



The Spirit

Spring/
Summer
2012

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center

Winter Wrap-Up

Well it started early with enough snow to open the mountain in November, and along with that early snow came thoughts of what the season and Mother Nature would bring. Unfortunately, the old girl had other plans and the weather soon changed, and while the storms stopped coming, the early snow and great snowmaking saved the season.

As the mountain danced between summer weather in winter and then winter weather in



Monoskier Wendy gets ready for a day of fun with volunteer Rose.

spring (and the perceptions of those “down the hill”), the people of the USARC did not waiver. Several new facilities participated this year, joining the veteran groups who understand the efficacy of USARC programs. We even taught a few more lessons than last year, thanks to 150 volunteers making their 6-day commitment.

The “Weekend in the Park” had great timing in its inaugural season, as it coincided with the USASA boarder-cross event at Snow Summit, where program participants were able to truly test their mettle against one another and the mountain. Look for a reprise performance next year.

(Cont. on Page 7)

How will you spend The Summer of Twenty-Twelve?

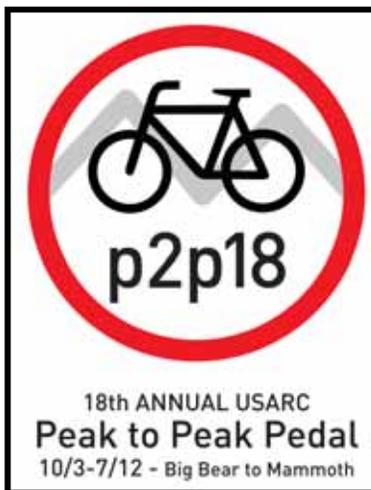
Despite freezing nights and patches of snow on the slopes, warm, sunny weather is finally here, meaning it’s time to think about USARC’s summer program.



Paul emphatically demonstrates his readiness to go water-skiing again.

Our fleet of vessels will soon leave their winter dry-docks for the lake, including Jet Skis, ski and wakeboard boat, sailboat, fishing boat, kayaks and stand up paddleboards.

(Cont. on Page 7)



Coming Soon to a Road Near You

Now is the time to start planning your participation (be that as rider, volunteer or supporter) in the USARC’s annual fall fundraising cycling adventure, the 18th Annual Peak to Peak Pedal (P2P18) scheduled for October 3-7.

(Cont. on Page 4)

We Want Your Thoughts!

The USARC values the opinions of those who utilize its programs. Thank-you letters, testimonials or other correspondence not only welcome and provide useful information to help the USARC improve its services, but they also provide important validation to program supporters. However, if you don’t have time to write such a letter, please take a [brief online survey](#), or you can print out, complete and mail in the simple, one-page [survey on our website](#). Thank you very much for your important feedback!

A Note from the Executive Director

Dear USARC family,

Songs and music have always been very powerful and evocative tools of communication to me. On my iPod I have The Sandals' reverb-laden theme from the classic surf film, "The Endless Summer." Aside from its soulful acoustical composition, the music simply completes the film's idyllic vision of wandering all over the globe to ride perfect long-board waves. Of course, it isn't just the surfing; it's also the notion of following summer back and forth across the hemispheres, never wearing anything more than shorts, flip-flops and t-shirts. How can a song about such an eudaimonic subject not strike a chord with you?



Tom Peirce
USARC Exec. Dir.



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While I know some people who have chosen to live the antipodean lifestyle, chasing snow from California to Australia or from Colorado to Chile, doing so just never quite captivated me, with all due respect to Warren Miller's efforts. I once considered such a peripatetic lifestyle until I realized that while winter and skiing are a lot of fun, a) shoveling is not fun, and b) winter is partly fun because summer is on the other side. Plus, as far as I know there really is not an endless winter theme to coerce me.

