

2000 MOUNTAINEERING SUMMARY

Denali National Park and Preserve



News from Mt. McKinley

The 2000 climbing season at Denali National Park & Preserve was one of the most tragic and one of the most memorable seasons in recent history. The terrible plane crash that happened June 19th stunned the Denali National Park staff, the town of Talkeetna, the state of Alaska and the entire National Park Service. The crash killed mountaineering ranger Cale Shaffer, volunteer patrol members Brian Reagan and Adam Kolff, and pilot Don Bowers. This catastrophic accident happened during the height of the season requiring the South District staff to continue working during this heartbreaking time.

It was the last season for Annie Duquette, one of the most legendary persons to work on the mountain, who after 10 years finally decided to retire. As Kahiltna basecamp manager, Duquette was Denali's ambassador to pilots, climbers, and visitors.

For the second year in a row there were no fatalities on Denali, although well known climber, Seth Shaw, was killed on the Ruth Glacier when an ice serac collapsed on him.

It was the first year that the National Park Service initiated a comprehensive trash and human waste management program on Denali. Also, the mountaineering orientation program was revised with a greater emphasis on sanitation and resource management. It was the first year of modifying the NPS mountain patrol schedules to have two rangers at the 14,200-foot camp. This enabled the rangers to have increased presence and to better monitor the mountain at both the 17,200-foot high camp and the 14,200-foot camp.

There were three winter attempts on Denali, each unique because of the routes attempted: the American Direct, the West Rib, and the Muldrow Glacier. The winter on Denali turned back all of the attempts, but a pair of Canadian climbers on the West Rib reached the 19,500-foot level before descending because of the severe cold.

The 322 expeditions that attempted Denali this year met with milder weather conditions overall than last season allowing more opportunities to attempt the summit from high camp. Of the 1,209 climbers, the weather permitted 52 percent of the climbers to reach the summit as compared to 43 percent last year.

International climbers comprised 40% or 470 of the total number of climbers on Mt. McKinley this year. Climbers came from 41 different countries and the top 5 countries represented were: the United States (739), Canada (62), United Kingdom (55), France (38) and Spain (33).

This year, the average age of mountaineers on Denali was 34. Women climbers made up 10 percent of the total number of climbers, with 43 percent reaching the summit. Guided climbers comprised almost 18 percent of total climbers.

As in most years past, climbs made in the milder month of June were more successful in reaching the summit than those in May. Of those parties that both started and finished their climbs in June, 60% reached the top; the comparative statistic for May was 37%.

In 2001, our goal will be to instill a stronger climber commitment to "Leave No Trace" ethics.

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• **The Annual Mountaineering Summary is created by the Talkeetna Ranger Staff to inform mountaineers about the activities on Mt. McKinley during the climbing season.**

Cleaning Up Mt. McKinley

There is evidence of abandoned equipment and disposal of trash on the mountain from the earliest expeditions to Mt. McKinley.

“When the mercurial barometer had been read the tent was thrown down and abandoned. The tent-pole was used for a moment as a flagstaff... Then it was put to its permanent use... planted on one of the little snow turrets of the summit.”

--- From Hudson Stuck’s
1913 ascent
The Ascent of Denali

From this historic context it should come as no surprise that trash continues to be a problem on Mt. McKinley. It is an unfortunate reality that for much of the history of mountaineering it was considered an accepted and necessary part of expeditionary climbing to leave behind gear and trash in the mountains. In the early 70s nearly 300 climbers a year were spending three weeks on the mountain. Most of these people left their garbage behind on the mountain and dug pit toilets for their feces on the glacier. In the camps above 16,000-feet, human waste was deposited among small rock outcrops. Attempts were made by the National Park Service (NPS) and private organizations to cleanup some of this debris and to educate climbers about proper human waste disposal.

