

Money

THE BULL MARKET IN FINANCIAL JOBS

JULY 1983 \$2.50

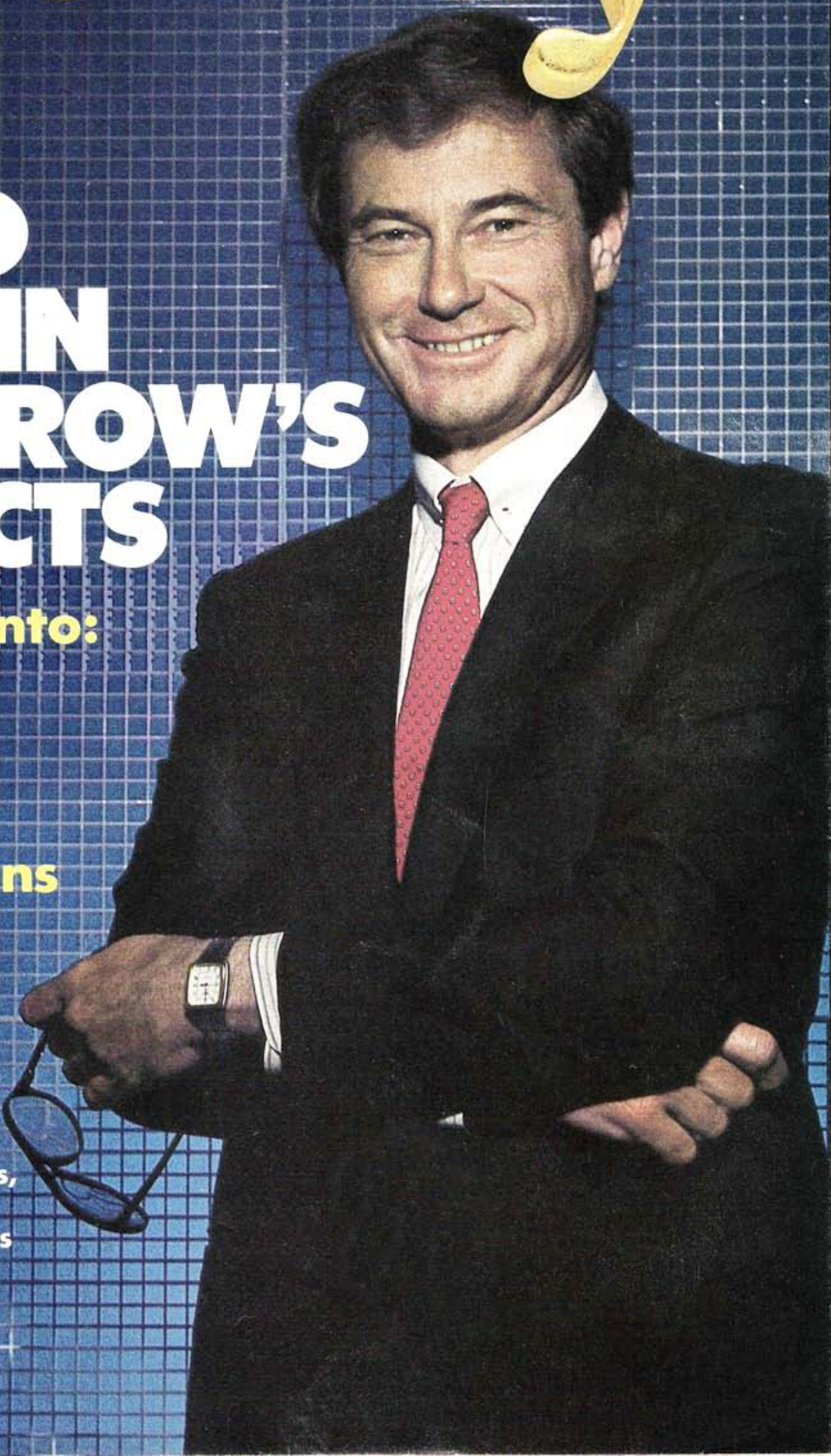
SPECIAL REPORT

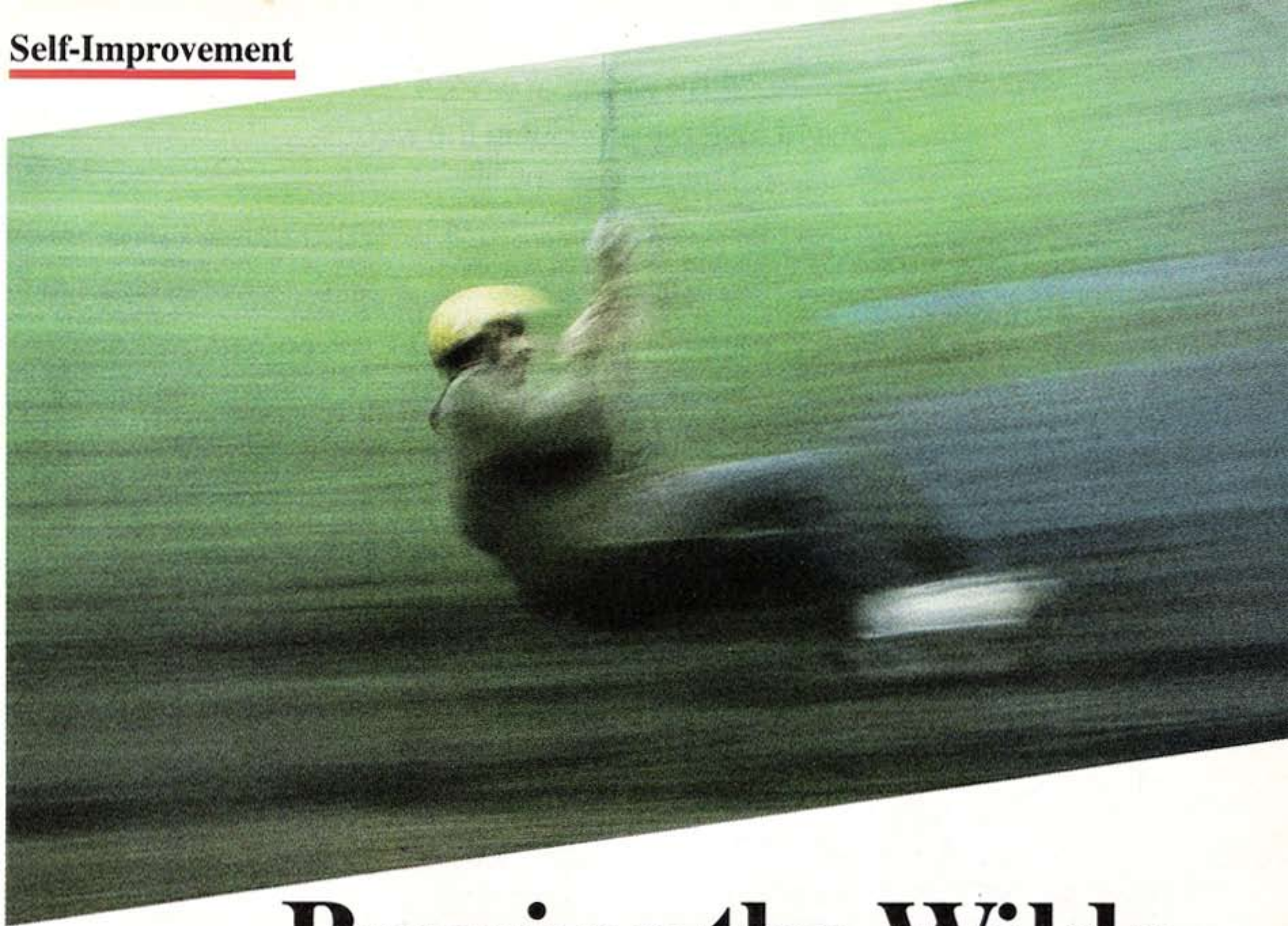
HOW TO INVEST IN TOMORROW'S PRODUCTS

Your best ways into:

- Computers
- Robotics
- Biotechnology
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Insider Thomas Perkins,
who helped create 60
successful high-tech firms,
tells the secrets of
spotting the next winners





Braving the Wilds to Survive in the Office

By teaching you to reach beyond yourself, these vigorous expeditions help you shrug off job pressures.

by Richard K. Rein

Her eyes glazing over with fear, her hands clinging to a thick strand of rope, Eileen Kinnaird dangles over the edge of a concrete-walled dam, 30 feet above some forbidding boulders in New Jersey's Kittatinny Mountains. She is supposed to use the rope to rappel—walk backward—down the face of the dam. But Kinnaird, a 30-year-old AT&T manager with a lifelong fear of heights, has slipped and, though she has a safety line, now twists helplessly against the concrete

wall. "I can't do this!" she screams. "I can't hold on anymore."

