

**Please allow us this reminder before reading further.**

**The 23rd Annual Peak to Peak Pedal is coming this October and the USARC needs donors, riders and volunteers to help make this adventure of a lifetime even more successful!**



**PEAK TO PEAK 23**

**BIG BEAR TO MAMMOTH**

**10.4-8.17**

**Please log on to [www.firstgiving.com/usarc/p2p23](http://www.firstgiving.com/usarc/p2p23) to register as a rider or volunteer or to give as generously as you can so the USARC can continue its mission of changing lives.**

**Thank you and enjoy this issue of USARC's The Spirit.**



# *The Spirit*

Summer  
2017

**of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center**



Paul and Melissa getting psyched for water skiing.

## **If April showers bring May flowers...**

...what do May flowers bring? Pilgrims! Okay, enough with the jokes, but at the very least, April and May

showers have helped bring the level of Big Bear Lake up about 30% since last summer. Of course everyone would have liked the same precipitation that fell in Northern California, but nobody is complaining. This past winter was a welcome change from its predecessors and as a result the USARC is in full swing in preparation for the upcoming summer.

(See Summer on pg. 5)

## **Welcome Back Old Man!**

You know what they say, beware of too much of a good thing. While USARC did not receive the same snowfall that fell on Mammoth Mountain and the Sierras, Ol' Man Winter still made his presence known during our 2016-2017 season. It was awesome to have steady snowfall for the first time in several years, despite the inconveniences it brought.

(See Winter on pg. 4)



Robert keeps his skier's speed in check while Mikey provides some face to face coaching.

## **Volunteer Profile - Danny Warner**

Danny Warner is a guy you can't help but love. He is a selfless volunteer, not only to USARC but to many other causes close to his heart. Always trying to make people smile around him, Danny never turns down a challenge, be that training to teach multiple adaptive techniques or riding the Peak to Peak Pedal. We invite you to take a moment to get to know Danny, who has garnered yet another achievement, that of USARC's 2017 Volunteer of the Year.



Danny takes Jaidyn through a big "off-the-lip" in Bear Mountain's half-pipe (in their bi-ski on their time!)

**The Spirit (TS):** What made you decide to volunteer at USARC?

**Danny Warner (DW):** I was exposed to USARC when my daughter Jaidyn was a participant. I was encouraged by Marshall and the staff to volunteer but I didn't have the vacation to do so. Two years later I had more vacation days left in the year and made a commitment to myself to force in some days off and use them for a good cause. There is something about volunteering at USARC that is so rewarding and in an environment away from the daily minutia. Nine years later I continue to put in 8-12 days a year.

(See Danny on pg. 4)

# A Note from the Executive Director

(NOTE: I wrote this for our volunteers, only to realize it applies to all USARC supporters and family members.)

Y'all know how I love sharing obscure vocabulary words, and today is no exception. But first let me digress. I hope everyone enjoyed this winter, because the weather report shows that in about 4.5 billion years it appears there will no

longer be a ski season on earth. There won't be snow, there won't be rain, there won't be clouds. In fact there won't even be any water at all. By then, all the water that ever existed on this planet will have returned to the void of outer space from whence it came. Not that it matters, because from what I've read there won't even be mountains. And actually, it gets worse.

Using observations, computations and experimentations, some scientists observing the cosmos have concluded that by then our sun will have swollen to become a massive red giant star, about 150 times its current size. In so doing, its diameter will likely consume the earth itself, boiling the oceans away and incinerating everything else. The earth's orbital motion will be slowed by the sun's gaseous bulk, enabling gravity to overcome this planet's centrifugal force. What's left of the charred earth will gradually move slower and slower, steadily spiraling down into the core of the sun, becoming an ever smaller cinder as it does so, until one day not even a tiny speck of rock is left. I suppose you could look at it as sort of like a very extravagant and

large-scale reduction sauce recipe. So we got that to look forward to.

Such notions do, however, give one pause. I mean, in 4.5 billion years why will it matter what happened here this season? Is it going to matter in 100 years? 10 years? Tomorrow? If all things are temporal, why bother doing what we do, what YOU do?