In 1977, the Park Service initiated a ‘climb clean’ policy by requiring climbers to pack out all gear, refuse and fixed line. A pit toilet was also established at the 7,200-foot basecamp. Seven hundred climbers a year attempted ascents on Mt. McKinley by 1980, and the Park Service had taken a passive approach to managing sanitation concerns primarily through education and orientation before each expedition’s departure. In 1982, a pit toilet was placed at the 14,200-foot camp. Two years later, all climbers were required to deposit their feces into crevasses. Twenty-one day ranger patrols became common practice, which helped with enforcement. By 1989 a toilet was placed at 17,200-feet using a removable box that would be dumped in a crevasse. In 1995, the Park Service’s booklet ‘Mountaineering’ was made available in eight languages. This booklet provided educational information to the international climbing community on clean climbing ethics.

Even with all of these concerted efforts, a significant amount of garbage was still being left on the mountain and improper disposal of feces at the camps continued. In 1997, one mountaineering patrol cleaned up more than 700 pounds of garbage from the 14,200-foot camp alone. Then, in 1998, a college student instituted a simple study on one-gallon fuel cans. This study found that 30% of the expeditions left one or more fuel cans on the mountain. From this information, the NPS initiated a mandatory return system for fuel cans and found a 90% compliance rate with the climbers surveyed in 1999.

Because of the success in the fuel can monitoring program, the NPS began a pilot study to determine the amount of trash generated per person per user day that should be returned by a climbing party. A secondary objective was to determine if there was a correlation between the weight of food and packaging efficiency of each expedition to the amount of trash ultimately produced. A third objective was to track the return rate of fuel containers. The final objective was to study the practicality of an expedition removing all of its human waste from the mountain.



*NPS staff members weighing trash at Kahiltna Basecamp
(NPS Photo)*

CLEANING UP MT. MCKINLEY*Continued from page 2***Projects implemented this season**

To accomplish the trash monitoring objectives, blue plastic bags were issued for garbage and clear bags for human waste. All blue bags were returned and weighed at basecamp while the clear bags were thrown into crevasses with the group's human waste. Clear bags were chosen for human waste disposal so that rangers and other climbers could see that garbage was not illegally tossed into crevasses. The number of the expedition was written on both the blue and clear bags incorporating the same numerical system used on the fuel cans in the 1999 study. This mandatory weighing and numbering system made climbers more accountable for their garbage and human waste. Data on food weight was collected prior to an expeditions departure and all of their trash was weighed upon return.

On the human waste study, Park Ranger Roger Robinson's patrol used a toilet system of sturdy plas-

tic boxes devised for river travel and his patrol removed all of their human waste from the mountain. Rangers observed that one of the major benefits of these studies was that trash return rates improved simply because of the increased attention paid to resource management by the National Park Service. Also, rangers reported a significant decrease in garbage found in the popular camps and Denali appeared to be much cleaner than in years past.

This project provided valuable baseline information upon which to build an education and enforcement program in future seasons. It established a framework that should provide accurate results in the coming years, but most importantly, it has also sent a clear message that the NPS is working hard to fulfill its mission to protect park resources by appropriately managing current uses.



Trash in transit (NPS Photo)

South District Staff and Volunteers – 2000

Special thanks to Punky Moore for all her hard work organizing the information and completing the summary before her departure to a new job with the US Forest Service in Colorado. Punky has been the lead in implementing the climbing registration program and operating the front desk for the past 6 years.

Acting South District Ranger
Acting Lead Mountaineering Ranger
Administrative Technician
Mountaineering Rangers

Helicopter Manager
Helicopter Pilots

Helicopter Mechanic
Lead Visitor Use Assistant
Visitor Use Assistants

Interpretive Rangers

SCA Interpretive Volunteer
Editors

Mountaineering Volunteers

Daryl Miller
Roger Robinson
Miriam Valentine
Kevin Moore
Joe Reichert
Meg Perdue
Gordy Kito
Scott Metcalfe
Cale Shaffer
Dave Kreutzer
Jim Hood
Carl Cotton
Ray Touzeau
Punky Moore
Maureen McLaughlin
Barbara Swanson
Maureen Swed
Nancy Juergens
Elaine Sutton
Erin Babcock
Punky Moore
Roger Robinson
Joel Geisendorfer
Jay Patterson
Lisa Osse
Jim Osse
Adam Kolff
Brian Reagan
Mario Romero*
Karl Grugel*
John Evans
Andy Adamski
Lance Taysom
Kevin Smith
George Rodway
Jay Mathers
Joseph Conroy*
Martin Kimble*
J. Denny Gignoux
Pete Athans
Howard Donner
Elizabeth Green
Mike Moxness
Josie Garton
Karen Hilton
John Loomis*
David Shuman*



