

# Code 1244: The Devastating Tragedy That Defined Mount Hood's Shadow

On May 31, 1986, an ordinary Saturday hike on Mount Hood in Oregon turned into a harrowing ordeal that claimed the lives of five young hikers in one of the worst mountaineering disasters in American history. Code 1244, the radio call issued by Clackamas County Search and Rescue, serves as a haunting reminder of the unforgiving nature of the wilderness and the courage and resilience of those who ventured into its embrace.

## The Fatal Ascent

Sandra Shaw, Bennie Boyd, Karlyn Ramirez, Tamara Steiner, and Ted Elliott, all in their early twenties, set out on the Timberline Trail, an iconic 40-mile loop around Mount Hood's base. With ample supplies and experience hiking in the area, they were well-equipped for the challenge. However, as they climbed higher, weather conditions took a treacherous turn.



### Code 1244: The 1986 Mount Hood Tragedy by Ric Conrad

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 18007 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 467 pages  
Lending : Enabled

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As the day progressed, a thick blanket of fog enveloped the mountain, reducing visibility to near zero. Persistent rain soaked through their clothes, chilling them to the bone. With the trail obscured and the weather deteriorating, the hikers lost their way and wandered aimlessly in the wilderness.

## **Search and Rescue**

As night fell, the hikers failed to return to their trailhead. Their loved ones alerted authorities, and a massive search and rescue operation was launched. Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, Oregon National Guard, and volunteers from the community scoured the mountain for any sign of the missing group.

In the early hours of June 1, search teams discovered the first body. It belonged to Sandra Shaw, whose body was found near the base of Devils Creek. Over the next few hours, the bodies of the other four hikers were located scattered along a 3-mile stretch of the trail.

## **The Legacy of Code 1244**

The tragedy of Code 1244 shook the Portland community and beyond. It prompted a re-evaluation of hiking safety and the need for greater preparedness in the wilderness. The victims' families and friends established the Mount Hood Wilderness Education Fund to promote education and safety in the outdoors.

In the years since, a memorial commemorating the five hikers has been erected at the Timberline Trailhead. The site serves as a reminder of the fragility of life and the importance of respecting the power of nature.

Code 1244 remains a haunting reminder of the dangers that lurk in the wilderness and the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. The story of the five young hikers who lost their lives on Mount Hood is a testament to the courage and resilience of the human spirit, and a tribute to the families and friends who continue to honor their memory.

## **Book Recommendation**

For a deeper dive into the tragic events of May 31, 1986, we highly recommend the book **Code 1244: The 1986 Mount Hood Tragedy** by Paul Kvinta. This gripping account provides a comprehensive examination of the disaster, its aftermath, and the legacy it left behind.

With vivid descriptions, personal interviews, and historical analysis, **Code 1244** offers a poignant tribute to the victims and serves as a valuable resource for understanding one of the most tragic mountaineering disasters in American history.

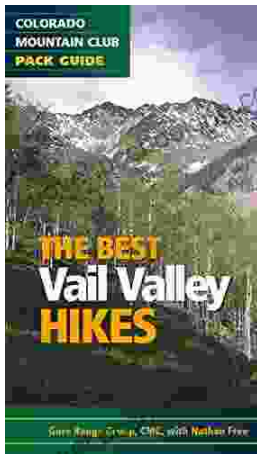




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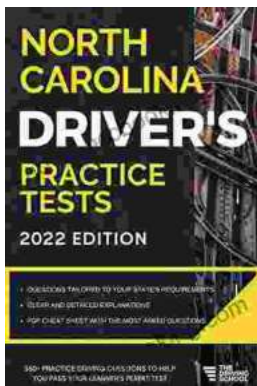
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