-332-5271.

FEB 4

Wisconsin Dells

Winter Carnival at Christmas Mountain

Enjoy a day full of fun for the whole family during the Winter Carnival at Christmas Mountain Village in Wisconsin Dells. Dog sled racing, woodsplitting, and turkey bowling are among the many events scheduled. The Winter Carnival will also feature live music, a torchlight parade and fireworks. S944 Christmas Mountain Rd., Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965.

http://www.christmasmountainvillage.com/documents/CMV011206_WtrCarnival_C1.pdf

FEB 4

Bayfield

Mt Ashwabay Summit Ski Race

Race offers a kid's 1k race, youth 3.5k race and adult 11k race. All races start & finish at Mt. Ashwabay Recreation Area. Classic & skating lanes are provided throughout the course. All ability levels encouraged to participate. Mt. Ashwabay Recreation Area, 32525 Ski Hill Rd. Event starts at 10 AM. PH: 715-373-5611.

<http://www.ashwabaysummitskirace.com/>

FEB 4

Cedarburg

Un-cultural Night with Pat McCurdy

National singer/songwriter Pat McCurdy presents comic lyrics and observations on life and love (adult music/comedy). Cedarburg Cultural Center. Event starts at 8:00PM. PH: 262-375-3676.

<http://creativealliancemke.org/2012/01/uncultural-night-with-pat-mccurdy/>

FEB 4

Chippewa Falls

Wine, Cheese, Beer Tasting Gala

Featuring many returning favorites and some new tastes from the Chippewa Valley area. Sample a wide variety of area cheeses, beers, and wines. Purchase tickets at the door or from Kiwanis members. Avalon Hotel and Conference Center. Event starts at 4 PM and ends at 8 PM. PH: 715-723- 2201.

FEB 4 - 5

Madison

Orchid Quest 2012

Orchid Quest is one of the largest orchid shows and sales in the Midwest. Aspiring home growers can expand their knowledge by attending orchid related educational seminars, conducted by renowned orchid experts. Sat:10 AM-5 PM, Sun: 10AM-4PM. Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way. PH: 608-267-3976. <http://www.orchidguild.org/orchidquest.html>

FEB 4 - 5

Iola

Iola Winter Carnival

The Iola area hosts the Iola Winter Carnival with a Norwegian Lutefisk Supper and Craft Fair at I-S High School also Ice Sculpting by Vidar downtown near the Chamber Kiosk. On Sunday the Central Ski Jumping and Nordic combined competition are held at Winter Sports Club on County Hwy MM. Activities start 8 AM Sat & 9:30 AM Sun. PH: 715-445-4005.

FEB 4 - 5

Prairie du Chien

Ice Fisheree

Annual ice fishing contest held on Gremore Lake. Prizes for winners. Fishing begins at 7AM. Lakeview Marina, 32319 County K. PH: 800-732-1673.

FEB 5

Rhineland

The Pro Arte Quartet

UW-Madison's resident ensemble has performed throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia. The quartet of two violins, viola and cello delivers an exciting mix of traditional works and new pieces commissioned for its centennial anniversary. Performance starts at 2PM. Call for ticket info. Nicolet College Theatre, 5355 College Drive. PH: 715-365-4646.

FEB 9

Green Bay

Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary Night Cross-Country Ski

Get your hands on a pair of cross country skis to ski the beautiful night on the Sanctuary trails. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, 1660 E Shore Dr. Event starts at 6:00PM. PH: 920-391-3671.

FEB 11

Sayner

Lion's Plum Lake Ice Fishing Tournament

Held on Plum Lake with registration at the boat landing. Fish judged on length. Entry fee required. Awards presented at 4pm. Sponsored by the Sayner/Star Lake Lion's Club. Plum Lake. Event starts at 6:00AM and ends at 3:00PM. PH: 715-542-3501.