*Staff-2000 Left to right top: Maureen M, Punky M, Dave K, Barbara S, Gordy K, Meg P, Daryl M, Dan V, Roger R
Bottom row: Miriam V, Scooter M, Kevin M, Cale S
(NPS Photo)*

* Denotes Alaska Air National Guard 210th Pararescuemen

Department of Interior Valor Award

On October 30 in Washington, D.C. former Denali Mountaineering Ranger Billy Shott received the Department of Interior's Valor Award for two life saving rescues in 1999. Shott exhibited the highest standards in mountaineering for safety, self-sufficiency, resource protection and assistance to fellow climbers during these rescues.

The first rescue occurred on May 21, near Denali Pass where a climber was found suffering from a broken leg and severe frostbite. In one of the more remarkable rescues ever accomplished on Mount McKinley, Ranger Shott performed a short-haul rescue mission from the 7,200-foot base camp to 17,500-foot while suspended 100 feet beneath a high altitude Lama Helicopter piloted by Jim Hood.

The second life saving rescue occurred on May 23, when a climber fell 200 feet on Thunder Mountain, a 11,300-foot satellite peak of Mt. Hunter in the Alaska Range. The climber broke both his ankles and legs and was stuck 2,500 feet above a glacier in a remote area of Denali National Park. Due to the climber's

precarious position, a decision was made to short-haul Shott to the site to extract the climber. He had to ascend 60 degree ice to reach the victim. In the final stages of the short-haul mission, Shott lost communication with the helicopter and had to resort to hand signals.

Shott's exceptional accomplishments earned him the highest level of respect and gratitude of his fellow rangers, the climbers' and their families and friends.



Billy Shott and family at awards ceremony

Shott Family

A Decade of Commitment

Fond memories were shared at a recent reception to honor the retirement of Annie Duquette as Denali's basecamp manager. Duquette, fondly known in the Alaskan climbing community as Basecamp Annie, served from 1991 to 2000 as the Kahiltna Glacier's air traffic controller, weather reporter, welcome wagon, visitor information desk, and multi-agency communications link. Acting South District Ranger Daryl Miller referred to Duquette as the climbers' "guardian angel".

While not an employee of the National Park Service (she is an employee of the collective air taxi concessions that fly in and out of the Kahiltna basecamp), Duquette recently received the agency's coveted "Arrowhead" award for her 10 years of dedicated service to the Denali mountaineering community. Denali National Park Superintendent Stephen P. Martin presented Duquette with the honor-

ary plaque at a ceremony at the Talkeetna Ranger Station on October 26, 2000.

Duquette's energy, commitment, organizational skills, and personal devotion to the climbers and pilots of the Alaska Range will always be remembered by the staff at Denali Park.



Annie Duquette and Supt. Stephen P. Martin
NPS photo

DENALI PRO

The Denali Pro lapel pin was presented this season to over 70 individuals. The Pro Pin recognizes climbers, mountain guides, pilots, and volunteers who selflessly assisted our mountain operations whether on the mountain or in Talkeetna.

The mountaineering rangers nominate a climber or an expedition out of these pin recipients to be given the annual Denali Pro Award. This award reflects the highest standards in the sport for safety, self-sufficiency, assisting other mountaineers, and “no impact” expeditions. For three years, the National Park Service and its partner, Pigeon Mountain Industries (PMI), a climbing equipment manufacturer, have presented this award and the lapel pins.

The recipients of the 2000-year Pro Pin award are John Mislow and Andrew Swanson of the Chicago West Rib expedition. Mislow and Swanson assisted several expeditions which were having difficulties. They built camps and retrieved caches for these expeditions. In addition, they assisted the National Park Service with several jobs that resulted in better visitor protection. Mislow and Swanson wanded a route up the West Rib cutoff route. Wanding the trail is an important mission because the trail aids climbers in finding their way from the West Rib route to the 14,200-foot basin during poor weather.

