

THE WCR LEARNING COMMUNITY

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Martin and Esther Kafer are the oldest man and woman to climb to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. This mountain is the highest point in Africa. The climb was organized by the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Photo courtesy of the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

Climb every mountain

Adapted from *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*

Level 1

Esther and Martin Kafer are 85 and 84. They are active seniors. They hike, climb and ski. The Kafers have climbed more than 500 mountains. They have named over 73 mountains. Why? They were the first to climb these mountains.

Their story

The Kafers married in 1953 in Switzerland. A few days later, they were climbing in the **Alps**. Then Martin fell. He was hanging on a rope. Esther pulled the rope up. "She saved my life," Martin says. A year later, they came to Canada.

The oldest couple

Esther and Martin are the oldest couple to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. This mountain is the highest in Africa. The Kafers made \$24,000. They made the money for the Alzheimer's Society of B.C. Martin's sister has **Alzheimer's disease**.

Advice from the Kafers

"Be active all of the time. Eat well, use your arms, your legs and your head. Most of all your head."

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(... continued from page 1)



View of Mount Kilimanjaro from
Honeybadger Lodge, Moshi, Tanzania
Photo by Koen Muurling, Flickr

Mountains are their religion

Martin says, "Some people,
they go to church on Sunday."

But the Kafers go to
the mountains on Sundays.

Martin believes, "The mountains become
like your **religion**, in a way."

Vocabulary:

- **Alps:** the highest mountains in Europe, covering 1,200 km and running through eight countries
- **Alzheimer's disease:** a disease that destroys brain cells; there is no cure.
- **Climb every mountain:** Take every step you must to have your dream.
- **religion:** The belief in and worship of a personal God or gods; faith

Links for teachers:

"Climb Every Mountain": a hit song written by Rogers and Hammerstein for the movie "The Sound of Music":

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t_wGHZCBVk

The Alzheimer Society of B.C.

<http://www.alzheimerbc.org>

Lyrics (words) to the song
"Climb Every Mountain" for study:

Climb Every Mountain (song)

Climb every mountain, search high and low,
Follow every **byway**, every path you know.
Climb every mountain, **ford** every stream,
Follow every rainbow till you
find your dream.

A dream that will need all the love
you can give

Every day of your life for as long as you live.
Climb every mountain, ford every stream,
Follow every rainbow till you
find your dream.

A dream that will need all the love
you can give

Every day of your life for as long as you live.
Climb every mountain, ford every stream,
Follow every rainbow till you
find your dream.

Rodgers and Hammerstein: from the movie
"The Sound of Music"

Vocabulary:

- **byway:** a road or track away from the main road
- **ford:** to cross a river at a place where the water is not deep