FEB 11

Mineral Point

A Valentine in Music and Poetry "Poemsong"

Presented to rave reviews in August of 2011, *Poemsong* returns just in time for the celebration of romance! Singer/songwriter Jen Logueflower and her talented friends present some of the most moving lyrics of the past millennium in song and poetry. From Blake to Dickenson, she transforms familiar and unfamiliar poems into something entirely new and totally enchanting. Imaginatively staged exclusively for Alley Stage at the beautifully restored Mineral Point Opera House. Tickets \$12-20 at 608.987.3292 or at the door.

www.mpoh.org

FEB 10 - 11

Minocqua

Cruiserfest

Enjoy Friday night's spaghetti feed, snowmobile parade, bonfire and Smore's! Pancake breakfast starts the day on Saturday followed by radar runs, bikini races, vintage display, Cruiser Sale, brat & chili feed and demo rides offered by area snowmobile dealers. Saturday night a huge silent auction and dance at the American Legion Hall. Fri 6:15 PM & Sat all day. Lake Minocqua & Park St. PH: 800-446-6784.

FEB 10 - 11

North Freedom

Mid-Continent Railway Dinner Trains

Enjoy an evening of fine dining and elegance aboard vintage First Class cars built in 1914 and 1929. Begin with cocktails, followed by a multi-course meal prepared using authentic railroad recipes and served on real china. Full beverage service is included, served to you by uniformed friendly staff. Trip lasts three hours. Seating is limited; reservations are required. Patrons are asked to board 15 minutes before scheduled departure time. Mid-Continent Railway Museum, E8948 Diamond Hill Road. Event starts at 6:30PM. PH: 800-930-1385. <http://www.mcrwy.com/ride/dinner.html>

FEB 10

Whitewater

Blue Suede Shoes - The Ultimate Elvis Bash

Scot Bruce performs as Elvis, the way we remember him during his early career, followed by Mike Albert, who is superb as Elvis in his Vegas years. Call for ticket info. UW-Whitewater's Young Auditorium. Event starts at 7:30 PM. PH: 262-472-2222.

FEB 11

Cambridge

Annual Dip for Dozer Plunge

The ice of Cambridge's Lake Ripley hosts the Dip plus turkey bowling, ice sculpting, costume contests, hot food and more! Events begin at 11AM, followed by raffles and free music at Heather's Bar & Grill. Area businesses offer Frosty Frolic specials (1-4PM) including artist demos, tours, wine tastings and food specials. Lake Ripley, Cambridge WI. PH: 608-423-3241.

FEB 12

Madison

Madison Antique & Collectible Show

Wonderful antique and collectibles sale showcasing 25 local vendors with vintage items for home and garden, books by Wisconsin authors, Native American baskets, jewelry, pottery and glassware, postcards and stereoviews, sports-themed items, sewing buttons, and of special interest, Wayne Visible Gas Pumps (circa late 1920s-30s). Handicapped accessible. Free admission. Knights of Columbus Banquet Hall, 5256 Verona Road. Event starts at 9 AM and ends at 4 PM. PH: 608-444-0649.

FEB 14

Appleton

A Sweet Way to Go!

Death By Chocolate in Appleton

The childhood home of Harry Houdini, the great escape artist, is now known for scratching the itch of shoppers at dozens of specialty stores, outlet malls and boutiques. But for Valentine's Day Appleton brings out the chocolates for a sweet and tasty walk up and down College Avenue. Heaps and heaps of whipped chocolate, dark rich chocolate, chocolate martinis await at the **9th Annual, Death by Chocolate Valentine's Day event, Tuesday, Feb 14th**. Go ahead. Risk it. Indulge! Tickets (\$20 or two for \$35) are required. PH: 920-954-9112 - www.appletondowntown.org

FEB 17

Manawa

"Under The Lights" Ice Oval Racing

Vintage Snowmobile & Motorcycle Ice Oval Racing. 1/3 mile shaved lake track. Vintage stock & modified sleds (sleds must be 20 years or older). Bear Lake Resort, Hwy 22/110. PH: 920-596-3372.

