



The Spirit

Summer
2019

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center

65,000,000,000 (yep, that's with a B)

Think about it. The Big Bear Lake Municipal Water District might have addressed the low lake level by simply asking every visitor to the valley to pour one gallon of water in the lake (but that would have meant a lot of traffic and plastic water jugs needing recycling.) Instead, mother nature cut out the middle-man and, over the course of a long-awaited big winter, finally dumped her bounty into the lake in the form of 20,000 acre-feet of water, or 65 billion gallons.



Morgan, the mighty 3-tracker.

Before it began its (still ongoing) flow into the lake, the precipitation fell heavily, sometimes as rain but mostly as snow, onto the slopes of the ski resorts. Big Bear at long last resembled the iconic alpine

community with its frozen lake, snowfields stretching in every direction, pines draped in heavy cloaks of white and broad smiles on the faces of powder skiers and boarders.

USARC athletes were no exception, as they turned out in droves to savor the best winter in recent memory and contribute to a record number of skier visits in the area! Those that skipped this winter, be they program participants or volunteers, missed what is known as a doozy! Hopefully this winter was the beginning of a trend and the epic dumps, along with powder-hounds, will all be back next year.

240 + 40 @ 6,731 = FUN

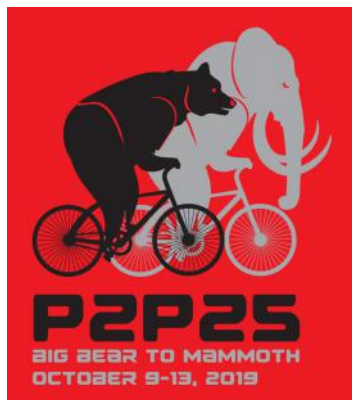
As indicated to the left, during the recent winter Big Bear Lake filled up quite a bit, yet still sits about nine feet below its ideal elevation of 6,740 feet above sea level.



USARC vessel team in textbook formation.

Nonetheless, with the enthusiastic help of 40 **WANTED VOLUNTEERS**, it should be easy to fulfill the desire for adventure of approximately 240 participants served by the USARC's watersports and boating programs during July and August.

(See **FILLED** on page 4)



P2P25: 10.9.19-10.13.19

That's right, this year is the silver anniversary of the annual Peak to Peak Pedal, the ride known as much for its support of its "everyday" riders as it is for its challenges and scenic diversity. Please go to <https://www.firstgiving.com/event/usarc/p2p25/> to register as a rider, volunteer or make a donation, as you can never get started too early on an adventure!



Greg, Paulette and KelLe pace-lining.

Executive Director's Note

And since we're on the numbers theme...

30. At a tenth of that number, my little guy began to understand when something is large, but he didn't quite grasp how to quantify such dimensions. I adore watching half of his little face scrunch up as he cocks his head trying to make sense of scale. For example, as a direct result of my annual windsurfing vacations at South Padre Island, he, quite logically, formulated his own yardstick

of the concept of far away. Thus, whenever we look at the stars or talk about the solar system he will try to convey, in his attempt to be as luculent as a toddler can, his processing of how big or far away things are. So he will ask something like, "Dad, is Pluto more than Texas?"

30. French existentialist Albert Camus said, "At 30 a man should know himself like the palm of his hand, know the exact number of his defects and qualities, know how far he can go, foretell his failures - be what he is. And, above all, accept these things." Clearly I am far from being as self-actualized as Camus pontificated, it having taken me almost twice as long to grasp many of those realities. While I may be around 30 pounds heavier than I was at my athletic prime, and I probably have 30% less hair on my head than I used to, and my joints have lost a collective 30 degrees of range of motion, Camus would probably appreciate my acute awareness that I have been fortunate enough to be with this program for 30 seasons.

30. We ask each volunteer to teach at least 30 hours per winter, but few stop there. Ask anyone who knows me well and they will tell you I'm more of a linguaphile than a mathematics guy, which is pretty funny for someone charged with being among this organization's fiduciaries! Nonetheless, I can appreciate how, for better or worse, numbers do not lie. This winter, while 12-plus feet of snow piled up and the lake level rose nearly 10 feet, USARC's volunteers logged some 4,600 hours, participants racked up about 3,000 hours, and Ski-A-Thon donors gave over \$40,000! No matter how you slice it, that's a whole bunch of 30's that many of you reading this will not only never get back, but that you willingly gave to someone else.