In this moment of peril it would give Kinnaird small comfort to learn that she is one of thousands of adults of all ages who each year leave their workaday routine to test their mettle in the great outdoors. They participate in mountain climbing, for example, or white-water canoeing and rafting, sea kayaking, cross-country skiing or solo camping in isolated terrain with minimal gear.

More and more of those who endure the rigors of a survival vacation do so to increase their confidence and gain a new sense of self-worth. Firms are springing up whose stated purpose is to lead adults

through rigorous character-building experiences in the outdoors. In addition, many corporations—including Martin Marietta, Coors and AT&T—send employees into the wilderness (at a company expense of around \$1,000 a person) to develop concepts of teamwork and risk taking that were once only talked about at indoor staff training sessions. The courses range widely in cost and difficulty. But whether experiencing the wilderness with colleagues or strangers, the participants all seem to find themselves in unusual predicaments, most of which end healthily and happily.

To cite several fairly typical examples:
► Eight Xerox managers were trekking

Reporter associate: Valerie W. Gerry

“If I’m wrong at work, I
might lose my job. But in the woods,
I might lose my life.”

and camping out at altitudes near 9,000 feet in the Pecos wilderness of New Mexico in May 1981 when they were engulfed in a freak spring blizzard. Two other people camping in the area that week died. “It was like an army in wartime—sharing the same foxhole brings on special camaraderie,” says George Bomley, 36, of that expedition, organized by Outward Bound (384 Field Point Rd., Greenwich, Conn. 06830), the nation’s largest sponsor of challenging outdoor adventures. For Bomley, a Xerox personnel manager in Palo Alto, the experience has “made

100° heat, trekked through the mostly uninhabited terrain of the Nguruman Escarpment, drinking water the color of mahogany (after first treating it with iodine) and scaring off menacing Cape buffalo by clapping hands and yelling.

Two days from their scheduled stop to pick up food, the group lost its way. “You learn not to panic,” says Hoglund, “and you learn that it takes a lot less energy to fix something than to fix it and worry about it at the same time.” Hoglund, now a writer for a corporate communications firm in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., says that

cases of nausea and headaches. “The trip isn’t risky, but it’s not for people who like to relax in hotels,” says Cogen. “Walking was hard. Sometimes just putting on your clothes was hard.”