FEB 17

Ephraim

Peninsula Music Festival February Fest 2

A program of romance, humor and beautiful music celebrating the 200th anniversary of Sense and Sensibility, featuring composers loved by Jane Austen complimented by Stephen Alltop's historical narrative. Ephraim Moravian Church. Event starts at 7:00PM. PH: 920-854-4060.

<http://musicfestival.com/new/concerts/2012concerts/2012febfest.php>

FEB 18 - 19

Antigo

Langlade County Culver's Trailblazer Challenge Sled Dog Races

The Antigo/Langlade County Chamber of Commerce will host the 2nd Annual Langlade County Trailblazer Challenge Sled Dog Races. The public is welcome to come out and watch; there is plenty of parking and several road-crossing locations for spectators 2105 Neva Road. PH: 888-526-4523.

FEB 18

Ashland

Book Across the Bay Cross Country Ski Race

Ashland/Washburn Cross-country ski race and tour, or snowshoe trek across Chequamegon Bay from Ashland to Washburn. Navigate the 10K course by the light of the stars plus hundreds of candlelit ice luminaries. Join more than 3,300 racers. Chequamegon Bay. Event starts at 6 PM. PH: 800-284-9484.

<http://www.batb.org/>

FEB 18

Drummond

Barstool Races & Chili Feed

Participants decorate their barstool-on-skis with some of the zaniest things you'll ever see, and then they set off in head-to-head competition down the man-made ski hill for thrills, chills and lots of spills! Great food including hot homemade chili, cold beer and fun! Funds raised go towards snowmobile grooming in the Drummond area. Black Bear Inn. PH: 715-739-6262. <http://www.drummondwi.com/Page.aspx?page=12&>

FEB 18

Boulder Junction

Boulder Junction Winter Festival

Join us for an ice fishing tournament, ice golf snowshoeing activities and family fun on Boulder Lake. Tournament proceeds will benefit the Boulder Junction Area Boat Landing Improvement Fund. Food and beverages will be available. Awards and raffle at JJs Pub & Grub - 5:30PM. Event starts at 11:00AM. PH: 715-385-2400.

FEB 18

Elkhart Lake

Pig in the Ice Winter Festival

Annual Pig-in-the-Ice Winter Festival at Sheboygan County Marsh Park featuring pig roast, ice fishing tournament, ice cube hunts and fireworks display. W7039 County Road SR. PH: 920-876-2535.

FEB 18

Green Lake

Willy Porter

"Porter is a dazzling acoustic guitarist with a moody baritone.." The Washington Post. "Thank goodness he doesn't play the flute." Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull. 7:30PM - call for ticket info. Thrasher Opera House, 506 Mill St. PH: 920-294-4279.

FEB 18

Madison

Polar Plunge

The Polar Plunge is a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support local Special Olympics athletes by jumping or slowly crawling into the frigid and icy waters of Wisconsin. Olin Turville Park. PH: 608-221-2900.

FEB 18

Manawa

5th Annual Manawa Snodeo

Lakecross racing/Radar Runs/Motorcycle Ice Racing. Classes for any and all riders. DJ, Food & refreshments all day. Fireworks and a Torchlight parade at dusk. Bear Lake. PH: 920-596-3372.

FEB 18

Onalaska

Lions Ice Fishing Derby

Annual fishing derby with prizes given in six fish classes. Door prizes, food & fun. Sat 11AM-3PM. Lake Onalaska - North Shore Landing, W7301 County Road Z. PH: 800-873-1901.

FEB 18

Oshkosh

Polar Plunge for Special Olympics

The Polar Plunge is a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support local Special Olympics athletes by jumping or slowly crawling into the frigid and icy waters of Wisconsin. Registration 10AM; plunging at noon Menominee Park/ Millers Bay. PH: 920-731-1614.

