# The Spirit

Winter 2020

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center


## What Are You Waiting For?



Mom, sis, Zachary and (maybe) Davey are all smiles!

Winter is on our doorstep and the USARC is eager to have **ATHLETES** and **VOLUNTEERS** join in on the fun and excitement for one last season in our current location. Yes you heard that right, the construction zone outside our window will eventually consume our little building, but with Bear Mountain's pledge to include a USARC building in its plans, the future is bright!

(See WINTER on pg. 3)

## Brewing Fun at Ski-A-Thon

It's baaack, the most fun (and least wet) fundraiser of Big Bear's winter season, USARC's annual Ski-A-Thon.

Mark your calendar for March 14, 2020 and remember, it's never too early to start getting sponsorships. So please spread the word to your family, friends and colleagues, and when the registration website is ready we will let you know.

(See FUN on pg. 2)

## P2P25 Strikes Gold on its Silver Anniversary

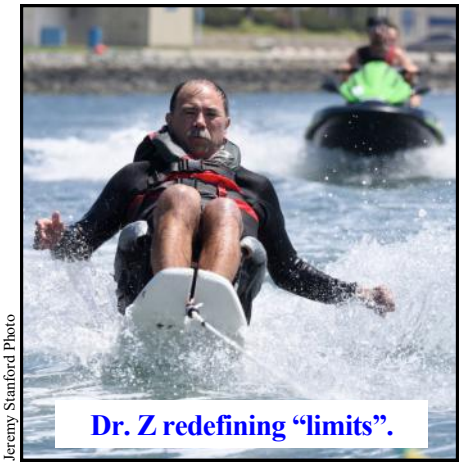
If there is one thing about cycling, the conditions at a ride's start are often different than at the finish. This year's Peakers left Big Bear on a blustery, cool morning, with no clue those winds would nag them on and off for 2+ days before finally clocking around to gentle coaxing tailwinds and balmy daytime temperatures for the latter half of the ride. It didn't matter; the energy and vibe of P2P25 was consistently upbeat and positive, rendering this silver anniversary ride positively golden, if not the best ever.

(See SILVER on pg. 6)




This amazing group and event changes lives!

## Lots of Lake = Lots of Laughs!



Jeremy Stanford Photo

Dr. Z redefining "limits".

We've all learned the valuable lesson of compounding interest, a concept which could also be applied to Big Bear Lake. Not only did the prior winter's rains add almost 10 feet to the lake level, but with each of those vertical feet the lake grew horizontally wider and wider. In turn, this ensured USARC's water sports enthusiasts had lots of room to spread out and explore the mile-and-a-quarter-high sapphire known as Big Bear Lake.

(See SUN-SPLASHED on pg. 4)

# Thoughts from the Executive Director

Like it or not, even when the truth hurts, it's still the truth.

There's no mistaking the sound of Bob Dylan's voice, particularly in his rendition of "The times they are a-changing'." That song popped into my head not too long ago as I sat watching ESPN and then suddenly saw the scroller along the bottom of the TV screen. There, in its stark black and white (okay that's for metaphorical effect since our TV is actually color) truth, without so much as a "we'll get 'em next time" smiley face, was a statistic that the recently dynastic Golden State Warriors trailed by 33 points, at HALFTIME!

Like most bay area sports fans, I have been indulging in the latest diet craze: humble pie. The now-weak Giants dominated baseball in 2010, 2012 and 2014 (sorry Dodgers fans), and then the Warriors took charge of the hardwood for the latter half of the decade. Even now, as the 49ers enjoy a resurgence, it's been a long time since they owned the NFL in the 90's.

Yes, the times they are a-changin'. The leaves have almost finished turning, the night temperatures have already hit the teens, and the town and resorts of Big Bear are hurriedly trying to wrap up their projects before the snows hit.



Tom Peirce
USARC Exec. Dir.