During the 14,200-foot camp insertion in April, a cargo net was accidentally dropped

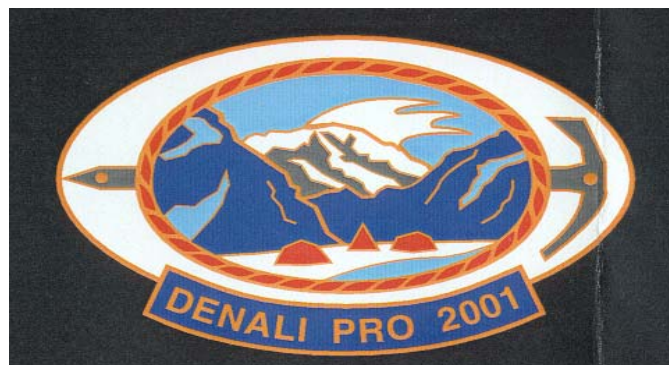
from 50 feet in the air. This accident posed a problem for the mountaineering rangers regarding storage of supplies, and more pressingly, the ability to get the damaged equipment functioning. Mislow and Swanson spent a day building an igloo that was used to store the supplies. They also assisted the NPS in wiring the electrical system for the 14,200-foot ranger camp that is used to provide communications.

While Mislow and Swanson were climbing they made an excellent attempt on the West Rib route reaching the high camp. They waited patiently for improved weather but were eventually forced to abandon the summit. They demonstrated good judgment and risk assessment.

During the May patrol the National Park Service responded to incidents involving several ill-prepared expeditions that put them in jeopardy. The National Park Service also responded to an accident where improper climbing technique was the cause. These incidents along with disputes between expeditions about camping etiquette, skiing over another’s climbing rope, and trash violations made the conduct of Mislow and Swanson exceptionally refreshing.

Although Mislow and Swanson did not participate in any rescues, their good humor, selfless behavior and respect for the mountain earned them this award.

Proposed Design for the 2001 Denali Pro Pin



Design by Anthony Marshall, a climber from Ontario, Canada

NEW ROUTES AND NOTABLE ASCENTS

- **Denali's Czech Direct:** Kevin Mahoney and Ben Gilmore made the second ascent of the route. Scott Backes, Steve House, and Mark Twight made the third ascent, utilizing the fast and bold style that distinguishes them in the alpine arena.
- **Mt. Hunter's North Buttress:** Julian Cartwright and Ian Parnell completed a new route called "The Knowledge". The climb is rated WI6, M5+, 5.7, A3.
- **Mt. Foraker's Infinite Spur:** Barry Blanchard and Carl Tobin made the third ascent of the Spur with Glen Deal and Gren Hinton hot on their heels for the fourth ascent.
- **Little Switzerland area:** British climber's Brian Davison, Lindsay Griffin, and Brian Griffiths made a total of 12 probable first ascents of unclimbed peaks, as well as two new routes on other mountains in the area.
- **Mt. Huntington's West Face:** Brad Grohusky, Mike Gruber, John Lohuis, Mark Thompson, and Rod Willard climbed a 1,500-foot wall route rated 5.8 A3+.
- **Mt. Huntington's West Face:** Joe Puryear and Mark Westman climbed a couloir to make a new variant to meet up with the Harvard route.
- **London Tower's West Face:** Kelly Cordes and Scott DeCapio climbed a couloir naming it "The Trailer Park" and rating it WI6, M6+.
- **Mt Johnson:** Seth Shaw and Tim Wagner climbed a new route in a snow gully in the middle of the east face.
- **Moose's Tooth:** Steve House, Kevin Mahoney and Ben Gilmore climbed a new 21-pitch route on the SE face of the Moose's Tooth

Routes	Number of expeditions	Number of climbers	Number of expeditions that summit	Number of climbers that summit
Cassin Ridge	7	15	4	9
Czech Direct	2	5	2	5
Haston Scott	1	1	0	0
Messner Couloir	3	12	3	7
Muldrow Glacier	5	22	1	11
North West Buttress	1	3	0	0
Reality Ridge	1	1	1	1
West Buttress	280	1048	169	556
West Buttress Traverse	8	39	5	24
West Rib	11	31	1	4
Upper West Rib	13	32	8	16
TOTALS	332	1209	194	633

Rescue Summary

This year, there were thirteen mountaineering related search and rescue missions in Denali National Park and Preserve. Costs incurred by the National Park Service (NPS) for these rescues were \$73,137 and the costs to the Military were \$158,047. The following are brief descriptions of the rescues performed this season. For more detailed information refer to Accidents in North American Mountaineering-2001, published by the American Alpine Club.

