

# Climbing Way

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF CLIMBING FOR CHRIST

**VOLUME 16 /WINTER 2009-2010** 



## Can you see me now?

#### By Gary Fallesen

Why do people crane their necks to see a car accident on the other side of a highway, yet turn their heads to avoid making eye contact with a homeless person on the street?

Why do we watch natural disasters, even chase storms, but close our eyes to human suffering?

Is it something Jesus said? "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (Matthew 25:45). Are we trying to sidestep the responsibility of being a witness?

I am haunted by the sight of a skeletal baby, hidden by a begging mother beneath her scarf on a street corner in Nairobi, Kenya. I was sitting in the backseat of a vehicle I had rented, driven by a local man I had hired, returning from a mountain climb I had paid a large amount of money to do. But I gave nothing to one of the least of these.

I consoled myself in that moment by saying a prayer for the woman and her child. Maybe God would send someone else to help. The confrontation was awkward then, and the memory has sickened me since that day more than a decade ago.

#### What if I was the help He had sent?

Each of us has an opportunity to make a difference, perhaps an eternal difference, in the life of another. What if we were to do just that: **help one other soul.** What if we recognized that our field of vision is our mission field? What if we didn't avert our eyes; didn't hold up our hands in the universal sign of "I have nothing to give you," didn't miss the opportunity ... and later regret it?

#### Letter from the editor



Samuel and Macy Carducci add their two cents, and more.

## Pennies from heaven

By Elaine Fallesen

A little change is a lot in God's hands.

Take, for instance, the challenge of filling one office water cooler jug to the brim with coins. How long would it take you? A month? A year?

It took just one week for the members of Hope Lutheran Church to completely fill *three* jugs with coins, dollar bills, and even a few checks. The challenge to the Greece, N.Y. congregation was issued by Senior Pastor Larry Stojkovic while promoting the September sermon series, "Hunger and Thirst," focusing on the lack of clean water and food that plagues nations worldwide and kills 250,000 children every day of the year.

The coin collecting campaign would raise funds to tackle the problem head on in one remote corner of our planet — the mountain village of Gentilhomme, Haiti, where Climbing For Christ works. The money would be used to build a system to supply clean drinking water for roughly 1,000 villagers. About \$5,000 would buy the materials needed for a pedal powered pump to carry clean water from a riverbed 450 feet up a steep slope to the village.

Pastor Larry, who wrote this issue's "Why I support C4C" on page 5, kicked off the campaign by being the first to pour his own spare change into a jug. Next, 16-ounce drinking cups were handed out and everyone was encouraged to fill them with the loose change that collects in cars, pockets, purses, on dresser tops, and under couch seat cushions. Project flyers also were provided for people to take to work.

Continued on page 4



## Climbing For Christ

We are sent to mountainous areas of the world to deliver the Gospel where other missionaries cannot or will not go.

#### Mission Statement

Members of Climbing For Christ agree that we are called to:

- Bring praise, honor and glory to God the Creator of all things, including the mountains we love — and to our Redeemer, His beloved Son.
- Inspire believers to achieve greater spiritual and physical heights in this world.
- Introduce the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, to those living in or visiting mountainous areas who don't know Him personally in a new, exciting and everlasting way.

To join Climbing For Christ, visit www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=146

THE CLIMBING WAY is a product of Climbing For Christ, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We are a missions-based, non-denominational organization. Send questions and comments via e-mail to <a href="mailto:info@ClimbingForChrist.org">info@ClimbingForChrist.org</a> or write to:

#### Climbing For Christ, Inc. P.O. Box 16290 Rochester, N.Y. 14616-0290

For more information on Climbing For Christ, go online at: <a href="https://www.ClimbingForChrist.org">www.ClimbingForChrist.org</a>

To contribute to *The Climbing Way* or ClimbingForChrist.org send an inquiry to <a href="info@ClimbingForChrist.org">info@ClimbingForChrist.org</a>.

WARNING! Activities described in this publication and on ClimbingForChrist.org carry a significant risk of personal injury or death. Do not participate in mountaineering, rock climbing, ice climbing, bouldering, and hiking and trekking unless you are an expert, have sought and obtained qualified professional instruction or guidance, are knowledgeable about the risks involved, and are willing to assume personal responsibility for all risks associated with these activities.