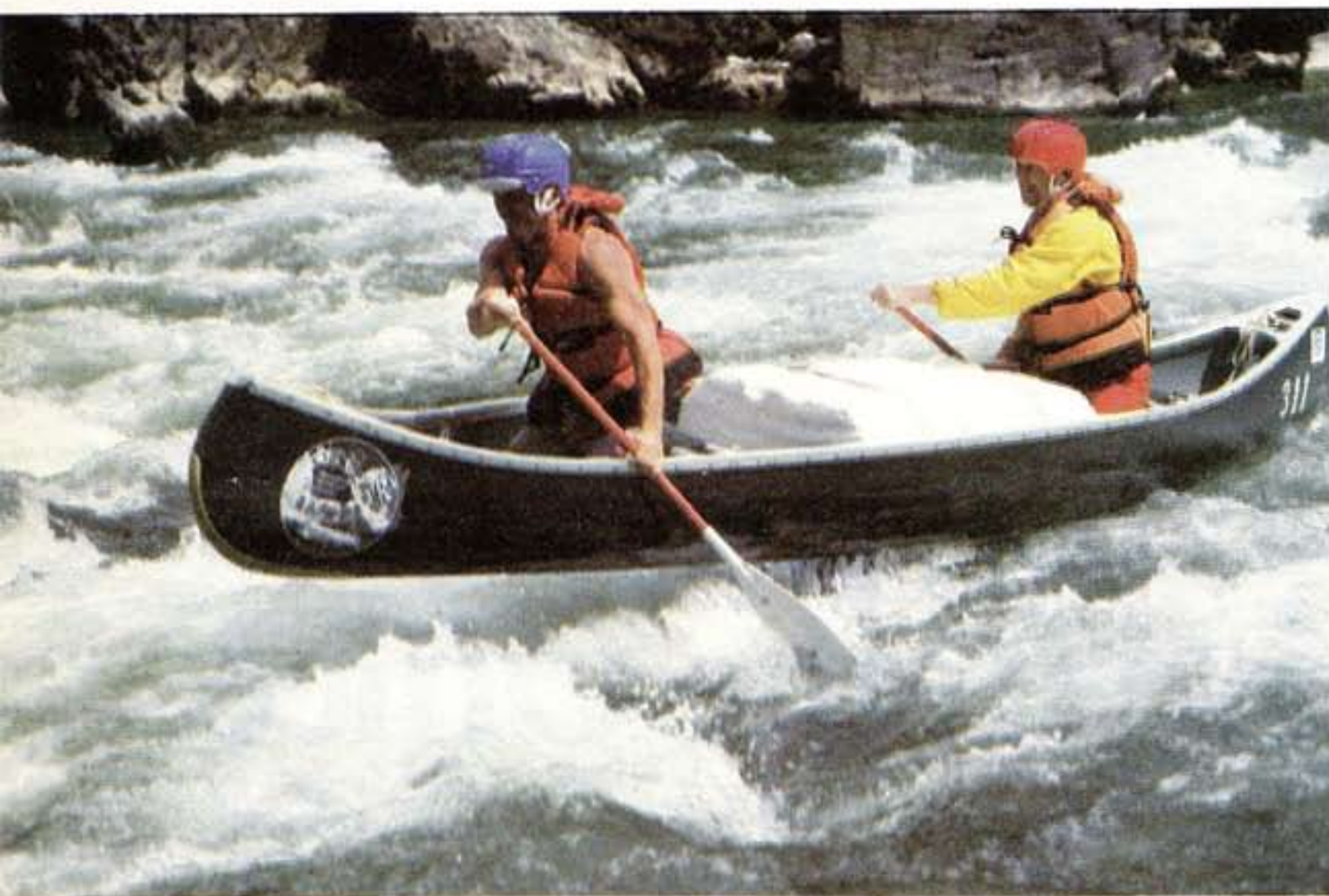
► Bill Lynch’s cross-country skiing trip into the Wyoming wilderness in 1982 was postponed for a day when the temperature in Yellowstone National Park fell to 52° below zero. The next day, when it warmed up to 40° below, Lynch, 36, a vice president of a computer company in Valley Forge, Pa., set out with nine other “students” and three instructors on a two-week course sponsored by NOLS.

The NOLS philosophy of minimum-impact camping—leaving the wilderness exactly as it was discovered—precludes campfires. Lynch and the others stayed warm at night by building “quincies,” snow structures that are rough combinations of igloos and beaver lodges; the sleeping quarters are above the level of the entrance so that melting snow, but not heat, escapes. Halfway into the trip, one skier began shaking violently in the middle of the night. Afflicted with hypothermia, a potentially fatal loss of body heat, the woman—a marathon runner in her late twenties—was fed hot liquids while people took turns lying beside her in her sleeping bag. Her symptoms lasted about seven hours and recurred two nights later. Then she regained her normal body temperature. For Lynch, coping with that crisis was “frightening, but the trip as a whole was one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve ever had.”

For many others, the benefits appear to apply as much to their careers as to their private lives. “The only exercise some of us ever get is throwing our weight around, jumping to conclusions and grasping at straws,” Bill Sternbergh, 41, likes to say. He works for the Center for Creative Leadership, a North Carolina institute that has worked with Outward Bound to develop wilderness programs to improve management skills.

In the wilderness, adds John O’Brien, 39, a Princeton, N.J. management leadership consultant who trains corporate clients, “you’re getting people out of their routines. The more you move out of business as usual, the greater the tendency to see things simply. People’s masks fall—their act isn’t so important.”

The Executive Council on Foreign



Wayne Bennett (left) and Lynn Stoutner cope with the rapids—and their own emotions—on North Carolina’s Toe River.

decision-making a whole lot easier. If I take a risk and I’m wrong, the most I can lose is my job. But out in the woods, in the snow, I might actually lose my life if I don’t get it right.”