Tom Peirce  
USARC Exec. Dir.

So here comes your vocabulary lesson for today: I'm guessing the answer is because you all subscribe, consciously or subconsciously, to the concept of 'noblesse oblige'. I learned this term while in college when I had run out of time to research and write a term paper, so my best friend Danny let me plagiarize one he had written on the subject. (Quick sidebar for you kids out there: I received a D because I couldn't discuss "my sources" with the professor. Karma.)

It's not like we need fancy French words for some pretty straightforward stuff, but if you Google the term you might learn that *Noblesse Oblige* is "the inferred responsibility of privileged people to act with generosity and nobility toward those less privileged." For all the changes in the world and this country as of late, and in spite of much of the resultant discord, it is heartwarming to see this concept remains intact. Not only that, but it even seems to be enjoying a degree of resurgence as people's awareness of the world around them, and the needs of the less fortunate inhabitants of that world, seems to have increased.

So this is really just a long-winded way of saying thank you for being not just volunteers (and supporters) but also for being exalted

practitioners of 'noblesse oblige'. What better way to spend the 4.5 billion ski seasons you have remaining?



Volunteer Roger lends Tina a helping hand or two during the Ski-A-Thon.



United States Adaptive Recreation Center

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## Danny Warner (cont.)

**TS:** You rode Peak to Peak a couple of times, any plans to do it again?

**DW:** Yes! Based on the time commitment involved (training and riding) I plan on doing it every couple of years. It's a definite must do bucket list check off if anyone is on the fence. I was fortunate to ride peak to peak both directions as well as bring along a few friends. I proudly display the highly sought after "P2P Horse's A\*\*" award in my trophy case.

**TS:** What do you tell folks about USARC?

**DW:** It's an incredible organization that gives people the ultimate gift of freedom and independence. The staff and volunteers are selfless and their actions are inspirational.

**TS:** If you could travel anywhere in the world where would you go?

**DW:** I love travel and studied abroad in College. I would like to do a Safari in Africa. My wife and daughter have been and loved it but unfortunately I had to miss that trip to stay home with Jaidyn. But my next upcoming trip is this July in Argentina and I have built in some time to go snow skiing in Cerro Castor.



Danny subscribes to the motto: "The family that plays together, stays together."

**TS:** What are your other hobbies besides skiing and cycling?

**DW:** I spend a significant amount of time giving back through being the Chair of the Rett Syndrome Family Empowerment Board ([www.Rettsyndrome.org](http://www.Rettsyndrome.org)), my daughter's school PTA President, and on my Company's giving committee. Yet in my free time my hobby is spending time with my girls.

**TS:** Your family is very active together, what are some of your favorite things to do?

**DW:** Even though I have a daughter with severe special needs, it does not hold us back from being active as a family. We like to ski as a family (have our own Bi-ski), go boating and tubing in Lake Havasu, and even bike riding around on weekends as I pull Jaidyn in her trailer. All activities we can do together.

**TS:** Do you have a favorite lesson that stands out?

**DW:** I can remember nearly every lesson as they are each special. I have had lessons from someone having a seizure to crying of happiness. Yet my favorite is Laird! For a few reasons- He loves it, his family is great to work with, and he is light weight!



Danny is a great bi-ski instructor, and he's no slouch in a mono-ski!

## Winter (cont.)

Yes the storms did cause a few road restrictions and resort closures, and some lessons had to be rescheduled, but the new snow left behind was enjoyed by those who persevered. USARC's amazing volunteers (see pg. X) stepped up their game to fill in the depleted ranks, Big Bear residents went through many shovelfuls (and shovels) keeping driveways clear, while the old adage of "no friends on powder days" was in full force! The silver lining to those snowy clouds is a lake that was five feet fuller than at the beginning of the winter, but as fast as the storms came and went, so too did the season, one of the better ones in recent memory.



Mono-skier Annemarie moves her center of mass downhill for a nice turn initiation.

