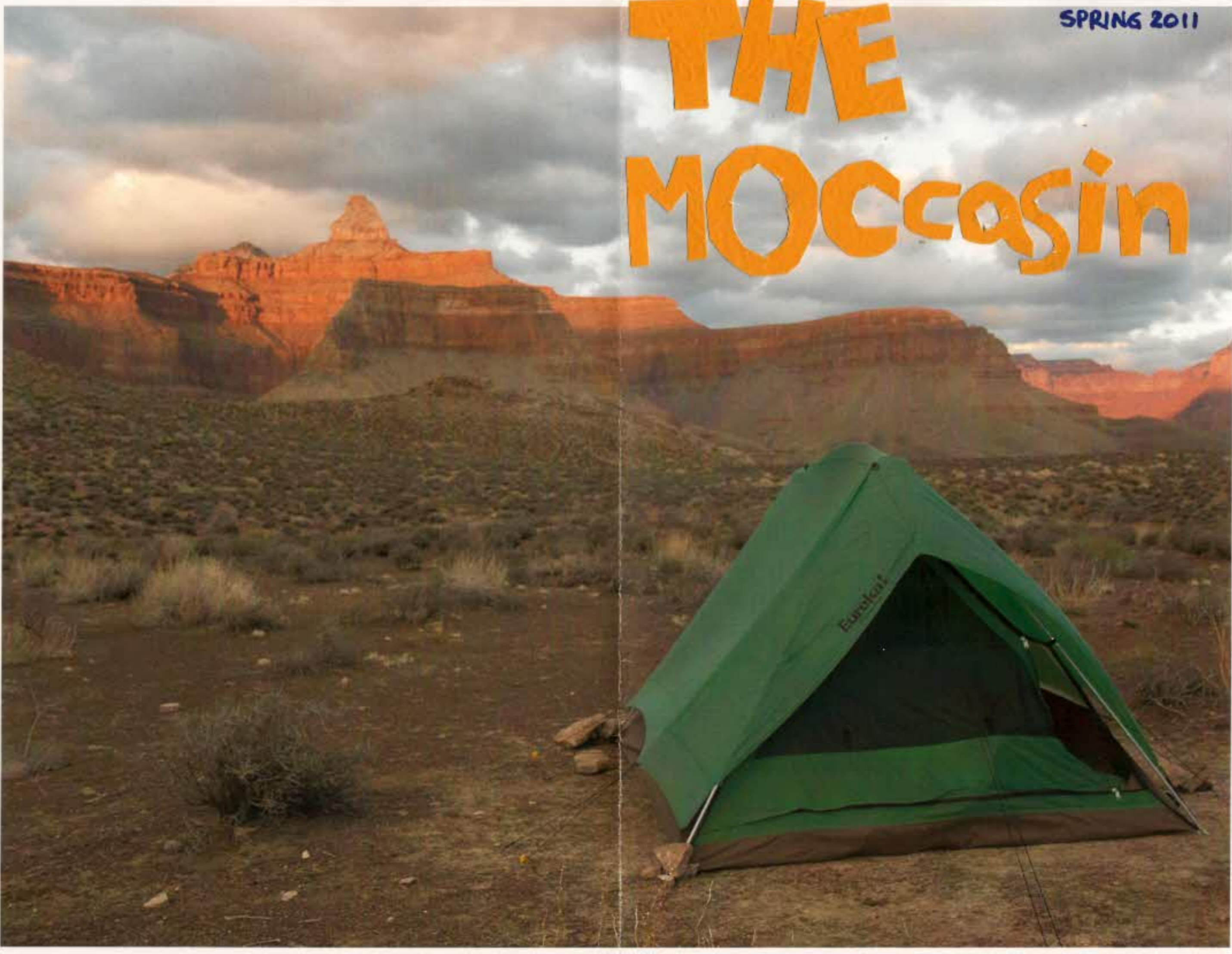


SPRING 2011

THE MOCCASIN



Dear Readers,

I am so pleased to present you with the fourth issue of the MOCcasin. The MOCcasin is the McMaster Outdoor Club's (MOC's) bi-annual newsletter. It's aim is to provide a forum for members to share stories, skills, pictures and more.