30. On the time scale of universal existence, 30 hours or 30 years is not even the infinitesimally small fraction of an eye blink, such a nugacity that it comparatively amounts to virtually nothing. Yet in that time I have had the good fortune of watching or hearing about thousands of lives that have been changed. Changed because of a collective group of people who believe that 30 minutes or 30 hours or 30 miles or 30 dollars, or any combination or multiple of those numbers along with the insertion of a comma or decimal point, are NOT nothing. I am once again honored to head, and I am thankful for, a program supported by these extraordinary people who have left a signature as indelible as the river-carved Grand Canyon, the earth's tallest peaks that rose from the ocean floor to become Hawaii, or the texture left by countless asteroids on our moon.

You know, near Texas.



Tom Peirce
USARC Exec. Dir.



United
States
Adaptive
Recreation
Center

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DSUSA Makes USARC Better

Thanks to a grant from Disabled Sports USA, five USARC instructors became certified by the Professional Ski Instructors of America to strengthen the USARC and the quality of its services. Congratulations to:
Morgan Ackerson: L-1 Cog
Emily Hammond: L-1 Cog
Mark Hopkins: L-2
Daniel Horner: L-2
James Muller: L-2



“In-Kind”ness

USARC’s events and programs succeed thanks to these generous in-kind donors of goods and services from the 2018 calendar year. Please remember them with your patronage when possible.

Acatmeowz Graphic Dezinz
Action Tours Big Bear
Alpine Slide at Magic Mountain
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Bear Belly Deli
Beyond Coastal
Big Bear Bowling Barn
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Big Bear Marina LLC
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Robbie Young



Ski-A-Thon Hits a BIG Milestone

This year’s logo depiction of snow covered mountains was actually spot on, as the powder had fallen fast and furious on the slopes of Bear Mountain this winter, creating ideal conditions for USARC’s dedicated Ski-A-Thon teams.

With the new snow and all sorts of Saturday happenings at the busy resort, Ski-A-Thon participants could only smile broadly as they cut to the front of chairlift

lines to ski or ride twice as much as everybody else. When you add great food, swag and prizes throughout the day, it was just icing on the proverbial cake.

In addition to raising over \$40,000, the event marked a special achievement this year. Leading the way among fundraising teams was (once again) the family of Michelle’s FUNdraisers, who not only raised \$17,090 this year, but in so doing became the charter member of USARC’s Ski-A-Thon \$100,000 Club, having historically raised a total of \$114,970!



Nothing slows down Michelle’s Dad, Doug.

A tremendous thank-you to Michelle, Doug and Sandy for their



Even small skiers make a big impact.

tremendous efforts, this year and every year. Second place was earned by Team CK with \$2,600 raised, while the third place trophy was taken home by the inimitable Team Buce, which raised \$2,210.

The annual Ski-A-Thon is an easy, fun and effective way to support the USARC, while spending a day being active with a team of your friends, and enjoying all sorts of goodies and benefits thanks to the generous sponsors, many of whom you see in this list on this page. Come on up next year and see if you can unseat the queen, Michelle!

Athlete Profile: Terina Sprague

Terina is back at it this year! After some time away from the snow skiing world, Terina came back with a vengeance. Not



Her Mom Sherrill always has Terina's back.

only did she ski 11 days this year, but most of them were rainy and cloudy and that didn't stop her from looking like a pro!

The Spirit (TS): How does it feel to be back skiing again?

Terina (T): It's amazing. With the abundance of snow and winter wonderland scenery we had this year I certainly chose the perfect time to get back into skiing!

TS: What was your favorite day?

T: It was when my instructor DJ finally convinced me to go to Chair 9. I was ready for some steeper terrain but needed the extra encouragement to get there. I skied the hill well until I second guessed myself and ended up sliding down a good portion of one of the hills. Once I came to a stop (thankfully not hurt) we just laughed and took a photo of me covered in snow. After lunch, I decided to go on that same hill, without the fall this time!

TS: In what other hobbies do you participate?

T: Anything adventurous or outdoors; paddle-boarding, rugby, hand-cycling, surfing. Crossfit and concerts are also favorites of mine.

TS: If you were stranded on a deserted island with all your necessities, what two bonus items would you want with you?

T: Music and my best friend.

TS: Explain the importance of recreation to you.

T: Recreation is a huge part of my life. You don't have to be a sports enthusiast's athlete, but simply being outdoors, pushing your limits and going outside your comfort zone results in a



Monoski or Biski, she does it all.

sense of achievement. There are so many wonderful programs and organizations that make participating in recreation possible regardless of disability, there are no excuses.