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Gary Fallesen, president
Elaine Fallesen, vice president
Mary Lindsay, secretary
Ace Concordia, at-large member
Pastor Derek Fullerton, at-large member
Isaac Will, at-large member

#### THE CLIMBING WAY

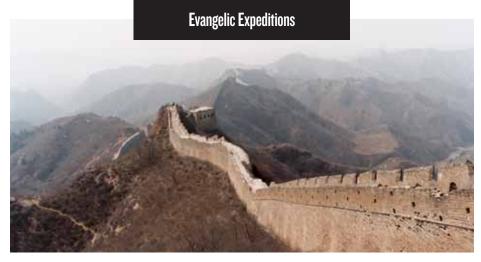
Elaine and Gary Fallesen, editors
Ace Concordia, Pastor Larry Stojkovic,
contributing writers
Ace Concordia, Pastor Derek Fullerton,
Miguel Rubén Guante, Pastor Duncan Nyozani,
contributing photographers
Melissa Mihalyov, designer
GraphiXPress, printer

#### IN THIS ISSUE

"Can you see me now?"	1
Letter from the editor	2
10 mission fields for 2010	3
"Why I support C4C"	5
Giving ideas	6-7
In Praise of God's creation	9
A View	12



**GONE GREEN** *The Climbing Way* is printed on 100-percent recycled paper. The recycled papers used to make the pages of this magazine contain at least 30 percent post-consumer waste recycled fiber certified by Green Seal and meeting EPA guidelines. This paper is elemental and process chlorine free. God created the earth and everything in it for us. We are called to be good stewards, and so we support responsible use of forest resources.



Great Wall of China.

### 10 mission fields for 2010

One of those secular-humanistic travel guides has done a *Best in Travel* book, which includes its top 10 countries for 2010. This is from a publisher that celebrates things like voodoo ceremonies in Haiti ("Vodou is one of the most maligned religions on the globe," its authors write) and it goes on to blame Christianity for the enslavement of Haitian people.

This guide company's 10 "hottest countries" for 2010 are:

- El Salvador
  Germany
  Greece
  New Zealand
  Portugal
- Greece
  Malaysia
  Morocco
  Portugal
  Suriname
  USA

While this guide leads people to "guilt-free travel — a slice of history served alongside a healthy slice of hedonism — and everyone seems happy," we have a different purpose for going places. It's not about self-satisfying happiness; it's about the joy of knowing and serving a Savior.

With that in mind, here are Climbing For Christ's 10 mission destinations in 2010:

China
Dominican Republic
Haiti
Indonesia
Malawi
Nepal
Philippines
Tanzania
Turkey
USA

Our "best in travel" consists of Evangelic Expeditions, such as:

**Mission: Kilimanjaro** (Jan. 19-31) – An opportunity to teach evangelism to guides and porters in the Kilimanjaro Chapter. These members have an opportunity to do outreach among their Muslim co-workers and witness to the tens of thousands of trekkers who visit Tanzania each year. Climbing For Christ will also visit Malawi to see how the Lord would have us help the orphans living in villages near Mulanje Massif. [Read about Project 1:27 on pages 7 and 8.]

**Mission: Philippines** (Feb. 20-28) – Trekking to and serving the people living in the rugged Cordillera mountains in the Kibungan municipality in the province of Benguet on the northern island of Luzon. [Read more about reaching Tacadang on pages 12 and 11.]

**Mission: Possible IV** (March 8-17) – A team of Climbing For Christ members who have the ability and experience to teach mountaineering, first-aid, search-and-rescue, and/or avalanche detection will evaluate the abilities of local guides and teach much-needed skills in a place closed to Christianity.

**Mission: Possible 5** (April 5-18) – Revisiting a closed area, where only .05 percent of the population of nearly 1.5 million are Christian, to distribute radios, Bible books, and start a discipleship program.

**Mission: Nepal** (May 7-18) – Building a church in the mountain village of Dapcha; sharing Christ's love with the "untouchable" Dalits, among others, and exploring other villages in the Central

#### Mission: Indonesia

Region.