This issue is a true blend of the heartwarming and the hilarious. Take a peak into the magical world of MOC...



-Your MOCcasin
Editor,
Mado

IN THIS ISSUE ...

A true Tail of Tunnel Vision in Cootes by Natasha Turner	3
Pierogis! by Madeleine Springate-Combs	7
Why I love Trees by Peter Morley	10
In Memoriam: Mr. Marsh Mallow by Ros Pfaff	10
Cold, Damp, Dirty, Tired, and Sore by Maya Sengupta-Murray	11
Photo Contest Winners	15
Spider Dogs by Shannon Pole	20
Recipe for Slop by Jillian Horning	21
Grand Canyon Retrospective by Kyle McLaughlin	23
Horoscopes written by the stars	29
A Poem by Meghan Dertinger	33
How to find the Time left Before Sundown by Dan Thompson	33
Woody Witticisms by Carol Daley	34

A True Tail of Tunnel Vision in Cootes

By Natasha Turner

Last June I found myself once again outside a professor's closed door. I was tired of this scenario. I was trying to sign up for intermediate Spanish, but the professor seemed to be incapable of using email and was never in his office when he said he would be. His secretary informed me he was out to lunch (at 1:30pm!) and would be back in 20-30 minutes. All I had with me for amusement were my house keys...clearly I would have to look elsewhere for entertainment. I did not want to walk through the center of campus because I would see all the summer scholars (something I'm steadfastly against) so I decided to go to Cootes. Being in a logical mood, I walked over to the Prez Rez and entered Cootes that way so that I would come out at Brandon, near TSH where my elusive professor would hopefully be waiting.

I walked into Cootes feeling excited and bold for my solo adventure, wondering if I would be so fortunate as to see a swan when I was abruptly stopped. In front of me was a sign telling me the trail was closed. For a moment the moral dilemma raged in my head: to go, enjoy Cootes and disobey the law or to turn around, obey the law and let Cootes regenerate. I looked quickly

behind me and gallivanted down the hill feeling doubly emboldened from having disobeyed the sign.

About one and a half minutes later I met my second, and far more significant obstacle: the floating boardwalk was gone. My only path led right into a river and then left me stranded at the edge of the un-

jumpable chasm.

This time I

contemplated a little longer about what to do. About

30 seconds later I decided the marsh

had to be crossed. I had come so far, I had already broken the law: I was committed. Tentatively, I tickled the water with my toes; it was chilly but pleasant on a warm summer's day. I drew in breath, looked to my surroundings for some support, grabbed hold of a twig on a nearby tree and stepped fully into the river. Immediately, I sank about three inches. This depth didn't seem so bad, I'd been readying myself for some sinking and I was kind of enjoying the icky swamp ground between my toes. This was going to be just fine!

"minutes later I met my second, and far more significant obstacle: the floating boardwalk was gone"

Boldly I took a few more quick steps and then I found myself in a bit of a predicament. I had let go of my twiggy life-line and was

now sunk past my knees in the marsh holding my shorts high on my thighs for dear life. If I kept going, I would definitely be at

"So I laughed at myself."

least hip deep in muddy water before I made it across and the more I disturbed the marsh the worse it was starting to smell. There was no point in going back, I

was already a quarter of the way there, and, like I said, I was committed. On top of it all, as a quick scan of the surroundings confirmed, I was entirely alone, not even a swan was there to laugh (honk?...more likely snap) at me. So I laughed at myself. The situation was pretty ridiculous and entirely of my own creation so I stood there, looked at the cloudless sky and laughed at myself while I contemplated how on earth I would get out of this mess.

After a moment I spotted a wooden log to my left. It was covered by plants to my right and left, but if I could just get to it I might be able to scope the situation better from higher ground. Wobbling slightly, I shifted my weight onto my left leg and heaved my right leg out of the water breaking the suction cup pull of the swamp. Two steps later I stepped triumphantly up onto the log. And then I giggled some more. Oh man, I was proud of myself! I was still in the middle of the marsh, but I'd made it out alive without any significant damage to speak of.

