

How to Make a MILLION

These four midlife entrepreneurs took their business ideas and stepped out of the box—and into the bank

SARAH SPEARE | 50 |
PRESIDENT, Chomp Inc.

Every dog deserves its day—and its breath mints. So when graphic designer Speare moved from Boston to Maine with her dog, Margaret, she wound up manufacturing canine treats with her sister at age 42. **“There were already dog breath fresheners on the market,”** Speare says. **“But they looked like medicine. We packaged Yip Yap bone-shape mints like Altoids.”** Today the company brings in \$3 million to \$5 million per year with dog snacks and fish-shaped candy for cats.



DAWN STOKES | 47 |
CEO, Texas Driving Experience

At 43, Stokes quit her job as a vice president in the health care industry to chase a lifelong yen to drive fast cars. **“I was blown away by the control techniques that I learned at high-performance driving schools,”** Stokes says. In 2004 she started her own company at the Texas Motor Speedway, in Fort Worth, teaching specialized safety skills to teenagers and would-be professional drivers. She also entertains *Fortune* 500 execs who pay to race in her fleet of Mustangs and Corvettes. **“Driver’s ed on steroids,”** as she calls it, plus fun-for-big-guns equals \$1.3 million a year.

SHEILA OGLE | 67 |
CEO, Integrated Clinical Trial Services

Ogle gets bored easily. So after starting a multimillion-dollar ad agency (Media Planning and Placement Inc.) and opening a space for weddings that generates \$1 million yearly (the Matthews House, in Carey, North Carolina), she chose a different kind of challenge. Since 2003 Ogle has sought out human guinea pigs for clinical pharmaceutical studies. **“Recruiting research patients is one of the most important parts in drug development,”** she says. And lucrative—earning her company \$1 million annually.



MARNI BUMSTED | 49 |
PRESIDENT, Hollywood Fashion Tape

Ten years ago Bumsted was trying to safety-pin shut a gap between sweater buttons when a friend came to the rescue with tape. **“I knew everyone needed that product,”** says Bumsted, who is based in Minneapolis. In 2000 she used revenue from a window blinds business and enlisted a partner to start Hollywood Fashion Tape, solving style crises from torn hems to renegade bra straps. By 2004 the company took in more than \$1 million a year. **“Everyday women drive our business,”** Bumsted says, **“not Jennifer Lopez.”**

—DARA PETTINELLI



WHO WE WANT TO BE WHEN WE GROW UP Sylvia Earle

SEA SENSE Known as “Her Deepness” and the “Sturgeon General,” Earle, 71, is an oceanographer and conservationist raising awareness about marine ecosystems. “The ocean drives the basic function of the planet, and it needs urgent attention because humans have already harmed the environment,” Earle says. Back in her tadpole days—that is, at 44—Earle donned a special pressurized suit and walked untethered on the ocean floor at 1,250 feet, a depth lower than any other person before or since. At 57, without formal engineering training, Earle formed Deep Ocean Exploration and Research (now DOER Marine), which specializes in using submarines and underwater robots. “I hope my most exciting work is still yet to happen,” says the California-based mother of three.

OCEANS TWELVE Raised on a farm in New Jersey, Earle moved to Florida at age 12 and became mesmerized by the marine life she found while swimming there. Now, she dives once a month because “a dry rut sets in if you don’t get wet pretty often.” As explorer in residence for the National Geographic Society, she’ll revise the atlas of the ocean this year. She’ll also study a seamount off the shore of San Francisco, submerge herself in the Gulf of Mexico, visit the Galápagos at least three times, travel around the Indian Ocean aboard a research vessel and observe the Chesapeake Bay 100 feet down.

IMMERSION THERAPY “When you love what you do, you immerse yourself in it,” she says. “For me, that means doing everything I can to understand how the planet works and inspiring others to do the same.”

—REBECCA ADLER