FEB 18

Rib Lake

Hinder Binder Cross Country Ski Race

Racing includes a 22K classic or freestyle, an 8K high school race, middle school race and shorter kids' races. Registration 8AM; races start at 10AM. Rib Lake Ski Trails and Camp Forest Springs Trails. PH: 715-748-2307.

FEB 18

St. Germain

29th Annual Ride with the Champs

Sponsored by HotDawg Garage Heaters by Modine. Starting from the Whitetail Inn at 7:30AM with registration and breakfast, there are two routes scheduled. The vintage ride group will head to Minocqua and the photo shoot. The other groups will take the traditional longer ride and return to the Whitetail for an autograph session, Hall of Fame Dinner (starting at 7PM) followed by the Hall of Fame Induction. 8481 Highway 70 West. PH: 715-479-4463.

FEB 18 – 19

Whitewater

Freeze Fest

Ice carvings, fishing derby, historical museum tours, snow dog show, free wagon rides, candlelight ski, quilt show, Chili cookoff, 2012 Polar Plunge and much, much more! Throughout Whitewater. PH: 262-473-0121.

FEB 18 - 19

Madison

Mad City Model Railroad Show and Sale

45th Annual! More than 90,000 sq ft of model train layouts in Z, N, HO, S, O and G scales, classic toy trains, exhibits & videos. Browse 300+ tables of model train merchandise including tools, railroad collectibles, models, books, clothing and artwork. There will be several train sets given away daily. Admission charged. Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way. Event starts at 9:00AM and ends at 5:00PM. PH: 608-267-3976. http://www.nmra-scwd.org/Rail_Show_Info_Flyer.php

FEB 18 - 19

Madison

Madison Winter Festival - Capitol Square Sprints

Madison's Capitol Square is transformed into a winter wonderland with ice and snow sculptures, premiere cross-country skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing venues during this weekend-long event. Family oriented activities, special events at the museums, public open skiing and music. This year, there will be again an attempt to break the world record at the 100 meter sprint. Wisconsin State Capitol Building. PH: 608-385-8864. <http://www.winter-fest.com/>

FEB 19

Oshkosh

Annual Coin Show

Numismatic Research Society Ltd invites you to buy, sell or trade coins, jewelry and precious metals. Free and open to the public. Door prizes. Oshkosh Convention Center, 2 N Main St. PH: 920-231-5000.

FEB 19

Madison

Miss Madison-Capital City

Come watch the 12 contestants who have raised over \$1,200 for the Children's Miracle Network and will compete for the 2012 title. They will compete in evening gown, talent, swim suit and on stage question. A panel of judges will interview each contestant earlier in the day. Madison Eastside Club, 3735 Monona Drive. PH: 608-221-2403.

FEB 21

Green Bay

Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary - Night Cross-Country Ski

Get your hands on a pair of cross country skis to ski the beautiful night on the Sanctuary trails. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, 1660 E Shore Dr. Event starts at 6:00PM. PH: 920-391-3671.

FEB 23-25

Cable to Hayward

39th Annual American Birkebeiner Cross Country Ski Race

The American Birkebeiner, "the Birkie", was launched in 1973 as a small cross-country ski race with 35 participants in the Northwest Wisconsin woods. Today, with 9000 racers, it's the largest cross-country ski race in North America and part of the Worldloppet circuit of 15 international ski marathons. The race is 54K and attracts skiers from 48 states and 21 foreign countries. PH: 715-643-5025. <http://www.birkie.com/>

FEB 24 - 26

Madison

Madison Fishing Expo

With 20,000 attendees, this show is the largest in the Midwest. Since 1985, the nonprofit event has donated more than \$550,000 to improve fishing in Wisconsin. Kids can join in the favorite fishing contest while their parents learn all about fishing techniques and tricks. Fri 4-9PM, Sat 9AM-7PM, Sun 9AM-5PM. Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way. PH: 608-267-3976.

