'Wild, Wild Woman' tells how to enjoy the great outdoors

By KATHY PARRISH

Wearing a handwoven blouse over slacks and boots, tousle- haired Maggie Nichols looks her role as assistant man-aging editor of Field and Stream maga-zine.

Then you find out she usually wears skirts to the office, puts on lipstick be-fore her picture is taken and parties until all hours with her producer-hus-band.

band.
You can't tell by looking — which is
the point of Nichols's book, "Wild, Wild
Woman," a woman's guide to enjoying
the outdoors.

"A lot of women feel they don't be-long in the outdoors, that it's a man's world," said Ms. Nichols. In 18 years with "America's Number One Sports-man's Magazine," she has become an experienced outdoor person.

"They think it's too rough - all worms and yuk.
"That's just not the case at all. If I can do it, anyone can."

Speaking to writers attending the Craftsmanship of Creative Writing Conference Oct. 27 at Oakland Univer-sity, Ms. Nichols called "Wild, Wild Woman" a "why-to book."

"THERE'S HARDLY any need for another how-to book," said the 48-year-old Greenwich Village resident.
"So I tried to make it readable as well as inspire them with the joys of the outdoors."

written in the humorous way she speaks, "Wild, Wild Woman" gives in-formation about sports ranging from backpacking and shooting to snowshooning. Ms. Nichols tells where to go, what to wear and carry with you. She even touches on outdoor "Facts of Life" like skin care and going to the bathroom in the wilds.

the wilds.
"I talk about things most books don't talk about because they're written by men," said the author. She believes many people — men and women alike

forego adventure because they fear dirt, discomfort or being laughed at when they don't know what to do.

when they don't know what to do.

She is a native of Winnette, III, admittedly "not, quite your great outthoors." But she enjoyed the outdoors as a child, especially time spent at summer camp in Wisconsin.

After graduating from Antioch College and doing master's work at the
University of New Mexico, she headed
for New York and landed a job with
Quick Frozen Foods magazine.

"I KNEW less about that than I did about the outdoors," she said. She got the Field and Stream job, which had been open for three months, after persuading an employment agency to send

"The editor liked my background and felt I would fit right in," said Ms. Ni-chols, who found she did. "I've always felt that job was just waiting for me."

Once at Field and Stream, she be-came more and more interested in the outdoors and sports. "It's like autobiography," she told the writers. "You must have lived it."

Despite some problems — like a run in with a black bear which she was relieved to find wasn't the "maniac of the mountains" — she loves her work.

"It's very rewarding and I have a wonderful time," said Ms. Nichols, who recently returned from a fishing trip in Guatemala.

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Torch Drive dollars helped 170,047 residents receive emergency assist-ance through the Salvation Army's Family Service Department in 1977.

Her book grew out of a Field and Stream column called "Especially for Women." She wrote for three years be-fore it was eliminated in a cutback.

"It was expendable because the mag-azine really is for everyone," the editor said.

But she believed there was more to

be said on the subject.

"I had gathered such a lot of experience, and it seemed important to share it. One reason I wrote the book was to tell people about my hilarious experiences."

She also wanted to share her enthusi-

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"Just taking a walk in a city park is such a wonderful release; to get away from the mall for awhile," she said. And she hopes the book will help wom-en, who she thinks are "brought up taught to be helpless," develop self-re-liance

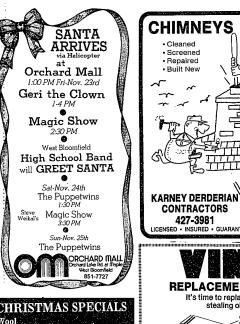
"It makes them understand they can survive if they have to. People who own Coleman stoves and down sleeping bags will do okay."

If those reasons don't fit, the \$4.95 paperback is easy to carry outdoors.
"At least you can be entertained while waiting to be found," she said.









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