I’m driving through Fort Lauderdale, Florida with two alligator catchers: Ryan Yates and his 17-year-old daughter Jenny. It’s a hot Saturday afternoon, and most people want to relax in their swimming pools. The problem is that alligators like swimming pools, too!

There are 1.3 million alligators in the rivers and canals of Florida. They often get into swimming pools to stay cool. Ryan stops the van outside a big, expensive house. In the pool, there is a three-metre alligator!

Slowly, Ryan puts a rope around the alligator’s mouth. Then Jenny and Ryan pull it out of the pool. Tomorrow, they will take the alligator to the Florida Everglades National Park – far away from people.
Flying with the smoke jumpers

August 20th, 10:30

Every summer, there are hundreds of forest fires across America. A lot of the fires aren’t near any roads. Special firefighters, called smoke jumpers, have to fly to the area. Then they parachute into the forest! The smoke jumpers cut down trees and start small fires, so that the big fire can’t spread.

This week I’m with a team of smoke jumpers in Grangeville, Idaho. Most of them are students, and smoke jumping is their summer holiday job! One of the students, Chris, is showing me the parachute room when the alarm rings. Everyone takes a parachute and runs towards the plane. There is a big fire about fifty kilometres away.

‘Come and watch us jump,’ shouts Chris. Fifteen minutes later, we are flying over the mountains. The forest is burning below us. The pilot turns the plane after the smoke jumpers jump out. I look out of the window and see ten white parachutes below us.
On ski patrol

November 12th, 11:30

This weekend, I’m with the local ski patrol in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Over 30 centimetres of snow fell here last night. And too much snow on the mountains can start avalanches. P.E. student and ski patroller Darren Miller and I leave early in the morning. Darren has a rucksack full of dynamite!

‘Ski patrollers usually look after people on the mountain,’ says Darren. ‘But sometimes we go out and start avalanches! You start an avalanche when nobody is there. Then it doesn’t happen later when there are skiers on the mountain.’

Later, I watch Darren from a safe place near some trees. He throws some dynamite, then skis back towards me. Ninety seconds later, it explodes. Hundreds of tonnes of snow go down the mountain at 200 kilometres an hour!