



*Throughout history, countries invested in explorers to be the first to discover and have their flag flown in a new world. Today, an emerging explorer is offering you an historic opportunity to fly your corporate flag and elevate your brand as he attempts to become the **YOUNGEST** person in the world and the **FIRST AMERICAN** to complete **THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE.***

*C*onquering the **FOUR EXTREME POLES** of the planet and climbing the **SEVEN CONTINENTAL SUMMITS**—a feat so extraordinary that you can count on ONE HAND those who have succeeded. More men have landed on the moon than have completed

**THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE.**

Dear Potential Sponsor:

April 8, 2005

Times have changed since the first explorers set sail, yet much has remained the same. Corporations, like countries, still compete to achieve their objectives and turn their obstacles into opportunities. As history has proven, explorers have much to offer their sponsors. After all, how often do you get to be a part of history? Explorers can also help solve some of the following challenges.

## *Y*OUR CHALLENGE

### • *ESCAPE ORDINARY BRAND MARKETING*

The historic attempt to become the youngest person in the world and the first American to complete THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE has the ability to IGNITE consumer imagination. Marketing your brand with **MT EVEREST**, which has produced one of the greatest IMAX documentaries and adventure books of all time, *Into Thin Air*, not to mention creating its own billion dollar industry, will give your brand a formidable partner in today's marketplace. When your brand speaks to the world from its rooftop, it makes a statement that is unsurpassed by any advertising campaign. In terms of pure marketing power, **MT EVEREST** has no equal.

Attaching your brand to expedition clothing, equipment, media, print, website, or flying your corporate flag from the top or bottom of the world or in the world's most dangerous ocean, will POSITION your brand in an extraordinary manner.

### • *ELEVATE YOUR BRAND ABOVE COMPETITORS*

As you know, it's not just about flag waving anymore, but who is waving the flag. Explorers have always captivated the hearts and minds of each generation. Through image transfer, you can associate your brand with all the defining characteristics of the explorer mindset such as:

- **Exploration** – to explore is to be human
- **Courage** – life shrinks or expands in proportion to our courage
- **Risk** – risk is not about escaping life, but keeping life from escaping us

These characteristics connected to your brand will create a powerful image that is fully alive, connected, courageous, forward thinking, innovative, leading edge, and unique.

Images and sounds captured in photos, video, cybercasts, and satellite phone dispatches in the world's most extreme environments will elevate the impact of your brand.

### • *EXPERIENCE BRAND LOYALTY*

Loyalty decreased as the power shifted from product to consumer. Loyalty is increased through connecting your brand to the consumer's core values. The core values of THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE have a universal appeal to both the eyes and the heart. By creating new horizons, individuals are empowered to explore their own dreams and potential.

This message is communicated as a value to your brand and corporation through motivational, multi-media presentations with on-site appearances by the emerging explorer upon the completion of THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE.

There is tremendous momentum and interest from potential sponsors for THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE. With more than half of THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE complete, plans are in motion to complete the remaining tasks within the next year. In fact, as you are reading this letter, I am nearing the Geographic North Pole, skiing up to ten hours each day, crossing pressure ridges and open water leads, setting up camp each night on the unmarked and shifting ice with temperatures between -40 F and 0 F.

The cost/benefit ratio along with the time/risk factors associated with THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE are favorable to you as a sponsor and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss sponsorship levels, benefits, timeline, and maximization with you. I look forward to partnering with you in helping to create a unique marketing message.

However, time is short. The “ship” is set to sail. **The time to act is now.** If you are interested in discussing how your brand can benefit from the unique marketing possibilities of THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE before your competitors secure exclusive rights, call today to schedule a phone appointment. Appointments can be scheduled by calling **734.878.1118** or emailing [devrieskj@aol.com](mailto:devrieskj@aol.com). Don't miss this rare, historic opportunity. Call Today.

