

EXPLORATION

Volume 2, Number 2

Quarterly



◊ *We shall not cease* ◊



ADVENTURE 22



Grace Under Gravel by Lisa Morris and Jason Spafford

EXPEDITION 36



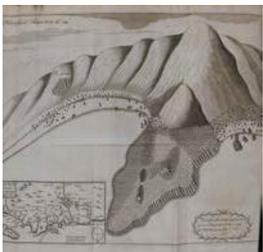
True Source by Janet Rith-Najarian and Norwood Hall

EQUIPMENT 50



Multi-tools Test by Jonathan Hanson

CARTOGRAPHIA 8



Dawn of Science Info-Graphics

ARTIFACT 14



A Table's Tale by Jonathan Hanson

VEHICLE REVIEW 66



18 mos. with an ENEOS Grenadier by Graham Jackson

ARTS & LETTERS 18



The Unlikely Voyage of Jack de Crow

FIELD ARTS TOOLS 80



Perfectly Portable Field Arts Studios by Roseann Hanson

ARE YOU AN OVERLANDER? . . 102



Take the Quiz by Jonathan & Roseann Hanson



EXPLORATION

Vol. 2, No. 2 (October 2025) *Quarterly*

“WE SHALL NOT CEASE FROM EXPLORATION

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.” – T.S. Eliot

Welcome to Exploration Quarterly, the publication for those who do not cease to BE CURIOUS . . . to LEARN . . .

to EXPLORE . . .

We define exploration in the broadest sense:

Exploration can be geographical.

Exploration can be fractal.

Exploration can be introspective.

Exploration can be expansive.

Exploration can be structured.

Exploration can be unplanned.

Exploration can happen every day.

Exploration is continuously seeking new places, new ideas, new knowledge.

Exploration is the essence of being human, what brought us from the forests into the savannahs, and beyond the horizons of Earth to the edges of the known universe.

We shall not cease from exploration.

Thank you for joining us.

Jonathan Hanson

Roseann Hanson

Founders, Curators, Editors, Designers



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FIELD ARTS FEATURE 92



What’s in your kit and journal share: Overlander & Artist Lisa Spangler

EXPLORERS MOMENT 111



Her Majesty . . . in Amarillo, TX

SPONSORS 104

ABOVE: Kofa National Wildlife Refuge; Lisa Spangler photo. OVERLEAF: Pulpit Rock, Norway (58°59’11.353”N, 6°11’17.761”E); Jason Spafford photo. COVER: May 19, 2005, NASA’s Mars Exploration Rover Spirit captured this stunning view as the sun sank below the rim of Gusev crater (14.6°S and 175.4°E). Panoramic camera mosaic: 6:07 in the evening of the rover’s 489th Martian day, or sol (NASA/JPL/Texas A&M/Cornell).



Lisa Spangler

Full time overlander and

JUL 22-28



25-2024
Cunningham's
striped lily
Marion Campground, NM



7-27-
2005
Picnie
Springs,
Croser -
Gallatin NF.
Sutter
Dafoto

Handmade leather perpetual journal from Wonder Cabin on Etsy.
Main image: Lisa sketching in her Ford Transit campervan in Lincoln
National Forest, New Mexico.



See page 97 for supplies list.

artist

Perpetual Journal Kit

Sell everything and go . . .

Eighteen months ago, self-taught artist and field journaler Lisa Spangler and her husband Jason sold their house in Texas and took off in their custom Ford Transit campervan to explore North America. Since then they have covered tens of thousands of miles through 16 states, 24 national parks, and uncounted forests, regional, and state parks.

Lisa's journey to nature journaling came by way of an accidental detour. After she tore her ACL and damaged an ankle on a hike, she faced six separate operations. During recuperation she dove back into art—something she's done much of her life—and into the books and videos of John Muir Laws. Slowly working her way back to mobility, she started with short walks to a local pond where she would journal every day.