► One dreary winter day, Melissa Hoglund, 24, looked out the window of her office in a Boston-based strategic-planning company and decided she had to get away. She ended up in Kenya on a 70-day expedition sponsored by the National Outdoor Leadership School, called NOLS (Box AA, Lander, Wyo. 82520). Excluding her air fare, the trip cost \$3,000. Hoglund and four other participants, all lugging 70-pound backpacks in

her group found its bearings with the help of some Masai tribesmen.

► When Lorna Cogen, 33, went on a three-week hike in the mountains of Peru last year, half of the land cost (\$1,680) was paid by the organizer, Mountain Travel Inc. (1398 Solano Ave., Albany, Calif. 94706), which annually arranges more than 200 expeditions to hard-to-reach places in 30 or more countries. Cogen’s trip was underwritten because she is a physician at San Francisco’s Kaiser Hospital, and Mountain Travel wanted a doctor to go along in case of emergency. “Anytime you’re above 10,000 feet you risk altitude sickness,” says Cogen. “We were camping at 15,000 feet and hiking to 17,000.” Cogen’s group, which ranged in age from 27 to 64, enjoyed the adventure and had just a few

"Rafting breaks everyone away from their routines. We find that attitudes change in just a week. The river bonds people."

Diplomats, a New York-based organization founded in 1962 to help visiting emissaries understand the U.S., sponsors white-water raft trips that put diplomats, American businessmen and government officials all in the same boat. "The rafting experience breaks everyone away from their everyday routines," says Ellen Stoutenberg, founding director of the council. "We find that attitudes change in just a week. The river bonds people." American executives who are bilingual and work for multinational corporations can volunteer for trips by writing to 211 E. 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Since 1979, one company, Martin Marietta, has shipped 450 people, from executives to secretaries, into the wilderness with Outward Bound instructors. Says Edward Dash, chief of educational services: "We've promoted many of the people who've taken Outward Bound. The course teaches people to take responsibility and to work together."

A group called Rites of Passage (15 Hansen Rd., Novato, Calif. 94947) charges only \$300 for a seven-day expedition into the Mojave Desert, aiming for such forbidding destinations as the Last Chance Range and the Funeral Mountains. The low price is understandable: for three days and nights the participants camp alone in the desert with enough water but no food.

If you seek a more traditional wilderness experience, you can find one good source of names in the expedition directory carried in each issue of *Outside* magazine (1165 N. Clark St., Chicago, Ill. 60610). Prices vary, largely according to the complexity of the trip. But one bonus, observes Bill Lynch, the subzero skier, is that "once you're out there you can't spend another nickel."

Finding the best sponsor or guide can be an expedition in itself. Experience counts as much in the wilderness as it does anywhere else. "Take a second look if someone hasn't been in the business a long time," says Steven Harper, 27, who has worked for Outward Bound and the National Outdoor Leadership School and who runs the Esalen Institute's Wilderness Program (Big Sur, Calif. 93920).

Outward Bound, the biggest survival-training organization, got going in 1962 and now handles more than 8,500 participants a year. NOLS, the second largest



Terry Bisaccia, an AT&T secretary, learns to walk aerial ropes in New Jersey.

survival school, was formed by one of the original Outward Bound instructors three years later and trains about 1,500 people annually. The two groups' fees and requirements are similar. Outward Bound charges about \$600 for its intensive nine- to 11-day courses in Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, North Carolina and Hurricane Island, Maine. That includes all food, backpacks, parkas and sleeping bags. You provide footwear, shorts or wool slacks, wool shirt and wool socks. NOLS charges \$725 for its shortest courses, two-week expeditions to Yellowstone National Park and kayaking in the Gulf of California, and provides basic supplies. For an additional \$75 it also will rent you all the necessary clothing.

One disadvantage for career people is that NOLS offers few two-week courses. Most are for a month or longer and attract younger people with more time to spare. Outward Bound has courses as short as four days, several of which are designed for managers and teachers and are tax deductible. Another such group, Outdoor Leadership Training Seminars (P.O. Box 20281, Denver, Colo. 80220), offers \$130 river-rafting trips as short as one week-

end. Outward Bound and NOLS insist on proof of a recent physical examination. NOLS also makes you promise, in writing, to pay \$200 extra if a helicopter has to be summoned to fly you out of the wilderness.

The two organizations differ mainly in philosophy. NOLS focuses on the development of outdoor skills, including minimum-impact camping, hiking, safety, environmental awareness, mountain climbing and expedition leadership. For example, NOLS mountain climbers don't use pitons—the spikes that other climbers drive into rocks as footholds; instead they use chocks—metal wedges that can be removed by the last climber.