Adjusting the Sails,

*Kevin DeVries*

Kevin DeVries  
Emerging Explorer

P.S. Attached are more details regarding THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE, Explorer's Biography and Detroit Free Press/Ann Arbor News articles.

*“Make no little plans: they have no magic to stir men's blood.” Daniel H. Burnham*





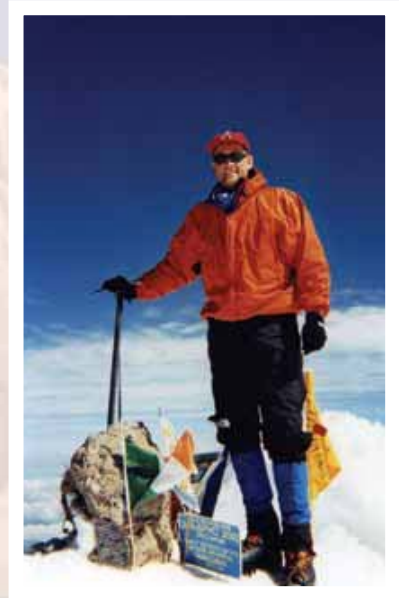
# THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE

## One Explorer's Journey

### Conquering the Four Extreme Poles of the Planet & Climbing the Seven Continental Summits

#### FOUR POLES

CLIMB Mt Everest	Asia	Highest Pole	Scheduled Spring 2006
SKI Geographic South Pole	Antarctica	Bottom of the World	Scheduled Fall 2005
SAIL Cape Horn	Southern Ocean	Southernmost Continental Pole	Scheduled Fall 2005
SKI Geographic North Pole	Arctic Ocean	Top of the World	Spring 2005 Current Expedition



#### SEVEN SUMMITS

Mt Everest	Nepal, Asia	Elev. 29,035 Ft	Scheduled Spring 2006
Aconcagua	Argentina, South America	Elev. 22,840 Ft	Summited 2002
Mt McKinley	Alaska, North America	Elev. 20,320 Ft	Summited 2003
Kilimanjaro	Tanzania, Africa	Elev. 19,340 Ft	Summited 2000
Mt Elbrus	Russia, Europe	Elev. 18,510 Ft	Summited 2002
Mt Vinson	Antarctica	Elev. 16,067 Ft	Scheduled Fall 2005
Mt Kosciuszko	NSW, Australia	Elev. 7,310 Ft	Summited 2003

#### Notes:

- Kevin has summited five of the seven summits all on first attempts and is currently skiing to the North Pole. This will satisfy six of the ten objectives of THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE.
- Only seven explorers have completed the Adventure Grand Slam, which is the seven summits and the Geographic North & South Poles. Kevin will attempt to be the second and youngest American to complete the Adventure Grand Slam.
- Of those seven explorers, only two are known to have completed THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE, with no known attempts by an American.
- Less than 100 climbers have completed the seven summits. Kevin will attempt to be the first known Michigan resident to summit Mt Everest.
- Future plans include trekking across the world's great deserts and cycling across North America.
- THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE is pending trademark approval from the USPTO through ReImagine Inc.

## THE EXPLORER – Kevin DeVries, Age 37

Instinctually, explorers are entrepreneurs. Prior to committing to THE EXPLORERS CHALLENGE, Kevin founded Planet X Inc ([www.planetxinc.com](http://www.planetxinc.com)), a nationwide new generation entertainment company that capitalized on the experience economy and emotional marketing. As a result, Planet X Inc became one of the leading and fastest growing companies in its industry. Prior to Planet X Inc, Kevin worked in the non-profit sector creating faith based initiatives and providing consulting services on a national level. Presently, Kevin is the Founder and President of ReImagine Inc., a communications company dedicated to “creating new horizons” by empowering individuals through motivational speaking, print and multi-media presentation. With over two decades of experience and a successful track record in the non-profit, entertainment, and communications industries, Kevin is uniquely qualified to be your brand ambassador. Kevin lives with his wife, Jodie, and their eight month old son, Jack, in Southeast, Michigan.