Even though this past winter doesn't really deserve a comparable soundtrack, as far as the USARC was concerned, it was epic for many reasons. Fantastic early season snow and snowmaking preceding the long dry spell left ideal conditions: clear weather, wide open roads and packed powder. An impressive cadre of volunteers teamed up to ensure our participating families and facilities met with one success story after another. The Ski-A-Thon and Weekend in the Park events were fun and festive! The strong efforts of the USARC's small staff were complemented by an eager and hard working intern from San Jose State University.

I pity the adenoidal lot thinking it was a lousy winter, who didn't come enjoy the slopes simply because there had not been many storms and they didn't see snowcapped peaks. We had a TON of snow on the slopes when Bear Mountain shut down a month ago, most of which will trickle down into the lake for our upcoming summer programs! Ah yes, sunshine, watersports, shorts, flip-flops and t-shirts. No piacular pretense from me here; goodbye winter, hello summer! And you, participants, volunteers and supporters alike, are all invited!

I close this missive while on vacation, mesmerized by the setting sun's rutilant trail glittering across distant waters. I think I'm here partly because a simple song inspired me to explore, to do something, and to push my limits.

I hope you have a similar soundtrack that motivates you to join USARC in one of the above roles this summer, and I'm curious just what that theme song may be...

Helmets Rule!

The USARC's new helmet requirement for all participants, volunteers and staff came off with nary a hitch this past winter. Just like wearing a mandatory life vest in the summer program, no matter how skilled somebody may be, they just never know when they might need extra protection. Thank you for everybody's cooperation in putting safety first!



Abstract art? No, USARC's array of helmets.



Volunteer (of the year) Profile - Kim Meares



Kim Meares is, by anyone's assessment, the proverbial 'Energizer Bunny'. If she is not devoted unabashedly to her career as a family counselor, she is being the typical 'soccer mom' running around with her son Madison to his various scholastic and/or athletic endeavors. Under Kim's encouragement, Madison has become an exceptional snow skier and water skier through the USARC's programs.

Somewhere between that frenetic schedule, Kim still finds time to volunteer in both the USARC's summer and winter programs. In the latter, she has recently gone the extra mile by serving as a PSIA Adaptive Certification trainer, helping other volunteers prepare to pass their Level 1 exam as an adaptive ski instructor certified by the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA.) As if all this isn't enough, Kim is a six-year veteran rider on the USARC's annual fundraising bicycle ride between Big Bear and Mammoth, the Peak to Peak Pedal covering 335 miles over five days!

Just like Kim, you would be smiling too if you just got off your bicycle seat after pedaling 85 miles across the desert!

The Spirit (TS): *What got you involved in USARC?*

Kim Meares (KM): When my 17 year old son, Madison, took his first ski lesson with USARC at age 8, I was sold on the program. As a parent it was great to get a break and let someone else teach him. The first time Madison got locked into skis and boots I remember him screaming, "I'm stuck, I'm stuck." Now he does double black diamond runs with us.

TS: *You first volunteered for the summer program, what made you want to try winter?*

KM: The reason I hadn't volunteered for the winter was I get cold extremely easily. I didn't want to let a participant down by bailing nor did I want to have the "beyond my limits of cold" experience, where my fingers feel like they're breaking off. After volunteering summers and doing Peak to Peak in the fall, I wanted to stay involved year round. Plus, I love skiing. Fortunately, I found hand warmers and the art of layering.

(Cont. on Page 6)

The USARC salutes and thanks the following volunteers who, through fulfilling their time commitment, ensured the winter of 2011-2012 was a safe, fun and learning-filled experience for each and every program participant.