Once my self-congratulatory moment began to fade I started evaluating the sturdiness and length of the log. Both were fabulous in the direction I was going. Before departing though, I had to look back to see the other end of the log. There was a little nagging voice in my brain telling me that just maybe the log extended all the way back to the river bank. So of course, I turned and investigated. To my great chagrin the log did extend all the way back to the shore! All I would have had to do was look to my left and I could have waltzed my way across that log in no time. I laughed out loud to myself the entire way across the log and thought about how hilariously unnecessary my near sinkage in the swamp had been.



As I hopped off my bridge and onto the opposite river bank I already knew I wouldn't be going back to see my professor today: I smelled like swamp, and there were adventures waiting to be had in Cootes.

PIEROGIS!

This delicious Ukranian staple can be turned into a great camping food. Here are two versions: one is quick and easy, for a hearty meal after a long day. The other is more gourmet, and you can pull it out to impress your fellow campers. Both are great for longer trips, because all the ingredients keep for ages (kraft sells vacuum sealed blocks of cheese, but most cheeses will last a long time, they just get sweaty). I had the Legit Pierogis on the last night of a 30 day canoe trip down the Ogoki and Albany rivers - they were delicious, and special enough to have as a final night meal. Lazy Pierogis are a camping staple in mind, just a more filling version of Mac'n'Cheese. Pierogis are everything I look for in trip food: Carboliscious and Cheeselicious.



Both of these recipes are designed to be cooked over a fire. A stove would do, but fires are so much more kick-ass.

Lazy Pierogis:

Ingredients:

- Oil for frying
- Onions, sliced
- Spices (your choice)
- Lasagna Noodles
- Instant Mashed Potatoes (so awesome)
- Lots of Cheese, cut into small cubes



How to Make:

Saute the onions and spices, until caramelized if possible. Meanwhile, boil a big pot of water. Add the lasagne noodles and cook 'em till tender. Drain them (a good way of disposing of your grey water is described below) but leave enough water in your pot to reconstitute the potatoes in. Add the instant potatoes, and stir till they're nice and fluffy. Then add the cheese and the onions, and stir it all up! Yum Yum Mush!

Disposing of your greywater: I used to always dig holes to get rid of grey water (the left over water from boiling pasta, etc.), but this past summer I learnt of a cool alternative: Making a natural sift! Find a thirsty looking tree. Find some small sticks and form a little log cabin out of them at the base of the tree. Then find a bunch of mulch - twigs, leaves, moss, etc., and fill in

your cabin with this. Make a layer cake. Poor your water through this home-made filter. The filter will collect the bad stuff, and the tree will only get the clean (ish) water to drink. To get rid of your silt, through it on a roaring fire.

Legit Pierogis:

Ingredients:

Flour

Water

Oil for frying

Onions, sliced

Spices (your choice)

Instant Mashed Potatoes

Lots of Cheese, cut into small cubes



How to make:

Sauté the onions and spices. Reconstitute the potatoes in some boiled water. Combing your flour and water into a dough (like the consistency of bread dough). Then split it up into a bunch of palm-sized balls. Roll the balls of dough out into circles (use your water bottle as a rolling pin). Put a pile of mashed potatoes, onions, and cheese into each dough-circle, and fold the dough over, so you have stuffed half-circles. Use your fingers to pinch down the dough around the edges. Now fry each pierogi! Make them golden brown on each side. Eat Hot!

WHY I LOVE TREES

By Peter Morley

- trees provide habitat and food for wildlife
- trees provide shade, reducing our cooling costs
- trees stabilize the soil, preventing erosion
- trees are sound barriers, reducing the noise pollution
- trees absorb carbon dioxide, keeping our air cleaner
- trees supply us with the oxygen we need to breathe
- trees are great to hike amongst with the MOC.



In Memoriam:
Mr. Marsh Mallow
A Haiku by Ros Pfaff

Golden perfection
Submits to cruel dance of flame
Charred ruins, bitter defeat

Cold, Damp, Dirty, Tired, and Sore

By Maya Sengupta-Murray

Last year in early October, I went on a canoe trip with my program. The trip lasted a full weekend, and we spent most of it canoeing or camping.