# Mountain climber swings for the fences

Local man tries to become first American to accomplish "Grand Slam"

Sunday, December 26, 2004

By Jason Deegan, News Staff Reporter



Kevin DeVries heads outside on a recent snowy morning, without a coat, gloves or a hat. He begins shoveling the snow on the driveway of his Putnam Township home on one of the coldest days of the year so far. The temperature hovers around 19 degrees, a bitter, blustery day for most people, but the weather doesn't faze him.

When you've survived temperatures way below zero on Mount McKinley in Alaska or trudged across a mountain glacier at an altitude of 22,000 feet, a little morning chill is nothing.

DeVries, 36, began climbing mountains, on "a whim" in 2000, but it has quickly become one of his most passionate pursuits. He already has climbed five of the famous, "Seven Summits" - the tallest mountains on each of the seven continents.

Now, he's preparing to take his mountaineering to the extreme. He says he wants to become the first American to complete the "Adventure Grand Slam" - climbing the Seven Summits and skiing to the Geographical North and South Poles.

Although no factual list can be verified, according to [adventuregrand-slam.com](http://adventuregrand-slam.com), only six foreign born climbers have reportedly conquered the feat.

DeVries has laid out an ambitious long-term plan to take on the world's coldest climates in the next two years. He hopes to ski to the North Pole next April, ski to the South Pole and climb Mount Vinson in Antarctica on a month-long expedition in January 2006, and then attempt Mount Everest, the world's

tallest and most revered mountain, later that spring.

"I believe God made the Earth to explore," he says. "I want to try to enjoy what he's given us."

DeVries is a rare breed of climber. By living in Michigan, he's also one of the few with worldly aspirations who doesn't live in a mountainous region. He has already summited Mount Kosciuszko in Australia, Mount Elbrus in Europe, Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa, Mount McKinley in Alaska and Cerro Aconcagua in South America.

"I haven't heard of many people who are trying for it (the Slam)," says Gordon Janow, director of operations for Alpine Ascents International, the company that organizes DeVries' trips. "Climbing and skiing require such different training. There is so much work on the front end before you even attempt it."

DeVries admits it will take a lot of luck (like good weather) to accomplish any, or all, of his quests. He says climbers never conquer a mountain, "the mountain allows them to the top."

## Getting Started

DeVries says he wanted to do "something off the map" when he pulled together an impromptu trip with friends to climb 14,410 feet to the top of Mount Rainier in Washington state four years ago.

"I didn't realize Mount Rainier was so dramatic with crevasses and rock falls. I did a three-day crash course on sliding on the ice," he jokes. "But I really enjoyed it."

Van Defibaugh, 33, a Hamburg Township resident, has hiked and

run races with DeVries for years and came away impressed with his friend during the climb. He said the group dubbed DeVries the "Energizer Bunny" for his fast pace and boundless energy. "He was like a machine," says Defibaugh, who did not summit. "The altitude didn't affect him. You can see he's got an ability."

DeVries says mountaineering appeals to his love of travel and experiencing new cultures.

"You get to see what most tourists don't see," he says. "You really get in depth about the people and their culture when you're out of the city."

His climbing has transformed into a journey of self discovery and overcoming fear.

"Mountain climbing is a great metaphor for life," he says. "It's about striving, working as a team, leaving the safety of the valley to find out who you are. It's human nature to test limits. There's a lot of personal and spiritual growth that takes place."

His wife, Jodie, who recently had their first child, now 4-month-old Jack, says she supports her husband's dangerous dream. She has hiked to the top of several mountains with him, including Mount Whitney in California in August 2001. Whitney is the tallest mountain in the continental United States at 14,494 feet, but their trip didn't require technical climbing - use of ropes or crampons, spiked boots for walking on ice.

"It was a very unique experience, seeing things most have not seen before," Jodie says. "You are away from city life and the hustle and bustle. Life is very simple at that point."

It's just about getting your breath and taking in the (scenery)."