Scott Adler	Julius Garcia	Kay Kobayashi	John Melville **	Matt Rohn*	<u>Andy Suzuki</u> *
JOHN ALDERETE	Tony Garza	Matthew Kolodziejczyk	Sue Mendoza	Tony Rogers	Josef Szigeti*
Harold Allen**	Nathan Gibson	Caryn Krasne	<u>Gary Mertens</u> *	Daniel Romney	Daniel Taylor**
Robert Allen**	Rosanne Grier	Bobiane Kupfer	Jeff Mills*	<u>Mary Kay Sachs-Chirico</u> **	Terry Teale***
Ron Andrews	Carl Gronhagen	Benson Lam**	Paulette Moore	Janice Schafer***	Kathy Tejano
Steve Barker	Tim Guebert***	Sharon Lancaster*	Karen Mora ***	Cris Schlanser*	Andy Templeton***
Greg Benson	George Halter	Kam Lawrence **	Rene Mora	Melissa Schmitt**	Casey Valek
<u>Steven Betance</u> *	Frank Hamilton **	Soo Jeong Lee	Ron Newport**	Don Schroeder	<u>Paul Van Wig</u>
Richard Beynon*	Michael Hansen	Debbie Leong*	Jim Ortiz*	Matthew Schwier	Veets Veitas*
Marsha Burns*	Dori Harris	Fred Liebel*	John Pacente **	Matt Scriven	<u>Jay Vickers</u> **
CLAUDE CHIRICO	Mark Harris*	Daniel Locarnini	Sandy Pappas*	Colin Sentence	Tracy Walton
<u>Pius Choi</u>	Sarah Heacox*	Ray Locascio ***	Matt Pawley**	Bill Shamhart	Jeff Warhol**
Ryan Conchrane	Scott Hepner*	<u>Jenn Long</u> *	Harry Pearce**	Joseph Shay*	Daniel Warner
<u>Jack Cooperman</u>	Rebecca Hinton	Rick "Spyder" Martin-ROY	Travis Plante	<u>Ray Shelden</u> **	George Watson-Jones*
Eric Crawford	Ansis Hoheisel	Greg Matson**	Tom Pollard***	Holly Shelton	Sue Wellman*
JR Davidson	Mark Hopkins	John Matz	<u>Carll Pontius</u>	Neil Slate*	Donald B. Whitbeck**
Mike Day	Tamisha Jackson*	Kevin McCalley	Linda Pratt	SUSAN SLESINGER	Wendy Winters**
<u>Peter de Viso</u> **	Jonathan Johnston	Janet McCord	Dina Price	Carol Sorensen*	BILL YAEGER
Tom Delgado*	Diane Jordan***	MELISSA MCFEDRIES	JOHN PRICE	Roger Sorensen*	Connie Ybarra
Dianna DiGandomenico	Bruce Kane	TIM MCGRATH	<u>Paul Priest</u>	<u>Charles Stapleton</u>	Maryana Yurchyshyna
<u>Kyle Fahey</u>	Nicholas Kelley	Mari McMichael	Gil Rangel	Jamey Starcher**	<u>Paul Zamoyta</u>
Bronco Farwell*	Allen Klicka*	Kim McRae **	Rod Rice*	Devin Steele	
Raymond Freeman	Monica Kluge	Rose McShane*	Brian Robertson	<u>Dan Stormer</u>	
Matt Fukushima**	Bob Knight **	Kim Meares *-VOY	Chris Rocco	Karyn Strong	

CAPS = 20 years or more / *** = 15+ years / ** = 10 + years / * = 5+ years / Underline = 10+days / **Bold** = PSIA Certified

Participant Profile: Dino Zane – Ski Bum in the (Re-)Making



With a little assistance from volunteer Monica, Dino takes to R3T skiing like a penguin to snow.

Dino (Peter) Zane was a first time skier this year. Well, sort of. He was an admitted ski bum before a stroke necessitated focusing his energies elsewhere. Fortunately, Dino's wife never let him forget the activity they had shared in the past, and her repeated encouragement finally took hold and they called the USARC.

At first Dino was a little unsure about how he was going to ski but after his first run, using what USARC refers to as R3T (for Reverse Three Track,) he enjoyed every minute of every run. Read on for more of Dino's thoughts on his first experience with USARC...

The Spirit (TS): So Dino, when did you first learn to ski?

Dino Zane (DZ): It was 1974, next door at Snow Summit.

TS: Yet this was your first time skiing after your stroke, how did it make you feel?