“So nature journaling really saved me—it really means a lot to me. Now I can't go a day without doing it. I feel like it's a part of me, of my routine—like brushing your teeth. If you don't brush your teeth, you're not the same. You have to do it!”

Lisa comes from a professional background in math and computer science, and while journaling was a way to reconnect with nature after having been “stuck” in an office all day, she did struggle a little with her scientific mind, which wanted everything she painted to be perfect representations.

“In the beginning I wanted a tree to look exactly like the tree that was out there, or capture a dragonfly's wing and all the little details. And then I started thinking to myself, you know, this isn't fun. I want to make it fun! So I started using crazy colors. I would paint the sky pink instead of blue, for example. And it was really liberating!”

“Part of me kept struggling—saying ‘you can't do that,’ but then I'd say, well yes ‘you *can* do that.’ You can do whatever you want. It's your journal.

“And that's exactly what I love to do, to teach and to try to help people get over that fear of ‘it has to be perfect or an exact rendition.’”

Capulin Volcano and prairie, a national monument in northern New Mexico.





VIDEO FEATURE: Roseann Hanson chats with full-time overlander and artist Lisa Spangler about her journaling practice, her artist residencies, and the pluses and minuses of living full time in an adventure van with her husband, Jason.

Lisa’s scientific mind does triumph in the thoughtful way she puts together her journaling kits. She has at least five different carefully curated kits, from her tiny Minimalist Kit to a more comprehensive Camp Kit that can be expanded by what she calls her Fun Kit (a larger selection of pens and paints, for when she’s not going to be hiking far). She maintains multiple small journals, favoring Stillman and Birn, Hahnemühle, and Global Arts Materials, as well as a larger custom leather perpetual journal. This is a journaling concept introduced by [Laura Call Gastinger](#) more than 20 years ago; the journal has 52 double-page spreads, with each spread representing a week. Each week you add one entry—anything that catches your eye, though for Gastinger it was about documenting and learning plants. You can maintain a perpetual journal for years, as long as there is space in the spreads. Lisa keeps another special Perpetual Journal Kit with 28 colors in her paint palette (see page 93).

“Do I need that many colors? Heck, no! I’m perfectly content with a limited palette, and that’s what I use most

of the time. Do I love having this many colors? Heck, yeah! It feels like a decadent luxury!”

Color continues to be Lisa’s passion, as you can see by her many different palettes and color combinations. Part of that is a recent collaboration with friend Maria Coryell Martin, founder of Art Toolkit. Lisa developed a [template](#)—now produced and sold by Art Toolkit—for drawing a sectioned circle for testing different combinations of three colors, usually a blue, a red, and a yellow (called a “triad” in watercolor lingo; cyan-magenta-yellow is a “true primary” triad for mixing secondaries such as green, purple, and orange, but any combination can be used for a range of hues; see page 100).

As you travel around national parks and forests this coming year, keep your eye out for Lisa, who has been Artist in Residence at three parks so far and has her applications out for more. She teaches as part of her residencies, sharing her passion for exploring nature, and recording its beauty in nature journals and fine art.



Camp Kit

Lisa’s main “Camp Kit” for fun and exploration includes:

A – Art Toolkit Folio palette filled with (Daniel Smith unless otherwise noted) Chinese White, Azo Yellow, New Gamboge, Shell Pink (Holbein), Quinacridone Magenta (Winsor & Newton), Raw Umber (Winsor & Newton), Deep Scarlet, Transparent Red Oxide, Cobalt Turquoise Light (Winsor & Newton), Peacock (Holbein), Ultramarine Blue Light (Holbein), Phthalo Green, Cerulean Blue (Holbein), Indigo.

B – Hahnemühle Toned Watercolor Book.

C – Shop towel.

D – Her Triad Template, a collaboration with Art Toolkit.

E – Kneadable eraser.

F – Alex Slim scissors

G – Pentel waterbrush and pipette for adding water; Kakimori 2mm lead holder and sharpener, and brass-nib dip pen; Koh-i-noor 5.6 mm magic clutch pencil.