## Summer (cont.)



Mikey and Jeremy get ready for another round on a Kawasaki Jet-Ski!

Whether the change in the shoreline will be noticeable or not, one big difference from past summers is the rescheduling of the overnight camps from August to July. The overnight sessions simply add a camping element to the activities of the day sessions, including water skiing, jet skiing, kayaking and SUP. Check out the dates on the back page and mark your calendars because camp spaces fill up quickly! First come-first serve reservations can be made beginning May 16th at 9:00 so set your alarm!

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** There is a free one-day volunteer training on Saturday, June 24. This clinic will prepare you for a variety of roles inherent to the water sports program's success. Volunteers are needed for dock help, water starting, jumping, boat crew and paddle sports. The volunteers are an essential part of our Summer Program, so come on up to the beautiful mountains and watch the magic happen. Applications are now available on the USARC website summer volunteer page at <http://usarc.org/summer-details>.

## Thank You Winter Volunteers!

The USARC gratefully acknowledges these volunteers who fulfilled their Winter '16-'17 teaching commitment to enabling the USARC to continue its important mission.

<b>Scott Adler*</b>	Daniel Horner*	<b>TOM POLLARD</b>
Britt Aguilar	Karen Horst	David Price
<b>JOHN ALDERETE</b>	<b>Rodney Hsueh</b>	Paul Priest*
Robert Allen***	Kyle Jones	Gilbert Ramos
<b>Debbi Armenta</b>	<b>Bob Knight***</b>	Aryeh Ribak
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Jack Beckley	B.A Laris	Morgan Schetter
Pete Beckley	<b>Kam Lawrence***</b>	Don Schroeder*
Thomas Beckley	<b>Soo Jeong Lee*</b>	Matthew Schwier*
<u>Steven Betance*</u>	David Leong	Bill Shamhart*
Richard Beynon*	Debbie Leong**	<b>Holly Shelton*</b>
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Bill Hinchliff	Jim Ortiz	<b>BILL YAEGER</b>
Cindy Hinchliff	<b>John Pacente***</b>	Casey Ying
Josh Holt	<b>Sandy Pappas**</b>	<b>Claire Youmans</b>
<b>Mark Hopkins*</b>	Matt Pawley***	Darren Young
	<u>Tom Perez**</u>	

*Italics* = 25 years  
CAPS = 20+ years

\*\*\* = 15+ years  
\*\* = 10+ years  
\* = 5+ years

Underline = 10+days  
**Bold** = PSIA Certified

## Ski-A-Thon 2017

With all the fantastic new snow leading up to March, excited teams showed up for the Ski-A-Thon with ski fever and donations for the USARC. The pendulum swung back to Team Briana (\$9,750) as the fundraising champion this year, barely edging out reigning champion Michelle's FUNraisers (\$9,425), with the Parrot Heads (\$3,150) rounding out the podium. Team Buce (\$2,475) and Mt. Everest (\$1,475) led the rest of the wonderful Ski-A-Thon participants who raised over \$50,000 in support of USARC's life-changing programs. Thank you one and all!



Ski-A-Thon-er Liz shows off her form.

## With Heavy Hearts

The USARC family is heart-broken to bid unexpected farewells to several people who contributed greatly to the legacy of USARC.



**GEORGE WATSON-JONES** was a USARC volunteer since 2005, having discovered the program when he brought his wife in for lessons. Seeing the merits of the program firsthand, George eagerly joined USARC's volunteer ranks and became a regular in the winter and summer, earning the 2011 USARC Volunteer of the

Year award. Not only was George adept at winter sports but his Merchant Marine background made him a natural on any USARC vessel as well as in the water. George's absence leaves a large void in our family and we will never be the same without him.

**ROGER LEE** came to USARC as part of the rehabilitation program for his spinal cord injury. Not only did he take to mono-skiing like a penguin to snow, he excelled to the point where he turned his attention to competition. Roger successfully joined the US Disabled Ski Team and competed in the 2006 Winter Paralympic Games in Torino, Italy. While he lived in Colorado, he never forgot his roots and came back to USARC to share what he had learned with aspiring racers. Roger's life validated the USARC's belief that with opportunity, nothing is impossible.