DZ: It was quite an experience. I never thought I would ever be able to ski again. I can ski better than I walk. I felt energized to start therapy again.

TS: What were your thoughts when your wife suggested you try skiing?

DZ: I thought she was nuts! You have to understand it wasn't a mild stroke and I have to fight every day to get more control of my walking and my arm. Skiing? Yeah, sure!

TS: So describe your first run down.

DZ: I was nervous at first until I got off the lift and although I was off balance the instructors had me and no matter what I wasn't going to fall. I felt like I haven't felt in six years, doing something I used to love and didn't think I would ever experience again. First day was smooth and the second day I was taken off the tethers for a few runs. I can't wait for next season.

TS: What would you tell someone about USARC if they asked?

DZ: Your staff made me very comfortable, I got right up the first time off the chair lift and didn't fall at all the first day! My instructors were stoked and more excited than me. I have to hand it to USARC, your level of professionalism is great!

TS: Any other comments?

DZ: Best experience I've had since my stroke.

TS: Think you will come up and check out the summer program?

DZ: I definitely am planning to do it. I can't wait!

TS: That's great to hear Dino! See you then.



Dino's smile says it all about his return to the sport he loves.

P2P18 (cont.)



One is likely to see wonderful, and strange, things on P2P18!

P2P18 will once again travel from Big Bear to Mammoth, 335 miles over five days. Since the goal is to challenge oneself, cyclists of all abilities are welcome, whether they ride every mile or not. Riders and volunteers are wanted.

To get an idea of the amazing event that is the Peak to Peak Pedal, take a look at Scott Hoffman's YouTube slide show of [last year's ride](#). Better yet, call the USARC (909.584.0269) for information, and then register or donate at <http://www.firstgiving.com/usarc/p2p18> because the time to get started is NOW!

My Life as "Intern"

So there I was, packing up all my belongings to bring with me from Northern California, to last me three months in a place I had never visited, beautiful Big Bear, California. I just knew this was the place I was meant to complete my 560-hour internship requirement for my Recreation Therapy degree from San Jose State University.

I was excited, exhilarated and apparently over-packed by at least five months too many! Lesson learned. Each day, alarm buzzing at 6:30AM sharp, chugging my coffee and packing in the nutrients and proteins needed to keep my body and mind running full force.

First go round with my first student, feeling excited but not sure as to how exactly these lessons go. As far as my daily protocols, paperwork and journaling went... student assessment? Check. Lesson implementation and activity adaptation noted? Check. Documentation at the lesson conclusion? Check. That process is ingrained in me thanks to USARC, something no textbook could have possibly done.



We're pretty sure Intern and Vika started their lesson day with the latter's tooth missing!

Every day a new lesson, a new student, a new outlet for me to apply the therapeutic recreation instruction obtained during the last two

years in school, all leading to this... This opportunity at USARC to test and reinforce my knowledge and strengths, and polish me up for the "real world."

Challenges, rewards and experiences I will never forget, and opportunities I know that have shaped me into this budding therapeutic recreation specialist ready to take a big bite of the professional world. It has been amazing, it has been unreal, this ride of the past three months, and I can guarantee it will never compare to any other place at which I could have interned.



"Intern" (aka Kara Roberts) is all smiles between runs with one of her lucky students, Cassidy.

The real-time practice and knowledge I gained at USARC will stay with me throughout my life. Thank you for the amazing opportunity, USARC, as well as a gigantic thank you to all the amazing staff, volunteers, students and parents with whom I had the opportunity to work. You will always hold a special place deep in my heart, as will your dedication, passion, drive, knowledge and encouragement. I appreciate it more than I can ever finesse into words for this article. I wish the best to you all!

With much respect and gratitude, Kara (aka "Intern")



Team Jameson Does it Again!

Maybe it's time to rename the event something like the Jameson-A-Thon, because that particular surname is appearing on the top fundraiser perpetual plaque with astonishing regularity. Once again, long-time program participant Michelle Jameson and her parents made this sunny Saturday event even more special as they helped the event raise over \$25,000!

