



KATHERINE LOUISE HASHER KAPLANEK



Born 1951 in Reno, Nevada, Member of SLO Skiers and Central Council of California

I do not remember my first day skiing, since it was as I was learning to walk, but it is documented with a photo! As long as I can remember, skiing has been a large focus in my life. I was born in Reno, Nevada, as my parents were living in Sugar Bowl at the time and providing transportation via a weasel for skiers to enjoy skiing at Sugar Bowl. Prior to that, my parents spent two winters, 1947-48 and 1948-49, compiling a snow survey of conditions in Mineral King for proposed development of Mineral King as a ski resort, which snow survey was later integral to Walt Disney's attempt to develop Mineral King into a ski resort. Though both of these attempted developments failed, the notoriety this snow survey brought forth was essential to the nationwide explosion of interest in the sport of skiing.

My father was a naturalized citizen from Germany where he started his career as a ski instructor, then in the United States, he pursued his skiing passion as a ski jumper, cross-country ski racer, ski instructor snow surveyor, and ski businessman. My mother, a naturalized citizen from Italy, had her degree in foreign languages from UCLA and spoke English, Italian, German, French and Spanish fluently.

My parents met in Big Bear Lake, where my mother learned to ski with my father's instruction, and skiing was solidly and permanently the focus of our family from then on.

Nearly every weekend in the winter as I was growing up in Los Angeles, we traveled to Big Bear to ski locally at Moonridge, Snow Summit, Snow Valley, June Mountain, Table Mountain, Rebel Ridge.

With my parents now in the business of importing skis and ski equipment from Europe to supply dealers here in the United States, much time was spent in San Francisco at ski show conventions as well as traveling to and skiing at resorts such as Mammoth Mountain, Sun Valley, Idaho, Lake Tahoe, Klamath Falls, to name a few. My father also had firsthand experience with Olympic skiers, as he attended the Winter Olympics religiously to support athletes with encouragement as well as new equipment and repairs.

When I graduated from high school at Big Bear High School, I was fortunate to find a college at South Lake Tahoe where I majored in skiing among other lesser subjects. What a paradise it was to be able to ski at legendary ski resorts such as Heavenly Valley, Squaw Valley, Alpine Meadows any day of the week!

Some of my happiest days were as a ski instructor at Snow Summit in the early '70s. The joy on people's faces when they made their first successfully controlled turn was so rewarding. I was so glad to share the love of skiing with my students and show them how easy and freeing it can be.

My three children were on skis by the time they were three years old and now are all accomplished skiers/snowboarders teaching their children to ski and snowboard.

Now a member of SLO Skiers, I look forward to another chapter of memories from the gift of skiing my parents gave to me.