(May 16-27) – Exploring mountain villages of Java to survey people groups and their needs, both physically and spiritually.

Mission: Ararat (July 5-16)

– Climbing Mount Ararat and answering divine



Working rice fields in Indonesia.

appointments with Kurdish people in eastern Turkey. Also assisting a youth ministry on a mountaineering exercise in neighboring Armenia.

**Mission: Haiti** (December) – Continuing the work with churches and schools in various villages in southeastern Haiti and across the Dominican border in Jimani. Climbing For Christ has ministered in the mountains of Haiti since 2005.

Additionally, U.S. chapters and American members are encouraged to continue or start outreach in the United States. Members from around the world are invited to go to America and serve as missionaries in the mountains there.

"As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" – Romans 10:15b (NIV)

For more information, visit www.ClimbingForChrist.org and click on Evangelic Expeditions. To apply for a mission trip, e-mail info@ClimbingForChrist.org.

#### CAN YOU SEE ME NOW?, from page I



Financial gifts gave hungry people in Haiti something to eat through our Food Bank program.

Sitting in another vehicle, several years removed from that visit to Kenya and many miles farther along on my spiritual walk, I looked out the window of another vehicle at a child. It was at a crossroads in Haiti, where I have gone seven times with Climbing For Christ. The boy, his face downcast, was wearing a sweatshirt with a slogan that captured my attention and my imagination:

#### **CAN YOU SEE ME NOW?**

Do you see him? Do you see his need? *His* need, not the needs of millions of others.

When we really look at the world, the suffering overwhelms us. The fact that, at last estimate, 40 percent of the people groups on earth have yet to be reached with the Gospel of Jesus is staggering. Those are countless unreached people; all of whom are known to our heavenly Father, who counts each hair on each of our heads.

Pondering what must be done often leads to a severe case of paralysis by analysis. We look away, throw up our hands, and pass by another opportunity.

I am asking you to rubberneck the human misery you've seen. Brake for the broken. Stop. And then go. Urgently. Send your prayers, your financial gifts, and your talents to the One who gave you everything. Be His hands and feet.

In the pages of this magazine — the giving issue — are only a few of the many ideas that are out there. More can and will be found on our Web site **(www.ClimbingForChrist.org)** in the weeks and months ahead.

Here's what you can do now: Pray for the church in a persecuted country; purchase a brick for a church or school; sponsor a child; go where other missionaries have not to deliver the Good News. Make a commitment to make a difference in the life of another before it's too late.

Allow the Shepherd to use you to reach one of His lost sheep. **Just one.** If each of us did this, the physical world would be a better place and, more importantly, there would be a great celebration in the spiritual realm.

"Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the Lord comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones." (Isaiah 49:13)

#### PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, from page 2

The jingle of coins being poured into jugs became a familiar sound on Sunday mornings. By month's end, the outpouring of support resulted in six jugs being filled, one cup of change at a time:

- The Olsen family left their cup out on the counter "so it would be a constant reminder for us to put our loose change in there, rather than in the 'bucket' we usually put our change in," explains Tami Olsen. "And when paying for items I would try to get loose change back. Instead of giving the extra three cents and getting \$1 back, I would pay with \$1 so I could get 97 cents back to add to our cup."
- Ann Drewel took cups to work and placed them along with the flyer and issues of *The Climbing Way* in the break room. "The first day we filled up two cups!" she says.
- One of the most creative collecting methods was devised by Macy and Samuel Carducci, ages 6 and 8, who "taped their cups to their bedroom door handles and charged us admission every time we wanted to come in their rooms!" says mom Carla Carducci. "And that was after they emptied our wallets." The kids also went door to door, explaining to neighbors that they were collecting money for people in Haiti who don't have water. "It was so simple and yet so amazing," adds Carla. "It was a neat teaching experience for them. When they heard about it and thought about it, they realized that many people don't have water to drink."