FEB 24 - 26

Neillsville

Neillsville Winter Carnival

Activities include a Variety Show, Polar Bear Plunge, Neillsville Area Players' production, outdoor co-ed volleyball, basketball, men's and women's pool tournaments, dart and cribbage tournaments, pancake breakfast, trophy trap shoot and card tournaments. PH: 715-743-6444.

FEB 24 - 26

Tomahawk

FROSTival

Frostival will include a polar plunge, snowmobile show and swap meet, kids snowmobile racing, food and music. SARA Park West Somo Avenue. PH: 800-569-2160.

FEB 24 - Mar 24

Monroe

Badger Conference Art Exhibit

Participating high schools in the 2012 exhibit are Baraboo, Monroe, Mount Horeb, Oregon, Portage, Reedsburg, Sauk Prairie, Stoughton, Verona, and Waunakee. Both two and three-dimensional pieces have been created in media such as watercolor, tempera, oil, acrylic, graphite, colored pencil, charcoal, ceramic, wood, photography, jewelry, metal fabrication, and computer-generated art. Tuesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM. Monroe Arts Center, 1315 11th Street. PH: 608-325-5700.

FEB 25

Green Bay

Polar Plunge

The Polar Plunge is a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support local Special Olympics athletes by jumping or slowly crawling into the frigid and icy waters of Wisconsin The Watering Hole, 2107 Velp Ave. PH: 920-497-2422.

FEB 25

Baraboo

Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Featuring violinist Alexander Sitkovetsky. Al Ringling Theatre, downtown Baraboo. PH: 608-356-8864

FEB 25

Mercer

Turtle Flambeau Flowage Ice Fishing Jamboree

Cash prizes for the largest fish caught in several categories. Food and beverages, raffles in a tent set up on the ice. 2974 N Hiawatha Rd.. Event starts at 8:00AM and ends at 5:00PM. PH: 715-476-2555.

FEB 25

Necedah

Cabin Fever and Green Fire

Indoor and outdoor activities to beat the winter blues. Many indoor exhibits and activities at the new NNWR Visitor's Center. Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, N11385 Headquarters Road. Event starts at 9:00AM and ends at 3:00PM. PH: 608-565-2551.

FEB 25

Phillips

Prentice Bushbenders Snowmobile & ATV Races

Bring your sled or ATV and race on an oval track against the clock. Kitty Kat races for the kids. Trophies for all classes. Food and drinks available. Raffles during the event and cash raffle drawing at 2PM. This is a snowmobile club public event. Everyone is welcome to attend. Sailor's Bar & Grill, 715 Railroad Avenue. Event starts at 10:00AM and ends at 3:00PM. PH: 715-820-2332.

FEB 25 - 26

Tomah

34th Annual Antique Show "Freez'n n February"

Smaller show with big Quality and variety - 25 dealers featuring stoneware, sporting collectibles, pottery, childrens items, jewelry, advertising, primitives, furniture, toys, glass, mid century, and much more. Admission under 16 free. 9AM-5PM Sat; 10AM-5PM Sun. Exhibition Park, (fairgrounds). PH: 608-385-3598.

FEB 25

Wausau

Polar Plunge

The Polar Plunge is a unique opportunity for individuals, organizations, and businesses to support local Special Olympics athletes by jumping or slowly crawling into the frigid and icy waters of Wisconsin. Sunnyvale Man Made Park, 1000 S 72nd Ave. PH: 715-848-0550.

FEB 25

Prairie du Chien

Bald Eagle Appreciation Day

See eagles at multiple viewing spots. Depending on weather you may see up to 50 birds. Live bald eagle programs in the morning and afternoon. PH: 608-326-8555; www.prairieduchien.org

FEB 25

Medford

Perkinstown Outhouse Races

The "Race of Thrones!" Teams of four pushers and one squatter make their way around the snowy race course. Fun for everyone with Kids' Races. Don't miss Otis' Famous Pig Roast and Rat Roulette! Registration noon; races begin 1 PM. Perkinstown Winter Sports Area. PH: 715-427-1002.