One such project at Bear Mountain, after this winter, includes the planned removal of the little building USARC has called home for several decades. Never fear, because according to the plans shared by the resort management with USARC staff and board members, by the following winter we will have a new facility in the base area. Per the resort, this new structure will have more room for participants, volunteers, staff and storage. If what they told us is true, USARC's new building is just the beginning of many expansions at the resort, including new chairlifts, trails and activities.

USARC asks all participants, families and volunteers to contact the administration at Big Bear Mountain Resorts to applaud them for helping to ensure access to winter sports and staying legally compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please share this news along with your experiences on social media, making sure you tag the resorts (@Big BearMountainResort, #Bear_Mountain, #Snow_Summit).

Times and seasons change, indeed. Sometimes it even causes inconveniences, rough patches and frustrations. Yet, like any devoted sports fan, the USARC has no intention of throwing in the towel, and that's the truth.


United States Adaptive Recreation Center
USARC

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A CHAPTER OF DISABLED SPORTS USA


## Fun is Brewing (cont.)

The Ski-A-Thon is a wonderful grass-roots fundraising event that allows skiers and snowboarders to spend a day on the slopes of Bear Mountain (and Snow Summit) while supporting those served by the USARC's life-changing programs.



A bi-ski fleet awaits lucky Ski-A-Thon-ers.

What's that? Lift line cutting privileges on a Saturday? Oh yes, and that's just one benefit, in addition to a goody bag, t-shirt, après-ski party, opportunity drawing ticket, and a chance to win a Big Bear Mountain Resorts anytime pass! Plus you don't even have to get soaked jumping in a freezing cold lake in the middle of winter! Stay tuned for more information as the Ski-A-Thon gets closer, or call USARC (909-584-0269) to book your lesson space now or if you have any questions. Thanks and cheers!

# Winter Awaits YOU (cont.)

You can read more about the changes in the Executive Director's letter on page 2, but never fear, with the temperatures already dropping into the teens and everyone eager for another (hopefully) bountiful winter, USARC's time-tested formula for success will be ready when the snow flies and the chairlifts roll in December.

**ATHLETES,** don't be "that guy" who waits too long, because USARC has already begun accepting reservations, and the early bird gets the worm (or the fresh powder!) If you are even just thinking about a lesson, be sure to call soon, because space is limited and holidays and weekends fill up quickly.

**VOLUNTEERS** are the life blood of USARC, because they are the kind of people (online application HERE), who believe in giving back to their community. Most volunteers agree they get more out of teaching than they give and the requirements are simple: attend a 2-day or 4-day training and teach six midweek days before the end of March. In return, they receive:



**Volunteer Mark and bi-skier Stuart are ready to rip. Are you?**

- Free training (see calendar on pg. 8)
- Become a better skier
- Earn vouchers for Bear Mt. and Snow Summit
- 50% discounts on food while teaching
- Eligibility for Far West Ski Association trips
- Eligibility to join Professional Ski Instructors of America

Remember the fable of the grasshopper and the ant, and don't put things off until it's already snowing. This may be the biggest winter in decades, or it may be below average. Regardless, the fun factor is the same, and the bottom line is you don't want to miss it. Call 909-584-0269 or go to www.usarc.org for info.

# Athlete Profile: Raymond H.

Raymond started coming to USARC this past year and has really enjoyed his time with us. With the help of his mom, Sheila, here's a peek at Raymond and his adventures.



**The marathon man, Raymond, in training with his mother.**

**The Spirit (TS):** How did you learn about USARC?
**Raymond (RH):** We heard about adaptive skiing and looked into it and found you!
**TS:** 2019 was your first time in USARC's summer program; what do you think?
**RH:** OMG, the best thing ever! I never thought Raymond would ever water ski (I have never water skied myself). I always want Raymond to try everything when the opportunity arises. I rode in the boat for his first time around and I definitely teared up. What a great opportunity and a great group of people to be involved in a wonderful program. Love!
**TS:** What other things do you do for fun?
**RH:** Raymond and I run and do triathlons together. At this time, I think Raymond and I have completed 25 half marathons, 2 full marathons, 16 triathlons and many 5Ks and 10Ks.