When the last penny was counted at the end of September, more than \$10,000 had been raised in faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"(About 5,000 men were there.) But he said to his disciples, 'Have them sit down in



Some of the 73,327 pennies, 13,524 nickels, 18,717 dimes, and 13,741 quarters collected at Hope Lutheran Church in Greece, N.Y.

groups of about fifty each.' The disciples did so, and everybody sat down. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over." (Luke 9:14-17)

If your church is interested in using the water-cooler idea to raise support for the work Climbing For Christ is doing, e-mail info@ClimbingForChrist.org. We can provide the tools. All it takes to start is a handful of spare change and a willingness to help.

## Climb on... to the ends of the earth

#### By Pastor Larry Stojkovic

I am not a climber. I love looking at pictures of Everest, Kilimanjaro, McKinley and Rainier. Never once, when gazing at the beauty of those mountains, did I think to myself, "Wouldn't it be great to climb that mountain?" I've never had the desire. In fact, my thinking goes like this: "Gary Fallesen of Climbing For Christ climbs mountains. Good for him. He goes way up, and then he has to come back down. I will do valleys. First, I go down and then I climb up — the complete opposite of what Gary does. We'll call it, 'Descending For Christ.' The people in the valleys need Jesus, too."

Seriously, they do need Jesus. In fact, people living on Manhattan need Jesus, as well as those who live in Hong Kong. People in Canada, where I'm from, need Jesus and so do folks living in the United States. A border separates the two nations. A need for Jesus unites us. People living in the tropics need Him and so do those living on the frozen tundra. Men need Jesus, and so do women. The imprisoned need Him and so do the homeless. People on the mountains need a Savior and so do those living in the valleys.

Now the reason I support Climbing For Christ is the simple fact that I believe we have many of the valleys covered. We've been going to the valleys for a long time, carrying with us the message of Jesus. I don't know of many who are taking the Good News to the mountains. It's a place of thin air, dangerous climbs, and in many cases, fewer people. The truth is, however, that those people in the mountains matter to the Savior, and if they matter to the Savior, then they matter to me. I will never climb one of those mountains, but I can financially support, encourage with prayer, and send missionaries into the mountains, to climb up and then come back down, having left on the mountain news that will cause the mountains to sing together for joy (Psalm 98:8).

At the beginning of the book of Acts (Acts 1:8), Jesus spoke to His disciples and He said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

In my backyard I have a huge patch of ivy. It starts with a little plant, and then before you know it, the ivy spreads. It's all over the place. If I didn't stop it, the ivy would soon cover my entire backyard. So it is with the message of the Gospel. The Divine plan was to start small in Jerusalem, and then like that ivy to spread all over our



Pastor Larry delivers support to Mission: Haiti.

global backyard. People tried to stop its spread. Unlike my ivy they did so without success. Governments and ideologies tried to get in the way, but they have been pushed aside by the power of God's might.

Even the mountains presented a formidable challenge. There is no challenge, however, too great for the living God. Missionaries anointed with Holy Spirit power look at the mountains and the people who live on the mountains or who are visiting the mountains and they are doing what the Master called them to do. They climb! They climb to the ends of the earth.

I see in Climbing For Christ faithful witnesses; ambassadors for The Faithful Witness (Revelation 1:5), who are not afraid or ashamed to climb a mountain looking for people who matter to the Master. I see people who do not worship the mountain, but the One who fashioned the mountains. I see a worldwide team of individuals who are determined to make a difference for Christ one person at a time. I see a ministry that cares about building churches, training pastors, supplying fresh water, and caring for people devastated by natural disasters. I see the ivy of Jesus spreading and I dare not stand in the way. In fact, I pray that it will climb all the mountains and reach into all the valleys.

That's why I support Climbing For Christ. That's why I encourage my congregation to support this ministry. That's why I encourage you to support the ministry of Climbing For Christ. There are lost lambs up in the mountains and the Good Shepherd sends His undershepherds to look for them and share with them. I say, "Climb on, Climbing For Christ." \textstyle="texts"

Larry Stojkovic, who joined Climbing For Christ in June 2006, is the senior pastor at Hope Lutheran Church in Greece, N.Y. Hope partners with Climbing For Christ through monthly financial support and constant prayer.

## Giving ideas

We've received the greatest gift that can be given for CHRISTmas. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

What, in turn, are we going to give to others for CHRISTmas (or even a future birthday celebration)? You can send someone a blessing they'll long remember and, at the same time, help someone you might not meet on this side of heaven. Here are a few ideas. These are gifts that keep on giving — and they don't require tape, wrapping paper, or bows.