I hadn't been camping in about a decade. In the bad old days, camping meant I played in the woods while my father set up the tents and the campsite and the fire. Then I roasted marshmallows and sat by the fire and slept in the tent. There were real bathrooms, and there was nothing rustling menacingly in the nearby underbrush while you tried to use them in the dark. We also went camping in the summer. The obvious, but often unappreciated, upside to camping in the non-winter months is that the temperatures do not dip below zero, and you do not wake up to frost on everything you own, and occasionally yourself.

I had also never been canoeing before. It is quite difficult, especially if you, like me, have little-to-no upper body strength. The first night, after upwards of six hours of almost continuous canoeing, I could barely



move my arms without pain. In fact even while I was motionless, they hurt quite a lot.

I spent the vast majority of that weekend feeling

cold, damp,
dirty,

tired, and
sore,

usually all
at once. I

didn't know
any of the

people I was

camping with - I could have been venturing out into the Canadian wild with a bunch of crazy cannibals. The food resembled the sludge that they ate in the Matrix, except when dirt or pine needles fell in. They probably improved the flavour. They definitely improved the appearance. There is something deeply unnerving about grey, gooey food that resists you removing your spoon from its grip.

And here is something strange.

That semi-sentient, off-putting, off-grey food? I think it might have been the best thing I have ever tasted (other than ground-bacon-meat sliders, but those are a category unto themselves). Everything I did for those

"I could have been venturing out into the Canadian wild with a bunch of crazy cannibals."

few, too short days, felt like an accomplishment. Admittedly, in many cases those things really were accomplishments, from the first essential skill I gained (getting into a canoe without also getting into the water, which I mastered quickly, but not quite quickly enough), to the more unusual knowledge, like a rough translation of the female moose's moan.

And those potentially-murderous cannibals, they turned out to be some really great people (one of whom owes me a big sloppy kiss for writing this). We got pretty close, and that is only partly due to too-many-people-in-the-tent cuddling. I still talk to all of them, but even if I didn't I will always remember them fondly for sharing the cold, beautiful

"I woke up in the mornings and when I looked outside I felt like I was still dreaming."

wild with me, and for popping my canoe cherry.

And while it almost goes

without saying, the Canadian wilderness is something else. The leaves had turned and

were just starting to fall, the air smelled clean and fresh, and it was just stunningly beautiful. It looked as though I had walked into a Group Of Seven painting, but indescribably better. I swear I have seen similar scenes a hundred times, and it doesn't matter. Every time, it leaves me speechless.

I have never felt more secure in my body, or more confident in my physical abilities than I did then. I was pushing



myself to do something outside of my range of experience and comfort, and I learned that yes, I can do this. It felt exciting, exhilarating, energizing, and any number of other things that begin with E.

Next year, in early October I plan on getting cold, damp, dirty, tired and sore again. And just like this time, I will love every single second of it.

And now for the moment
you have all been
waiting for...

The announcement of the
Photo Contest winners!

drum role

In third place, we have Salman
Safari - Mohsenabad, with his
picture from Algonquin (pg. 16 TOP)
and his picture from Cootes (pg. 16 BOTTOM)

In second place, we have Eric Collins,
with his picture of snow in the
Grand Canyon (pg. 17-18)

And finally, in first place we have
Renee Vieira, with her picture of
Algonquin (pg. 19 TOP)

her picture of the Grand Canyon (pg. 19 BOTTOM)
and her amazing photo of a Tent in the
Canyon which is the cover of this MOCasin!

• Thank you to all who submitted.

15 Good job everybody!







SPIDER DOGS - The more interesting way of cooking hotdogs over a fire

1. Find a stick and sharpen to a point.



2. Select your hot dog and put on the stick so that it forms a T.

3. Using a sharp knife, cut each end of the hotdog in quarters.

4. Slowly roast over the fire, these cuts will curl during cooking to make a Spider!



By Shannon Pole

Recipe for Slop (Canoe Trip Shepherd's Pie)

Ingredients

1	Onion
5 tb	Vegetable oil from a mason jar
1	Can O' Corn
2 cups	Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)
1 cup	Instant mashed potatoes
1 handful	Garlic powder
To taste	Salt, pepper, dirt

