

Summits of the Seven Continents Climbed by Women. The first to succeed in climbing to the summits of all seven continents was 54-year-old Texan Richard Bass when he reached the top of Everest in 1985. He completed the "smaller" series, which included Mount Kosciusko, the highest in Australia. Canadian Pat Morrow made his last ascent, Vinson Massif, in 1986 and became the first to complete the "big series," which includes Carstensz Pyramid, the highest point in Australasia. Since then, more than twenty men have completed the achievement. It was not until 1992 that a female, 54-year-old Japanese climber Junko Tabei, scaled the highest point of all seven continents. On June 28, she ascended Carstensz Pyramid (Puncak Jaya). Her first conquest was in 1975, when she climbed Everest. This was followed by Mont Blanc (1979), Kilimanjaro (1980), Aconcagua (1987), McKinley (1988), Elbrus (1989), Vinson Massif (1991) and Carstensz Pyramid (1992). At the time of publication, it is likely that a second woman will have become the second woman to have completed the series. Dr. Christine Janin is now in Argentina, planning to climb her last, Aconcagua.

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Denali National Park and Preserve Mountaineering Summary, 1992. The 1992 climbing season on Mount McKinley was record setting in the number of climbers and mountaineering fatalities. This year marked the most intense period of rescue in the mountain's history. Twenty-two rescue or recovery missions involving 28 climbers were conducted by the Talkeetna ranger staff and volunteers. There were eleven fatalities in 1992, the largest number for any year to date. There have been 75 deaths on McKinley since 1932, and 72 of those have occurred in the last 25 years. Rescue costs incurred by the National Park Service totaled \$206,000, double those for 1991. The military costs associated with the rescues was \$225,345. This brings the total for search and rescue to \$431,345. The National Park Service and the Korean Alpine Federation joined in an effort to reduce the high percentage of South Koreans involved in rescues which have occurred in the last two years. District Ranger J.D. Swed made a nine-day visit in November to Seoul, Korea, meeting with members of alpine and climbing clubs and climbing-school directors. He gave programs on the severity of the McKinley environment, difficulty of ascent and statistics involving Korean climbers. Swed stated that the Korean Alpine Federation is dedicated to educating Korean climbers who wish to attempt McKinley. A long-range plan to improve communication, education and to exchange climbers was proposed. The National Weather service accurately predicted in early May "the worst storm to hit the mountain in ten years." This brought in excess of 60 inches of snow at the 7200-foot Base Camp in a 24-hour period and winds over 110 mph at 14,000

feet! This halted most summit attempts for several weeks and brought about a number of rescues. Both guides and climbers assisted the mountaineering rangers at the 14,200-foot ranger station during these rescues, which were carried out under intense weather conditions. In the ten days from the start of the storm, seven people died and six were rescued. For the second year, the Aerospatile Lama helicopter, piloted by Bill Ramsay, was used for rescues, including a bold rescue of three Koreans at 17,700 feet on the Cassin Ridge. For the first time, short-haul technique was used for rescues when two Americans at 11,000 feet on the East Buttress were extracted. U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook helicopters were used to establish and remove the 14,200-foot ranger station. The 210th Air National Guard and Chinooks from Fort Wainwright assisted in rescue support. 11,070-foot Mount Spurr, 100 miles southwest of McKinley, erupted on June 27, causing glacier landings to be halted temporarily at the 7200-foot Base Camp. Expeditions beginning their climbs were informed of the possibility of walking out if the ash continued to fall on the glaciers, prohibiting landings. In the winter of 1991, data was collected from an automatic censor device placed near 19,000 feet above Denali Pass by the Japanese Alpine Club. This instrument monitored a low temperature of -72.4°F on February 6, 1991. From November 1990 through February 1991, the temperature remained at -60°F or colder for a total of 30 days. The wind-monitoring instrument was destroyed by high winds and those data were lost. The National Park Service conducted four 24-day patrols on Mount McKinley and numerous backcountry and hunting patrols in the park. We continue to staff a ranger station in Talkeetna, where climbers register for their expeditions. Registration is required for all climbs and expeditions on McKinley and Foraker. Commencing in 1994, all climbers will be required to preregister by February 15 of the year they plan to climb. Climbers and backpackers planning trips into other areas are encouraged to register. A strong emphasis is set on maintaining self-sufficiency and on conducting self-evacuations whenever possible. Environmentally sound sanitation procedures are a high priority in keeping the pristine wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve.