#### SCHOOL'S IN:

Embarrassed parents often keep children home because they don't have proper clothing to wear to school. You can provide a uniform and shoes for a school child for US\$20. Add US\$5 for paper, pencils and pens for the entire school year.

#### **JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED:**

Contribute to the Dr. Eric A. Cederstrom Memorial Fund for medical missions. This fund is used to buy medical supplies for Evangelic Expeditions and to help transport those in need of serious medical attention from the mountains. **Gifts of any amount** are accepted.

#### **CLIP AND MAIL**

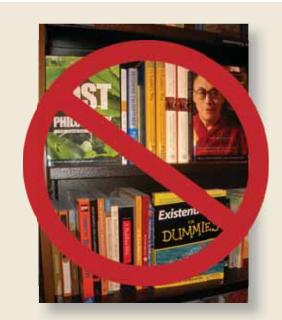
Your name:
Address:
E-mail:
Gift you're giving and amount you're donating:
Gift recipient's name:
Address:
Occasion (CHRISTmas, birthday, etc.):
Message:

Send check (payable to Climbing For Christ) to P.O. Box 16290, Rochester, NY 14616-0290. Or give via PayPal. (Please add 2 percent to cover PayPal's fee.)



#### **BUY A BLOCK:**

Plant a church, grow a congregation. Send US\$5 and buy a block that will help house your brothers and sisters in Christ in Haiti, Nepal, or another country. We are about the building of the church.





#### **SPONSOR A CLIMBER:**

You can help a young missionary head for the hills. Contribute to the Brian Kimble Memorial Scholarship fund. Brian was a Climbing For Christ member with a heart for missions. This passion lives on in the sending of others. High school and collegeaged servants are eligible to receive a scholarship to help them "go." **Gifts of any amount** are accepted.





#### **RELIEF TEAM:**

Be a part of a Christian relief team. Donate to the Climbing For Christ relief fund, which provides emergency supplies for those in need. **Gifts of any amount** are accepted.

#### THE WORD:

Christians don't need self-help books (or titles such as *Existentialism for Dummies, Idiot's Guide to Buddhism,* and *Becoming Enlightened*). They need Bibles, such as those we have distributed in (photos left to right) the Philippines, Indonesia, and Haiti.

Buy The Book for someone in a far-off land. We'll deliver it.

- Haitian US\$2.95 New Testament, US\$18.95 Bible
- Indonesian US\$4.50 New Testament, US\$28.50 Bible
- Kurdish US\$4.95 New Testament, US\$13.95 Bible
- Malawi US\$8 Bible
- Nepali US\$11.95 Bible
- Swahili US\$16.95 New Testament
- Tagalog (Philippines) US\$5.25 New Testament, US\$15.95 Bible
- Tibetan US\$25.95 Bible, US\$33.95 New Testament
- Turkish US\$3.50 New Testament, US\$29.95 Bible







#### **SEEDLING BANK:**

Subsistence farmers live off the land, surviving on what they can grow. In places like Haiti, a drought or a hurricane can wipe out an entire harvest. Then there's nothing for a family of eight to eat. We help more than 100 farmers in the mountains of Haiti with their crops. A gift of US\$40 can buy seeds and fertilizer for a growing season.

# Showing compassion in Malawi

Pastor Duncan Nyozani feeds 15 orphans on US\$450 a month. Thirty American dollars per child. But he hungers to do more.

There are many more children to feed and house.

"We used to care for 40 orphans in the past, but we reduced to 15 orphans" because of a lack of funding, said Pastor Duncan of Searchlight Orphan Care in the central Africa country of Malawi. "I still have that compassion of remembering the other 25 orphans who are starving so much with their grandparents at homes."

We share the compassion Pastor Duncan feels to help these children. In James 1:27, the writer tells us, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

That's why Climbing For Christ is introducing **Project 1:27**. This outreach project will focus on caring for orphans in places where others cannot or will not go.