Instructions

1. Stoke fire until raging (none of this 'cooking over the coals' wimpy business) and place grill precariously on unstable rocks surrounding fire pit
2. Cut onion into small pieces using a jack knife and a Tupperware lid
3. Place onions and oil in frying pan and place on the grill.
Note: Burning your hands is optional, but suggested.
4. Stir the onions constantly, but make sure they burn anyways
5. Boil a pot of water on the fire and add the TVP and instant mashed potatoes
Note: While for normal shepherd's pie the potatoes and TVP/meat is layered, in slop they are cooked together into an unrecognizable mush
6. Add corn to the now burnt onions and stir half-heartedly
7. Cook the crap out of the TVP/potato mixture because you realize you have put too much water in and it is now more of a soup than potato/meat texture

8. When the TVP/potato mixture has the texture of lumpy baby food, give up and add the onions and corn
9. Poke at it and add garlic powder, telling yourself and fellow trippers that this will make it all better
10. Attempt to remove pot from fire, knock the precariously placed grill off the precariously stacked rocks and watch as it almost teeters precariously into the fire
11. Grab it in the nick of time and place on a rock. Dance the dance of crispified fingers.
12. Serve into Tupperware containers and try to ignore the fact that it looks identical to the goop they eat in the Matrix
13. Add as much salt and pepper as it takes to overpower the burnt/dirt flavour
14. Wolf it down so fast that your mouth doesn't have the time to tell your brain that what you're shovelling into it looks like puke and smells like rancid yak butter
15. Stare bewildered at one fellow canoe tripper who inhales it with as much delight as if it were a \$50 steak dinner and asks politely for more while complimenting the cooks profusely
16. Repeat every canoe trip

by Jillian Horning



Grand Canyon Retrospective

By Kyle McLoughlin

So, when Mado approached me to write a story for the MOCassin, I didn't really know what to do, and didn't want to do a lot of work. After thinking a while I decided to just share my journal in the hopes that it painted a picture of the Grand Canyon trip, and what it meant to me. Check out the footnotes as well, I've added them as afterthoughts that have arisen while looking back.

So, here's some journal excerpts, from train ride, to plane ride...

Feb. 19th 2011

Somewhere outside of Chicago

Click-clack. The train sings the songs of the tracks. I've found my preferred method of travel. The train is abound with opportunities of rest, socialization and solace. We visited Chicago today. 1.5 hours to explore a city of more than 1 million people. Quite rad. I've begun reading *On the Road*, which has seemed like an appropriate book given the circumstances.

Met a couple folks on the train from Upstate New York, after they heard myself and some folks discussing trip logistics. Both were quite pumped about the trip to the canyon. We discussed trip destinations, bear stories, etc., all while a mystery guitarist played blues in the upstairs observation deck, adding a very chill vibe to the encounter. Eventually our discussion led to tarp camping. I was amazed at the concept. Word is it can be done in all seasons¹ which sounds like an awesome time, and is a must try for next summer.

Feb 19th 2011

Somewhere in rural New Mexico

Mountains! There are friggen mountains here! First time seeing real mountains and *I. am. pumped.*

¹ Bug season excludued.

Feb. 21st 2011
Flagstaff

Once again, mountains are incredible!

The last of the train ride was fantastic, with an unbelievable train station in Kansas City², burritos in Albuquerque³, and a record snowfall in Flagstaff⁴.

The coffee shops here are great. As I write this I am sitting in the Hotel Monte Vista, having a pint of Guinness, with the anticipation of a delicious coffee in the very near



future. This trip to Arizona has left me with a desire to see more of this country, even experiencing the different architecture blows me away.

We have had to delay our foray into the canyon for one day because of the record snowfall

in this area⁵. Disappointing of course, yet with one missed opportunity, others have arisen. We visited Sedona today, and will begin our descent tomorrow.

² Coolest architecture ever.

³ Amidst a surprise dust storm.

⁴ As in, they didn't know how to deal with the snow.

There are some more city adventures yet to come, but before then, there's a canyon to explore! Woo!

