



The Spirit

Winter
2024

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center

USARC celebrates 35 Years!

This season USARC is turning 35! While we are hoping we don't get the Snowmageddon that was last year, we are excited to be welcoming winter back to USARC. After a very memorable summer, we are ready to see what this winter will have in store for us. There is talk of a wet winter, but as you all know, we don't believe it until we're shoveling it!

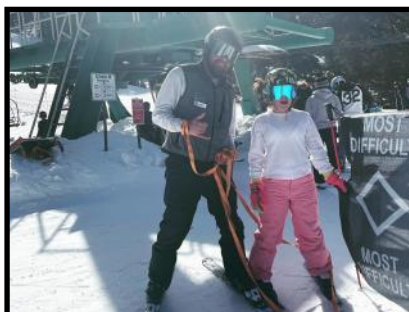
Reservations are open to sign up for your ski and snowboard lessons. Participants can call us directly (909.584.0269) and make a reservation. Lessons will be available seven days a week with the exception of some select days. We look forward to all of the returning volunteers and participants we will have along with the new faces we will see out on the mountain this season.



We would not be able to do what we do without our rockstar volunteers who give so much time and expertise to our program and participants. If you know of anyone interested, please encourage them to check out our program! You can sign-up to be a volunteer at this link: <https://www.usarc.org/volunteer/winter-application/>. Our new volunteer training days will be held on December 8-10, 2023 and January 8-10, 2024. Our returning volunteer training days are on December 9-10, 2023; December 12-13, 2023; and January 9-10, 2024. There is so much joy found out on the mountain and we would love to spread that to even more people whether it be participants or volunteers.

Staff Wanted

USARC is looking for motivated skiers to come work this season at Bear Mountain. As a staff member, you will work with many types of disabilities and adaptive equipment. Experience is preferred but not required. Full time and part time positions. If you are interested in applying please contact us at 909.584.0269 or email mail@usarc.org.



A Note from the Executive Director

USARC is celebrating 35 years this season, wow! I'm honored to be a part of such a legacy and I look forward to many more years to come. We are looking forward to welcoming winter, the first of the cold temps have come, the snow guns are getting tested and before we know it, we will be gliding down the slopes enjoying the beautiful environment of Big Bear.

Other exciting things are coming to USARC this winter. One is the completion of the new building! With the expansion of the deck at Bear Mountain, the USARC building is now on the deck next to the sports shop. The other is that we are expanding our winter operations, on a small scale, to Snow Valley. While the kinks are worked out it will be just a few select days of operation.

I hope you will be able to join us for our annual winter FUNdraiser, the 2024 Ski-A-Thon, scheduled for March 9, 2024. This year will be a party to celebrate 35 years of providing rewarding therapeutic outdoor recreation to our participants and their families, as well as YOU!

As I conclude, I want to thank you for the ongoing support of USARC and it's life changing programs. I am looking forward to a great winter and can't wait to see everyone on the slopes!



Sara Rosell-Gavigan
Executive Director



A view from the parking lot of the new USARC building



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Memorials and Tributes

The USARC is honored to have received donations in the name of someone held close to the heart of the donor and/or their family and friends. (5/1/23-9/30/23)

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Thank You!

Our volunteers are the best! USARC wouldn't be able to do what it does without them.



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Sailing past Summer

What an amazing year it has been! After a long period of anticipation, beautiful Big Bear Lake is finally on the rise. With all of the weather that last winter brought, the lake has climbed from over 17 feet down in December of last year, to just under 7 feet low for most of the summer! That being said, the lake was absolutely stunning this summer with the most clear water we have seen in years.



In addition to the lake's remarkable recovery, there's plenty more to be excited about. After over 3 years in storage, our sailboat, the Independence, made it back into the action! Providing the opportunity for our participants to help unfurl the sails, catch the breeze, and share in the unparalleled joy sailing has to offer.



Our ever popular watersports and Snow Summit Adventure days were also action packed, along with our overnight camp which welcomed a new friend of USARC, Mr. Bighorn. Mr. Bighorn brought out his authentic Alpenhorn and put on a little show while teaching us all about the story behind the horn.



