

18 are set to soar from Eagle Academy. Page 8



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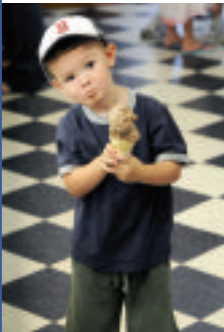
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Jackson filmmaker Thom Pollard celebrates reaching the summit of 29,035-foot Mount Everest (known as Chomolungma in Nepal) last Sunday. It was his third time to the mountain, but filming assignments and, in 2014, a devastating avalanche, prevented him from getting to the top. (THOM POLLARD/EYES OPEN PHOTO)

Pollard conquers Everest

By TOM EASTMAN
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

NEPAL — In what has become a deadly climbing season, with at least four people perishing on Earth's tallest peak since last Thursday, Jackson docu-

mentary filmmaker Thom Pollard safely fulfilled his long-held wish to stand atop the world Sunday, reaching the summit of 29,035-foot Mount Everest.

Pollard, 54, sent word of his successful ascent via Facebook, saying: "I sum-

mitted Chomolungma aka Mount Everest on May 22 at 2:40 a.m. (yes, a.m.) ... In N.H. at the time it was 4:55 p.m. on May 21. Who says nothing good ever happens after midnight?"

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Homicide victim's family: Bring killer to justice

By DAYMOND STEER
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONWAY — The family of homicide victim David Bruce Goodwin are reeling from his death. They also are vowing to do everything in their power to bring his killer to justice.

Goodwin, 64, of Conway was found severely beaten on May 15 at Conway Valley Inn in North Conway.

On Monday, the state Attorney General's Office announced Goodwin had died of his injuries and that the Maine Medical Examiner's Office was calling it a homicide.

In response, Goodwin's sister Patti Florence, who had come up from Florida and was behind the desk of the inn Tuesday morning, said: "He did not deserve this, and I'm not going to rest until they put

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He said he and three Sherpa (Sherpa Lhakpa, Sherpa Rinzi and Sherpa Uberaz) left Camp 4 at 26,000 feet at 8 p.m. Saturday Nepal time.

"Lhakpa and I pulled away and made the summit in 6 hours and 40 minutes under near full moon and snowy, breezy cold conditions," said Pollard. "Lhakpa — getting his fourth summit — and I had the summit all to ourselves. Rinzi and Uberaz (both getting their first summit ascents) made the summit two hours later. The moon prevailed to spectacular views upon our descent. We also witnessed the downside of Everest and came across three of the estimated five fatalities that day."

Pollard said the adventure is dedicated to his sons, Kennett High students Will and Sam Pollard, who never doubted he would make it to the top.

"They had more faith in me than I did in myself at times, and it charged me and energized me every step of the way. Thanks to Facebook messenger, I chatted with them daily when I was in base camp," Pollard told the Sun.

Pollard said he carried a flag from the New Hampshire State Police. He also dispersed a container of ashes of his late mother, father and brother.

"We spent 30 minutes on top, descended in a little over three hours. We are all back in base camp eating and resting, and on Thursday will trek back to the village of Lukla, then fly to Kathmandu, where we will spend a couple days before flying home. More stories to follow," Pollard reported.

Pollard's ascent took place exactly one week after the 25th anniversary of the one by Rick Wilcox of Eaton, leader of the New England Everest Expedition that successfully summited the world's tallest peak on May 15, 1991.

On Monday, Wilcox said: "It's great that he made it. It's certainly not an easy thing to do. Good for him, as he persevered. He did it!"

"We've been friends for a long time," he added, "and this is his third time over there. They waited for their window over the past few weeks, so patience paid off!"

Wilcox, owner of International Mountain Equipment of North Conway, said when he and his team of Barry Rugo, Mark Richey and the late Yves LaForet made their 1991 climb, few people were there at base camp. "Now all of that has changed."

According to CNN, four people died since May 19 on the 29,035-foot mountain, including a Sherpa. As of Sunday, rescue efforts were ongoing for two other missing climbers.

Over the past two years, avalanches claimed 35 climbers' lives — including 16 in one day in 2014. More than 200 climbers have died since Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary made the first official ascent in 1953.



Thom Pollard of Jackson whoops it up at Everest Base Camp. One of the Sherpa guides is at right. (THOM POLLARD/EYES OPEN PHOTO)

April was the first month of climbing since all ascent was halted after the catastrophic earthquake that struck Nepal in 2015.

And more than 400 people have attempted the Everest climb this season, including 288 foreigners and more than 100 Sherpas and guides, said Sudarshan Dhakal, director of the Nepal Tourism Department. That's more than the average for previous seasons, he said.

Pollard, owner of Eyes Open Productions, gave a Feb. 23 presentation at Kennett High School in Conway on his life of adventure as a benefit for Project Graduation.

During it, he showed clips from his 2014 Everest documentary, when an avalanche claimed the lives of 16 high-altitude porters and Sherpa.

Pollard also discussed being a member of a 1999 "Nova" and BBC Everest expedition, when he filmed the discovery of the preserved body of George Mallory, famed Everest pioneering climber at nearly 27,000 feet.

It also showed his attempt with Wilcox, Joe Lentini, Maury McKinney and other local climbers of Gasherbrum II in Pakistan in 1996.

Prior to leaving for Nepal, he told the Sun that his group planned to visit high-altitude camps on Everest dating back to the 1950s, for the purposes of creating a traveling museum on all things Everest and the Khumbu region of Nepal.

Working with Pollard on the film were Burlington,

Vt.-based filmmaker Scott Barber, son of rock- and ice-climbing legend Henry Barber of North Conway and Jill Barber of North Conway and Florida.

Pollard shot stills and video, while Barber will be producing the film.

Prior to the expedition, Barber — who attended Madison Elementary and Tamworth Learning Circles, and graduated from Kennett in 2008 — said he was looking forward to capturing the beauty and culture of Nepal.

"I am ready to make a movie on Everest that brings new understanding to the everyday person while still being a movie that has a strong hold in the mountaineering community," said Barber, also a graduate of Champlain College in Burlington.

Assisting Barber at base camp was Parker Haynes of Conway.

The expedition leader was Paul Giorgio of Millbury, Mass., who has climbed Everest successfully four times, twice without supplemental oxygen.

A writer for Outside Magazine was also along to chronicle the expedition.

A mini-version of the film is slated to debut at the Explorers Club's annual dinner in New York City in March 2017. Pollard said that both he and Giorgio are members of the Explorers Club, adding that Giorgio was granted an Explorers flag by late mountaineering cartographer Dr. Brad Washburn of the Boston Museum of Science.

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