DeVries says the sport's hazards don't scare him. "Getting to the climbs (in small airplanes and helicopters) scares me more than climbing," he says. He says he always hires Alpine Ascents because of the company's reputation for working with top guides and its commitment to the best safety equipment. The company's Web site ([www.alpineascents.com](http://www.alpineascents.com)) indicates that 15 of the 42 Americans who have accomplished the "Seven Summits" have used its services. The company organizes logistics like travel, food, providing equipment and hiring local guides who haul heavy equipment up and down the mountain. DeVries generally likes to travel alone, meeting his climbing partners at the site.

### Climbing to new heights

DeVries has created some amazing memories in his travels to five continents.

Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa in December 2000, he marveled at the journey through five ecosystems, from the rain forest to a lunar-like, barren landscape just above the tree line to the glacier peak.

In the summer of 2002, he safely reached the summit Mount Elbrus in Europe near the border of Russia. A different kind of problem made that adventure difficult.

"The main obstacle was the Russian food," he says. "A lot of us got sick. Our water source might have been compromised."

That winter, he visited Cerro Aconcagua in South America, the tallest peak outside of the Himalayas.

But his toughest ascent was of Mount McKinley in Denali National Park in 2003. The 20,320 foot mountain, called Denali or "The High One" in the Athabascan Native American language, has reportedly claimed the lives of more than 100

mountain climbers with its shifting ice caps and harrowing weather conditions. He says some days featured 80-degree temperature swings from day to night.

His scariest moment to date occurred on the descent. Roped together for safety reasons, his team reached a tiny ridge, he recalls, as one member began to show signs of high-altitude sickness, a condition where a lack of oxygen can cause any number of life-threatening problems. One slip would jeopardize lives. Fortunately, the guide helped the team safely return to base camp.

"I braced myself for it (a fall)," he recalls. "It would have been one tangled mess of people and rope."

He and his wife climbed Australia's Mount Kosciuszko, the easiest of the summits, with a one-day hike in shorts and tennis shoes last December.

### Adventures yet to come

His toughest tasks lie ahead. On his trip to the North Pole, he says he'll fly to Norway and take a helicopter to within 70 miles of his destination, then ski the rest of the way in temperatures that can reach 40 degrees below zero.

"We'll have ice ridges to climb over and open water to worry about," he says. "It will be cold all the time."

Mount Everest and the South Pole will be even more treacherous. According to [www.MountEverest.net](http://www.MountEverest.net), a Web site created by climbers, nearly 2,250 people have reached this mountain's summit, and 170 people have perished on Everest since Sir Edmund Hillary and his sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay first reached the top May 29, 1953.

At 29,028 feet, Everest is more than 6,000 feet higher than DeVries has every climbed.

"(Kevin) has done great on the mountains with us so far. Indications are he should perform well on future

trips," Janow says. "Mount Vinson (in Antarctica) should be fine for him, but with Everest, you jump into another realm."

Jodie refuses to watch "Everest, The Movie," an IMAX documentary that filmed one of the mountain's deadliest days when nine climbers perished during a storm in May 1996.

She says technology, which allows her to talk to her husband almost every day and tracks his progress online, makes his longer trips bearable. She stays busy by running the family business, Planet X Inc., but lost sleep and anxious moments are a given.

"I'm confident that he wants to come home to tell the story, that he's not being reckless," she says. "Even though the mountains are bigger and more risky, he is still going with the best guides in the world and the best equipment to be safe."



As

Kevin DeVries explains it, "I'd done the sea kayaking and the marathon running, and I wanted to do something different."

He could have taken up golf. Maybe tried his hand at sailing. And mountain biking is a lot of fun. But after a while

## An Adventure Slam

By Eric Sharp

FREE PRESS OUTDOORS WRITER

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the solution hit him:

Why not become the first American to complete the Adventure Grand Slam, climbing the highest mountain on each of the seven continents and skiing cross-country to the North and South poles?

