



2023
SKIER & SNOWSHOER HANDBOOK



Visit www.meccatrails.com for event registration, trail conditions, and more information about MECCA Trails.

About Winterfest

MECCA Trails Winterfest is an annual event sponsored by MECCA Trails (www.meccatrails.com) in Mercer, Wisconsin, in collaboration with the Gogebic Range Health Foundation (gogebicrangehr.org). The event is MECCA's biggest fundraiser of the year.

Proceeds from Winterfest are used to promote, enhance, and maintain MECCA trails and its equipment and facilities. Winterfest also supports the MECCA Experience Fund, which provides funding for students and other groups to visit MECCA Trails throughout the year.



Event Pricing

- Student (18 years and under) for all events: \$10
- Adult for all events:
 - Register by December 15, 2022: \$40
 - Register by January 15, 2023: \$45
 - Register after January 16, 2023: \$50

Course maps

Maps and descriptions for all Winterfest events are available on the MECCA Trails website at <https://www.meccatrails.com/events/>

Prizes

- All registered participants of the ski and snowshoe events will receive a Winterfest Nordic ski hat.
- Prizes for competitive live and virtual events are awarded by gender and age categories as stated in the event descriptions.
- Sponsors' merchandise and gift certificate prizes will be awarded by drawing, and all registered participants have a chance to win.
- Live Event prizes will be awarded at the chalet immediately after the race on January 28, 2022. Virtual Event prizes will be mailed out the week of February 21, 2023.



Live Events – January 28, 2023

Live 2023 Winterfest events will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2023. There are three ski races in the morning and the Candlelight Ski-Shoe-Hike event that evening.

MECCA 30K Live

Skiers choose to compete in either Classic or Skate Divisions with prizes awarded for each. Grand Prizes for will be awarded for the fastest male and female overall, and prizes will be awarded to the fastest male and female in seven age categories: students up to 19, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s+. *(Please note: the actual course length is 30.8 kilometers.)*

Flowage 15K Live

Skiers choose to compete in either Classic or Skate Divisions with prizes awarded for each. Grand Prizes will be awarded for the fastest male and female overall, and prizes will be awarded to the fastest male and female in seven age categories: students up to 19, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s+. *(Please note: the actual course length is 15.4 kilometers.)*

Claire d' Loon 5K Live

Skiers can either skate or stride in the Claire d' Loon 5k; registration is open to all skiers. This event is a favorite of younger skiers, families, and first-time races. Prizes will be awarded to the top three male and female students and the fastest male and female adult skiers.

Candlelight Ski-Shoe-Hike

MECCA's annual community celebration is a one-mile candlelit trail that invites skiers, snowshoers, and hikers to enjoy the winter night. Two hundred luminaria along the one-mile trail make for a magical wintry night. The woodstove and bonfires in and around the chalet will keep everyone warm. The event is free and will be a great get together for everyone. It's family friendly and dogs are welcome. This is not a competitive event. No registration is necessary, but those who choose to register in advance may purchase a Winterfest hat.



Winterfest Live Event Information – January 28, 2023

Live event start times

- MECCA 30K Classic skiers: 9:30 AM
- MECCA 30K Skate skiers: 9:45 AM
- Flowage 15K Classic skiers start at 10:00 AM
- Flowage 15K Skate skiers start at 10:05 AM
- Claire d' Loon 5K skiers start at 10:15 AM
- Candlelight Ski-Shoe-Hike held at 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM

About the course

- The trails will be groomed with a set of tracks and a skate lane.
- Start and finish lines are at the MECCA Chalet, 4686N Fierick Road, Mercer, WI.
- Skier aid stations with water and energy snacks will be at the chalet and the Flowage trailhead.
- Volunteers will be stationed at the snowmobile crossings.
- All skiers will be chip timed as they cross the start and finish lines.
- Skiers can self-identify at registration as expert, intermediate, or novice skiers to minimize passing.
- Skiers will launch at 20 second intervals.

