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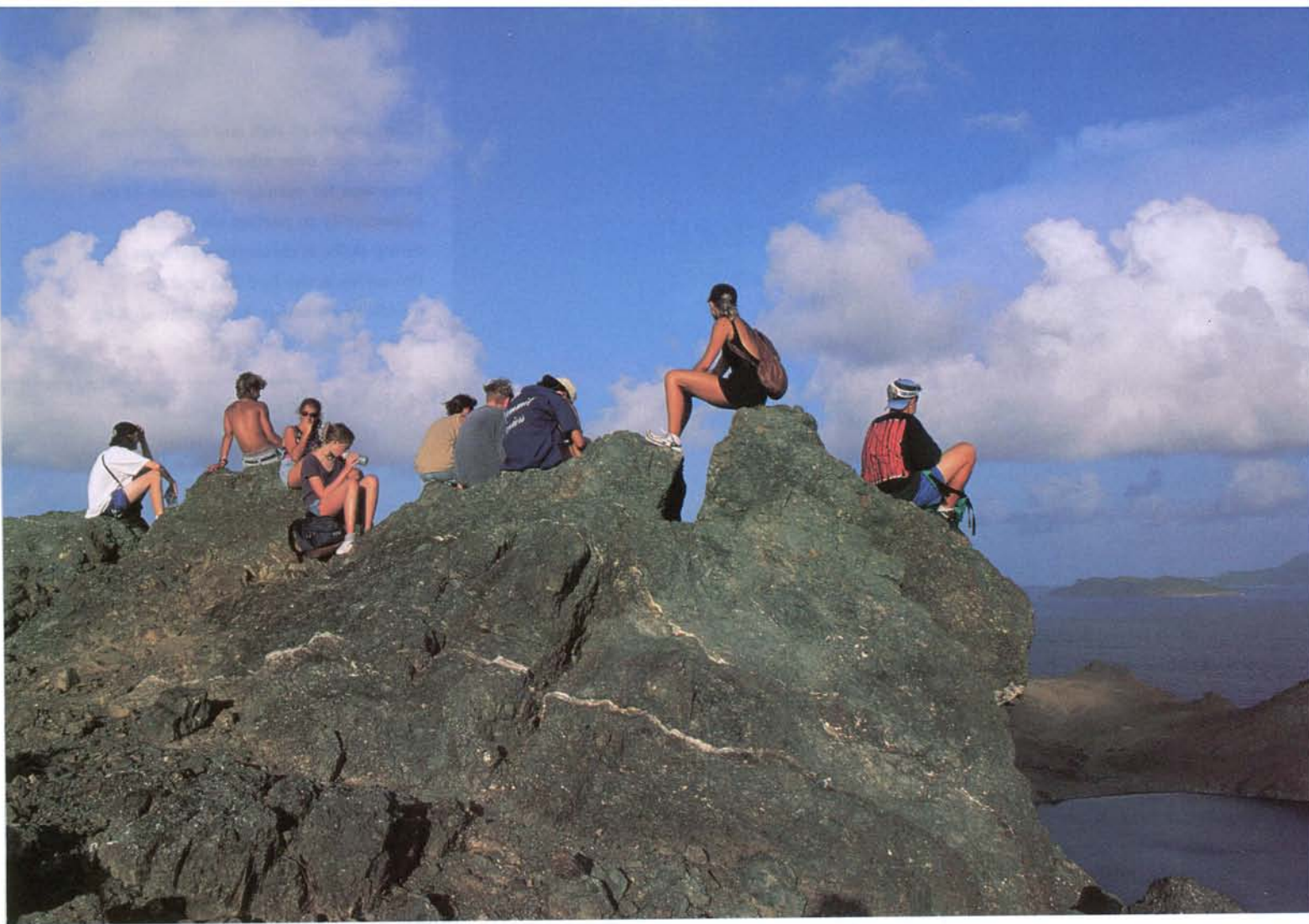
# GREENWICH

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**Bill Tragos:**  
Energizer of the Ad World





Now in its sixth year, Broadreach trips for teenagers are attracting a large contingent from Greenwich.

