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A CLIMBER'S PROMISE

Seven Summits; Millions for Charity

by Raj Balu

Honoring Life

At the tender age of 12, Canadian Francois Langlois learned something about himself from his father that he had never known; he was born prematurely and had been very ill.

Coming into the world at four pounds and with underdeveloped lungs, he spent the first five weeks of his life in an incubator. During that time, he dropped to two pounds, had numerous blood transfusions and battled various illnesses. Ultimately, he made a full recovery.

This amazing story stuck with Francois throughout his formative years and into adulthood. Today, Francois is a successful financial advisor and avid mountain climber. His highlight reel includes climbing six of the Seven Summits, climbing Kilimanjaro three times with [Tusker Trail](#) and reaching the summit of Mt. Everest. Best of all, his climbs have raised nearly two million dollars for charities.

At the moment Francois reached the summit of Everest, he made a promise to honor the gift of life that he had been given. The way he does that is by living life to the fullest and generously raising money for a host of children's charities that at the most, help to save lives, and at the least, help make lives better.

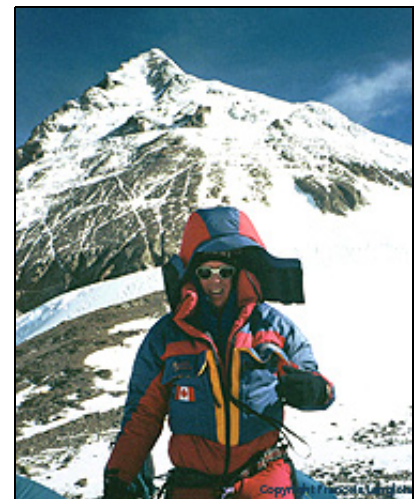
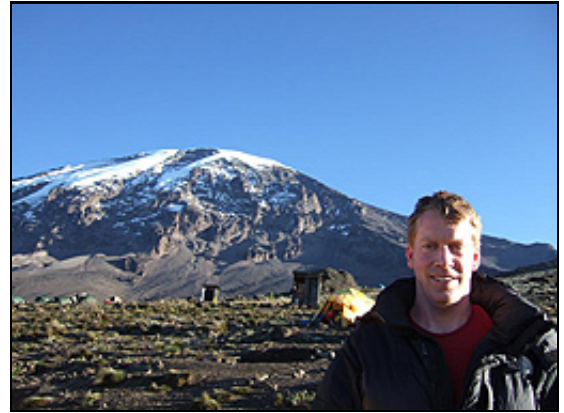
Francois is a unique and dynamic individual who is living the dream. His good friend and colleague, Tusker Trail's own [Eddie Frank](#) says, "Francois is a great human being, a role model for many, and a really good citizen. He possesses an incredibly adventurous and generous spirit."

Mountain Adventures

It is no small undertaking to set your sites on climbing the Seven Summits – the highest peaks of the seven continents. Being the great adventurer he is, Francois has already climbed six of them.

Checked off the to-do list include Mt. Kilimanjaro, Mt. Carstensz, Mt. Everest, Mt. Elbrus, Mt. McKinley and Mt. Aconcagua. The last one on the list needed to complete the journey is Mt. Vinson Massif, the highest mountain of Antarctica. For some people, Mt. Everest alone is the highest in climbing achievements and a great place to rest on your laurels. It symbolizes monumental challenge and provides a way to truly test the limits of mind, body and spirit.

At nearly 23,000 feet, Mt. Aconcagua is the highest mountain outside of the Himalayas. Climbers often use it as a warm-up to Everest. Francois reached the summit after a thirteen-day climb in 2000. In 2008, he climbed Mt. Carstensz in Indonesia, the highest of Oceania's peaks. He calls it



“the most unique and technically difficult of the Seven Summits.” Among other Seven Summit mountains, he has also climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro on numerous occasions. When asked what his favorite climbing destination is, he says, “The world is a grand place and I don’t really have a favorite. Except I have been to [Kilimanjaro](#) three times so maybe that’s a hint that I do have a favorite.”

It has been an incredible life for Francois who, as the youngest of five brothers, always had a strong sense of drive and competition. His drive has led him to the highest peaks and farthest corners of the Earth, and it has also given him the opportunity to form great friendships.

Great Friendships

There is camaraderie among climbers that is special and unlike any other. Climbing any of the Seven Summits usually equates to living out a dream. When you are among people who are so passionate and having such a great time, it is impossible not to take advantage of the great opportunities for friendship.



When it came time for Francois to climb Kilimanjaro, it was friendships made on other mountains that led him to Tusker Trail. Tusker had been highly recommended and his climbing with them turned out to be a great decision. On numerous Kilimanjaro climbs, he has gotten to know Eddie and Amy Frank well. “I am really glad to have developed such a special friendship with them,” says Francois. The three of them have gotten along so well that Francois recently asked Eddie and Amy to serve as the medical team on a thirteen-day trek to Everest Base Camp that he organized. Francois says he picked them because “I knew they would be bringing the same medical expertise to Everest Base Camp that they practice on Kilimanjaro.”

Francois plans on working with Tusker again next year. Together, this time they will go above and beyond anything they have previously done for charity.

Three Summits, One Day

Three summits. Three continents. One cause. That sums up the challenge that Francois, his friends and colleagues will take on in April of 2010.



The mountains to be climbed are Kilimanjaro, Everest Base Camp and Elbrus. A total of sixty climbers, twenty on each mountain, will summit on the same day. Tusker will lead the climb up Kilimanjaro, Francois will lead Everest Base Camp and his colleague will lead the climb up Elbrus. The best part is that the climbs are all for charity and will benefit the Charles Bruneau Foundation, a charity organization which, at its own facility in Montreal, treats children with cancer and researches the disease. It’s going to be an incredible adventure; a one-of-a-kind opportunity and it will be in the spirit of supporting a great cause.

Francois has proven time and again that with great motivation, you can accomplish anything to which you set your mind.

Great Motivation



In a short matter of time, Francois will have climbed all Seven Summits. He has helped raise nearly two million dollars for children's charities and the number is growing. He is a true humanitarian, a person of great character and spirit, and he is living the dream.



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