Information for live event racers and spectators

- Parking is available at the Mercer Sanitary District, past the chalet on Fierick Road.
- The heated maintenance garage has wax benches, changing spaces, and bag drop shelves.
- The chalet will be open for registration and bib pickup.
- There are two heated vault toilets at the chalet and two porta potties along the 15K and 30K courses.
- Hot and cold beverages will be available at the chalet. A pasty lunch will be served at the finish line. Food and beverages will be served by volunteers.
- Spectators are welcome at the chalet and at the Flowage trailhead.
- Mercer EMS and skier assist personnel will be on the course.



LIVE Course Signage

The start line and finish line are located at the MECCA Chalet, 4686N Fierick Road, Mercer, WI.



Each course has color coded directional markers at the trail intersections to keep you on the correct trail. There are at least two directional markers at each intersection, one approximately 50' from the intersection and one or two at the intersection. K markers along each course allow you to know how far you've skied.



Virtual Events – December 17, 2022 to February 19, 2023

Virtual Winterfest events will be open from December 17, 2022, through February 19, 2023.

Virtual participants can select from four ski races (5K, 11K Pursuit, 15K and 30K) and the Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour. All registrants get a logo Nordic hat and are eligible for sponsor prizes.

Skiers keep and report their own time and may ski the course multiple times and submit their best time. Skiers can register and compete in as many of the events as they choose.

MECCA 30K Virtual

Skiers choose to compete in either Classic or Skate Divisions with prizes for each. Grand Prizes will be awarded for the fastest male and female overall, and prizes will be awarded to the fastest male and female in seven age categories: students up to 19, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s+. *(Please note: the actual course length is 30.8 kilometers.)*

Turtle River Pursuit (11K classic and 11K skate leg) Virtual

Skiers ski the 11K course twice, once with classic striding and once with skate skiing techniques. The two legs do not need to be skied on the same day. One skier can complete the Pursuit individually or two skiers may register as a team with one Classic skier and one Skate skier. Prizes will be awarded to the top three male and female individual pursuit skiers and to the top three teams.

Flowage 15K

Skiers choose to compete in either Classic or Skate Divisions with prizes for each. Grand Prizes will be awarded for the fastest male and female overall, and prizes will be awarded to the fastest male and female in seven age categories: students up to 19, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s+. *(Please note: the actual course length is 15.4 kilometers.)*

Claire d' Loon 5K

Skiers can either skate or stride in the virtual Claire d' Loon 5k; registration is open to all skiers. This event is a favorite of younger skiers, families, and first-time races. Prizes will be awarded to the top three male and female student and the fastest male and female adult skiers.

Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour

The Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour is a non-timed recreational event showcasing the beauty of the MECCA Trails. Participants can choose 1-, 2- or 3-mile looped snowshoe trails. The trails are well marked, and participants can snowshoe the trails throughout the winter.



Information for virtual participants

- After you register for a virtual event, you can ski the course, keep your own time, then log back in to report your time. You may ski the course multiple times and report your best time.
- The Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour is not competitive. The one-mile *Klondike* and 2-mile *Mercer Springs Trails* can be enjoyed all winter.
- The MECCA chalet is open daily from 8:00 AM until 6:00 PM. The chalet has a woodstove, wax bench, change room, tables, and benches.
- The chalet has a vault toilet and there are porta potties at the Flowage Trailhead and along the Little Turtle River.
- The trails are groomed regularly with a set of tracks and a skate lane. Current conditions are updated frequently at meccatrails.com.
- Event winners will be awarded after the close of competition on February 19. Prizes will be delivered to local participants and mailed to out of town participants.



Virtual Course Signage

Virtual participants may complete their race any time during the virtual event, December 17, 2022, through February 19, 2023. Each course has color coded directional markers at the trail intersections to keep you on the correct trail. There are at least two directional markers at each intersection on the right side of the trail. The first is approximately 50' before the intersection and there are one or two at the intersection. Each course has "K" markers indicating how many kilometers you've completed.



Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour

The Mercer Springs Snowshoe Tour is a non-competitive event that highlights the beauty of the MECCA snowshoe trails. Registrants will receive a commemorative logo Nordic ski hat.

Snowshoers can snowshoe the Klondike Loop (1 mile), the Mercer Springs Loop (2 miles), or both (3+ miles).

The Klondike loops starts and finishes behind the chalet. The Mercer Springs Loop starts across Fierick Road from the chalet and finishes behind the chalet after connecting to the Klondike Loop.