**BY ALISON STONE**

## ANYTHING ELSE IS A LETDOWN

**F**IFTEEN STUDENT SCUBA DIVERS FROM THE United States gear up for their first night dive in the Red Sea, which with its wondrous, almost alien underwater world promises heart-quickenning, memory-searing adventure. But to a few of the divers staring down into the darkened, swirling waters, the



**JOHN LOCHNER (left and below) chose Broadreach over other adventure programs for teenagers because of the opportunity to perfect his scuba diving skills. A three-time veteran of the series in the Red Sea and now a PADI dive master, he plans to sign up again for next summer.**

hours of lessons, lectures and daytime dives leading up to this moment somehow seem inadequate preparation for the plunge into this other, unknown world. What they need more than any hard training is an extra dose of courage, a seat-of-your-pants sense of abandon, and a friend.

Two girls, both high school sophomores, suddenly reach out and grasp each other's hand before jumping. They continue to hold hands as they explore the underwater reef and its nocturnal wildlife with nothing more than the conelike beams from their flashlights for illumination. Afterward, the girls were hooked on night diving and went again several times, often helping out fellow divers.

"Seeing that initial unity between them was really special," says Andy Petesch, a staff member of Broadreach, the sponsoring organization of the expedition. "In a way, their experience embodies what we're all about: achieving personal growth through teamwork, in a uniquely challenging environment."

Broadreach — named for a nautical term meaning the fastest point of sail, as well as for its figurative connotations — is the brainchild of thirty-two-year-old entrepreneur Carlton Goldthwaite, an affable ex-Wall Street executive who relocated to North Carolina to estab-

lish his travel adventure program for teenagers.

"The greatest satisfaction I get," he says, "is in seeing a young person break out of his or her shell, knowing that Broadreach has touched them in a positive way and helped them grow."

Though Goldthwaite comes across as a man with a mission, he is careful to explain that his underlying motivation for leaving behind the suits and ties is simple: He craved a more balanced lifestyle between financial and personal reward. His office in Raleigh is in a sunny converted 1920s warehouse with few dividing walls, full kitchen, stereo system and a pool table for a conference table. His employees say they love their jobs. And why shouldn't they? Goldthwaite regularly sends them on trips to ski or beach resorts, where they put in some hours writing the next brochure, or they go to the expedition sites where they can see Broadreach wheels in motion.

Marketing director Missy Cooke, a Greenwich native, can't seem to say enough good things about Goldthwaite. "As a boss, Carlton fosters an atmosphere of camaraderie that's really special in a workplace," she says. "It's a feeling that extends to the programs and everyone benefits from it." Since Missy grew up in Greenwich, she knows the town



well and she makes sure that a large contingent of Greenwich families learn of Broadreach and its excursions to Egypt and the Caribbean.

"I got interested when I discovered that they offer scuba diving," says John Lochner, a senior at the Hotchkiss School, whose home is in Greenwich. "Sure, there are other programs out there, like Outward Bound, but scuba diving in the Red Sea? That's what turned me on." John is a three-time veteran of Broadreach; last summer he completed two programs back to back. He proudly flashes all his cards, attesting to the skill rankings he achieved under Broadreach's tutelage. He's a full-fledged dive master today, and yet he plans to go back next summer.

John's friend Kate Leikin, who he met on the last expedition and who hails from the Midwest, was intrigued



**THE BEAUTY** of the Red Sea with its incredible coral life and colorful saltwater fish made a lasting impression on the broadreachers from Greenwich (left and below). Night diving and drift diving added to the excitement, as did encounters with bioluminescence, a microscopic life form that glows in the dark when a light is flashed on it.

by an ad Broadreach ran in a national publication. "I wrote to them, read all the material they sent me, and I thought, this is for me."

What distinguishes these youngsters and their peers in the program, besides a thirst for adventure, is their independence. "You have to be able to function on your own," says Kate, "be willing to explore the places you find yourself in, and be open to the cultures you meet." John would wander into restaurants for lunch, and then make friends with the chef. Dubbed "the cameraman" by his mother, John came home from each trip with over eighteen rolls of film, taken with three or more different cameras, including one for underwater photography.

**W**HAT EXACTLY IS BROADreach? Loosely defined, it's a summer enrichment program for thirteen- to eighteen-year-olds to the Sinai Peninsula and the Red Sea, or to the more familiar waters of the Caribbean. The sessions run from twenty to twenty-eight days in length, structured mostly around scuba diving and sailing. Goldthwaite is quick to explain that these are not red carpet adventures, although John Lochner says he was "overwhelmingly happy" while on the Red Sea excursion. The teens are expected to pitch in for their daily

bread, doing chores such as cleaning the deck of the boat. They are also responsible for their own free time, living quarters and expenses. That's quite a reach, even for most high school seniors.