Continued on page 8



#### **SPONSOR A CHILD:**

Jesus has a heart for children. "Jesus called the children to him and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these'" (Luke 18:16). We seek to bring the children of Malawi to their heavenly Father. Our desire is to help these orphans physically and spiritually. Will you consider sponsoring one of these children?

Go to http://www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2860 to meet the orphans of Malawi and learn more about **Project 1:27**.

To help the children, use the envelope in this magazine and send your gift to Climbing For Christ (marked "c/o Project 1:27 Malawi") at P.O. Box 16290, Rochester, NY 14616-0290 USA



"Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys." – Luke 12:33

#### MALAWI, from page 7

Pastor Duncan is a Climbing For Christ member. In January 2010, he will host other C4C members from America when our Mission: Kilimanjaro team visits Malawi after teaching evangelism in Tanzania to Kilimanjaro Chapter guides and porters.

"You will be able to see the orphans (in Searchlight care) and the other orphans in the village," said Pastor Duncan, who lives outside Migowi in the southern part of Malawi. "Migowi is an area having hundreds of orphans, and the problem is getting much worse."

There are nearly 1 million orphans in Malawi, a country of 14.3 million that is among the poorest in the world. The village of Migowi has been described by one travel guide as "just another pleasant, friendly and totally nondescript Malawian town, no more and no less." Migowi is also a "springboard" to some "very off-the-beaten-track explorations" — one being Malawi highpoint Mount Mulanje (9,855 feet/3002 meters).

Climbing For Christ seeks to explore what can be done to help God's children, not the rugged terrain that surrounds them. Our mission is about people, not peaks; service, not summits.

Africa is a continent of orphans. Wars, AIDS, malaria, cholera, and famine helped the number of orphans in Africa increase from 30.9 million in 1990 to 41.5 million in 2000, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). It is projected that there will be 53.1 million under the age of 18 without parents in 2010.

Those numbers are staggering, almost paralyzing. When faced with statistics like this, people often think: "What can I possibly do to help?" The problem seems overwhelming.

As with a mountain climb, however, the solution starts with one step. One child. For US**\$30** a month, one child in Pastor Duncan's care can be fed. And, potentially, some who are no longer in his care can be brought back to the orphanage.

Pastor Duncan, center of photo at right, with orphans near Mount Mulanje. Children, in photo at top of page, giving praise for food about to be received.









"Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life.

...the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man's life is but a breath."

- Psalm 39: 4-5

### Winter on Mount Washington

By Gary Fallesen

We pause on the Tuckerman Ravine Trail several hundred feet below the summit of ice-encased Mount Washington. I suggest that my climbing partners go ahead; "I'll wait here." A day spent in wind-chill of minus-59 and worse has taken its toll on me mentally.

But Kevin Flynn is wiser than me. He has been up this mountain five times in winter. When he applied with a team to climb Denali they asked for his resume. Multiple winter ascents of Mount Washington qualified him for that trip.

Washington, first climbed in winter on Feb. 10, 1862, is a barometer for a climber's hardiness. The mountain has produced some of the world's worst weather: a record 231 mph wind on April 12, 1934; winds of 100 mph or more on one of every three days in January, when the average wind-chill is minus-49. Winters here are equal to the worst conditions reported in Antarctica. These conditions have contributed to the greatest loss of life on any peak in North America.

"I want to get you this summit," Flynn says to me.

Not only does he know me well enough to see that I just need to be coaxed to the top, he realizes the danger of leaving someone on the summit's cone — far above timberline and fully exposed to nature's wrath. We ascend together to the summit, where the sunshine and 65-mile visibility make the minus-69 wind-chill tolerable.

"We were blessed," Gary Smith says in the pack room after we have finished our roundtrip back to the Joe Dodge Lodge at Pinkham Notch.

The day had begun with the weather observatory on the summit recording winds gusting to 114 mph, but with the forecast calling for improving conditions. Constant winds of 75-95 mph were predicted to be "diminishing," which meant down to 45-75 mph. In reality, they ended up decreasing to 35-40 mph. Tame by Mount Washington standards.

Our ascent was a far cry from the same day six years previous. On Jan. 15, 1994, the weather worsened — as predicted — catching an ill-prepared pair of young climbers in a death trap despite the efforts of 11 men from the Mountain Rescue Service.

