EDITOR'S NOTE

Comfort zones

To become a better person, it is necessary to regularly venture outside of one's "comfort zone." This is one of the aspects of wilderness medicine that attracts so many adventurers—the desire to experience new and challenging environments and situations. Exploring outside the comfort zone allows us to develop our skills and abilities, test ourselves, develop self-confidence, create new relationships, and experience a sense of satisfaction when we are successful and set goals when we fail.

For me, it is an exciting opportunity to go outside my personal comfort zone and become the Editor of this journal. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to nurture and develop my editorial skills while forging vital and cherished relationships with many others in the field of wilderness medicine. There is great potential for satisfaction here, yet the challenge is daunting indeed.

Bill Robinson is a tough act to follow. He has been tremendously successful with *Wilderness and Environmental Medicine*. Dr Robinson navigated the Journal to an absolutely critical milestone—indexing in *Index Medicus* and MEDLINE. I think it is fair to say that the vast majority of readers of medical literature are unaware of the tremendous amount of work necessary to achieve this status. We all owe Bill and the rest of the Journal staff, and the contributors who for years have kept their faith in the Journal, a huge debt of gratitude for making this a reality.

In addition, Bill also has worked relentlessly to lay the groundwork necessary to allow our Journal to be published electronically. At the time of this writing, we are very close to being able to see the current issue of *WEM* on-line as soon as it is published (weeks before it appears in your mailbox), and over the next several months, previous volumes will be archived at the site. This will allow people to search prior issues for topics of interest.

One of the big reasons I agreed to take on the chal-

lenging role of Editor of *WEM* is a promise from Bill that he will remain very active with the Journal and will be a readily available resource. Further reinforcing my decision is the assurance that our talented Publications Manager, Jonna Barry, and our Managing Editor at Allen Press, Mary Lee Norris, are committed to remaining with the Journal. With the help of all these hardworking individuals and the full support of the Wilderness Medical Society, I am excited about my future with *WEM*.

A scientific journal cannot be successful without the input of a solid editorial staff and a hardworking core group of peer reviewers. I look forward to getting to know everyone who commits time and energy to the Journal. In the next few months, I will solicit additional peer reviewers. If you have an area of special expertise or interest in wilderness medicine, please let me know by filling out an interest form to be published in the WMS newsletter, *Wilderness Medicine Letter* (soon to be available on-line at the WMS Web page, <http://www.wms.org>). From past experience, I can assure you that it is a fascinating educational experience to provide peer review on the scientific merit and clarity of original science, clinical observations, and other sorts of manuscripts.

I plan to spend my first 6 months as Editor learning all I can about *WEM* without making any major changes. I am, therefore, very much interested in learning from the readers and fellow WMS members about their ideas on how to make improvements on this vital medical information resource. Please write to me with your suggestions and criticisms. This is *your* Journal. A time of editorial transition is an opportunity to take a fresh look at what has made this publication successful in the past and how to ensure its growth in the future.

Robert Norris, MD
Editor