Whether or not the "broadreachers" achieve the goals of the program seems secondary to the fact that many of them have just had the time of their lives. Unquestionably, the prospect of outdoor activities in an exotic locale is the most obvious lure, especially for those interested in scuba diving, sailing, sea kayaking and hiking.

Five of the trips offer full scuba certification taught by PADI (Professional Association of Dive Instructors) certified dive masters. First-time divers or those with "resort" skills can finish as advanced open water divers with a specialty, such as night diving or drift diving, a technique that involves passively following the current. There is also something called the rescue diver course set in the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean. Along the way, a little education sneaks in about underwater ecosystems and the fragility of the rain forest. "An educated explorer or diver," Goldthwaite points out, "is one who is respectful of the environment."

Some skills and activities don't result in special certification, while others can lead to academic credit. In either case, the instructors are top-notch and the



settings picture postcard perfect. U.S. Coast Guard licensed sailors and experienced yachtsmen teach sailing on a 400-mile voyage across the Lesser Antilles in the "Arc of the Caribbean", while a three-day whitewater rafting trip and a backpacking trek through a rain forest are offered in the Costa Rica program. There's also marine research and coral reef study in the Bahamas. It's learning while having fun at the same time, and the students go home with high school or college level credits.

A main attraction of the Leeward Islands is the multinational mix from



**ANNA KRAUS and Stephanie Miller** hoist a sail on a 45-foot catamaran yacht during their Underwater Discoveries trip to the Caribbean last summer. But it wasn't all work and no play — the crew (below) enjoyed many hours water skiing, sea kayaking, scuba diving and exploring the islands.



island to island. With the French influence in St. Barths, the Dutch in St. Martin and Saba, and the British in St. Kitts, the cultural potpourri of colonial Europe is rich and colorful. The Festival of Carnival, complete with costumes and parades, is a bonus in the Leewards. On the Costa Rica trip, local naturalists talk to the broadreachers about the indigenous tribes and the country's efforts to preserve natural resources.

"One memorable day," says Allie Hecker, a Greenwich Academy sophomore, "was when a guide on the island of Dominica drove us around showing us the banana fields, stopping at different fruit trees like papaya, mango, and breadfruit — a plant which can be poisonous if not prepared correctly — explaining how they are used and eaten and are so important to island survival."

John remembers the dinners prepared by Bedouin tribesmen in the desert outside Cairo. The men made unleavened bread and cooked it over a small fire. "They would cook with only five or six ingredients, add different spices and turn out these really really good dishes," he says. He still talks about the "great chicken and rice dish" and fafael, "the best I ever had, better even than the one made by the Indian restaurant in Washington Square".

One day of each trip is dedicated to

some form of good will activity, whether cleaning up a beach, or sailing with underprivileged children. "We did a lot of community service," says John. "It's about getting along with people from another country, another culture, learning about how they do things and doing it along with them." Once, he and some friends met a man digging a roadbed, and to the laborer's surprise, the young men spontaneously gave him a helping hand.

"While you're there, you're not trying to impress anybody, you're not having to impress anybody, yet the things you accomplish are definitely impressive," John says, "and the atmosphere for learning them is open and non-judgmental."

The emphasis on responsibility and group leadership also struck a chord with Allie Hecker, who came home from Arc of the Caribbean knowing that she could organize and lead a group. "You realize a couple of days into it that this is not a game," she says. "During the days you serve as skipper — you have to run and navigate a boat with twelve people in the middle of an ocean."

While they are given a lot of leeway to make decisions, certain activities are taboo, such as drug and alcohol consumption, smoking and "exclusive relationships". Accountability is enforced

not only by Broadreach, but by the teens themselves. Last summer two young people went home early after cigarette and alcohol violations — a decision made by themselves (and their parents) and their fellow participants.

Everyone has a turn at being group leader at least once during the trip. Any negative first impressions are given little opportunity to set in, partly because daily rituals take so much time. Though breakfast and lunch are often on the run, attendance at dinner is required. At the table, or wherever the meal takes place, on the ground, sand, grass or boat deck, the leader starts dinner by reading aloud a passage he or she has chosen from a



**GREENWICH ACADEMY student Anne Day piles on the apparatus for an underwater exploration of Caribbean waters. She is a PADI advanced open-water diver. A waterfall (below) provides a photographic opportunity in Dominica for the Broadreach team.**



Bartlett's-style compendium. He or she then offers a toast for outstanding accomplishment that day ("Sarah got certified!"). Before eating, a moment of silence is observed, the young people hold hands and starting with the leader, "pass the squeeze" from one hand to the next.