**Raymond about to feel the wind in his face with Carol and B.A.**

**TS:** If you had a super power, what would it be and why?
**RH:** Flying! He loves the wind in his face.
**TS:** How would you describe the feeling of water-skiing?
**RH:** Big smiles and laughing indicate his love of wind in his face and the splashing of the water!
**TS:** Tell us something we don't know about you.
**RH:** We went to Hawaii with Make-A-Wish last year. We got to go parasailing which he loved and got to kiss a dolphin!
**TS:** What would you tell someone about USARC?
**RH:** Amazing program with amazing people!!!!

# Sun-Splashed Summer Memories (Cont.)

With all that water and room to move, we knew that this past summer was going to be a little different. While our beach location, thanks to Holloways Marina and North Shore Landing, had grown a tad smaller, it was easier to find wind protected water for our skiers and wakeboarders. The weather also cooperated this year, with the exception of a little monsoon rain during our overnight sessions, but along with it came cooler temperatures, glassy water, and rainbows!



Theresa always delivers smiles, as Erin shows.

Thanks to grant support from The Community Foundation and Disabled Sports USA, as well as from Kawasaki USA and Temecula Motorsports, USARC was able to purchase two new Jet Skis to keep our participants safe out in the water.

USARC and Casa Colina successfully collaborated once again at the Land Meets Sea Sports Camp in Long Beach.



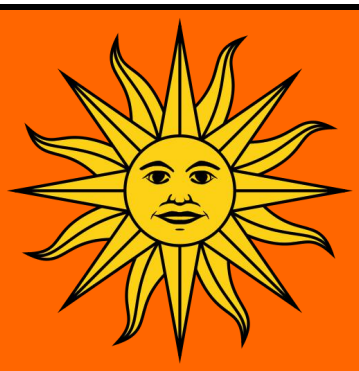
For the first time in five years, the Indepen-Dance, had sufficient lake depth to navigate its way around the lake for those participants seeking a non-internal combustion option for exploring the lake when the breezes came up.



Michael is always sartorially ready to do battle with the elements!

Of course, what is a summer on the lake without wrangling with some wily rainbow trout? Thanks to professional fish assassin John Cantrell (909-585-4017) for donating his time, vessel and expertise to help USARC's trophy hunters land some lunkers (usually in the catch-and-release manner.)

Last but certainly not least worth noting are the tireless and devoted efforts put forth by the wonderful volunteers whose names you see on this page. With their help and everyone's collective fun, time (and summer) flew by. Hopefully those warm memories will sustain us all through a cold winter until next summer.



## Thank You!

**Valerie Baggett**
**Jim Benson**
**Steven Betance**
**Don Beyer**
**Don Brannon**
**John Brown**
**Marilyn Capel**
**Zachary Charles**
**Genivieve Cook**
**Sean Curtell**
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**Morgan Schetter**
**Riley Jo Schetter**
**Rachel Taylor**
**Ernie Thompson**
**Paul Van Wig**
**Grace Zinnel**

**The USARC is grateful to these 2019 summer volunteers for helping our program be a safe, fun learning adventure for all.**