H – Art Toolkit Pocket Palette; the colors are Lisa’s tribute to Georgia O’Keeffe and Ghost Ranch: Yellow Ochre (Holbein); Daniel Smith’s Sedona Genuine,

The “Minimalist Kit” for on-the-go includes:

A – Stillman and Birn Beta sketchbooks, softcover.

B – Pouch, Chicken Trampler Gear.

C – Large rubber band from Art Toolkit.

D – Papermate .5 mm pencil (she likes this one because the lead retracts so it doesn’t get broken, and the point isn’t sharp, so it doesn’t poke holes in things).

E – Copic multiliner .3 mm, black.

F – Ballpoint pen.

G – Mini Pentel waterbrush and binder clip.

H – Art Toolkit demi palette filled with Daniel Smith Hansa Yellow Medium, Organic Vermillion, Quinacridone Magenta (WN), Ultramarine Blue, Phthalo Green (Blue Shade), Transparent Red Oxide, Indigo.



Minimalist Kit

From page 93, Lisa’s “Perpetual Journal Kit” includes:

- Art Toolkit zippered pouch that holds supplies.
- Pipette for filling Pentel waterbrush.
- Pine needles for making scratches in wet paint.
- Kakimori 2mm lead holder and sharpener.
- Copic markers: .1 mm black, .3 mm, .1 mm sepia.
- Art Toolkit Folio palette with Daniel Smith paint (unless noted): Azo Yellow, Hansa Yellow Medium,

Permanent Yellow Deep, Quinacridone Coral, Quinacridone Rose, Quinacridone Magenta (WN), Potter’s Pink, Organic Vermillion, Pyrrol Red, Quinacridone Burnt Scarlet, Deep Scarlet, Venetian Red, Transparent Red Oxide, Piemontite Genuine, Indigo Bloodstone Genuine, Vivianite, Van Dyck Brown, French Ultramarine (WN), Smalt (WN), Phthalo Blue (Green Shade), Chromium Oxide Green, Peacock Blue (H), Cobalt Turquoise Light (WN), Chinese white, Yellow Ochre (H), Raw Umber (WN), Nickel Azo Yellow.

Piemontite Genuine, Cobalt Blue, and Venetian Red; and Smalt (Winsor & Newton).

I – Art Toolkit zippered tool pouch holds everything.

J – Expired America the Beautiful pass, for scraping wet paint to make marks.

K – A few copies of Wild Wonder Foundation’s Quick Guide to Nature Journaling zine to give out to people who stop to see Lisa’s work.

L – Pocket knife for scraping wet paint.

M – Opus 88 Koloro fountain pen with a broad nib, filled with Yoskeka Stationery x Kakimori “hello” ink (a rusty brown); black Pentel brush pen; Platinum Carbon desk pen.

N – Tintoretto dagger size 6; Rosemary & Co. R13 dagger brush.

You can read Lisa’s Substack *adVENTure* [here](#), and follow her on Instagram [@sideoats](#)





FROM FAR LEFT: Painting of Saddlehorn Pueblo, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Colorado. Lisa with the painting at the pueblo. Jason and Lisa's 2021 Ford Transit T-350 EcoBoost, interior layout, including Lisa's many stashes of art kit. Mini journal sketch from Lincoln National Forest, New Mexico. Painted Hand Pueblo, Canyons of the Ancients. Mini journal sketch, East Jemez River, Valles Caldera National Preserve, New Mexico.



LEFT: Potsherds at Painted House Pueblo, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Colorado.

RIGHT: "Desert Fireworks," blooming cactus near Persimmon Gap in Big Bend National Park, Texas.

BOTTOM: Demonstrating different ways to use Lisa's Triad Temperament with cyan, magenta, and blue primaries.



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plate



*“I soon realized that no journey carries one far
unless, as it extends into the world around us, it goes
an equal distance into the world within.”*

– Lillian Smith

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