The meal is followed by a discussion of the day's "glows" ("I saw a school of dolphins.") and "glums" ("It rained.") Staffer Tony Hawgood, a biology and chemistry teacher at Lawrence Academy in Massachusetts, describes the experience: "When you're having dinner on the open deck of a catamaran under a starry sky, everything just seems so horribly right; sometimes we skip the glums."

Talking to a broadreacher about his experience is to be bombarded with superlatives: "incredible diving ... awesome sailing ... the best trip ever".

Tom Toepke, a Brunswick School junior, recalls nostalgic details of his trip to the Sinai, from the Pigeon Hole Hotel in Sharm El Sheikh, to a desert camel ride and traditional meal with a Bedouin tribe, to haggling in an open air bazaar for a small table with inlaid mother of pearl (a present for his mother). He was most excited by the underwater world he discovered: seeing Spanish Dancers, the blood red, primitive jellyfish-like creatures that move through the water with graceful, wave-like twirls; spying a hammerhead shark

for the first time; swimming through a phenomenon called bioluminescence, a cloudlike, glow-in-the-dark, microscopic life form that appears when a light is flashed on it.

"We could make it swirl around and create crazy patterns by running our hands through it," Tom says. "And its color, a neon fluorescent blue, was surreal. I came away with a whole new respect for what's in the sea."

Tom started his trip to the Red Sea with resort certification and finished as an advanced open water diver with seven specialties including night diving and drift diving. "It was the best opportunity I've ever had and may ever have to scuba dive. It seems like anything after this would be a letdown."

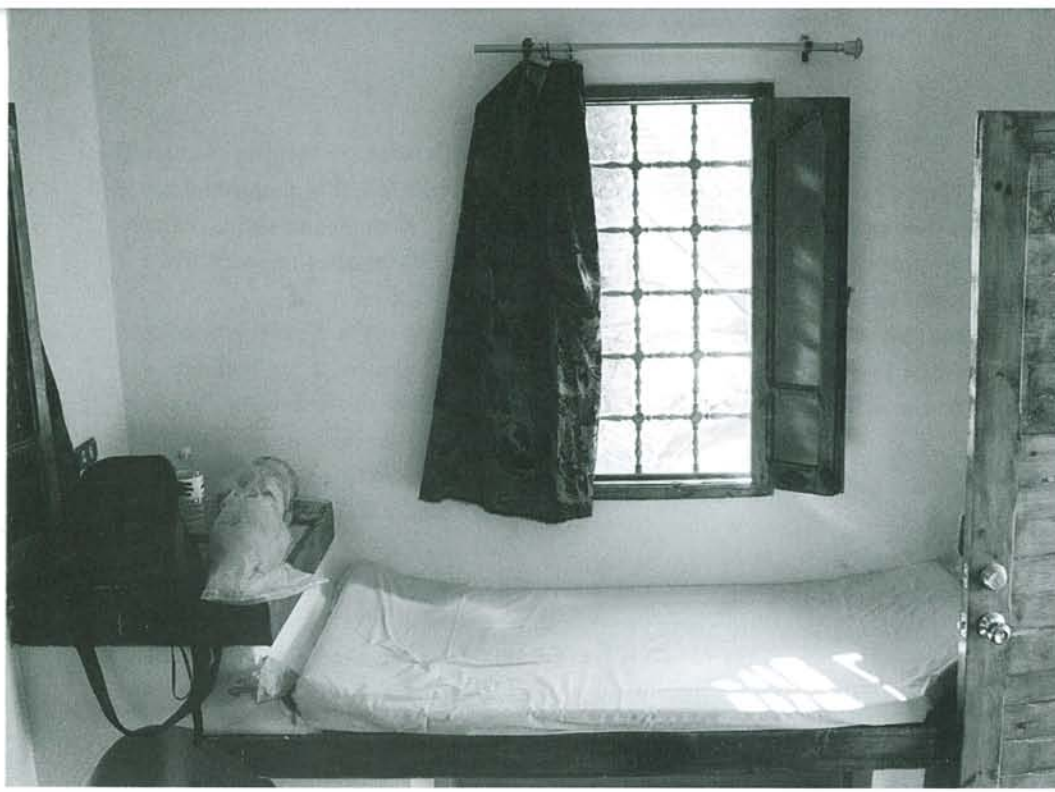
He may not be exaggerating. Even Jacques Cousteau described the Red Sea with its rare coral reef and underwater species as among the top dive locales in the world.