Interesting Statistics: In 1992, 1081 climbers of 291 expeditions from 23 countries attempted 10 different routes on McKinley. This is 133 more climbers than in 1991, and the most on record with a total of 19,028 user days. 73% (831) attempted the West Buttress. Americans made up the largest segment with 634 climbers (59%). The rest of the countries represented were Switzerland (68), United Kingdom (58), Germany (56), Japan (44), Korea (40), Canada (37), France (24), Italy (18), Austria (17), Australia (16), Norway (9), Mexico (8), Netherlands (8), Spain (6), Taiwan (6), Sweden (5), Scotland (4), China (4), CIS (3), Finland (2), Slovenia (2) and Argentina (1). [The five new routes done are described in the "Climbs and Expeditions" section.] *Acute Mountain Sickness:* 105 cases (10%) of climbers reported symptoms of AMS. 55 (52%) were mild, 40 (38%) were moderate and 10 (9%) were severe. *Frostbite:* 38 cases (4%) reported frostbite. 21 (55%) were mild, 11 (28%) required physician care and 6 (16%) required hospitalization. *High Altitude Pulmonary Edema:* 12 cases

were reported, of which 9 were treated at the 14,200-foot ranger station with oxygen and advice to descend and 3 required hospitalization. *High Altitude Cerebral Edema*: 4 cases were reported of which 2 were treated on the mountain and advised to descend and 2 required hospitalization.

Accidents: *Frostbite, helicopter evacuation*: On May 6, Mountaineering Ranger Ron Johnson and Student Conservation Aide Keith Nicholson climbed from 11,000 feet to the 14,200-foot camp on the West Buttress of McKinley. The temperature was -15° F and the wind 30+ mph. Nicholson was wearing polypropylene glove liners and shell mittens. He contracted frostbite on his little finger and thumb of his left hand and on all finger tips of the right. A full recovery with no tissue damage has occurred. *Frostbite, AMS, HAPE, HACE, helicopter evacuation*: On April 25, Daryl Hinman, Robert Rockwell and Tom Roseman attempted McKinley from the Muldrow Glacier. Due to cold weather, altitude, high winds, fatigue, pulmonary edema (HAPE) and cerebral edema (HACE) and the loss of supplies, they became incapacitated at 17,500 feet below Denali Pass on the West Buttress side. On May 10, Hinman climbed down to the 14,200-foot ranger station for help. The National Park Service Lama helicopter picked up Ranger Johnson and VIP (Volunteer in the Park) Julie Culberson and flew to 17,200 feet, where they loaded Roseman and Rockwell into the Lama. Both had frostbite while Roseman suffered from pulmonary and cerebral edema. *Fall on headwall, helicopter evacuation*: Also on May 10, Paul Kogelmann and Timothy Hagan fell 500 feet down the headwall from 15,800 feet. Ranger Johnson and Culberson in the Lama landed at 15,200 feet and loaded Hagan into the helicopter, which flew to the 14,200-foot station to off-load Johnson and Culberson and pick up Roseman and Rockwell. The Lama then flew to the 7200-foot Base Camp. Roseman, Rockwell and Hagan were flown by fixed-wing aircraft to Anchorage. *Abandonment by fellow climbers, rescue by NPS ground team*: On May 10, Edwige and Frédéric Sement and Philippe Berthois spent the night at 17,200 feet without a stove. This had been cached at 16,200 feet on the West Buttress. On the afternoon of May 11, F. Sement and Berthois attempted to descend to 16,200 feet for the stove but turned back in the face of high winds and poor visibility. They decided to descend to 14,200 feet via the Rescue Gully and to return that evening to 17,200 feet. Because Mme Sement was too tired to descend, she was left at 17,200 feet, where there were no other parties. Sement and Berthois arrived at 14,200 feet, notified Ranger Johnson that they were too tired to climb back to 17,200 feet and that Mme Sement did not have a stove. A weather forecast predicted a severe storm. Johnson, VIP Matt Culberson and volunteers Mike Wood and Willy Peabody ascended the Rescue Gully. Mme Sement was found in her tent in good condition. The rescue team with Mme Sement descended to 14,200 feet. The expedition was issued a citation for Creating a Hazardous Condition and for making inappropriate decisions which exposed rescuers to life-threatening hazards. This expedition also reimbursed the NPS for rescue costs. *Fall on Cassin Ridge, fatalities, body recovery by helicopter*: On May 10, Italians Giovanni Calcagno and Roberto Piombe arrived at the base of the Cassin Ridge.

