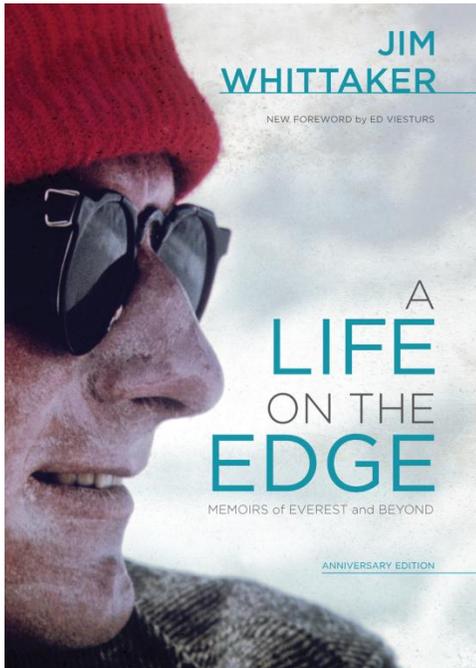




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A Life on the Edge Memoirs of Everest and Beyond

By Jim Whittaker
New foreword by Ed Viesturs

A full-color edition commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first American summit of Everest in May 1963. New and on shelves wherever fine books are sold April 2013, e-book available by July

320 pages – 7” x 10” – 5 maps – hardbound -\$24.95
116 color and B&W photos, including several never-before-published
ISBN 978-1-59485-666-2

“Jim Whittaker is an American adventure hero of the highest order—on the highest peaks and deepest oceans. His story is a timeless tale of inspiration and living life to the fullest—on the edge and at home. He’s a model for us all.”
—**Tom Brokaw**

“My father’s greatest living heroes were John Glenn and Jim Whittaker - a physical giant with a huge heart, a decent soul, and inspirational courage. We can all be grateful that Whittaker has finally put his extraordinary life on paper. Whittaker’s story is a riveting saga of high adventure by one of history’s greatest climbers.” —**Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**

Seattle, WA –In May of 1963 Seattle mountaineer Jim Whittaker stepped into world history by becoming the first American to summit Mount Everest. Fifty years later, he is still regarded as a seminal figure in North American mountaineering, as well as a remarkable businessman who helped create the outdoor recreation industry, a loyal friend to dirt-bag climbers and celebrities alike, and the ultimate American hero. His is a profoundly human story of success, failure, redemption, and inspiration.

A Life on the Edge: Memoirs of Everest and Beyond is Jim's courageous, no-punches-pulled autobiography and a look at pushing life’s boundaries. Before ever setting foot on Everest, he honed his skills as a climbing guide on Mount Rainier and Denali, and as a member of Olympic Mountain Rescue. Jim was only thirty-four years old when he stepped onto the summit of Everest at 1:00 PM on May 1, 1963. What could the following fifty years possibly hold to compare?

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Everest may have been the high point topographically, but Jim's life has contained many more peaks—and valleys too. Starting as its only full-time employee, he built REI from a small mountaineering co-op to a multimillion-dollar business with stores nationwide. He led Bobby Kennedy on a first ascent of Canada's Mt. Kennedy, and then developed a close friendship with Kennedy—later running his presidential campaign in Washington State. He led the climbing expedition that put the first Americans on the summit of K2, the world's second-highest mountain. His organization of the 1990 Mount Everest International Peace Climb united Chinese, Soviet, and American climbers in a common goal of reaching Everest's summit while also cleaning up more than two tons of trash left by previous expeditions. He guided a team of nine disabled people to the summit of Mount Rainier. And he set sail across the Pacific in the aptly named *Impossible* with the woman he loved and their two young sons.

Jim's life has not been all conquests, however. There were behind-the-scenes disputes at REI. He faced near-bankruptcy due to a deceitful business partner and was forced to sell nearly all his possessions, then rebuild his finances from scratch. His first marriage fell apart during the tumultuous 1970s. But the honesty and humor that mark Jim's accounts of his successes are all the more pronounced when life on the edge becomes a little less comfortable—and it is that very human Jim who shines through in this special anniversary edition of *A Life on the Edge*, which features never-before-published photographs and a new final chapter that brings readers up-to-date, including details of Whittaker's trek to Everest Base Camp in 2012 at the age of 83, and his son Leif's recent successful summits of Everest.

If you aren't living on the edge, you're taking up too much space...It has nothing to do with thrill-seeking. It's about making the most of every moment, about stretching your own boundaries, about being willing to learn constantly...Being out on the edge, with everything at risk, is where you learn—and grow—the most. —Whittaker

On April 20th join the official launch of the book and a celebration of Jim at **Everest 50**, hosted by The Mountaineers in Seattle, WA, and featuring special presenter Robert F. Kennedy Jr, with guests Tom Hornbein, Brent Bishop, and Jake Norton. For tickets and more information visit www.mountaineers.org/everest50.

May 1963 marks the 50th anniversary of the first American ascent of Mount Everest; to arrange an interview with Jim Whittaker or feature photos or an excerpt from *A Life on the Edge* contact emilyw@mountaineersbooks.org.



About the author: **Jim Whittaker** was born in Seattle in 1929. His accomplishments are wide and varied: in addition to being the first American to summit Everest, Whittaker was the first full-time employee of Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), retiring as the company's president and CEO after twenty-five years. He led the team that put the first Americans on K2's summit, and he organized and led the International Peace Climb on Everest in 1990. In 2012, at the age of 83, Whittaker trekked to nearly 17,000 feet in Nepal, just a few hundred feet below Everest Base Camp. He and his wife, Dianne Roberts, live in Port Townsend, WA. Find him online at www.jimwhittaker.com

About The Mountaineers Books: Born from the hand-scribbled trail maps and wilderness passion of its members, Washington's more than 100-year-old Mountaineers established the nonprofit Mountaineers Books in 1960 to express and share its love of nature and the outdoors. Launched with the publication of *Mountaineering: the Freedom of the Hills*—now in its 8th edition and translated into over 10 languages worldwide—today The Mountaineers Books has more than 500 titles in print and publishes a variety of outdoor recreation, sustainable lifestyle, and conservation advocacy books along with their imprints Braided River and Skipstone.