TS: If you could travel anywhere you want, where would you go and why?

T: I don't have a bucket

list of specific destinations. I enjoy any traveling or adventures!

Filled with Fun (cont.)

Thanks to the generosity of program host North Shore Landing, as well as our vessel anchorage, Big Bear Marina, USARC's summer sessions will return in full force to enjoy more navigable waters than have been seen in a half dozen years.



Morning glass and sparkling sun await lucky Ray.

Water-skiing, wake-boarding, kayaking, paddleboards and Jet-Ski rides are available during day sessions, while the overnight camping sessions add fishing and sailing (water level permitting.)

Interested **PARTICIPANTS** should check out the calendar on the back of this newsletter or at www.usarc.org/calendar and call 909-584-0269 to make their reservations, as it is not unusual for sessions to follow the lake's pattern and fill up steadily. **NOTE: reservations are accepted beginning on Tuesday, May 14th at 9:00 AM.**

Likewise, motivated **VOLUNTEERS** can call and/or find an [application](http://www.usarc.org/summer-details) at <http://www.usarc.org/summer-details>. This will be one of the best summers we have seen in a while, so come up to the full(er) lake and fill your memories to the brim with fun!



Charles and Tina on the tube and dry, for now...

A Catawba-Cali Combo Please

I am writing this with only a few days left of my internship, and it is crazy to believe that the season has flown by so quickly. I was happy to have the opportunity to do an internship at USARC. If you had told me I'd be an intern where I would be helping individuals with disabilities ski and snowboard, I would not have believed you. I have always dreamed of working in the outdoors and being able to combine that with my passion of recreational therapy, so this goal of mine came true when Sara told me the great news.

Lessons had already been in effect for a few weeks, but I remember walking into USARC and sitting on the benches the same way I remember my first day of college: anxious, excited, but out of place, as if I didn't belong.



Former intern Emily and Morgan.

However, I was not alone at all. With the support of the staff and the amazing volunteers it felt like I was a part of a big family that was always there to support me and made me feel welcome. This was reassuring to me as I was coming from Catawba College in North Carolina to a new city where I did not know anyone or the area around me. I can't thank them enough for the memories and taking me in as one of their own.

Looking back with the culture and energy that was embodied and displayed by everyone at USARC, it made me look

forward to coming in every day and learning a ton of information. One of my favorite things that I love about USARC is the participants, employees, and volunteers' positive attitude and empowerment towards each other. It is priceless to see the participants use their ability to do something comparable to their peers and shows disability proves no barriers to adaptive skiing.

As a final thought, I cannot express how much I have enjoyed my time here. The work was meaningful as it was, but that was only a small part of what made my internship feel so special. Seeing everyone's dedication is something I won't forget and the endless amount of knowledge I have gained as an intern.



A new Recreation Therapist is born.



USARC interns learn important So-Cal culture.



Always happy to be finished, but always sad it's over.

P2P24 Notable Names

The Annual Peak to Peak Pedal is successful because of many dozens of riders, volunteers and supporters. Below are P2P24's top fundraisers and the Horse's "Backside" trophy winner. Thanks to everyone, and come ride P2P25!

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) KelLe Malkewitz \$11,325 | 7) John Mattos \$4,375 |
| 2) Jason Dodd \$5,718 | 8) Paul Mattos \$4,287 |
| 3) Gary Steube \$5,648 | 9) Liz Robertson \$4,025 |
| 4) Tom Peirce \$5,489 | 10) Allison Van Wig \$3,875 |
| 5) Frank Elliott \$5,000 | |
| 6) Rusty Barnes \$4,430 | H.A.) Bob Lombard |

Thank You to USARC's Winter 2019 Volunteers!*

UNDERLINE = Taught 10+ days **ITALICS** = PSIA Certified Instructor

30+ YEARS

John Alderete
Bill Yaeger

25+ YEARS

Claude Chirico
Gilbert Cortez
Matt Fukushima
Karen Mora
Susan Slesinger

20+ YEARS

Kam Lawrence
Ray Locascio
Tom Pollard
Andy Templeton
Jay Vickers

15+ YEARS

Steven Betance
Bob Lombard
Mary Kay Chirico
Donna Halpin
Bob Knight
Kim McRae
Jeff Mills
Michael Moniak
John Pacente
Tom Perez
Andrew Suzuki
Josef Szigeti
Donald B Whitbeck
Paul Zamoyta