**FRANK HAYES** came to the program in the early 90s also as the loved one of a participant, his son. After witnessing the enjoyment bi-skiing brought to his son and how it served to allow family members to ski together, Frank jumped at the chance to become a volunteer. With enthusiasm and slope time, Frank's once-shaky skiing skills evolved regularly and soon he found himself volunteering all the time. His big, booming laugh could often be heard echoing down the runs, proof that the USARC is as fun as it is life-changing!

The USARC thanks these  
2016 in-kind donors\*

Acatmeowz Graphic Design  
Rusty Barnes  
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Medieval Times  
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The Agency Brands  
The Bike Shop  
The Pines Lakefront Dining  
The Sock Guy  
Allison Van Wig  
Paul Van Wig  
Donald B. Whitbeck  
Claire Youmans  
Robbie Young

If your 2016 donation of goods or services is not listed please accept our apologies and contact us so we can correct our records.

# Lyndsey, by any other name is, well, “Intern”

(Ed. Note - Thanks Lyndsey O’Brien for continuing USARC’s tradition of keeping your name secret [from most people] until the end of the season volunteer party, not to mention being a fantastic intern!)

How cool is it that I was able to spend my last semester in college here at USARC in Big Bear Lake, CA? When searching for an internship for my last semester at Arizona State University, I never imagined there was



Lyndsey demonstrates the form and shares the knowledge that earned her a Level 1 PSIA certification.

an internship like this one available. I am very used to a clinical setting so I decided to look for an outdoor recreation setting as a change of pace and a way to expand my experience. Well, amazingly, I found the US Adaptive Recreation Center. Skiing and snowboarding have always been a big part of my life, so having the opportunity to support people with physical and cognitive disabilities to ski and snowboard was truly a dream. I immediately contacted Sara and told her I was very interested, and the rest is history!

When I first arrived, lessons had already been in effect for some time. It



Lyndsey’s on-the-hill skills were rivaled by her “office assistant” talents.

was very intimidating jumping right into things, but as many of you already know, the USARC staff is beyond great and made me feel right at home. And don’t even get me started on our volunteers; they are selfless, encouraging, and all around amazing people who teach us all a ton. There is no way I could possibly pick just one day that was my favorite. Every day was a new adventure. Even though you may only see a participant once, it feels great when you get to share what you

love with someone who appreciates an adventure and recreational opportunity, no matter the obstacles.

Now let’s talk about all the things I have gained during this experience. Hang onto your seat because there’s a lot. For example, I have gained a new name (Intern), profound snow shoveling skills (don’t underestimate the snow), too much experience with tire chains, tons of new friends, a PSIA Level 1 Adaptive Certification (whoop, whoop!), more Therapeutic Recreation knowledge than I ever could have imagined (so much to learn), and most of all I have realized I picked the best and most rewarding field to make a career out of. USARC gives people opportunities that they never thought they could have. There is no such thing as “can’t” at USARC; there is only “can”.



Looking like an old pro, Lyndsey goes skiing with Alysia in her bi-ski.

Thank you, USARC for letting me be a part of the best program ever and letting me learn and grow here as a Therapeutic Recreation student! It has truly been a blessing and I can’t wait to come back and visit!



As a multiple P2P rider, Karen shows how to navigate a tricky switchback leaving Big Bear on day one.

## A P2P22 to You too!

Even with the horrible mid-construction road conditions courtesy of CalTrans, compounded by some pretty discouraging headwinds at times, the riders of the 22nd Annual Peak to Peak Pedal showed from what cloth they are cut by putting their collective heads down and grinding out the miles, 335 of them to be more specific.