# An Intern's Journey: Que Sera Sera Sara

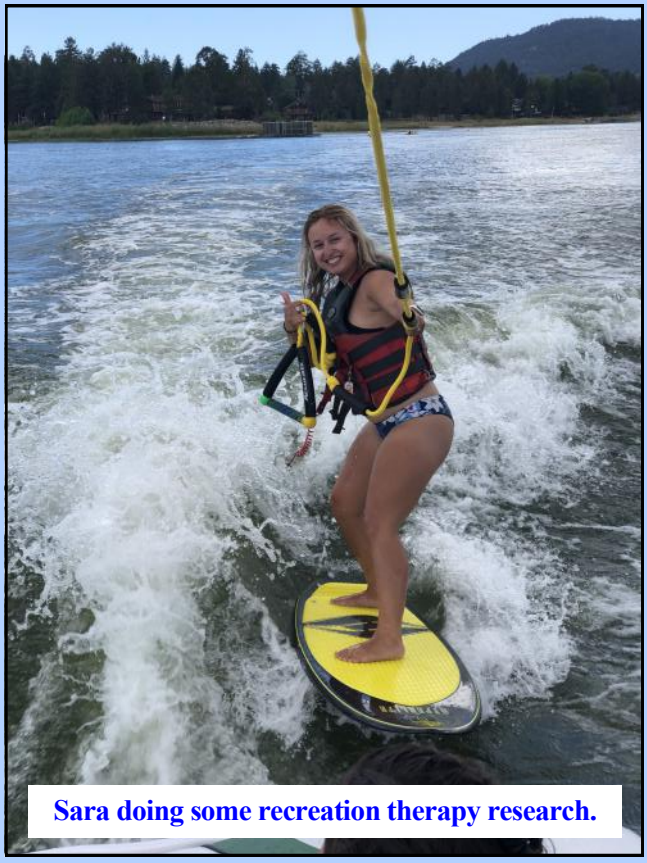
When the time came to start looking for internships, I had my mind set on going to a program that was in a more clinical setting. However, when I got pointed in the direction of USARC I knew this would be a great opportunity and exposure. My Cal State Sacramento advisor, Dr. Hoffman, who had been a part of the program many years ago, raved about USARC, so it did not take much convincing to jump on the opportunity to move to a new and beautiful place.



Jeremy Stanford Photo

**Thumbs up for Sara teaching safe Jet Skiing skills.**

It was my first time ever moving far from home as during college I was only about 30 miles from home. Coming from a big tight-knit family I knew this would be more difficult than any previous move. For my family and friends, it was hard for them to believe I would be moving to a small mountain town for an accredited internship hat would allow me to spend time on the water having fun and doing what I love most, helping others.



**Sara doing some recreation therapy research.**

The first couple weeks started off with kayaking with the local schools, and it was so much fun. I had volunteered in an adaptive kayaking program for people with strokes and TBI, but facilitating such a leisure activity for young kids, some of whom had never experienced being on the lake, let alone kayaking, was so rewarding. There was a lot of anticipation leading up to summer programming, as everyone had told me how exhausting the days would be, but I knew the rewards would be much greater.

One of my most memorable moments was working with individuals with visual impairments. It was my first time working with this population and on top of it, some only spoke Spanish. I never felt more in my element; I was able to use my bilingual skills and translate as well as create a safe and therapeutic environment that would allow them to thrive and try new things that they may have never had the opportunity to do if it was not for our program.

My experience with USARC was one of the greatest learning experiences. The biggest thing I took away from this internship was that we know no limits. Learning to create new adaptations for every unique ability and disability was a learning experience in itself. My favorite memories were watching individuals who had never water skied before, get out there and fearlessly shred like they had done it before. It was a very empowering feeling knowing that participants who had never met me before trusted me and others to be there to help when they needed it.

I enjoyed that every day was new people and new experiences. I was so inspired by the dedication of our many volunteers that would show up and create such a positive and uplifting environment. Looking back over this whole experience I am so thankful for all the connections and opportunities I made along the way. I cannot wait to apply my new skills and further develop as a Recreational Therapist.

# Silver and Gold (cont.)

There are so many intangibles when it comes to creating a championship organization, and if the formula was perfectly understood then everyone would be doing it. And yet, every now and then, like a jigsaw puzzle of seemingly random, myriad little colored pieces that becomes a masterpiece, the right people and components and attitudes all come along and fit together seamlessly. The challenges, while



**Sandy, Aimee, Karen, Rebecca, Sheri and Linda (dubbed "The Rolling Thunder Moms" by Gary).**

perhaps daunting at first, end up in hindsight being not just manageable, but integral to the camaraderie and self-satisfaction experienced at the end.