USARC has always strived to push the limits of accessibility to create opportunities for our athletes to reach their full potential. The spirit of USARC has instilled that same perseverance into many of our participants, to conquer their fears and step out of their comfort zones. Every year we are amazed and overwhelmed by the progress our astonishing athletes have made.

Thank you to all of the participants, family members, caregivers, friends and especially volunteers for another amazing year full of Smiles Seen, Memories Made, Lives Changed!



Athlete Highlight, Kane Menissov

We would like to introduce you to this summer's athlete highlight: Kane Menissov. Kane was new to our winter program last season and then decided to come try our summer program as well. It was such a joy to watch his progress throughout the summer and our volunteers and staff had a wonderful time working with his boisterous personality. There were lots of laughs and fun times had when Kane was around. Let's hear more from Kane himself.

The Spirit (TS): So Kane, what was your favorite activity from the summer program?

Kane Menissov (KM): My favorite activity was definitely water skiing! At the beginning of the season I was afraid of the water, but by August I was doing so good.

TS: Yes you were! We love to see that progress. Do you like to go fast or slow?

KM: I like to go SUPER FAST!

TS: We thought so! What do you like to do in your free time?

KM: I have such a busy schedule, so when I have free time, I like to relax at home or do play dates with my friends.

TS: That's great! If you could be any animal, what would you be?

KM: A dog!

TS: We loved watching you play with Zeke all summer! We can tell you like dogs and are really good with them. What superhero would you be and why?

KM: I would like to be Spider-Man. It is so cool to swing on spider webs.

TS: That would be pretty awesome! Do you like snow skiing or water skiing more?

KM: *With a happy screaming voice - "Water skiiiiiiiiing!"*

TS: What do you want to be when you grow up?

KM: A Police Officer.

TS: Very cool! What do you like to tell other people about USARC?

Ace (Kane's Dad): Trust me, we've went through lots of programs because he is diagnosed with Autism and USARC is definitely the best program that we ever were able to find Kane.

TS: Thank you Kane and Ace! We look forward to having you join us on the slopes real soon!



Rookie of the Year, Ingrid Miles

We would like to introduce you to this year's Rookie of the Year: Ingrid Miles. Ingrid is an excellent skier who came to training with a positive and ready-to-learn attitude. She quickly became a rockstar volunteer who could take on almost any lesson! It is great to have another amazing female rookie of the year to add to our history.

The Spirit (TS): What was your reaction to being awarded rookie of the year?

Ingrid Miles (IM): When my name was called, I thought I heard incorrectly and was totally overwhelmed with surprise and disbelief. Then I became very emotional, tears running down my face. I couldn't believe it. I just love the program and all the people in it, students and staff. I had an amazing winter! Volunteering with USARC last winter made a profound impact on me and I can't wait for the next winter to arrive.



TS: We love that! Where are you from?

IM: I grew up in Norway in a small town called Kongsberg. It has a small ski resort:) After high school I came to the US for college, the University of Utah, and had wonderful winters with lots of skiing before I moved to LA for grad school. Living in Venice Beach I met the love of my life, Aaron, who was from New Jersey, and a skier! We raised our three kids in Venice. We made an agreement to travel to Norway every year. One year Aaron agreed to take a sabbatical and we lived there for a full school year. Everyone feels very connected to the family there and speak fluent Norwegian:)

TS: How awesome! How did you first hear about USARC?

IM: I came up to ski Big Bear early in the season last year as Aaron was hired on the hill safety team. I thought about teaching skiing but my eye caught this group of folks that were training on the slopes. They were smiling and laughing yet serious about what they were learning. At the bottom I asked what they were doing and they told me they were returning volunteers training for USARC. I asked an instructor if I could join and the next day I was on the mountain training with them - I was ecstatic! Such a great group of folks; the instructors and the volunteers. I have some background working with the adaptive community but never on the snow. I knew this was for me!

TS: What is your favorite part about volunteering?

IM: My favorite part of volunteering is seeing the smiles on the students' faces. Often their faces light up when they master a certain task like getting on or off the chair lift or gliding down the hill. I was blown away to witness many student's progress from the morning to the afternoon, whether it was mastering a turn or getting over some fear. It warms my heart to share their joy and excitement - despite the weather! We also had an epic winter last season!

TS: Thank you for that! What do you like to do in your free time?

