

Activities keep you on the edge

This task is about finding information in an article.

SWINGING between two poles from a wire rope 13 metres above the ground may not be everybody's idea of fun, but for people who enjoy testing their limits it could be the challenge they are looking for.

The "big swing" is just one of the eight activities which can be conquered on the Pole to Pole high ropes obstacle course at Patuna Farm just out of Martinborough.

Though the Pole to Pole course is not for the faint-hearted, owner Alan Wilkinson says that once you have completed it, there is no feeling quite like it.

"I must admit I was nervous the first time I tried a high ropes course, but once I had done it and gotten past that initial fear it felt amazing, almost as though I could do anything," Mr Wilkinson says.

The course is one of only a handful around the country and is destined to become a must for those wanting an extra adrenaline rush.

Included in the high ropes course and part of the Martinborough Big Day Out are the swing, trapeze and the beam.

Perhaps the most challenging of these is the trapeze.

After climbing 12 metres up a 90-year-old Corsican pine pole, participants then have to stand at the top and leap skywards, 1.9 metres towards a trapeze before being lowered slowly to the ground.

While it may sound dangerous, Mr Wilkinson says he has absolute faith in the safety of the equipment.

"I can understand most people having a fear of heights, but you could sit here watching people go on the high ropes every day for a month and never see



anyone hurt themselves. Every wire rope and harness has at least one safety back up and most have two," he says.

The high ropes course is not Mr Wilkinson's only foray into adventure tourism.

For the past 2 ½ years Mr Wilkinson and his wife Alison Tipler have been guiding visitors on a walk through a beautiful chasm on Patuna Farm.

Each year, during the summer, hundreds of people venture into the chasm for a four hour walk which takes them through some of the best natural attractions in the Wairarapa.

In the chasm, visitors find themselves in a spectacular limestone gorge which, in places is just 10 metres apart.

Waterfalls, stalactites, fossils, mosses, caves, native birds and eels are among some of the sights to be discovered along the way.

Read the article, then complete the questions.

a) Why do the words "big swing" have quotation marks around them?

b) How many activities are there on the obstacle course?

c) What is probably the most challenging part of the obstacle course?

d) The high ropes obstacle course does not include a ...

beam.

chasm.

swing.

trapeze.

e) Mr Wilkinson states that his equipment is very safe. How does he support this statement?

f) How long does it take to do the chasm walk on Patuna Farm?

g) Which word from the article most vividly describes the scenery in the chasm walk?