HAPE, On May 12th, a Czechoslovakian climber was evacuated by helicopter from the 14,200-foot ranger camp suffering from High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE). The climber, along with other members of his expedition, had made a two-day ascent from the 7,200-foot basecamp to the 14,200-foot level on the West Buttress. Because of the rapid ascent, the climber's condition over two days at the higher elevation progressed from a mild cough to pulmonary edema. He received medical care at the ranger camp and was evacuated off the mountain where he recovered in a Palmer hospital. *It is suggested that mountaineers ascend at a rate of 1,000 feet per day above 10,000 feet so that they can properly acclimatize.*

FALL, On May 16th, an Austrian climber fell 800 feet below Denali Pass while descending unroped on the West Buttress route. The climber had been using ski poles, which are not effective for arresting a fall. NPS Ranger Kevin Moore and several NPS volunteers witnessed the fall from their position at 17,200 feet and immediately responded to the scene. They assessed the climber's condition and stabilized him for a helicopter evacuation. Moore short-hauled the climber from the scene at 17,000 feet to the 7,200-foot basecamp (9 miles). The climber was then transported to a hospital in Anchorage where he recovered.

SERAC COLLAPSE, RUTH GLACIER, On May 25th, an American climber was killed in a serac fall near the base of the 8,400 foot Mt. Johnson. The American, along with his climbing partner, had hiked up to the lower eastern flank of the mountain. They were free ice climbing and taking photographs within a large ice cave when a section of the ice collapsed and buried the American climber. His partner suffered a leg fracture during the event but was able to extricate himself and report the accident to climbers in the area. He was later flown off and received medical treatment. NPS rangers responded to the scene but concluded that the area was too unstable to initiate a ground search or body recovery. The American climber's remains are buried underneath an estimated 20-30 feet of large ice boulders.

HAPE, On May 27th, two American climbers who were members in separate guided expeditions, experienced symptoms of High Altitude Pulmonary Edema. Both climbers were evacuated via helicopter from the 17,200-foot high camp. They were both transported to a hospital in Anchorage where they recovered.

AVALANCHE, MT. FORAKER, On May 27th, an American expedition climbing the Infinite Spur of Mt. Foraker witnessed an avalanche that may have buried an American/Australian team climbing below them. On the 28th, they informed the NPS that the pair were missing and feared dead. The NPS conducted an aerial reconnaissance of the avalanche debris and did not find any evidence of the climbers. Later that night the expedition reported seeing the American/Australian climbing team above the couloir, and on May 29th, NPS rangers confirmed that they were uninjured and had cleared the avalanche site. Both expeditions continued their climbs without incident.

HACE, On May 29th, an American climber descending solo near Denali Pass became disoriented due to High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and was assisted down to the 17,200-foot camp. Later that same day, the other two members in his party had descended with the group's tent and stove. The sick climber was provided shelter that night at 17,200 feet, then escorted down the ridge the following day where Ranger Gordy Kito and NPS Volunteers assisted the climber to the 14,200-foot camp. *Because of a breakdown in group dynamics this near tragedy had to be prevented by fellow mountaineers.*

HAPE, On May 30th, an American climber was diagnosed with severe Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema at the 17,200-foot camp. A few hours later he was assisted by his climbing partner and other climbers down to the 14,200-foot camp where he recovered. *Unlike the previous incident, here was a good example of early recognition and a quick descent with the cooperation of expedition members and other climbers.*

Rescue Summary

RESPIRATORY DISTRESS, On June 2nd, an American was reportedly suffering from respiratory distress above Windy Corner. NPS volunteers and National Air Guardsmen lowered the victim to a landing zone where he was evacuated by Lama helicopter from the 13,500-foot level. He recovered in an Anchorage hospital. *This climber may have used poor judgment in attempting the climb with a pre-existing respiratory condition.*

HAPE, On June 2nd, a Canadian climber was diagnosed with High Altitude Pulmonary Edema at the 17,200-foot camp. She was assisted down to the 14,200-foot camp by her climbing partner, NPS Ranger Joe Reichert and NPS volunteers. She made a complete recovery at 14,200 feet.