Feb 24th
Grand Canyon

Our final night in the canyon. I've never felt so small. From the moment we began our descent this place has filled me with awe. Cliché though it is, I understand how people could experience God here.

The group has been fun, positive and uplifting⁶. I know I will be leaving this place with friends⁷. We have traveled many miles and surprised some with our route plans. "Oh gosh darnit, you Canadians are so hardcore⁸," the pleasant park ranger⁹ said with a smile and a nod while we made way down the west end of Clear Creek trail. Yes, it will be sad to leave this place tomorrow, and also physically difficult as the hike is long, and uphill. I will return here though; the seeds have been planted.

At 6:15 we'll be getting up to begin our big trek; from Cremation, we hike across the tonto and ascend at Bright Angel, which promises to be a fun uphill struggle. As I write this, a violent wind whips our tent, and harasses the

⁵ Like I said, couldn't deal with the snow.

⁶ Yaaa!Canyaaaaan!

⁷ Holla TNA!

⁸ Harhar, if hardcore means ibuprofen, ice, and A535, then maybe I am. It was totally the Europeans that hardcored it up on this trip. Like sherpas they were!

⁹ Also from upstate New York...

vast wilderness of the tonto. This place is beautiful, yet fickle, and the very land that imposes reflection and humbles the heart can turn harsh and unforgiving in the face of complacency¹⁰. The very wind that has for the last two days kissed my face with a cool breeze, now teases the stability of my transient home, possessing the fly into a wildly loud dance. And I love this like nothing else.

Feb 26th

Somewhere in Nevada

After the solitude of the canyon, we move through the Nevada desert on to Sodom and Gammorah. The finality of the trip will be undeniable there, not to mention the culture shock. Here goes!

Feb 27th

Vegas is behind me. As I write this we are on our way back home, moments after taking off from McCarran. This city has left a bad taste in my mouth not easily removed by toothbrush and toothpaste. I am looking forward to returning home. Although I will greatly miss this wonderful group of 31, I am happy to see friends and family. Las Vegas has made the transition much clearer.

After the casinos, dancing fountains, a legendary arcade experience, and the hypnotic powers of bells and lights, I am ready for a quiet hike in Cootes. I won't be putting Vegas high on my list go to's/return to's any time

¹⁰ Thank goodness for large puddles.

soon. That said, my biggest piece of advice for the city would be this: Get rid of your \$1 bills before you get on the plane back to Canada. They're useless in the land of \$1 coins and colourful money.¹¹

We are traveling at 518mph at 3200 ft. The highest and fastest we have all trip. The speed at which everything has moved the last 36hrs is, once again, and incredible contrast to the slow, steady, and



significant buildup of the previous 9 days and 3 months.

Every trip must end though, and this is how this one does; hurtling through the sky at a speed that I can't even comprehend.¹² I will return to Arizona, and I look forward to when I do. This trip has shown me how accessible this continent is, and how foolish it is to miss opportunities because of sentimentalities or possessions. A few things to remember though: trains are incredible; ravens are smarter than people; and coffee in the Hotel Monte Vista is inspiring.

Here's to life!

¹¹ Seriously, dump those greenbacks.

¹² Beyond 'mind-boggling'

HOROSCOPES



Aries: March 21 - April 19

Try not to be overwhelmed by the unpredictable weather, Aries. Hail storms and windy days are popping up everywhere, and your first reaction may be to flip out and give up on your expedition. This is the opposite reaction that you need to have now. Calm yourself down and give yourself small goals- don't try to do the whole 3 km portage in one stretch!



Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

It's time to bring more fire into your life, Taurus. Consider calling up an old flame or friend from the past who stirs the passion within you. Inspire your inner yearning for outdoor adventure by making a fire with this special someone. Remember to start with small kindling - even the smallest twigs will help bring more dynamic, activating energy to your fire - and your relationship.



Gemini: May 21 - Jun 20

This is one of those days in which you may ask for a five minute break to spend in the outdoors, and an hour later finally head back to the library. Keep in mind that this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Your outdoor longings are taking over more than expected not because of your bad work ethic, but because deep down you know that spending time connecting with nature will inevitably help in your studying.



