

DARIEN TIMES

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FOR CHARITY

# Hersam to scale Mt. Olympus

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Andrew Hersam, Runner's World magazine vice president and publisher, of Darien, will help lead a group of 10 climbers up one of America's most storied peaks next week as part of an effort to raise money for both at-risk urban youth as well as benefit the family of a former co-worker who died just days before the birth of his second child.

Hersam, a runner who has completed both the Boston and New York City marathons, among other races, will attempt his first-ever mountain ascent of Washington's Mount Olympus from Thursday, July 27, through Sunday, July 30, as part of the Summit For Someone program, a fund-raising climb series sponsored by Backpacker magazine

that raises money for Colorado's Big City Mountaineers. Climbers must raise a minimum of \$2,500 in pledges to participate in the climb series, with every dollar going to Big City Mountaineers's efforts to send at-risk urban youth from around the country on camping and hiking trips in some of America's greatest national parks.

Hersam has combined the fundraising effort to benefit the two young children of Jim Houran, a former co-worker and fellow magazine publishing executive at Sports Illustrated who in April died suddenly of a heart attack at 42. Houran left behind a wife, Lori, and two young sons — one of whom was born just four days after Houran died.

"Jim's way-too-short life was marked by his uncanny ability to attract legions of friends," Hersam said. "It's the many friends he made that are doing



ANDREW  
HERSAM

what we can to keep the memory of Jim alive and to assist his family at a time when he needs us most, and I hope that any money raised by this climb will go towards paying for a good portion of the boys' college education."

"The whole spirit of the Summit For Someone program is to create chances for kids

who might not otherwise get one," said Jonathan Dorn, Backpacker magazine editor-in-chief. He also heads the board of directors for Big City Mountaineers and has been training Hersam for the 7,500 foot climb. "Through the blood and sweat of our climbers, hundreds of kids every year are getting a truly life-changing experience, and the fact that Andy can combine this effort to help benefit two very special kids in particular will make this ascent even more special for everyone involved."

Hersam began spreading the

word about his fundraising effort for the Houran family early this week, hoping potential donors among his colleagues in the media and publishing industry might commit to pledging "a penny per foot climbed" (which would equate to \$75 should he complete the ascent). In the first 24 hours, he received nearly \$11,000 in pledges.

"The immediate outpouring of support for the cause just blew me away, but I guess it shouldn't have," Hersam said. "Jim's sense of humor, loyalty, and intelligence connected with everyone he met, and he touched so many lives."

If you would like to support Hersam's fundraising climb on behalf of the Jameson and Michael Houran Trust (Tax Identification No. 836074670), e-mail [andrew.hersam@rodale.com](mailto:andrew.hersam@rodale.com). Hersam and his wife, Peggy, and three children, Maggie, Tucker and Annie, live in Darien. He is the brother of Martin Hersam, chief operating officer of Hersam Acorn Newspapers which publishes *The Darien Times*.