FALL, On June 8th, an Italian climber was evacuated by helicopter from the 14,200-foot camp on Mt. McKinley due to a disabling ankle injury. The Italian was injured during his descent from the summit of Mt. McKinley on June 3rd. Inclement weather prevented an evacuation until the 8th where he was treated in Talkeetna. *This was a good example of an expedition assisting one of it's own members off the upper mountain.*

FALLING ICE, RUTH GLACIER, On June 8th, an American climber was injured by icefall while climbing on Mt. Johnson. He was transported by fixed wing to Talkeetna, where NPS personnel assisted him with transport to a local clinic for medical care.

HAPE, On June 9th, an American climber reported symptoms of High Altitude Pulmonary Edema to the rangers at the 14,200-foot camp on Mt. McKinley. He was put on oxygen and he was able to descend with NPS assistance to the 11,000-foot level where his condition improved.

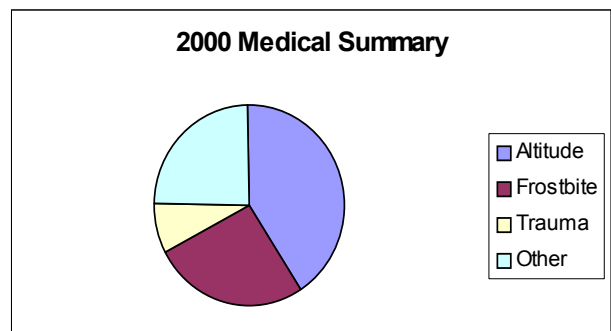
ABDOMINAL DISTRESS, On June 9th, a climber from Hong Kong collapsed from abdominal distress at the 16,700-foot level of the West Buttress. Severe pain rendered the climber immobile. The climber was lowered to the 14,200-foot level by a team led by Ranger Joe Reichert. The climber's condition improved with rest and he was able to descend without assistance. *This incident was caused by a pre-existing condition that the climber had not disclosed to his team members, placing all involved personnel in harm's way.*

FALL, On June 10th, a Russian climber was descending un-rope from Denali Pass using only ski poles when he stumbled at the 17,400-foot level and fell 400 feet. The climber sustained numerous broken ribs and was stabilized at the 17,200-foot high camp. On June 12th, a large rescue team led by Ranger Joe Reichert lowered him to the 14,200-foot camp where he was evacuated by military Chinook helicopter. He was treated at a hospital in Anchorage. *The traverse down from Denali Pass has been the location for more accidents than any other place on the mountain.*

AMS, On June 25th, a solo American climber was reported to be having difficulty descending along the traverse from Denali Pass back to the 17,200-foot camp. NPS volunteers assisted him down to the 17,200-foot camp where he continued the descent on his own the following day.

MEDICAL SUMMARY

A total of 88 patients were treated for medical reasons this year on Mt. McKinley. There were 48 international climbers treated and 40 American climbers treated. The busiest period of medical activity was during the week of May 28 through June 3. The adjoining chart shows that altitude sickness played a major role in the medical problems that climbers experienced this season.



The Lost Patrol

On June 19, 2000, four friends were lost in a plane crash in Denali National Park & Preserve. In turbulent weather, a Hudson Air Service Cessna 185 aircraft piloted by Don Bowers, crashed near the Yentna Glacier. Killed in the crash were National Park Service Ranger Cale Shaffer, National Park Service volunteers Adam Kolff and Brian Reagan, and Don Bowers. Cale, Adam and Brian were flying to the 7,200-foot basecamp of Mt. McKinley to begin the last ranger patrol at that camp for the 2000-climbing season. The plane turned around due to deteriorating weather and the wreckage was found the following day. On June 25, over 500 friends and family members came together in Talkeetna to celebrate the lives of these four special people who will be remembered for their contribution to the National Park Service, their willingness to help others and for their love of the outdoors and the mountains. The lasting legacy of these men will be the love and passion for the mountains that inspired them in their work and personal lives.



