

Life after ski patroller's death at Squaw Valley

By Megan Michelson, Co-op Journal

Exactly one year ago, Joe Zuiches kissed his half-sleeping wife, Mikki, on the forehead as he left his house in the dark, at 3:30 in the morning on Jan. 24, 2017. Joe was on his way to his job as a ski patroller at Squaw Valley. He'd once read that you live longer if you kiss your spouse before you leave the house each day, so he always made a point to do so.

Later that morning, as a golden sun was rising over a brilliant blue sky—after days on end of pounding storms and feet upon feet of snow—Joe texted Mikki to say, “Another patroller blew his knee out, so I’m the supervisor.” He was doing avalanche control work to ready the snow-drenched mountain for the day’s onslaught of skiers and riders.

She responded, “Be safe.”

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