"I remember the Tinkham-Haas rescue very well indeed," says Nick Yardley, who was the head guide for the International Mountain Climbing School in North Conway, N.H., and the director of the Mountain Rescue Service. "It was one of the coldest days of my life — 85 mph winds, minus-35 (temperature), which puts the wind-chill well below minus-100. We all had frost-nip on the face.

"It was a sad rescue — one over-ambitious kid with an ego leading another to his death."

Derek Tinkham and Jeremy Haas were experienced mountaineers on college break. They were determined to do a winter traverse of the Presidential Range — with Haas setting the pace. Never mind the high winds and extreme cold forecast for that weekend.

After spending one night bivouacked at the northern end of the range, the pair climbed Madison and Adams. Then trouble set in. Tinkham slowed, became unsteady



#### WINTER, from page 9

on his feet, and finally collapsed at the top of Mount Jefferson — more than three miles from the summit of Washington. He was suffering from hypothermia; his body's core temperature dropping with the mercury outdoors. It was now minus-27 with winds in the 80s and gusting to 96 mph. Haas tried to get Tinkham into a sleeping bag, then left him.

It took Haas four hours to reach the weather station on top of Washington. Once inside, his hands horribly frost-bitten because he'd lost his gloves while helping Tinkham, he told the observatory crew about the situation. A call was placed down to the valley. But because of the brutal conditions, a night rescue was deemed impossible. Yardley's team set off at 5 a.m. the next day in weather still too harsh for climbing. Despite being dressed as if on a Himalayan expedition, one rescuer was halted below timberline by cold feet, another pulled up lame after post-holing on Jefferson, and a third had his eyes frozen shut.

"When we found Derek, he had on barely enough clothes for a moderate spring day on the mountain," Yardley says. "We'd been told he'd been left warmly wrapped up—that is the only reason we bothered going out in such conditions. In reality, he wasn't even in his sleeping bag above his knees."

Tinkham had already succumbed to the vicious weather. He was dead at the age of 20.

Yardley was involved in about 20 rescues on Mount Washington from 1987 to '95 — a span during which 10 people died climbing. A native of Scotland, where the weather also demands respect, he has climbed in Alaska, Canada, Nepal and Peru. "I have never been so cold as I have on Washington," he says.

"Cold, wind and lack of visibility ... are the issues on Washington. With the jetstream touching down on Washington, the severe cold and wind is far more severe than people ever expect. Despite the nice words that people write about these situations in the papers afterwards, I'm not sure I can remember any rescue that was a pure accident. In most cases, ego, ignorance or poor judgement was the cause of the situation."

He believes "judgement — or a lack of it — was the main issue" in Tinkham's death.

While members of the Mountain Rescue Service need to remain detached from victims, it is hard not to carry something heavier than a corpse down from the peaks — especially if it is a lost soul.

"My overriding memory from the rescues is that life is so very frail and so easy to lose," Yardley says. "It has really helped me live life to the fullest and appreciate the simplest things in life. Seeing the loss of so much life has made me cherish and seek out and enjoy mine so much more." \[ \]

This story is an excerpt from Gary Fallesen's once and future book, Mountains of Inspiration. He wrote Mount Everest: Confessions of an Amateur Peak Bagger with climbing partner Kevin Flynn.



Weather observation station is encased in ice during winter months on Mount Washington's unforgiving summit.

#### **Mountain Profile**

**Location:** White Mountains, New Hampshire.

**Height:** 6,288 feet/1,916.6 meters (state high point).

First ascent: Darby Field, June 1642. A 19th-century author wrote that Field's climb, 125 years before the start of so-called modern mountaineering (credited to the ascent of Mont Blanc), "is far more remarkable in its way than that of the brave Swiss, since he had to make his way for eighty miles through a wilderness inhabited only by beasts of prey, or by human beings scarcely less savage, before he reached the foot of the great range; while Balmat lived under the very shadow of the monarch of the Alps." In a letter dated June 29, 1642, Maine magistrate Thomas Gorges wrote of Field: "On this mountain, he mett with terrible freesing weather..." It would be 220 years before someone would dare climb Washington in the winter.