Cale Shaffer, 25, was born in State College, Pennsylvania on July 24, 1974. He loved outdoor activities such as bicycling, rock climbing, caving and mountaineering. During summers, he worked as a counselor and taught outdoor adventure and wilderness skills. Cale was known for his dedication to helping others. While living in Arizona, he served as Assistant Program Director of the Apache County Probation Search and Rescue Program where he taught search and rescue operations to community members. He worked for the National Park Service in Grand Canyon from 1997 to 1999 performing search and rescue operations and providing emergency medical assistance. In 1999, he worked for Denali National Park at Wonder Lake as a Park Ranger and Emergency Medical Technician. In February 2000, Cale was hired to work in Talkeetna as a Mountaineering Ranger on Mt. McKinley. Prior to the accident, he had spent 30 days in May and June on Mt. McKinley providing climber education and rescue services. Cale will be remembered for his ability to look at the good in life, no matter the circumstances, his capacity to put the needs of others first and his commitment to the protection of the park visitor.

Brian Reagan, 27, was born July 16, 1972 in McHenry, Illinois. He graduated from high school and completed two years at Glendale Community College in Glendale, Arizona. He worked for a concessionaire in Denali Park in 1993, 1995, and 1997. In 1998, he moved to Anchorage and worked for the Alaska Natural History Association. He enjoyed mountain climbing and hiking. Brian climbed Mt. McKinley in 1999, reaching the summit of the mountain on June 12th. Brian attended an NPS slideshow on mountaineering in Anchorage last winter, which sparked his interest in volunteering for a patrol. He was excited to be a part of Cale's mountaineering patrol on Mt. McKinley, sharing his enthusiasm freely with all of the staff at the Talkeetna Ranger Station. His parents said, "Brian will be remembered for his love of God, God's creation, his family and his numerous friends."



Photo by Jeff Graham

Adam Kolff, 27, was born in Seattle on December 7, 1972. He graduated from Garfield High School in Seattle, attended Whittman College for a year and then spent several years in South America. He studied at the School for International Training in Brattleborough, Vermont before he returned to Peru to work for The Mountain Institute, a non-profit organization that fosters the advancement of mountain cultures and the preservation of mountain environments. He completed his master's thesis at the University of Colorado on the preservation of the Andean mountains and the indigenous people who live there. Adam and his girlfriend were going to settle in Alaska so that he could pursue his passion for mountains and nature conservation. Adam's parents said, "Adam will be remembered for the way he loved life, nature and other people."



Kolff Family photo



Don Bowers, 52, was born April 1, 1948 in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He was valedictorian of his high school graduating class. He went on to graduate from the United States Air Force Academy and obtained a master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Ohio State University. Don was a C-130 Hercules pilot, retiring from the Air Force as a Colonel in 1994. After he retired, he continued his education, earning a Master of Arts degree in teaching and an elementary teaching certificate. Don wrote several articles and books on aviation including, "Flying to Alaska" and "The Alaskan Airmen's Association Logbook for Alaska, Northwest Canada and Russia." He caught the dog mushing bug when he volunteered as a pilot for the Iditarod Race. The story of his efforts to become an Iditarod dog musher was told in his last book, "Back of the Pack." In 1997, he was chosen by his Iditarod racing peers to receive the Iditarod Sportsmanship award. Don was the chief pilot for Hudson Air Service in the summer and during the winters he was a substitute teacher. Don was involved in many different organizations such as the Talkeetna Bachelor Society, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the local community council and the Alaska Airmen's Association. One of Don's close friends said, "Don will be remembered as a passionate man. Don did not just care for things; he embraced them with a passion that was unbelievable."

**Denali National Park
and Preserve**

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Cul de Sac Glacier, Kichatna Spires, *photo by Roger Robinson*

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