They intended to climb and descend the ridge in two or three days. On May 15, the NPS ranger station at 14,200 feet received a report that a body had been seen the day before at the base of the South Face. On May 16, Rangers Jim Phillips and Daryl Miller flew in the Lama to the South Face, where they recovered the body of Piombe. The body was sling-loaded to 7200 feet and flown out by fixed-wing aircraft to Talkeetna. Calcagno's body was located at 15,400 feet on the first rock band on the Cassin Ridge just off route. His body was not recovered.

Fall on South Face, aircraft evacuation: On May 11, Koreans Song Seong-Woo and Lee Seung-Hwan were descending a new route they had nearly completed on the South Face. Due to bad weather, the pair had decided to descend to their Base Camp and wait. While rappelling, Song fell 1000 feet to the bottom of the South Face, on the east fork of the Kahiltna Glacier. Lee saw Song falling past him and assumes that the rappel rope broke. Song was found unconscious with a head injury. Another Korean party assisted in bringing Song to the 7200-foot Base Camp. Song remained semi-conscious, suffering from facial wounds and having respiratory difficulties. The Alaska Air National Guard, hampered by poor weather, arrived at 7200 feet on May 13 and evacuated Song to Anchorage. He remained hospitalized for three weeks, where he slowly regained consciousness.

Frostbite, AMS, helicopter evacuation: On April 28, three Koreans flew in to climb the Cassin Ridge. They started with 15 days of food. By May 9, they had reached their high camp at 17,700 feet. They planned a summit attempt the next day, but strong winds made them decide to construct a snow cave. While working on that, their tent blew away with most of their food, fuel, clothing and climbing gear. To wait out the weather, for over a week they rationed themselves to one cup of rice and a quart of water a day. The weather finally improved, but they were too weak to continue in the cold and wind. The leader, Kang Hyun-Doo, had frostbitten fingers and AMS. They began distress calls, saying they had no food or fuel and that their leader had AMS. The weather remained poor and it was not until two P.M. on May 17 that the Lama could get to the 7200-foot Base Camp then to attempt an airdrop at 17,700 feet. The helicopter experienced extreme down-drafts and was forced back. When the winds subsided, the Lama departed with Ranger Jim Phillips aboard. The Lama landed and picked up one Korean and flew him to 14,200 feet, returning to pick up the climbers, one at a time. An Army Chinook delivered them to 7200 feet and a Pavehawk flew them to Anchorage. Kang suffered frostbite on all fingers and three toes. The other members had minor frostbite.

Crevasse fall, aircraft evacuation: On May 17, in a whiteout Koreans Jang Duk-Sang, Kang Seong-Yu and Seo Dong-Choon at 15,000 feet on the West Buttress were preparing a campsite on a snow bridge, which suddenly collapsed. Kang and Seo fell 60 feet into the crevasse. Jang was uninjured and able to descend to 14,200 feet and notify Ranger Johnson. VIPs Matt and Julie Culberson and volunteers Jim Wickwire and John Roskelley were sent to the site. They found that the collapsed snow bridge had exposed a crevasse 40 feet wide, 200 feet long and 60 feet deep. They saw Kang in the bottom of it, buried chest-deep. Matt Culberson and Roskelley rappelled and dug Kang out. They