Such was the case during this year's silver anniversary running of the 25th Annual Peak to Peak Pedal. There are simply not enough superlatives or gilt-edge phrases to describe the amazing people who came together to make this year's ride so fantastic. There were the riders of all abilities who rode as hard and as long as they could; there was the staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly to make sure the riders were all safe, hydrated, fed, massaged, photographed and accounted for; there were the extra guests who paid their own way so they could be there to cheer on and support their loved ones on the road; and there were the hundreds and hundreds of generous donors who believed in and sponsored the passion the riders displayed for the unique cause that is the life-changing programming of the USARC; and there were the product sponsors who made sure the rides were as safe, comfortable, nourished and prepared as one can be when riding 335 miles over five days.



**P2P is a ride for all abilities.**



**Yes Virginia, Peak to Peak Pedal does have at least one downhill.**

It may sound cliché to say that "you never know until you go", but by the end of P2P25, this extraordinary group of people knew, both individually and collectively, a feeling of pure joy that was absolutely overflowing and infectious. Yes, they were joyous to be finished, but it was also the unparalleled ebullience and natural high derived from going together through shared struggles and achievements, sprinkled liberally with laughter and love, and coming out on the other side not just intact, but stronger forever in mind, body and heart.



**John and Robert cruising along 395's wide shoulder.**

Oh yes, and along the way, this phalanx of intrepid athletes just happened to raise over $131,000 to support the mission of the USARC. With donations still rolling in, please check out the spring version of *The Spirit* newsletter for a list of the Top 10 Fundraisers, as well as this year's winner of the prestigious H.A. Award trophy. What a ride!

# The USARC proudly salutes these 2019 fiscal year donors!

**If your donation between 7/1/18 and 6/30/19 is not listed please accept our apologies and contact us so we can correct our records.**

## Philanthropist $10,000+

**Anonymous**
**California Dept. of Boating and Waterways**
**Disabled Sports USA**
**Griswold Industries**
**Dan Murphy Foundation**
**Norris Foundation**

## Benefactor $5,000+

**Autism Speaks**
**Glen & Tricia Bland**
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**San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**
**Jay Vickers**

## Patron $1,000+

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# How can I help USARC?

In reply to this oft-asked question, 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 here https://www.givedirect.org/donate/?cid=1433 or via the Donate Online option on the Support tab at www.usarc.org, will take you to a secure, reliable website where you can use your credit card to make a one-time or recurring 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 a partner when you shop at numerous retailers, either online or at "brick and mortar" stores. Amazon's charitable arm, http://smile.amazon.com. Other online retailers at www.igive.com or www.escrip.com, allow you to select the USARC as a beneficiary of your shopping forays. RALPHS grocery shoppers can register at www.ralphs.com/topic/community-contribution-2 and designate 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 at https://careasy.org/nonprofit/USARC are sold, with the proceeds defraying USARC's operating costs and you receive a tax deduction! Please call 855-500-7433 or click on the link to get started.

# What's ahead at USARC?

## DECEMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 | Lessons Begin for Individuals |
| 9-10 | Returning Volunteer Training #1 |
| 12-15 | New Volunteer Training #1 |
| 14-15 | Returning Volunteer Training #2 |

## JANUARY

| | |
|---|---|
| 9-12 | New Volunteer Training #2 |
| 11-12 | Returning Volunteer Training #3 |
| 13 | Group Lessons Begin |
| 27 | PSIA Winter Rally (Snow Summit) |

## MARCH

| | |
|---|---|
| 14 | 2020 Ski-A-Thon |
| 17-19 | PSIA Adaptive Exams (Bear Mt.) |
| 28 | Volunteer Party |

## APRIL

| | |
|---|---|
| TBD | P2P25 Reunion Party |

# Tribute Donations

*Barbara & Gary Lee in memory of*
**ROGER LEE**

**FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS***

*Kylie Everly, Kara Kerr, Lynn Eder, and Lori in honor of*
**GENEVIEVE COOK**

*Kelly Krewson, Vicki Hahn, Raven McGann, Heather McGann, Lannice Montague, Elisa Marie, Shanna Vilven, Kathy Cramer, Mary Elizabeth, Addison Coniglio, Anne Ravanesi and Brunelle in honor of*
**HEATHER MCGANN**

