He lives and works his outdoor dream

What Sandy Graham calls "a little excitement" many would consider sheer madness. Scaling a 14,000-foot mountain, kayaking a rolling river, or skilig a mountain slope is sub-zero temperatures are some of the Rochester Hills resident's favorite means of entertainment.

trainment, who also enjoys swimming, backpacking and bicycling, claims to like the excitement, accelerated heartbeat and "natural high"

erated heartheat and "natural high" these activities bring.

And, as manager of the Benchmark sporting goods store in Farmington, he's managed to combine his pleasure with business.

"It's a feeling that's really hard explain," said the 34-year-old Graham of his favorite sport — kayaking.

Graham of his favorite sport — kayaking. "There's nothing like sitting on top of a wave and having the water scream by underneath you while you sit on top, just surfing back and forth."

GRAHAM KAYAKS the Clinton River from the Silverdome to Rochester Road several times a week.
"There's a good wave (in the Clinton) at Livernois and Avon to horse
around on," said Graham, father of
two. "Actually, the Clinton has more
drop that the Riffe or Pine (considtered the fasiest rivers in Michigan's
Lower Peninsula), but no one knows
it."

it."
Graham also enjoys mountain climbing, an activity he took up when he was 21.
"Every kid likes to climb," said Graham with a shurg, "and one day I just decided that's what I wanted to do."

Without any lessons, the climbing started slowly, Graham admitted.

"IN THE beginning I would get part way up and I'd get stuck," he said. "Then I would promise that, once I got out of it, I would sell all of my equipment and get out because I

wasn't gutsy enough."
But Graham's no quitter. Climbing in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and Colorado, he continued to improve and move on to bigger and more difficult things.

Last January, Graham made a trip to the Rockies where he skied to 11,000 feet, set up camp and within one week climbed four 14,000-foot peaks.

peaks. Graham also has been "lee climb-

Granam auso nas een "irec climb;" in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, where the ice formed by water — not snow — freezing. Such ice, which forms in colored hues, is difficult for elimbers' tools to puncture because it contains no air packs. Also, these ice formations are constantly changing.

are constantly changing.

"ICE CLIMBING is totally different," said Graham. "When you are rock elimbing, the rocks are always there. But with the climbing, you can go out today, climb, come back tomorrow and the same peak could be entirely different."

Nevertheless, Graham said the White Mountains are his Favorite place to climb.

With record winds of 230 milesperhour, an annual temperature of 29 degrees, mountains 4,000 Gergees, mountains 4,

Graham neaus can.
Graham had wanted to be a physical education teacher, but a slow job market prompted him to look elsewhere.
"When I got out of school, I had

"When I got out of school, I had trouble finding a teaching job," he sald. "I used to go into the Bench-mark all the time, got to know the owners and was offered a job,"

WHILE GRAHAM doesn't feel his activities are especially dangerous, he has had his share of falls.
"I was coming home along a train tressel in New Hampshire and a train came," he said. "I had nowhere to go, so I had to jump. I broke my leg,"

leg."
Graham also has broken his shoulder in five places as a result of a "bad skiing fall," and has distocated his finger while kayaking on Canada's Ottawa River.



Sandy Graham, amid a selection of kayaks at the Benchmark in Farmington, which the Rochester Hills resident manages.

for the future. He'd like to go to the Grand Teton National Park in Wyo-ming, Yosemite National Park in California and the Canadian Rock-

s. But none of these trips will be taker in five places as a result of a bad sking fall," and has distocated is finger while kayaking on Canata's Ottawa River.

Grahom has many trips planned

Junnou of these trips will be taken was to spend more time with Susie, his wife of 14 years, and their woo children, Deirdre, 7, and Sandy J., 4.

"Right now I cut back a bit to spend time with my midgets," he said, cracking a grin, "but hopefully they'll be my tleket out someday. "When they get a little bigger, hopefully they'll be doing it (kayak-log, mountain climbing, etc.) and then I'll have an excuse."

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and to bring more out tours to michi-gan. This is the fifth year this kind of tour has been sponsored. The visiting tour planners repre-sent travel companies from Canada, Deleware, Illinois, Indiana, Massa-chusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohlo, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconstin.

York, Ohlo, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin.
Group travel by bus is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry and is eagerly sought by attractions, restaurants and hotels nationwide. Circle Michigan members work together to convince tour operators that Michigan is a desirable destination for bus groups.
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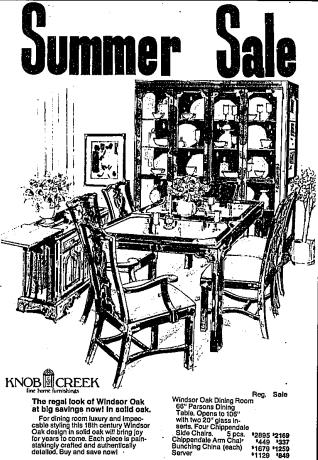
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