
Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

September, 2000, vol 50:9

Elsewhere In This Issue...

<i>The Presidential Preamble</i>	2
<i>Artwork: Spring Sierran Fungi</i>	5
<i>Our Foragers' Report</i>	4
<i>New Fungus Threatens Oak Woodlands</i>	6
<i>MSSF Scholarship</i>	7
<i>MSSF Council and Committees</i>	8
<i>More! Season Recap</i>	9
<i>Mz. Myco-Manners</i>	9
<i>Calendar</i>	10

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Membership and Subscription Information

To join the MSSF and receive this newsletter, send a \$25 check, payable to MSSF (\$20 for seniors 65 and over and full time students), to MSSF Membership, 2750 Market St. Suite 103, San Francisco, CA 94114-1987, Attn: David Bartolotta. Please include contact information: home and/or work phone numbers and email address. New and renewal memberships will be current through December of 2000. To change your mailing address, please notify David. MSSF members may also join or renew membership in the North American Mycological Association at a reduced rate by including with their MSSF check a separate check for \$17 payable to NAMA. Send it to David at the same address. For further information email David at david@bartolotta.com or call at (415) 621-3166.

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MSSF Mourns Harry Thiers

In the early morning of August 8th, Dr. Harry D. Thiers died in his sleep of cardio-pulmonary failure at the age of 81. He was in Ohio with his wife Ellen, visiting his daughter Barbara and son-in-law Roy Halling, whose granddaughter Mary was attending an ice-skating camp. Harry spent the day of August 7th in an activity that defined so much of his life: collecting and studying mushrooms with friends and family.

Harry's death is a great loss for the MSSF. As our scientific adviser for 30 years, he trained many notable MSSF mycologists, including Mykoweb founder Mike Wood, Bay Area Fungi writer Fred Stevens, and the late Herb Saylor, an expert on hypogeous fungi. As a researcher and author, he wrote many of the standard works on California fungi, including a definitive book on boletes and a series of monographs entitled *The Agaricales of California* that culminated in the 1997 release of his monograph on the genus *Russula*. As a teacher, he taught many of today's leading professional mycologists, including our current scientific advisor Dr. Dennis Desjardin.

Harry was born a Texan on January 22, 1919 in Fort McKavett. He remained in Texas to earn his B.A. (1941) and M.A. degrees (1947) at the University of Texas, interrupted by a four-year stint in the U.S. Navy during World War II. In 1956, he earned his Ph.D. at the University of Michigan as a student of the pre-eminent American mycologist Alexander Smith, writing his doctoral dissertation on the Agaricales of the pine belt of eastern Texas. It was then back to Texas where Harry continued as a faculty member at Texas A&M University for a total of 12 years.

1959 brought Harry to California and to San Francisco State University, where he would spend the next 30 years teaching biology and mycology, and where he entered the lives of MSSF members as our scientific adviser. While at SFSU, he served as major professor for 35 Master's degree students (SFSU doesn't offer doctorates), 19 of whom went on to get their Ph.D. degrees and take up positions at leading universities and research labs throughout the world. After his retirement in 1989 he continued to run the herbarium at SFSU until he and Ellen moved to Peoria, Illinois in 1994 to be near family.

Harry's research in California, North America, and in trips abroad led to his publication of over 150 new species of fungi, to eight published books, to 50 papers in leading scientific journals, and to many articles for lay journals. He was recognized worldwide as the leading authority on boletes and as an innovator in secotioid fungi research. His extensive collections throughout the state of California became the basis of the Harry D. Thiers Herbarium at SFSU, named in his honor, now containing over 100,000 speci-

D. Thiers Herbarium at SFSU, named in his honor, now containing over 100,000 specimens, over half of

The Presidential Preamble

By Terri Beausejour

It is truly an honor to serve as President of this fine organization. I recently had occasion to travel to Washington DC and meet a member of the Washington DC Mycological Society. It is always interesting to learn the perceptions of those who live in distant lands and follow our activities from afar. He had some very positive comments regarding how active our group is, on the diversity of activities we undertake, on our dedication to mycological education, and on our huge annual fungus fair. He also viewed our ability to collect multiple pounds of morels and porcini with some envy.