Recognition is deserved by second place fundraiser Team Bucé, with third place to Team Hofmann. Honorable mentions go to Team Booz, Allen & Hamilton as well as Team Shaunaghnessy. Thank you to all!



Another Top Fundraiser title for Sandy, Doug & Michelle Jameson!

The USARC is honored to recognize the following in-kind donors* from 2011 whose services and products facilitate the USARC's success.

Advanced Racing Suspensions
Ardis Beckner
Big Bear Marina
Big Bear Mountain Resorts
The Bike Shack
Bishop Waste Disposal
BlueWater Ropes
Boo Bear's Den
Bradford Renaissance Portraits
B's Backyard Barbeque
Cantrell Guide Service
Captain's Anchorage
Clif Bar
El Jacalito
El Monte RV
Finish Line Technologies
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Gate City Beverages
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Andy Templeton
Trinity Wine Partners

* If we have overlooked your support, please accept our apologies and contact us so we can promptly correct our records.

Kim Meares (cont.)

TS: How does volunteering make you feel?

KM: After a day of volunteering I often say to myself, "This was the best day ever!!"

TS: You're a six-year Peak to Peak Pedal veteran; any thoughts on it?

KM: I wasn't into biking prior to Peak to Peak. Initially, I was fearful I'd get hit by an 18 wheeler. Also, frightening down-hills and miserable up-hills were on my mind, but after six rides I am over all that. The challenge and the people (staff, volunteers and riders) make it all worth while.

TS: What is your favorite story to tell about your years at adaptive?

KM: I remember Marshall and I struggled to get a student back on the tube we'd been pulling, flipping the Jet-Ski upside down in the process, all the while cracking up at the cryptic remarks our student kept blurting out as she bobbed in the water, waiting for us to get the Jet-Ski righted. After all that we had to be rescued because the boat wouldn't start. It reminds me that life doesn't always go smoothly, but laughter is important.

TS: What is your favorite kind of lesson to teach?

KM: Bi Ski. It's really hands-on. I enjoy tethering and working as a team with another instructor. It enables more severely challenged students to participate in the skiing adventure. Also, it's fun to ride in!

TS: Other than skiing and cycling, what are your other hobbies?

KM: I've been running since I was 8 years old. Started with my Dad. Pretty much a daily activity. This year Madison joined the high school mountain bike team. Despite my fears and frequent crashes, I've taken up the sport. And surprisingly I am starting to enjoy it. I also like hiking, boating, vacations, and hanging out with my husband and son.

TS: What do you wish other people knew about USARC?

KM: As a parent of a child with a disability, its amazing to have qualified instructors who understand our kids and enable them to have a great experience. As volunteers we know we're helping; we can see the smiles and confidence growing before our eyes, but it is also such a gift to us. My day and life is better because I spend time with our participants. They let me be their buddy for the day; that's why it's the "best day ever."

TS: Well said, thanks Kim!



Kim and her son Madison ready to tackle Black Diamonds at Whistler, Canada.

Winter Wrap (cont.)

Congratulations to Volunteer of the Year Kim Meares (see page 3,) and Rick "Spyder" Martin, Rookie of the Year recipient. Equally deserving of recognition are those who successfully passed their PSIA adaptive certification exams: Jack Cooperman (Level 2,) Sandy Pappas, Carol and Roger Sorensen (Level 1 Bi-Ski,) and Karyn Strong and Kara (Intern) Roberts (Level 1 Cognitive.) Kudos to all!

Special thanks goes out to the USARC staff instructors this year who really stepped up their game as their ranks dwindled due to a variety of lifestyle changes. Not only did they tend unfailingly to their lessons, but their leadership ensured the volunteers in turn left their participants happy and successful.

So even though the mountain closed a month ago, it was one rife with good memories and success stories. And guess what? The next one will be here before you know it, so enjoy summer!



Fred, volunteer and USARC Trustee extraordinaire, is probably giving a battle cry before tackling the Volunteer Party obstacle course.

