

PRESS RELEASE

Climb every mountain...or fifty state summits. Douglas Butler chose the latter and began a quest—a long-held dream—to reach the highest geographical point of each state. *A Walk Atop America—Fifty State Summits and a Dream to Reach Them All* (Parkway Publishers, 2007) describes that journey.

On America's highest summits, Butler faced blizzards, avalanches and forest fires; in other states, he struggled to obtain permission from private landowners and government officials to even attempt the summit. With a sense of humor and a love of adventure, however, he persevered.

Butler's vivid descriptions include scenes of incredible beauty and joyous solitude, reasons he states, that make the process of scaling some of the most difficult and isolated mountains in the nation so special. With journal, camera and an innate sense of curiosity, he followed secondary roads between the mountains, opting to expand his climbing odyssey into a journey of discovery instead of a rushed excursion from peak to peak.

In *A Walk Atop America* climbing narratives are interspersed with lively descriptions of the people Butler met and the places he visited—talking with a self-described “real McCoy” near the site of the famous feud, chatting with Midwestern farmers as he struggled through axle-deep mud and snow to reach Nebraska’s highest point and traveling along the Nevada highway dubbed by *Life* magazine as “America’s Loneliest Road.”

The state summits vary greatly in difficulty. Florida's highest point is a sandy knoll 345 feet above sea level, Delaware's a suburban street intersection. Others rank among America's most challenging and well-known peaks: California's Mt. Whitney, Oregon's Mt. Hood, Washington's Mt. Rainier and, highest of all, Alaska's Mt. McKinley (also known as Denali), a 20,320-foot-tall mountain requiring a three-week-long expedition to reach the summit.

But each summit is special, often reflecting a state's character. "Butler eloquently describes these places and the folks he met," writes popular guidebook author Don W. Holmes in this book's foreword, "capturing the unique charm of every highpoint."

Douglas Butler is a travel writer and award-winning photographer whose love of adventure, sensitivity to native cultures and joy in exploring remote areas are shared through work which has appeared nationally. Publications include *Ashe County—Discovering the Lost Province*, a guidebook to the North Carolina mountain region he calls home. An emergency and family medicine physician, Dr. Butler continues to work with underserved populations on American Indian reservations.

Approximately 170 people have reached each of the fifty state highpoints; Butler is the first, and thus far only, North Carolinian to have accomplished this feat.

Further information and photos available at awalkatopamerica.com

A Walk Atop America—Fifty State Summits and a Dream to Reach Them All

Douglas Butler
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280 pp.; 47 photos