also located Seo. Brian Okonek and Bruce Blatchley arrived with a sled litter. Seo was worked free and extricated from the crevasse. He was conscious, but hypothermic with suspected internal injuries, injuries to his lumbar spine and pelvis and lacerations to his tongue. He was lowered to 14,200 feet. Kang was uninjured. On May 18, a break in the weather allowed Seo to be flown to 7200 feet and to be transferred to a helicopter and flown to Anchorage. *HACE/HAPE fatality at 14,200 feet:* On May 17, a Swiss expedition was camped at 14,200 feet on the West Buttress. The expedition leader, Roli Merz, notified Ranger Johnson that a member was having difficulty breathing. Johnson and Matt Culberson were led to Alex von Bergen's tent. Von Bergen was cyanotic and his pupils were fixed and dilated. Johnson notified Dr. Mike Young, who arrived at the scene. CPR was initiated by Matt and Julie Culberson after a pulse was not detected. Von Bergen remained pulseless and unresponsive and was pronounced dead. The body was removed from 14,200 feet by the Lama and flown to Talkeetna. An autopsy determined that von Bergen had died from pulmonary and cerebral edema. *Fall on Orient Express, three fatalities, bodies removed by helicopter:* At midday on May 20, Koreans Yung Soo-Yang, Hong Sung-Tak and Jin Seong-Jong were killed when descending the Orient Express route. They had started their ascent on May 3 and in ten days had ascended to 14,000 feet. From May 14 to 17, strong winds kept them tent-bound. The weather improved on the 17th and they ascended to 16,200 feet. On May 20, the Culbersons discovered their bodies at 15,800 feet on the Orient Express. Their bodies were recovered by helicopter. *Crevasse fall, fatality, helicopter evacuation:* On May 4, Terrance "Mugs" Stump and his clients Nelson Max and Robert Hoffman began climbing the Japanese Ramp on the South Buttress. On May 20, Stump and Max reached the summit via the Southeast Spur in extremely adverse weather. Max suffered frostbitten feet on the descent. On May 21, Stump and his clients began the descent from the high camp at 16,000 feet on the ramp. First on the rope was Hoffman, followed by Max with Stump at the end. They came to a large crevasse. Hoffman stopped near the edge of it, unsure how to proceed. Stump approached from uphill, passing Max and Hoffman. He was standing on the uphill lip of the crevasse when they heard a crack and Stump suddenly disappeared into the crevasse, pulling on fifteen feet of slack rope between him and Max. Max attempted to self-arrest and was pulled about 20 feet before stopping. The rope between him and Stump went slack. Feeling uneasy on the uphill side of the crevasse, Max cut the rope and tied it to a ski pole. They traversed around and approached from below. Max rappelled into the crevasse but was unable to locate Stump. He described the debris as a large volume of very hard blocks of dense snow and blue ice. The crevasse was at least 60 feet deeper from the bottom of the large blocks wedged into it. Because of the perceived danger, their condition, the weather and the low probability of survival, Max and Hoffman abandoned their efforts to recover Stump. On May 21, another expedition heard distress calls from Max and Hoffman and got a message to the National Park Service. The pair suffered frostbite and were assisted to 11,400 feet. The Lama transported them to 7200 feet and thence they were flown by fixed-wing aircraft