**Routes:** There are numerous routes up Mount Washington, but the most traveled trails are the Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail, Crawford Path, and Jewell and Gulfside trails from the west, and the Tuckerman Ravine Trail from the east.

Guidebooks: AMC Guide to Mount Washington and the Presidential Range from AMC Books and the Appalachian Mountain Club's White Mountain Guide. These — along with winter mountaineering experience and common sense — are invaluable.

#### A VIEW, from page 12

Once more the people on the mountains of Kibungan are being robbed of hope.

But our God is a God who is the source of *all* hope. As I pondered what could be done to provide assistance to the people of Kibungan, which Climbing For Christ Philippines considers its main mission field, I read this verse from the Bible:

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isaiah 52:7)

That verse defines for us what truly makes a mountain beautiful. It is not the views from the summit, or the splendor of its landscape, not even the culture of the people who live there. For all of these things cannot provide the hope needed in times of great crisis and emptiness. These things cannot provide the comfort of a hug, the firm reassurance of a handshake, the joy of a smile, or the words of encouragement that can uplift the soul. To God what makes a mountain beautiful is if hope can be found there.

For those of us who know how Christ brought hope to our lives, we enjoy many blessings because of the kindness of other people who cared enough to meet our needs and to share the love of God through His word. It has made our lives beautiful.

The people in Tacadang need help and hope from anyone who is willing. On our very first mission climb to this mountain village we discovered that there is no electricity, the local health worker lacks even the most basic of medicines, many elderly locals complain of goiter problems due to a lack of salt. The small elementary school needs simple school supplies such as pencils, notebooks and teaching materials. Children who walk many hours from their home to school on the rugged mountain paths have no shoes (or sandals) to protect their feet.

On our second mission trip there we brought "slippers" (sandals). The children wore them on their hands, not their feet. When we asked them why, the teachers said that the children did not want to wear out the slippers — they would save them for a special day. That's because they didn't know if they would get new shoes again.

There is no livelihood other than subsistence farming and raising livestock. Tacadang is an isolated place where the people make the most of what they have, and it often is not very much.

But the greatest need of all is for the Gospel to be preached to many more of the people of this mountain.

In February 2010, Climbing for Christ returns on its fourth mission trip to Tacadang. This is part of a



Bamboo backpacks are used by Kankanaey people to transport all that is needed over rugged trails to the remote mountain village of Tacadang in the Philippines.

commitment we made when the Lord opened a door to reach out to the people of this mountain in July of 2008. We see ourselves returning for more mission climbs in the coming years because we have seen the need, we have heard the voices asking for help, and we have come to love the people of Tacadang.

There is so much work to be done in the mountains of Kibungan, so that is why we ask for your support:

- Those who have the time can PRAY for us and our mission climbs:
- Those who are generous enough can **GIVE** financially so that we can bring more blessings to the mountain villages;
- Those who have a desire to see their love of climbing used for God's purposes can GO with us to bring hope to this mountain.

In this way we can make it a truly beautiful mountain. **†** 

Ace Concordia, who joined Climbing For Christ in June 2007, is the coordinator of C4C Philippines. He lives in Metro Manila.



Tacadang children receiving clothing delivered by Climbing For Christ Philippines.

### What makes a mountain beautiful?

#### By Ace Concordia

When I think of past mission climbs to Tacadang in the Philippine province of Kibungan, it always brings back memories of the beauty of its mountains and its people. From the magnificent rock faces of the mountain paths, towering waterfalls, and green fields on its rice terraces, to the smiles and hospitality of the Kankanaey tribe.

These thoughts always arouse in me a heightened anticipation for returning to this awe-inspiring place, where God's power to create beautiful masterpieces of mountains and men is put on display.

But the enemy has always sought to destroy the beauty of God's work. After being hit in October 2009 by two major storms that released a year's worth of rain within weeks, many places in the Philippines suffered from severe flooding, resulting in damage to lives and infrastructure. The province of Kibungan was no exception. Massive landslides rendered the roads leading to the town proper impassable, crops were destroyed, and there was a great shortage in food and medical supplies, according to reports from our friend, Diane Domes.

Continued on page II

12



Climbing For Christ, Inc. P.O. Box 16290 Rochester, N.Y. 14616-0290