<http://cwrclub.com/perkinstown-outhouse-race/>

FEB 26

Eau Claire

Special Olympics Polar Plunge

Individuals or groups are invited to plunge into the "cool" waters of Half Moon Lake and compete for prizes such as best individual plunge, best individual plunge wear, best group wear and theme, and fastest plunge. Carson Park, 100 Carson Park Drive. PH: 715-833-0833.

FEB 29

Janesville

Leap Year Family Fun Day

With an extra day to spend with family and friends every four years, there is no better place to celebrate it than at Rotary Botanical Gardens. Enjoy special activities for the young and young at heart! From bunnies to frogs to kangaroos, it will be a hoppin' and leapin' good time! Rotary Botanical Gardens, 1455 Palmer Drive. PH: 608-752-3885. <http://rotarybotanicalgardens.org/events/leap-year-family-fun>

Feb 23-25 -

Hayward & Cable-WI

The 39th Annual American Birkebeiner Cross Country Ski Race

The American Birkebeiner, "the Birkie", was launched in 1973 as a small cross-country ski race with 35 participants in the Northwest Wisconsin woods. Today, with 9000 racers, it's the largest cross-country ski race in North America and part of the Worldloppet circuit of 15 international ski marathons. The race is 54K and attracts skiers from 48 states and 21 foreign countries. <http://www.birkie.com/> PH: 715-643-5025

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BEFORE YOU GO: Avoid disappointment. Always check for schedule changes before heading to events. For more events: www.TravelWisconsin.com or www.WisTravel.com

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FREE TRAVEL GUIDES:

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF TOURISM

Free: 800-432-8747 (TRIP) <http://www.travelwisconsin.com>

Wisconsin "Activity Guide" Campground Directory, Lodging Directory, Highway Map

OTHERS IN WISCONSIN: (all free)

Calumet County Guide – PH: 920-849-1442 www.travelcalumet.com

Chippewa County Travel Guide – PH: 866-723-0331 www.ChippewaCounty.com

Door County Visitors Guide – PH: 800-527-3529 <http://www.doorcounty.com/web/contact.asp>

Fox Cities Area Guide – 800-2236-6673 <http://www.foxcities.org/visit-front.cfm>

Grant County Travel Guide – PH: 608-348-8888 www.Platteville.com

Green Bay Visitor's Guide – 888-867-3342 www.GreenBay.com

Green County Travel Guide – 888-222-9111 www.GreenCounty.com

Kenosha Area Visitors Guide – 800-654-7309 www.KenoshaCVB.com

Kewaunee County Guide – 800-290-4299 www.VisitKewauneeCounty.com

Madison Area Visitor Guide - PH: 800.373.6376 <http://www.visitmadison.com>

Mineral Point Travel Guide – PH: 888-764-6894 www.MineralPoint.com

Minocqua Area Destination Guide – 800-44-NORTH www.minocqua.org

Sauk Prairie Visitors Packet – PH: 800- 683-2453 <http://www.saukprairie.com/visitorspacket.html>

St.Croix Valley & Polk County Guides (ask Sue for both) PH: 800-222-7655 www.VisitSCF.com

Superior & Douglas Country Travel Guide 800-942-5313 www.VisitSuperior.com

OTHERS – NEIGHBORING STATES, REGIONAL, ETC

Lake Michigan Circle Tour and Lighthouse Map – PH: 1-800-442-2084 or at www.WMTA.org

Mississippi Valley Partners (WI-MN) www.mississippi-river.org 1-888-999-2619

Red Wing, Minnesota www.redwing.org 1-651-385-5934

Wabasha-Kellogg, Minnesota – www.wabashamn.org 1-800-565-4158

West Michigan Travel Guide 616-245-2217 www.wmta.org/publications-24/

Winona, Minnesota Visitor Guide – PH: (800) 657-4972 www.VisitWinona.com