*Melanie Holm and Jay Vickers in honor of*
**JAY VICKERS**

*Susan Purrington, Lori Martz and Maridith Curfman-Janssen in honor of*
**MARIDITH JANSSEN**

*Barbara Willimann, Kelsey Trujillo, CowboyBob Wallace, Kathy Field, David Johnson, Tiffany Santillan, Steve Hirschler, Kelsey Puntar, Eddie Etter, Marsha Long, Kathleen Puntar, Amy Tarleton, Ric Williams, Mike Chatham and Aletha Nelson in honor of*
**MARK UTHUS**

***Call USARC for info how to do a Facebook Fundraiser!**

## BEFORE YOU SKI OR RIDE:

- Know YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE.
- Wear a properly fitted helmet with the chin strap securely tightened to help prevent or minimize injuries.
- Use properly maintained equipment. Have bindings inspected and correctly adjusted by a certified technician.
- Dress in water– and wind-resistant outerwear and layers to accommodate changing conditions.
- Use sunscreen and wear goggles or sunglasses. The sun at altitude is intense, even on cloudy days.
- Skiing and snowboarding are active sports. Know your physical limits.
- Take a lesson. Every experience level can benefit from professional instruction.

## ON THE SLOPES:

- **Ski or Ride in Control.** Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Ski or ride at a speed you are able to safely stop and avoid others and objects you may encounter.
- **Look Out for Hazards and Obstacles** (natural and man-made). Resorts may use poles, flags, discs, ropes, fencing, signs, and other devices to provide visual warnings. No resort can mark all hazards and obstacles. Be aware of changing conditions.
- **Do NOT go under ropes** or enter closed areas. Ropes and closures are in place for your safety.
- **Do NOT Ski or Ride Impaired.** It is unsafe and against the law. Be responsible with alcohol consumption.
- **Stay Hydrated.** Your body requires more fluids at higher elevations.
- **Know Your Limits.** If you're tired, STOP. If you're injured, contact Ski Patrol.
- **NO Horseplay.** Always be respectful of others.
- **Look Out for Over-Snow Vehicles.** They may be on the slopes heading uphill or downhill, so stay clear of them at all times.

## AVALANCHE AWARENESS:

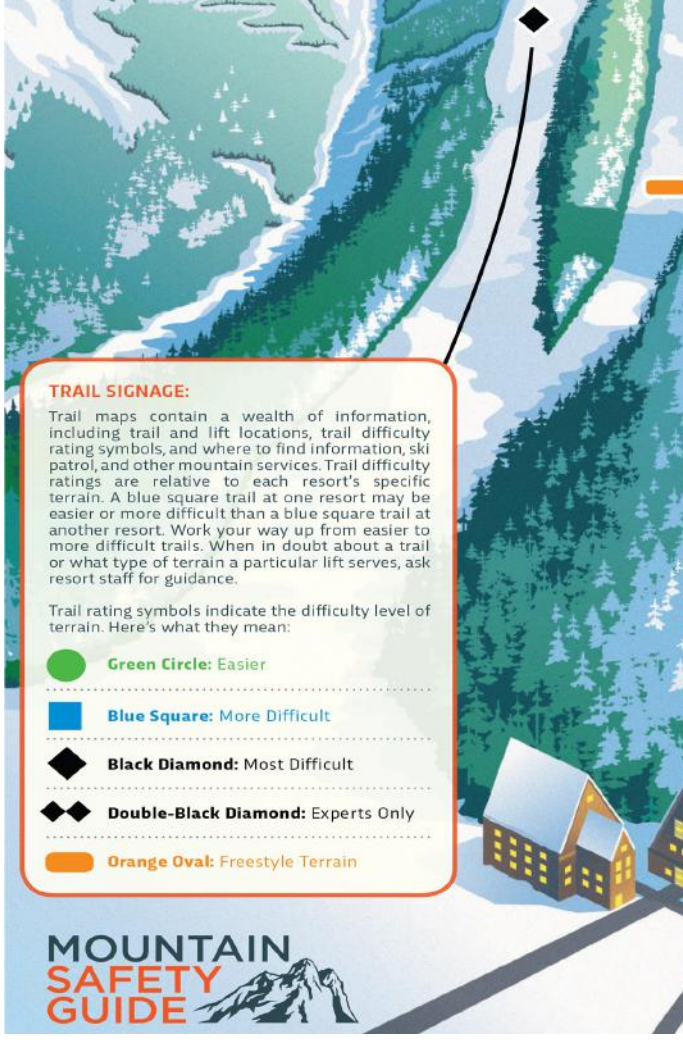
- Many ski resorts have avalanche-prone terrain, and the risk of avalanches cannot be completely eliminated.
- Ski Patrols use a variety of techniques and equipment for avalanche mitigation, including explosives. Avalanche mitigation may require terrain closures and delay opening. For your safety, never enter a closed area.
- Snow conditions constantly change as a result of wind, temperature, new snowfall, and skier/snowboarder use. Snow movement – from small sloughs to larger avalanches – can occur both in and out of bounds, particularly when skiing or riding in or near steeper terrain.
- If you leave the ski area boundary, which is illegal at some resorts, you do so at your own risk. Areas outside the boundary are neither controlled nor patrolled, and ski patrol is under no obligation to conduct a rescue. Avalanche education, proper equipment, and a partner are essential if you choose to enter the backcountry. Contact your local avalanche center or visit the Ski California website for more information.