Tom plans to follow in the footsteps of his older sister Beatrice, a Broadreach alumnus, and apply next year to the Ecuador program, which includes an Amazon rain forest expedition and a foray to the Galapagos Islands.

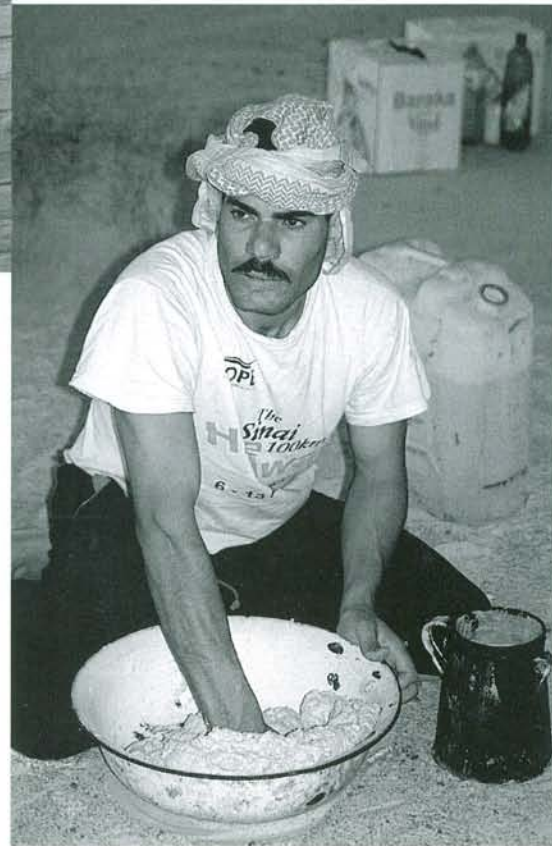
Anne Day, a thirteen-year-old Greenwich Academy student who went to the Caribbean, echoes Tom's enthusiasm. "We slept on the deck of the catamaran when it got hot. It was fun, living in close quarters with so many people, because everyone was so nice and everyone helped out. Swimming and playing with a pair of wild dolphins on our last dive was the highlight of my trip."

Recently a fourteen-year-old who was described by her parents as somewhat withdrawn socially was placed in a group of peers her age and younger, since older teenagers might have proven intimidating. Being among the oldest put her in a de facto leadership position. Afterward, her parents wrote Broadreach a letter noting a positive change they saw in their daughter.

This type of group "management"



JOHN LOCHNER'S room in the Pigeon Hole Hotel in the Sinai had everything he needed. During one safari into the desert, broadreachers met with a Bedouin tribe and were treated to dinner. One man (below) kneaded dough, prior to cooking it on an open fire. A younger member of the tribe (below left) was a camel driver for John's group.



continues during the trips, with the staff using subtle methods to draw out shy youngsters, so attention isn't drawn to them. "We limit the size of the group to ten or fifteen students, and divide them into teams, so it's harder to form cliques. The more timid teenagers have less of a crowd in which to hide," explains Missy Cooke.

"I knew this guy who was really open and funny one on one with the people he knew," says John Lochner,

"but he got quiet when there was a large group of people. The staff buddied him with more outgoing people during diving and by the end of the trip, he had gotten more outgoing, cracking jokes in front of everybody." Kate Leiken adds that "you're unaware the staff is nudging you one way or the other. Then you realize you're more confident, more relaxed with everyone, you've grown a lot."

Despite the regular trips ashore, having fifteen people plus staff and crew aboard a boat for four weeks could lead to a chronic case of cabin fever. Surprisingly, there are few complaints on that score. "If you need space, you can just jump into the water," is a common refrain. Most participants use their sleeping cabins for changing clothes and not much more.

Anna Kraus, a fourteen-year-old Central student, says that one of the best things that happened to her was making new friends, one of whom, Stephanie Miller of Greenwich, she "sees all the time now".