Summer 2012 (cont.)

With that variety of vessels from which to choose, and whether you just want to be around the water or in it, there are many ways to partake in the USARC summer program.

One-day sessions are held throughout July and August, while the two-day combination camping/water sports sessions will take place in August (see calendar on page 8.)



Julie is smiling, not screaming, as she skis across Big Bear Lake's sparkling blue waters.

The one-day sessions feature water skiing/wakeboarding, Jet Skiing and paddle sports, whereas the two-day sessions add sailing and fishing to the mix, along with camping at accessible Serrano Campground. Reservations will be accepted after 9:00 AM on Tuesday, May 15.

Volunteers are very much needed to help facilitate these activities, with a one-day training slated for Saturday, June 30. Boating experience is helpful, but not necessary, so please call the USARC.

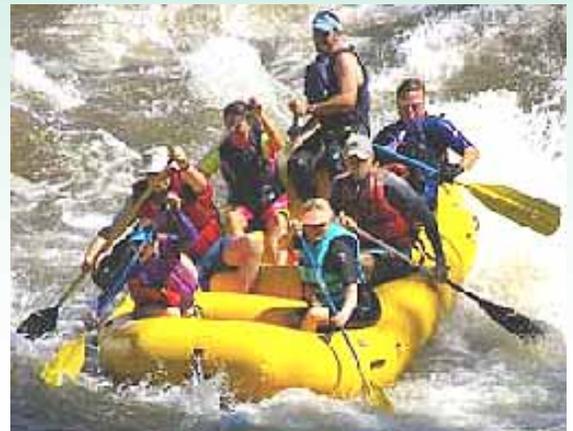
So we hope the answer to the question on page one is: "why, I'll be up in Big Bear playing with the USARC!"

Volunteer Kern River Raft Trip - June 8-10

USARC Volunteer, Robert Allen, is hosting a Kern River rafting trip for USARC's summer and winter volunteers and their guests.

NOTE: This is **not** a USARC event, and the USARC does not in any way endorse, sanction or have any other association with the event.

Fees are \$65 for volunteers, \$85 for guests, and \$25 for those 13 and under. Robert provides life jackets, helmets, rafts, paddles, and some wet-suits. Breakfast will be provided on Saturday and Sunday, as well as dinner on Saturday night. Spaces fill up quickly so interested volunteers should contact Robert promptly at allen6441@sbcglobal.net.





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*****Online Edition*****

Attention Big Bear Real Estate Buyers & Sellers!

USARC staffer, Will Rahill, is an agent with Keller-Williams of Big Bear, and he 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, 909.645.1949, or www.SearchBigBearRealEstate.com

Please like the USARC on Facebook!

Simply log on, then go to 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 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!



Memorial Day & 4th of July...

are awesome holidays to grocery shop for the USARC!

For Ralphs patrons, log onto www.ralphs.com and click on the "Community Contribution" link, then click "Enroll" or "Sign In", whichever is appropriate, and follow the prompts.

 (USARC's NPO # is 80843). 

For Vons and Safeway patrons, log onto www.escrip.com and under "Make a Difference in Four Easy Steps", and follow the prompts! (USARC's group ID # is 152931854).

Thank you, please tell a friend!

What's ahead at USARC?

MAY
 15 Summer Reservations accepted at 9:00 AM

JUNE
 30 Summer Volunteer Training (Big Bear)

JULY
 11-12 Summer Day Sessions
 18-19 Summer Day Sessions
 25-26 Summer Day Sessions
 29 Summer Volunteer Training (Long Beach)
 30-31 Beachfest Camp (Long Beach)

AUGUST
 1-2 Beachfest Camp (Long Beach)
 8-9 Summer Day Sessions
 12-14 Summer Overnight Session 1
 15-17 Summer Overnight Session 2
 22-23 Summer Day Sessions
 29-30 Summer Day Sessions
 31 Summer Volunteer Party

OCTOBER
 3-7 18th Annual Peak To Peak Pedal (P2P18)