That epiphany came five years ago, and now DeVries has five mountains down with two to go – including Mt. Everest. His first polar trip is planned for this spring.

"It started as a random thing," said DeVries, 37, of Pinckney. "My wife, Jodie, got me back into running, and we did some marathons and tri-athlete events together. Then we climbed Mauna Kea in Hawaii together. It was a one-day hike, and it was really neat. So after that I decided to try something higher and signed up with a group to climb Mt. Rainier in Washington."

But Rainier was no day hike.

"I had no experience with altitude and what it does to your body." DeVries said of his first experience with a peak that soars to 14,411 feet and is snow-capped year-round. "The company I went with really drove you hard. We did it in three days, and that included our training. We started the summit climb on three hours' sleep. Four of us started, and I was the only one to make it."

That climb taught DeVries a couple of important things – he liked climbing mountains, and he was good at it. His exposure to Rainier and the culture of alpine climbing put the idea of the Grand Slam in the back of his mind. So far, DeVries has climbed Mt. McKinley in Alaska (20,320 feet), Aconcagua in Argentina (22,841), Mt. Kosciuszko in Australia (7,310), Mt. Elbrus in Russia (18,481) and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania (19,340).

The two mountains left are the Vinson Massif in Antarctica (16,067), and the granddaddy of them all, Everest,

at 29,035 feet the world's tallest and most legendary peak.

"I was looking into doing some more climbing when I read about the seven summits," DeVries said. "It sounded like a really great idea. I've always read a lot about Africa and been fascinated by it, and I decided to start with Kilimanjaro. I really liked the idea of climbing from a rain forest to a glacier."

Kilimanjaro involves strenuous hiking with no technical rope-and-rock climbing, but it is a high mountain and a good place to learn more about functioning in thin air. "I think I'd recommend Kilimanjaro as a great first experience for anyone," he said.

Each mountain has its own personality and unique challenges and rewards, DeVries said. Mt. McKinley, North America's highest, often has atrocious weather, "and it was the coldest mountain I've climbed so far," he said. "I think Mt. Vinson may be even colder. After climbing McKinley, it made me realize that Everest probably wouldn't be climbable if it was as far north as McKinley."

DeVries' original plan was to become the first American to climb all seven summits and ski to both poles, but in late December he read that a man from Texas had beaten him to it. Seven people are believed to have completed the Grand Slam.

DeVries still plans to continue his quest and use his experience to create a motivational speaking program aimed at corporate America.

"I'm going to call it the Explorers Challenge," he said. "I'll do the seven summits and the poles and become the youngest American to do it. I like running a company. It's in my blood. I want to tell people what I learned about life and myself by doing these things, and how they can apply some of the things I've learned to their own lives and help them reach their goals."

**Detroit Free Press**  
www.freep.com

DeVries founded a business called Planet X, which does group parties and functions for corporations, churches and other groups. He has paid for his adventures from his own pocket, but now he's looking for corporate sponsorship to complete the quest. He will head for the North Pole in April, flying to Spitsbergen in the Svalbard Islands in the Norwegian Sea and then riding a Russian aircraft to an ice camp at about 89 degrees north.

"It's only about 70 miles to the pole, but it usually takes a week to ski there," DeVries said. "You're towing all of your gear on a sled that weighs over 100 pounds, and there are a lot of pressure ridges and open leads that you have to get over or around."

"They usually do it in April because there's enough daylight to ski for several hours, but it's not enough to melt the ice and make it impassible."

DeVries hopes to follow that with the Vinson Massif climb and ski to the South Pole this fall, then climb Everest in 2006.

But even if he completes the seven summits and reaches both poles, it doesn't mean he will have run out of mountains to climb.

Some climbers say Australia's Mt. Kosciuszko shouldn't count. They argue that while it's big enough to be a continent, Australia is really just the biggest island in the Australasian island group, and that group includes Indonesia, which boasts the Carstensz Pyramid at 16,023 feet.

DeVries may be reach by email at: devrieskj@aol.com.



*The Journey Continues...*