Outward Bound can be dogmatic in its own way. It bans cigarettes, nonprescription drugs and alcohol from its expeditions and encourages participants to fast during their solo camping periods. Says Steve Harper: "Outward Bound is very challenge oriented. The instructors push your emotional, physical and spiritual limits. With Outward Bound, you might do a rappel where you wouldn't really need to do it from a purist mountaineer's point of view. With NOLS there are fewer contrived situations. NOLS people would say the wilderness is challenging enough."

During Outward Bound expeditions, participants struggle with group problem-solving exercises and meet often to discuss their progress as individuals and as a group. That leaves people like Bill Lynch cold. "I'm 36 and I didn't feel like having some 26-year-old instructor telling me how to build character," he says, explaining why he chose the NOLS winter course. But thousands each year seek the Outward Bound experience. Although the program began in the U.S. primarily as a means of helping youngsters cope with the travails of adolescence, by 1981 more than half that year's graduates were over 21 and more than a quarter were 30 and older.

Outward Bound suggests that students begin conditioning themselves a month before the course. In May, a few days before a group was scheduled to meet at the Trailways bus station in Asheville, N.C. to depart on a nine-day course, the participants were all girding themselves—mentally, physically or both. Kristen McDougall-Jeter, 28, a self-employed art



Scruffy but smiling on a nine-day Outward Bound trek, these adventurers take a break at Table Rock Mountain, N.C.

director in Minneapolis, was hiking with a backpack filled with bricks to approximate the load she would bear on the trail. Bill Robinson, 32, a vice president of the American Bankers Insurance Group in Atlanta, worked out regularly before the trip. "I'm looking for a renewal on another level," said Robinson. "It hurts me to lose the idealism and principles I had when I was in college." A single person, he had one more reason for taking the course. "This one is coed. Ever since college I've had little success meeting the kind of people who share my values."

Katie Wilkins, 32, an inventory control manager for McCormick & Co. in Baltimore, was hoping to go back to school for a master's in computer science. "I keep putting it off," she said. "Here's a chance to see if I'm capable of gutting something out." Norman Bishop, 32, a merchandise manager for a wholesale distributor in Cincinnati, signed up for the challenge. "I found it to be a mini boot camp—a big confidence builder."

For these participants, Outward Bound proved to be as demanding as it was rewarding. "You have a lot more fun if you're in shape," Wilkins said later. Added Robinson, back at the office the day after his return: "If you had a couple of days to recover before going back to work, it would be beneficial."

Not every wilderness experience has ended so happily. Six NOLS participants and one apprentice instructor have died on trips, but none since 1979. Thirteen students have died in accidents on Outward Bound expeditions—nine by drowning, two by falling rocks and two from exposure. Two instructors also have died. In January 1978, a flotilla of nine

kayakers paddled into the 15-foot waves of a winter storm off the east coast of Baja California. Three died, and the parents of one filed a \$1 million lawsuit against Outward Bound. (It was settled out of court.) Since then more than 40,000 people have completed the course, and the organization has reported no fatalities or serious accidents.

"Outward Bound is obviously not for everybody, but nothing is," says Sternbergh of the Center for Creative Leadership. "Another downside risk is that it's possible to have a failure. A tiny percentage leave in the middle of the course—it was just not the right experience for them." Outward Bound officials estimate that the number of dropouts is fewer than 4%.

John O'Brien, the corporate consultant, emphasizes that personal growth from experiences such as Outward Bound or NOLS usually comes when a person leaves his or her own "comfort zone." But for others, these activities are just another thrill to seek. "They have to keep jacking up the ante of risk in order to enjoy it," says O'Brien. But, he emphasizes, "that's not the problem with most people in the corporate world. They are used to caution, safety and comfort."

And what about Eileen Kinnaid, the AT&T manager dangling over the edge of a dam? As Kinnaid screams in desperation, a group of colleagues standing on top of the dam shout back, urging her to continue. After several agonizing minutes, she regains her footing and begins the first halting steps down the face of the dam. By the time she reaches the bottom, she is smiling from ear to ear. She clenches both fists and raises her arms in victory. "I couldn't believe the support and encouragement," she says. "Trust is a very difficult thing for me to accept. It's as if I have unleashed a power I never knew I had." S