Cancer: Jun 21 - Jul 22

Bring more of your feelings into the open today, Cancer. Don't be so paranoid about what other people think. At times you may feel as if you're the only one struggling with portages, and everyone around you thinks you're wimp. It's time to dismiss these thoughts from your mind. Everyone struggles, and talking about your feelings is the only way for expeditions to be successful.



Leo: Jul 23 - Aug 22

Tackle things that require high energy today, Leo. This is your day to make short work of pulling the toboggan back up the hill. Patience is the thing that you will lack, if anything, but don't worry, because your strengths lie elsewhere now. Your heart is apt to sing every time you go down the hill, and you will get inspired for a personal project about which you feel passionate.



Virgo: Aug 23 - Sep 22

Even though you feel most comfortable when things are organized and meticulous, Virgo, you're going to need to be flexible. Allow room for surprise and adventure. Bask in the adventurous spirit that must be adopted when you register for a MOC trip, with no idea where you will end up. People and situations that come around today are likely to be a little bit insane, but friendly.



Libra: Sep 23 - Oct 22

You're a little off balance today, Libra, but if you adventure carefully, it'll work out. Waking up in your cold tent is likely to be the most difficult part of the day, but once you conquer that incredible feat, you should be fine, because you'll warm up when you start moving. Make sure to steer clear of any un-touched ice, or else you might fall through, and find yourself a freezing bundle once again. It's better to follow in other peoples footsteps for now, until you find your groove.



Scorpio: Oct 23 - Nov 21

You may feel like the smallest issue is suddenly a life or death situation, Scorpio. Depending on your mood, you may think you're on the brink of tipping your canoe, or having the cave opening collapse with you stuck inside, but the next minute be thinking that the canoe is as stable as your moma's love, or thinking that the cave is where you want to retire to. The drama that surrounds you is more a product of your reaction to your environment rather than the environment itself.



Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

The trail seems to be easier than usual today. This is a sign that you're following the map correctly, and are on the right path. Hiking shouldn't have to be full of bushwacking. If you start walking through what feels like dense forest without sign of a path, you should consider backtracking and taking a different turn off. Keep a smile on your face and pretend you did it on purpose.



Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

Money that you may have been hoping to use to go on an outdoor club trip suddenly come your way today, Capricorn. Ideas for what trip to go on may could pop into your mind quickly. You will probably want to write them all down, consider your options carefully, and then choose the one that suit your needs best. Go to it.



Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You will get much farther than you think today, even with minimal effort, Aquarius. There are plenty of routes to take now, so even if one channel has been damned by beavers, there's always another that you can reach easily. Soon you will arrive at your campsite with time to spare. The trick is to keep moving.



Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Don't get too caught up in the sedentary side of life today, Pisces. Keep things energetic and keep them moving. A rolling stone gathers no moss. Unfortunately, you may have quite a bit of that green stuff growing on you now. Get up and get moving. One little bit of effort will send you off and running. Don't hesitate. You're ready to take the plunge and get outside!



A flock of birds move like a
black ghost with no eyes.


Left and right they shift,

each one as one,

to scare

the

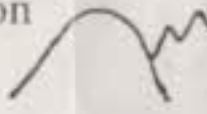
HAWK!



How to find the time left before sundown

Brought to you by Dan Thompson

This handy trick only works if there is less than 2 hours before sunset, and you are not north of 60 degrees latitude. Stretch your arm out towards the sun, but curl your hand so that you can see your four fingers length-wise. Position the top of your index finger so that it lines up with the bottom of the sun. For each finger that lies between the bottom of the sun and the horizon, you have about 15 minutes of sunlight left before sunset. If there is more than four fingers worth of sun left, use two hands. This trick is particularly useful in the mountains, where actual sunset times differ due to local topography (i.e. mountains).



WOODY WITTICISMS

Submitted by Carol Daley

Did you hear about the guy who stayed up all night wondering where the sun went?
It finally dawned on him.

Q: How can you tell the ocean is friendly?
A: It waves.

Q: What did the big flower say to the little flower?
A: How are you, bud?

Q: How do trees go on the internet?
A: They log in.

Q: When is the moon the heaviest?
A: When it's full!