With a couple dozen riders, many or whom were returning riders and



Bob leaves the White Mountains and bucolic Round Valley behind as he climbs Old Sherwin Grade.

some of whom were new, the P2P22 caravan worked its way northward from Bear Mountain, down twisty canyon roads, across long straight lines of wide open terrain, and then back up more long and winding roads (thank you Paul McCartney) to their destination at Mammoth Mountain. Of course, contrasting the aforementioned road condition and winds, riders were treated to some



Working together on 395's wide, smooth shoulder makes the miles fly by for a whole pack o' Peakers.

amazing sights, from the endless skies of the high desert and the verdant surroundings of the Owens Valley to the jagged serrations of the Sierra Crest, leaving many riders breathless, and not just because of the climbs and altitude change!

It is these undaunted riders and volunteers, as well as their supporters, whose efforts ensure sustaining USARC's important financial resources used to provide lesson

scholarships, the latest adaptive equipment, and well trained and certified instructors. To get a good idea of what P2P22 was like please go to <https://player.vimeo.com/video/208064612>, and if you are interested in P2P23 (Oct. 4-8) please give USARC a call or go to [www.firstgiving.com/usarc/p2p23](http://www.firstgiving.com/usarc/p2p23) where you can register to ride, volunteer, or make a donation.

### Top Ten P2P22 Fundraisers

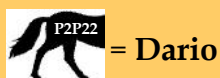
Kelle Malkewitz	\$13,214
Frank Elliott	\$7,225
Allison Van Wig	\$7,115
Dan Stormer	\$6,775
Debbi Armenta	\$5,050
Ken Klein	\$4,800
Liz Robertson	\$3,955
Paul Mattos	\$2,925
Paulette Campbell	\$2,925
Tom Peirce	\$2,825

Remember, P2P23 will be here in about five months, and history shows it's never too early to start planning and preparing. The USARC hopes you will make this autumn adventure



The sandman has nothing on long time P2P speedster Ken, always out at sunrise and the first one in camp.

part of your life this year, and in so doing, improve the lives of others. Thank you and ride on!



# Athlete Profile(s) - Daniel and Santosha Litzenberg

Daniel and his wife, Santosha, have been coming to USARC for multiple winters now. Daniel is a mono-skier and Santosha is a visually impaired skier-turned-snowboarder just this past season. A “participant couple” is rare at the USARC, so we thought this might be a chance to learn about two athletes in one enjoyable interview.

**The Spirit (TS):** What brought you to USARC?

**Daniel Litzenberg (DL):** I first came to USARC as part of the VA in San Diego. Several veterans with spinal cord injury/disease were invited to be part of a 2.5 day clinic at Bear Mountain.

**Santosha Litzenberg (SL):** It was the opportunity to learn how to ski in a safe environment. Being legally blind, coupled with the propensity to lose consciousness makes learning new things a challenge, however by no means impossible.

**TS:** Do you remember your first lesson, how did you feel?

**DL:** I was really excited about being able to ski again. I had skied while training in the Marines and really enjoyed it. I did not think that after being in a wheelchair that I would be able to ski again. The first lesson was great – it was challenging, but the instructors were patient and guided me through!

**SL:** I felt nervous and, if I'm honest, a little scared. There are times that I cannot see at all- so skiing down a mountain provided a certain amount of, I think, healthy fear. That being said, I was also super excited about being able to learn how to ski. I love being active and having fun. It's cool to be able to have a sport or exercise that you can do during the winter that you enjoy and burns a good amount of calories as well.

**TS:** What is your favorite thing about skiing/snowboarding?

**DL:** I have always loved being outside and doing new things. The challenge of learning a new skill is something I enjoy. Mostly, though, I like that skiing is something that I can do with my family where we can eventually just come out together and have a great time.

**SL:** One of my favorite things is that we can do it as a family. With Dan in a mono ski and my son (who is 15) snowboarding, me being able to have the skills to be on the mountain is amazing. We can all ski/board together building great memories as a family. Vacations are not fun if everyone is not having a good time.

**TS:** What is your favorite kind of food?

**DL:** Tough question. I like all types of food. Of course, I love pizza and soul food, but if I was to choose one type of food that I would have to eat for the rest of my life, it would be some sort of Mediterranean food (Lebanese, Greek, something like that).

