

>> born. And like anything else, they're only born when they're good and ready. *The Tender Bar*, Moehringer's acclaimed memoir published in 2005, took its sweet time in gestation. He had wanted to write a novel about his childhood and the neighborhood bar where he came of age since he was a teenager. Mostly, though, he jotted quotes on cocktail napkins, wrote vignettes in letters to his mother, and took mental notes for a book that wouldn't come spilling out of him until after September 11, 2001. "9/11 is how I finally did it," says Moehringer, who grew up less than 20 miles from Manhattan. "I wanted to write about the bar, my family, my friends as quickly as possible because the world was burning."

Writing a memoir is anything but swift work. Every day for nearly a year, Moehringer sat in his Denver basement and crafted his life story. After long hours in front of the computer, weekends poring over old letters, and three months of interviews back East, Moehringer checked off an item that many people have on their life list: He wrote a best-selling book.

"It is a dream job to be able to write for a living," admits Moehringer, who also writes for the *L.A. Times*. But would he recommend it to others? Yes, with one caveat. "A memoir is an offering, a gesture to the world—you're trying to include them in your story," he says, "but it can be wounding when others read it."

He often tells aspiring memoirists that wanting to write a book is no idle desire. In fact, he thinks it's an ambition one should heed. Of course, he also says that just because you sit down to write doesn't mean the book is ready to be born. You, too, may have to wait until the story is good and ready.

**GET A JOB LIKE THIS:** Write, write, write, and buy the *2007 Writer's Market* to learn where to sell your work. —LBK

**GREAT JOB ALERT!**

**Men's Wearhouse (multiple locations):** Internal promotions—all multistore managers started on the sales floor. Wardrobe consultants earn commissions that are up to 50 percent higher than the industry standard of 6-7 percent.

**Paul D'Elia, 26**  
**Sales Associate, PATAGONIA**

With his outdoorsy demeanor, worn trail runners, and black zip-up softshell, Paul D'Elia looks like he just stepped from the pages of a Patagonia catalogue—as well he should. He spends about 40 hours a week at the store's prime LoDo

corner lot, chatting up like-minded gear heads and adventure enthusiasts as he sifts through new outdoor apparel and rings in purchases.

"The biggest perk is being exposed to the outdoor adventure lifestyle and having access to such high-quality gear," D'Elia says. Extensive training is a priority at Patagonia, so employees have a genuine understanding of what materials and designs work well in the elements.

But having the inside scoop on the latest water-repellent parka or moisture-wicking base layer is just a bonus, he says. What he most admires is the company's environmentally friendly business practices. Patagonia donates 1 percent of all sales proceeds to environmental preservation and restoration, choosing a specific eco-problem to focus on every 18 months. The current campaign is "Oceans as Wilderness"—an idea that hits home with D'Elia, an avid surfer who grew up on the coast of New Jersey. Thousands of miles away from his hometown breakers, he's found an outlet to protect what he loves.

"Working for Patagonia is great because it goes beyond the retail aspect," D'Elia says. "It's about being part of a larger, big-picture culture such as environmentalism, progressive business, and innovation in the outdoor world, which leads to a constant mind stimulation. You know you're part of a company that's doing things other companies aren't."

**GET A JOB LIKE THIS:** If you're able to lift heavy boxes, stand for extended periods of time, work a flexible schedule, and climb ladders, you're qualified to apply; most Patagonia employees start as store clerks. —JD

**Jeff Litchford, 36**  
**Lead Video Game Designer/Project Manager, IDOL MINDS**

Like many young boys, Jeff Litchford started playing video games when he was 8 years old. Back then his parents gave him grief; now they realize he was just training.

Now 36, Litchford doesn't just play video games, he creates them. And with 15 years of industry experience, he makes a decent living doing so. (People in his position make from \$60,000 to \$100,000 per year.) In his dual position as lead designer/project manager with Idol Minds, a Louisville-based developer of >>



Most kids go to camp for only a small handful of years; George Stein has been going for more than three decades and counting.

In 1946, his grandparents founded New York's Camp Echo Lake, where Stein spent his childhood, met his wife, and eventually held every position the camp offers.

So when he, his wife, Mary, and their family moved to Denver in 2004, it was a logical choice for the Steins to start Dream Big Day Camp, currently the only private traditional day camp in Denver. "What we felt was missing was that community with continuity," George says. Dream Big has a minimum stay of three weeks so kids can be part of a tight-knit group and make long-lasting friends, with each other and with the Steins.

It's not all fun and games for the owners; running a summer camp is a four-season job. Enrollment starts by November (it will probably start earlier this year because of the demand), the Steins plan logistics months in advance, and keeping up with the newest research in child development is a year-round endeavor for the couple. "This is run with very high standards and high expectations," George says.

Dream Big Day Camp's first sessions are this June, but already there are thoughts of expanding. Stein has met with Denver Public Schools officials to set up scholarship programs for underprivileged children, and eventually he hopes Dream Big will have several locations around Denver. But more kids won't mean less personal attention. "Mary and I get to know every child," he says.

**GET A JOB LIKE THIS:** Boning up on educational trends is a must; start with the National Institute on Early Childhood Development ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)).

—Britten Chase