IM: In my free time I love being in nature, especially when I share this with others. I love hiking, walking along the beach, swim and play in the ocean and waves. In the winter I love skiing and knitting:) Spending time with family and friends, sharing good meals, or sitting around the fire in the back yard is a big favorite.

TS: Very cool! Do you have any trips planned?

IM: I just returned from an amazing trip to Peru with our youngest daughter! She asked if I wanted to join her to visit Lima, Cusco and Machu Picchu. Honored to be asked, I said yes right away! We explored this rich mountain culture through the Inca ruins and towns in the Sacred Valley leading to Machu Picchu which was breathtaking. It is not a joke walking all the stairs and paths at 12000 -15000 feet above sea level! In January Aaron and I will travel to Norway where our son and his two boys will be for a week. They live in Germany but he travels for work and will need some grandparent help! Can't wait to see them!

TS: That sounds amazing! What is your favorite mountain to ski?

IM: My favorite mountain to ski is Alta in Utah. Many of the ski areas there are amazing. The snow is so light and powder days can be many:) In California I really like Mammoth. A couple of years ago our oldest daughter worked ski patrol in Copper Mountain, Colorado. I love that she introduced us to skiing a new mountain. I have a dream of skiing the Alps in Europe one day

TS: Those all sound very exciting! Thank you for an amazing first year with us and we look forward to having you back this winter and seeing all the awesome things you will do!

The USARC proudly salutes these 2023 fiscal year donors!

If your donation between 7/1/22 and 6/30/23 is missing please accept our apologies and contact us so we can correct our records.

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SAVE THE DATE!

2024 Ski-A-Thon

March 9, 2024



We'll see you on the Slopes!



Helping Hands Poker Run

April 13, 2024

Get ready for an amazing day in Johnson Valley at USARC's Second Annual Helping Hands Poker Run! Join us for an accessible adventure in the desert, where you can rev up your engines and play for a good cause. Bring your own dirt bike, ATV, SxS, Jeep, truck, etc. to join the fun for charity. Don't have your own rig, hop into one of our Tour Vehicles to experience all that the desert has to offer. Don't miss the chance to draw your card at each of the 5 checkpoints – the best hands win! At USARC, we're committed to making desert fun inclusive while ensuring safety, enjoyment, and learning for everyone.



Peak to Peak Rolls On...

On October 4, 2023, 22 cyclists took off from Bear Mountain Resort on the first leg of the 5 day cycling adventure known as the Peak to Peak Pedal. The first stop is in Barstow followed by Ridgecrest, Lone Pine, Bishop and finally Mammoth Mountain!

The weather was perfect, the company was outstanding and the food amazing (as always!). Thanks to the selfless volunteers that helped out in one way or another, this ride is just another piece of the USARC puzzle that would not happen without them!

The 29th Annual Peak to Peak Pedal riders raised over \$120,000 which is a significant part of the annual budget. The money raised also helps us purchase the most up to date adaptive equipment, train our volunteers, and keep our prices low to ensure that everyone can participate in the USARC programs.

Next year will mark our 30th year of the ride, so mark your calendars, tell your friends, and come along on the adventure of a life time all while changing lives of those with disabilities! Save the date for P2PXXX October 9-13, 2024.



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 Get Involved option on the USARC website 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 Event 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 you 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. 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

- 8-10 New Volunteer Training
- 9-10 Returning Volunteer Training
- 12-13 Returning Volunteer Training
- 15 First day of lessons (weather permitting)
- 25 USARC Closed-MERRY CHRISTMAS!

JANUARY

- 1 USARC Closed- HAPPY NEW YEAR!
- 8-10 New Volunteer Training
- 9-10 Returning Volunteer Training
- 12 Group Lessons Begin

MARCH

- 9 2024 Ski-A-Thon
- 16 USARC Volunteer Party
- 30 Last day of Lessons

APRIL

- TBD Peak to Peak Pedal Slideshow
- 13 Helping Hands Poles Run

Seeking Corporate Sponsors!

A corporate sponsor could really help improve USARC programs and events! If you know anyone who would be interested in being a corporate sponsor please reach out!
THANK YOU!

USARC Wish List

Truck
Ski Boat
Pontoon Boat
Sand wheelchair
Box Trailer