**SL:** Grilled fish with a great salad (or Mediterranean food.)

**TS:** What was your favorite day this season?

**DL:** It would have to be my last day. I felt like I was really starting to get the hang of things. I was able to do chair 5 as well as Rip's Run with what I felt was success. Of course, if I were able to go for another day that one would likely have been my favorite!

**SL:** My favorite day was at the end of my second and last day learning to snowboard and feeling like I had "gotten it". It was awesome to feel like I was putting it all together and that I could snowboard.



Top: Daniel and Santosha après-ski  
Middle: Monoskiing with Mikey  
Bottom: Santosha boarding toeside

## What's ahead at USARC?

### MAY

16 Summer Reservations 909-584-0269 (9 AM)

### JUNE

24 Summer Volunteer Training (Big Bear)

### JULY

12, 13 Summer Day Sessions

19, 20 Summer Day Sessions

23-25 Summer Overnight Session 1

26-28 Summer Overnight Session 2

### AUGUST

2, 3 Summer Day Sessions

7 Summer Volunteer Training (Long Beach)

8-10 Land Meets Sea Camp (Long Beach)

16, 17 Summer Day Sessions

23, 24 Summer Day Sessions

26 Summer Volunteer Party

30, 31 Summer Day Sessions

### OCTOBER

4-8 23rd Annual Peak To Peak Pedal (P2P23)

## How can I help USARC?

This is a frequently asked question. Frankly, the answer is quite simple; in addition to volunteering, there are many ways to financially support the USARC!

### DONATE ONLINE IN YOUR NAME OR AS A TRIBUTE TO A LOVED ONE

Clicking on the logo below, or via the Donate Online tab on the USARC website ([www.usarc.org](http://www.usarc.org)), will take you to a secure and reliable website where you can use your credit card to make a tax deductible donation in your name or in recognition of another.



### PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL SKI-A-THON OR PEAK TO PEAK PEDAL

Under the Support tab at [www.usarc.org](http://www.usarc.org) are the web pages for these respective special events. Held annually in March and October, respectively, these unique and fun events allow you to support the USARC while engaging in activities they love, be it snow sports or cycling!

### SHOPPING PARTNERSHIPS



The USARC can be named as your partner when you shop at numerous retail outlets, at both

online and "brick and mortar" stores. AMAZON's charitable arm ([www.amazon smile.com](http://www.amazon smile.com)), and a variety of online retailers you can find through [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com) and [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) allow you to select the USARC as a beneficiary of your shopping forays. If you patronize [RALPHS](#), MACY'S, and many other retailers, you can select the USARC to receive a portion of your purchases.



### PLANNED GIVING IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

The USARC can be named as a beneficiary in your estate planning, enabling you to support the important and life-changing programs of the USARC well into the future. Consult your tax and legal professionals or call the USARC and we can put in you in touch with somebody to guide you through the process.



### DONATE YOUR OLD CAR, ETC.

Cars, RVs, and boats [donated in the name](#) of USARC are sold, with the proceeds defraying USARC's operating costs and you receive a tax deduction! Click on the logo to get started.

## Please like USARC on Facebook!



Simply log on, then go to [www.facebook.com/usarc1](http://www.facebook.com/usarc1) (or you can type in our entire name: United States Adaptive Recreation Center) and, once there, click on the little "Like" (thumbs up) symbol.

Not only can you keep up to date on USARC happenings and special events, but you can help the USARC win important support and funding. Don't forget to ask all your Facebook friends to like USARC too. Thank you!

## Attention Big Bear Real Estate Buyers & Sellers!

USARC staffer and real estate agent, Will Rahill, will donate 10% of his earned commission to USARC if a lead comes from a USARC associate. If you want to sell or purchase a home or property, please contact him at [usarc@willrahill.com](mailto:usarc@willrahill.com), 909.645.1949, or [www.SearchBigBearRealEstate.com](http://www.SearchBigBearRealEstate.com)