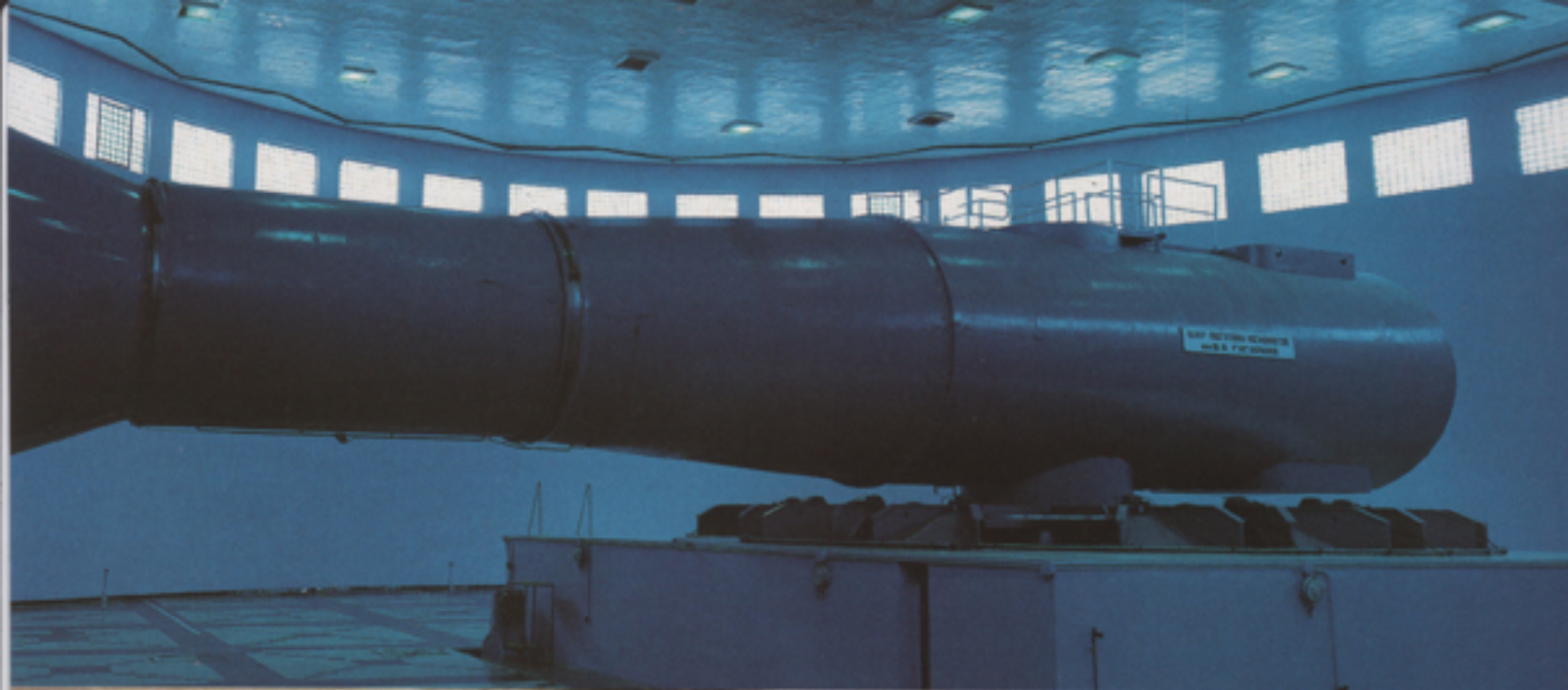




Dave Wolf dreams in Russian now. For a boy who grew up in Indiana, this is pretty odd. But then, he's an astronaut in what has become the odd new world of space exploration. The Soviet Union and the United States long ago entered the shoot-the-moon business as fierce, paranoid rivals, but the parties have recently tried to achieve more than détente: They're seeking rapprochement. NASA, looking at Star City, Russia's legendary space center, sees access to *Mir*, the world's only orbiting space station. Star City looks at NASA and sees a reusable shuttle and a usable bank account. Each has something the other needs, and that leads to a handshake. Ah, but lately, some handshakers have been worrying about whether they're giving too many secrets away, while others have grown concerned about a fire on the aging *Mir*. Meanwhile, Dave Wolf dreams in Russian—of spending next year 191 miles above the earth.



ANGE LAKE



Top left:
Throughout
Russia—even
in Star City—
the bathroom
reading
material often
doubles as
toilet paper.

Above:
Floridian Wendy
Lawrence, 37,
peers into the
jaws of a 300-
ton centrifuge
that can spin
its occupant at
30 times the
force of gravity,
and longs for
Mir, "my
future home."

Left: Mike
Foale, 40, here
being fitted
for his space-
walk garb
by a Russian
technician,
is a one-man
melting pot.
He's a British-
born NASA
astronaut
training
in suburban
Moscow.



There are, at present, two dozen Americans living in Star City, including five astronauts who are headed for space, a support staff of six from the States and a handful of spouses and children. Some do not interact with the locals overly much: Astronaut Wendy Lawrence enjoys walking or skiing in the nearby woods. But some do. "I didn't want to come originally," says Wolf, who takes the train into Moscow for food and fun on the occasional weekend. "But I love being here. We're such friends now that we talk about how strange it is that our job used to be to kill each other." ➡



Top: For some Star City residents, dawn means a plunge through the ice holes of Lake No. 1.

Above: Foale, Wolf and Andy Thomas take an ice bath indoors. But NASAs have been known to hit the lake after parties.



Star City is filled with relics of a heroic past: '60s gear; ubiquitous shrines to Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space. But what of the future? Congress is angry that Russia's contributions to a new space station are behind schedule. And then there was the *Mir* fire. NASA threatened to send no more astronauts if the 11-year-old outpost, designed to last five years, was unsafe. Viktor Blagov of Russian Mission Control responded, "The Americans overreacted because of their own tragic experience." Mike Foale, distant from the controversy yet right at the heart of it, knows one thing: He wants to spend his summer on *Mir*. □



Above: Foale's daughter, Jenna, five (far right), tries to fit in at Star City's nursery school, but language can be a barrier.

Top: Sitting beside Gagarin's locker—intact and covered with plastic since his death in 1968—Foale says, "You respect each other's idols."