10+ YEARS

Scott Adler
Valerie Bagget
Steve Barker
Richard Beynon
Tom Delgado
Soo Jeong Lee

Debbie Leong
Kimberly Light
Jim Ortiz
Sandy Pappas
Bill Shamhart
Matthew Schwier
Holly Shelton
Neil Slate
Carol Sorensen
Roger Sorensen
Jack Walser
Danny Warner

5+ YEARS

Britt Aguilar
Marilyn Capel
Cathy Ghazal
Mark Hopkins
Rodney Hsueh
Kay Kobayashi
B.A. Laris
Susan Mason
Josh Miner
Rene Mora
David Price
Windy Sirignano
Kathleen Snow
Mark Uthus
Paul Van Wig
Tracy Walton
Darren Young

1+ YEARS

Lindsey Anderson
Olivia Anderson
Robert Anderson
Thomas Beckley
James Benson
Haylee Beynon
John Brown
Curt Cattau

Genevieve Cook
Julie Dawson
Julius Garcia
Lauren Gentry
Sara Gordon
Tina Green
Linda Griffith
Jean Denis Hinkel
Michael Horner
Karen Horst
Kyle Jones
Michael Kish
David Leong
Reed Leong
Alex Luna
Samantha Malz
Dennis Mataviesko
Andrew McAllon
Brooke Moultrie
Carolyn Mounteer
Theo Myers
Tosh Neminsky
Aimee Newell
Ted Oden
Pat Patterson
David Pearson
Colette Pfiffer
Gil Ramos
Randy Richards
Daniel Romney
Jason Schetter
Morgan Schetter
Thomas Schmidt
Cougar Shelton
Magali Stein
Brian Stiver
Patrick Thelen
Teddy Tran
Bill Wandner
Jeff Weber
Kim Wolmerath



Billy joins the now-two-member 30-year club!



All smiles: Dudley, Jack, Steve, Patricia and Val.



Sally clearly enjoying her instructor, Jack.

*For any discrepancies or omissions, please accept our apologies and contact us so we can correct our records accordingly.



Please keep in touch with USARC on Social Media



FACEBOOK: Find us at 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.



TWITTER and INSTAGRAM: Log into your account and search for @USADAPT

These are great ways to stay up to date on USARC happenings but they can also help the USARC win important support and funding. Don't forget to ask all your friends to do the same, thank you!

Volunteer of the Year: Kim McRae

Kim McRae displays many of the same traits that comprise all USARC volunteers. Yet in Kim's case, he displays a passion for skiing that is among the most fervent ever seen, always exemplifying the "no bad days" philosophy. That boundless enthusiasm inevitably took Kim in other directions of his devotion to USARC, successfully passing him PSIA Level 1 adaptive exam, volunteering in the summer watersports program, riding in the Peak to Peak Pedal and securing philanthropic support. In recognition of his exceptional blend of attributes honed over 18 wonderful years of service, USARC is proud to introduce the 2019 USARC Volunteer of the Year.

The Spirit (TS): "Kim McRae, Volunteer of the Year" Your reaction?

Kim McRae (KM): Surprised, somewhat shocked and honored to receive the VOY award. At this stage of my time with USARC, I thought my time has passed to receive the award since I have somewhat curtailed my on the slope activities in recent years. After 18 years, I guess giving a Christmas Poinsettia to the ski school was the difference. Haha!



Living the dream. Son Jared joins Kim on the slopes.

TS: What is your favorite part of USARC?

KM: The thing that has always been the draw to the program for me is the positive attitude of the students, their families, their caregivers, my fellow volunteers and the staff. Oh yeah, USARC also happens in the mountains and involves skiing!

TS: You recently moved to Big Bear full time, what do you think?

KM: I enjoy Big Bear immensely. Some of the things I enjoy are the lower intensity of existence compared with



Orange County, the scenery and fresh air. I used to hear the jet noise from John Wayne airport, now I hear wind whistling in the trees. I used to see more buildings than trees; now it is hard to see my neighbors.

TS: Are you planning on volunteering this summer?

KM: I am looking forward to the summer program. Days on the water are fun and nothing is wrong with that! Last summer I had a great time.

TS: What do you do in your spare time?

KM: Ski. This Winter I put in 90 days on the snow. I also mountain bike at Snow Summit and on the trails and fire roads around our home with my wife Sandy and our dog Tracker. Sandy will also ride her horse while I ride. I SUP on the lake and at San Onofre. My wife and I also spend a lot of time with our 5 grandchildren.