to Anchorage, where Max was hospitalized with frostbite on both feet. The Lama returned to the accident site with Rangers aboard. The crevasse was wedged with big chunks of snow and blue ice, as Max had described it. Because the accident had occurred 25 hours earlier and the exposure of the rescuers to excessive hazards, a recovery effort was not initiated. *Fall above Denali Pass, helicopter evacuation:* On May 28, Germans Gerhard Seibert and Christoph Mach ascended the upper West Rib. They decided not to make a summit attempt and to descend the West Buttress route. As they descended to Denali Pass, Mach was ahead when Seibert fell. Seibert suffered head lacerations and was unconscious. Mach set up a tent and began to call for help on their CB radio. On May 29, Ranger Daryl Miller and VIPs Billy Shott, Mike Abbott and Dr. Colin Grissom left 14,200 feet and reached the climbers at 19,400 feet. VIP Andy Lapkass had joined them at 17,200 feet. Seibert had regained consciousness but had double vision. Mach had a frostbitten left hand. The rescue team lowered the two climbers to 17,200 feet, where the Lama landed and took them to 7200 feet. A 210th Air National Guard Pavehawk flew them to Anchorage. *Fall on the Messner Couloir, four fatalities, body recovery by helicopter.* On May 31, Canadians Alain and Christian Proulx, Alain Potvin and Maurice Grandchamp fell about 3000 feet to their deaths from 19,300 feet in the Messner Couloir. They had left the 17,200-foot camp on May 30. They were not seen again until the next evening as they descended the summit ridge at 20,000 feet. The weather was deteriorating. Then the weather cleared and a search plane with Ranger Roger Robinson aboard took off. Robinson saw the four traversing between 19,200 and 19,300 feet on the Messner Couloir. Robinson notified Ranger Miller at 14,200 feet, who could view them with binoculars. Minutes later, the climber at the back of the rope fell, dragging the rest of them down some 3000 feet over the rock bands and through the hourglass of the couloir. They stopped above an icefall at 15,800 feet. A rescue team set out, but visibility was down to 25 feet and the snow unstable. On June 1, the visibility had improved and the rescue team reached the accident site. The Lama recovered the bodies using a grappling hook. *Avalanche on East Buttress, short-haul by helicopter:* On June 6, Bob Archbold and Allen Sanderson ascended from their 11,000-foot camp on the East Buttress. They finally decided to descend because Archbold was not comfortable with the route. While descending, they saw an icefall avalanche start at about 13,000 feet. This struck them and carried them down. Sanderson was uninjured and observed the slack rope below him reaching into a crevasse. Archbold had been carried 150 feet down and 60 feet into a crevasse. He managed to free himself and his pack and then jumar out of the crevasse. He had a bad head wound and lower leg pain. They descended to their 11,000-foot camp. Sanderson was able to contact a pilot with his CB radio. The NPS responded in the Lama and performed the first short-haul extraction to a staging area on the Ruth Glacier. It actually took less than three minutes from the 11,000-foot camp to the Mountain House on the Ruth. Both climbers were flown to an Anchorage hospital. *Avalanche on Mount Foraker, two fatalities, one self-evacuation:* [This is covered in the "Climbs and Expeditions" section.]

**DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE
1992 MOUNTAINEERING SUMMARY**

	<i>Expeditions</i>	<i>Climbers</i>	<i>Successful Climbers</i>
<i>Mount McKinley</i>			
West Buttress	213	831	429
Cassin Ridge	23	56	17
East Buttress	2	8	0
Muldrow Glacier	3	18	0
Muldrow Traverse	3	8	2
South Buttress	2	8	4
West Buttress Traverse	8	38	16
West Rib	31	90	47
Southwest Face	5	20	0
Pioneer Ridge	1	4	0
	291	1081	515
<i>Mount Foraker</i>	8	26	2
<i>Mount Hunter</i>	21	51	4
<i>Mount Huntington</i>	3	8	2
<i>Moose's Tooth</i>	8	21	2

Administrative Notes: A special recognition must be made to the VIPs and others who assisted in search-and-rescue missions. A portable radio repeater was once again installed in the Ramparts, west of the lower Kahiltna Glacier. This was an integral part of communications between the Talkeetna Ranger Station and the mountaineering patrols. For more information or to request mountaineering information and/or registration forms, please contact the Talkeetna Ranger Station, PO Box 588, Talkeetna, Alaska 99676. Telephone: 907- 733-2231.

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McKinley West Buttress Variant. On June 11, Bruce Normand and I climbed a new variant on the right side of the southwest face of the Direct West Buttress. It involved twenty belayed pitches of water ice of Alpine Grade III. We completed the climb in 15 hours round-trip from the 14,200-foot camp on the West Buttress.

JACK TACKLE