

# Everest: Two experienced climbers died on the expedition

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be desired."

The climb requires a myriad of special gear for the elements. With each step, climbers face extreme wind and cold. The threat of altitude sickness was constant and the effects of high altitude on the body significant.

The 2013 climbing season was deadly on Everest's north side, with four deaths and only 60 climbers. Two experienced climbers in their mid-30s died of apparent heart attacks while descending the mountain — one just feet from Kershner's tent at the Advance Base Camp.

The other climber, Namgyal Sherpa, a friend and guide on Kershner's team, died returning from the summit while still in the "death zone" — the portion of the mountain more than 26,000 feet in elevation. Kershner and the other climbers had to step around his body as they continued their ascent.

"Namgyal's death made clear what was at stake," Kershner said. "If you make a mistake at high altitude, you're dead."

There are no helicopter rescues on the mountain's north side. Climbers often die because they're caught up in how much time and money they have committed and it clouds their judgment as they take unnecessary risks, Kershner said.

Kershner had problems of his own. He started coughing up blood and, after a four-day trip to a Tibetan hospital on the flatbed of a truck littered with cigarette butts, broken glass and dirt, he returned to the lower altitude of base camp to recover.

After recovering, Kershner rejoined his team



Photo Provided

Micah Kershner stands in his climbing gear at Camp 3, 27,500 feet above sea-level, on Mount Everest. Kershner climbed just short of the 29,092 foot summit, but will attempt the climb again next year.

for the summit bid. He reached 28,000 feet — about 1,000 feet short of the summit — but turned back after having problems with his oxygen supply.

Exceeding expectations and returning healthy with all his fingers and toes made his first climbing expedition a success.

"I went looking for adventure. I found it," he said. "I really just wanted to challenge myself, step away from my day-to-day and get completely outside my comfort zone."

Along the way, Kershner made a group of international friends with whom he will continue to climb. They are set to climb Mont Blanc in France next month and plan to conquer the seven summits — the highest summits on each continent.

Even after the initial difficulty of telling his parents, Marion and Morrie,



Photo Provided

Micah Kershner waves from just below Camp 3 on Mount Everest at about 27,000 feet.

who reside in Fergus Falls, that he would make the climb, Kershner expects to be back on Everest next season, this time to ascend the mountain's south face. The group plans to use the next expedition to raise money for charity.

"Everest is a big challenge for me and I will finish what I started," Kershner said. "It's a chance to get away and experience some real adventure. How much real adventure is really left in the world?"

# Kirkbride: Project proceeded 50,000 square feet at a time

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Minervini said. "It's the way you build vibrant communities. Creating elements of community. That's what draws people together. I think that's probably the most important component."

So what does it take to make a project of this magnitude successful?

"Without being arrogant, somebody with vision," Minervini said. "You have to be passionate about it."

The saga of making The Village a reality started in 2001. The building had been abandoned and shut down for many years. It needed new windows and a new roof, for starters.

"We had to tear everything out to begin with," Minervini said. "The bones of the building remained. It was a total rebuild."

The redevelopment of the 400,000-square foot Michigan Kirkbride was done one section at a time, and it's still not complete. They've done 50,000 square feet at a time, starting nine years ago.

The last piece of the puzzle is to create senior housing, which should be completed within 15 months.

So far, \$70 million was invested in the project. That figure should surpass \$100 million after the senior housing is finished. The

Village has a huge economic impact on the community. It's estimated that every dollar of historic preservation has an economic impact of more than \$10 locally, Minervini said.

The entire lower level of the building is now boutique shops, with more than 100 residential units above. The facility houses 75 different businesses.

The Village is located just a mile from downtown Traverse City and is in one of the hottest real estate markets in Michigan, according to Minervini. About 15,000 people make up Traverse City, with 100,000 people in the surrounding five-county area. Visitors are a balance of tourists and locals.

It's adjacent to a hospital, so many employees live at The Village and can walk to work.

"That has been an economic engine for our project," Minervini said.

They also have a full-service restaurant, Trattoria Stella, which is "considered by many to be the best gourmet restaurant in town," Minervini said. It has also helped sell commercial and residential spaces.

"When they go to the restaurant, they have an opportunity to walk through our facility," Minervini said.



Photo provided

The Traverse City State Hospital opened its doors in 1885 as the Northern Michigan Asylum for the Insane. While a committee wanted to tear it down, Ray Minervini had the idea for redeveloping it into The Village at Grand Traverse Commons.



Photo provided

The Village at Grand Traverse Commons redevelopment was a 12-year project. A senior housing element is still anticipated. It's a place to live, work, play, shop and enjoy fine dining, said the developer.

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