## DEEP SNOW SAFETY:

Fresh snow is fun, but it also creates additional risks.

- **Avoid Tree Wells.** These are voids or depressions in the snow that form around the base of a tree and are often hidden by low branches. Skiers and riders can fall into these wells and die. To avoid tree wells, steer clear of trees and stay in control.
- **Stay With a Buddy.** Always maintain visual contact and stay close enough that you can pull or dig each other out of deep snow.
- **Carry Information.** Have ski patrol phone numbers so you can quickly call for help (but be aware of areas without cell coverage).






## TRAIL SIGNAGE:

Trail maps contain a wealth of information, including trail and lift locations, trail difficulty rating symbols, and where to find information, ski patrol, and other mountain services. Trail difficulty ratings are relative to each resort's specific terrain. A blue square trail at one resort may be easier or more difficult than a blue square trail at another resort. Work your way up from easier to more difficult trails. When in doubt about a trail or what type of terrain a particular lift serves, ask resort staff for guidance.

Trail rating symbols indicate the difficulty level of terrain. Here's what they mean:

- **Green Circle:** Easier
- **Blue Square:** More Difficult
- **Black Diamond:** Most Difficult
- **Double-Black Diamond:** Experts Only
- **Orange Oval:** Freestyle Terrain

## LIFT SAFETY

### LOADING

- Remove pole straps from wrists and hold in one hand. Remove backpacks and hold in your lap. Remove back foot from snowboard binding.
- Be lined up with other guests and prepared to load before moving forward from the "Wait Here" area.
- After the chair in front passes, move from the "Wait Here" area to the "Load Here" area.
- At the "Load Here" area, look back and grab the part of the chair that is easiest for you, typically a side bar or backrest.

### RIDING

- When a restraint bar is available, tell others and lower the bar when you can do so safely.
- SIT BACK and remain seated.
- NO HORSEPLAY.
- Do not turn around, or otherwise move on the chair, even if the lift slows or stops. Never jump from the chair.

### UNLOADING

- Check for loose clothing or equipment (such as backpacks) to make sure it will not get caught.
- If a restraint bar is lowered, tell others and then raise the bar before the "Unload Here" area.
- Keep your ski tips or the front of your board up and straight ahead.
- After unloading, move away from the unload ramp.
- If you fail to unload at the "Unload Here" area, remain completely seated and wait for further assistance. DO NOT JUMP.

**If you need assistance or there is a problem, SPEAK UP, and tell a lift operator.**

# MOUNTAIN SAFETY GUIDE