TS: As a past Peak to Peak Pedal-er, what would you tell someone interested in doing it?

KM: I've told many people that if they ever wanted to do a multiday bike trip, P2P is the way to go! The scenery is great, the riders are well cared for on the road and after, with food along the route and dinner each night. I did P2PXX in 2014, the North-to-South year which I thought might be an easier way to go, but I was mistaken. The last day, Barstow to Big Bear is 60 miles with 7500 feet of climbing! That was a "character building experience" and I found out I like climbing. I was proud that I pedaled every inch of the ride. I hope to do P2PXXV and that it will be a South-North route.

TS: What would be a good theme song for your life?

KM: This is a tough one. Actually one song doesn't do it, I would have to pick two: U2's "I Still Haven't Found What I Am Looking For" and "Don't Worry, be Happy" by Bobby McFerrin.

(Note: Kim is too fast to actually photograph him skiing.)

How can I help USARC?

Since this is an oft-asked question we will continue to run this page in every newsletter because, quite frankly, YOUR options are numerous. 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, 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 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), and a variety of online retailers you can find through www.igive.com and 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, BOAT, RV ETC.



Cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, trailers and RVs [donated in the name](#) of USARC are sold, with the proceeds defraying USARC’s operating costs and you receive a tax deduction! Call 855-500-7433 or click on the logo to get started.

Tributes & Memorials*

Elizabeth & Larry Schmitt in memory of
GEORGE & MARTY WATSON-JONES

Melissa McFedries in memory of
JANICE SCHAFER

Joanne Apodaca in memory of
JULIAN APODACA

Michael & Alessandra Alves in memory of
MARY NORMAN

Dave Norman in memory of
MARY NORMAN

Holli & Mike Hiddessen in memory of
NIGEL HOLLAND

Gary & Barbara Lee in memory of
ROGER LEE

Tami Schmitt In honor of
THE LARSEN/BROWN FAMILY

FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS

Cindy Hardison in honor of
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TOM POLLARD

Debbie Sornborger, Joy Simi Hubbard, Ava Chiao in honor of
TINA WALPOLE

Carolyn Peirce in honor of
CASSANDRA WOODS-PEIRCE

* Since prior newsletter

USARC Events

MAY

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

JUNE

29 Summer Volunteer Training (Big Bear)

JULY

10, 11 Summer Day Sessions

17, 18 Summer Day Sessions

21-23 Summer Overnight Session 1

24-26 Summer Overnight Session 2

31 Summer Day Session

AUGUST

1 Summer Day Session

7, 8 Summer Day Sessions

12 Summer Volunteer Training (Long Beach)

13-15 Land Meets Sea Camp (Long Beach)

21, 22 Summer Day Sessions

24 Summer Volunteer Party

28, 29 Summer Day Sessions

California Division of Boating and Waterways reminds you:



KNOW HOW TO KEEP YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND YOURSELF SAFE WHILE BOATING, AND YOU'LL GET TO SAVOR SUMMER DOWN TO THE LAST DROP.



Know Your ABCs

Always wear a life jacket, Bring a marine radio, and Check the weather.



Life Jackets Save Lives

Swimming in open or swift water is harder and more dangerous than in a pool. No matter how strong a swimmer, everyone should wear a life jacket while boating. Make sure they are Coast Guard-approved, free of rips and tears, made for your intended boating activity, and fit properly. Undersized life jackets may not provide enough flotation; oversized life jackets may slip off. Always stay with a capsized boat—you'll be more easily visible to rescuers and may be able to climb onto the hull to rest and stay warm.



Learn the Rules of the "Road"

Take a boating safety course to learn the rules of waterways, how to handle emergencies, and avoid the situations that most often lead to problems on the water. Always keep your eyes on what's going on around you. Just like in a car, avoid getting distracted and operate your vessel defensively—give obstacles and other boats a wide berth. Get to know your waterway; inexperienced river paddlers should start with guided trips.



Keep Children Under Supervision

Always keep an eye on children around water, and appoint a designated "water watcher," taking turns with other adults. Teach children as much as possible about safety and good practice on lakes, rivers, and the ocean.



All Aboard—Except Alcohol

You can be arrested and have your boat impounded for operating a boat or water ski while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Remember that the elements can magnify the effects of alcohol, too. Designate a passenger to stay sober and who can take the helm if the captain becomes incapacitated.



Let Someone Know Where You Go

File a float plan with friends and family so they know where you're going and when to expect your return.