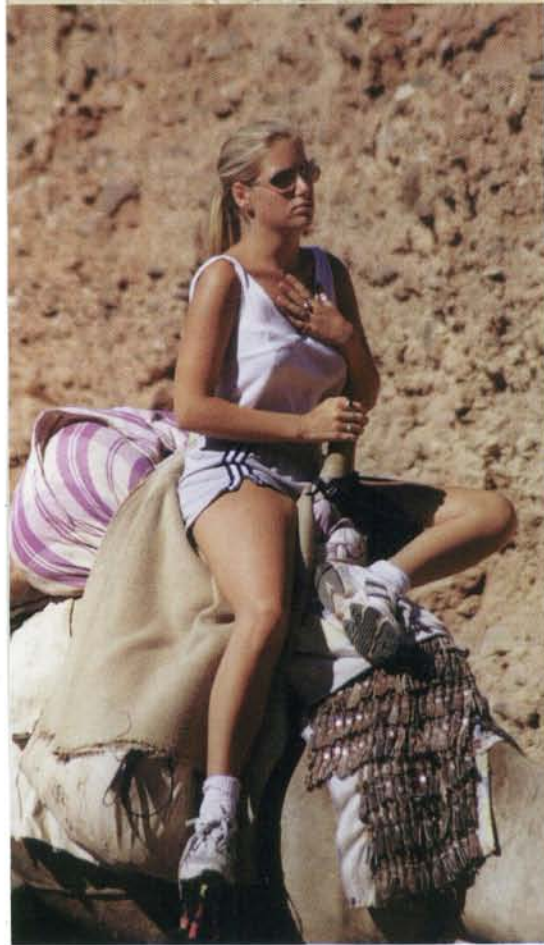
The teens all give their instructors high marks. Over one hundred people apply each year for the few vacancies that might open up on staff positions, and Goldthwaite admits he feels fortunate

that he "can select the best of the best". Still, Broadreach spends an average of almost \$2,000 in training new staff members, which includes a four-day course dedicated to a "teach don't tell" style of leadership.

"Life is not like the brochure," Goldthwaite says, and he wants everyone who works for him to be able to deal with any problem that may arise.

Apparently, all of this training pays off. On Arc of the Caribbean, a conflict between the girls and the boys over the regular but strenuous job of removing a dinghy engine (the boys always did it; the girls wanted the chance to show





their mettle) was settled during a group discussion. The girls showed they were equal to the task. Rather than perceiving the staff as authority figures, the teenagers felt a sense of respectful camaraderie with their instructors. "They're like peers, but older, and they know more," says Anna Kraus. "They were easy to talk to and explained things in a way that made learning fun."

All of this sounds wonderful, but

parents know that there are inherent risks in any sport like scuba diving or sailing, and as one Greenwich mother, Jody Bellows, whose sixteen-year-old went on Underwater Discoveries, explains, "Jennifer enjoyed herself and there weren't any problems on her trip, but it's not wise to assume that this type of activity is risk free, and I would always recommend asking for referrals from other parents about any program of this kind."

"The kids might feel like Man Friday," Goldthwaite reassures them, "but in terms of safety, there's a huge net. Everything is very much under control. We will not enter a situation that we know is dangerous," he adds, referring to the massacre of tourists in Egypt last year. "That goes without saying."

However, vulnerability to the vagaries of weather and wildlife, as well as to accidents or illness on the open seas or in the depths of a rain forest, might give even the most intrepid traveler pause.

Allie Hecker vividly remembers a hair-raising incident of outrunning a storm in the Caribbean. "We set out only to be called back to port because of weather, even though we were halfway to the next island. Soon we could see the dark clouds and rains behind us on the horizon, gaining on us fairly quickly. It literally chased us back to port."

Despite such white-knuckle moments,



**JENN WALKER** of New Canaan was part of the group that traveled with Greenwich teenagers to the east coast of the Sinai Peninsula. There, they rode camels during a safari led by Bedouin through the desert (top). In Sharm El Sheikh, they came across a barefoot man digging a roadbed (right) and offered him a helping hand.



**THE WRECK** of a cargo freighter teeters on the edge of Gordon Reef, a favorite haunt for divers from Broadreach.

the Greenwich broadreachers were surprisingly sanguine about their trips. John Lochner says he wasn't that concerned about safety. "There was one instructor with twenty-four sessions in emergency training under his belt," he recalls, "and another who carried around a backpack first-aid kit, and all the staff knew how to use everything in it."

As word spreads about Broadreach, Goldthwaite will eventually put a brake on what he describes as the "hyper-growth". In the meantime, he's in the midst of establishing two new programs: The Thirteenth Year, a reference to the first year out of high school, is a year-long round-the-world sailing adventure for young people before they head off to college; the other, "Ten Days on Wall Street", a fairly radical departure for Broadreach, introduces high schoolers to the world of finance.

"So many students plan on a career on Wall Street almost blindly," says Goldthwaite. "This will give them a frame of reference later on, when they're choosing a major in college."

Whichever direction it takes, Broadreach inspires a sentiment often expressed by the Greenwich contingent: a desire to go back for more adventure. □

# broadreach

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