This certainly sparked renewed appreciation for the blessings of living in the San Francisco Bay Area and of belonging to the MSSF. Here we not only enjoy year-round collecting of a vast array of species, but belong to an organization which brings together a wide diversity of individuals from all walks of life, enjoying and sharing a common passion for mycology and mushrooms. As standard annual fare, we enjoy 9 eminent speakers at our general meetings, weekly and bi-weekly identification walks at Lands End and Joaquin Miller, approximately 15 organized camping forays, a two-day fair complete with 5-10 collecting forays, a very active and talented culinary group, a Christmas dinner, and numerous special workshops and classes throughout the year. At any of these events we are likely to encounter a cast of very interesting characters, including several expert taxonomists eager for a heady species debate or to explain the basics to a newcomer, and numerous culinary gourmards always prepared to whip up a tasty appetizer or multi-course meal as the occasion demands.

How is it possible to do all of this within a non-profit, all-volunteer organization? It is the volunteers themselves: council members, committee chairs and active member volunteers that make it all possible! How can we begin to thank those who have contributed so much over the years? Ironically, I don't think we have to, because we don't do it for the thank-you's nor the recognition, but for the sheer joy of sharing the knowledge and thrill of discovery with others. The friendships and camaraderie that result from working together on engaging projects are the reward in itself!

Still, I can't help but extend my personal heartfelt thanks to those who have served on the council and as committee chairs over the years, because doing so does require a certain amount of responsibility and commitment in addition to the enjoyment. As we make the transition to our 51st year, we have several departing, continuing and new council members and committee chairs, who I'd like to thank, welcome and introduce.

Mark Thomsen completes a 2 year term as President, and will sit on the council this year as Past-President. His creativity

and thoughtfully considered direction will continue to be invaluable to this year's council. Many thanks to **Zoe-Amey Cauldwell**, who has served for two years as Treasurer, and among other accomplishments, converted our books into Quicken format and created several new reports for our information and entertainment at budget meetings. Merci beaucoup to **Lynn Zickerman** who served last year as recording secretary and also has generously produced artwork for us at several fairs, and for this year's council dinner invitation. Muchas gracias, and grazie! to our outgoing councilors, **Tom Chester** and **Bennie Cottone**, whose insightful input to council decisions was of great value. Each will take on new roles as committee chairs this year.

Several of our long-time committee chairs will be trying something new this year: **Norm Andresen** was our Foray Chair last year after a two year intermission following his service in that role for many years prior. Anyone who has attended one of Norm's forays can appreciate his vast knowledge of mycology and local species combined with an exuberant thrill of discovery and humorous yet highly informative dialog. And he really knows how to setup a campsite in comfort and style! Norm will be our new Books Chairperson this year.

Chris Thayer, after many, many years as Books Chair will take this year "off", at least on a formal basis, and turn over the trusty hand cart and inventory to Norm. Chris is certainly to be commended for his diligence in carting all those books from his house to meetings and fairs so we would all have the opportunity to purchase important mycological works, at a discount, conveniently and with ease. I wonder what he will do with all that extra space in his garage?

Wade Leschyn has been our membership chair for several years, getting new members started, keeping up the extensive membership database, submitting member names to the printer for the newsletter, and staffing the membership table at the fair. Wade will be taking this year off from the "formal" responsibilities of a committee chair, but will likely be found leading some forays on the peninsula and participating in the fungus fair.

Sherry Carvajal was our Culinary Group chair last year, and what a year it was. Sherry never failed to ensure that those who were unable to attend a culinary dinner regretted having missed it after reading her raving follow-up reviews here in the Mycena News. I would also like to thank Sherry for tons of help at the Flower and Garden Show, helping us transport plants, mushrooms, and structural elements to and from the show, and playing an integral role in getting the lighting and other technical aspects to work. If Sherry ever says to you "I'm just an engineer", be sure and remind her she is also a fantastic cook! Sherry will be our Treasurer this year.

Lisa Bauer deserves much appreciation for managing the T-shirt sales for the past two years, and especially for getting the beautiful fungus fair poster onto a lovely selection of different types of shirts, which sold like hot candy-cap cakes. Thanks for all the schlepping of merchandise to events and for the enthusiastic

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marketing effort. Lisa will take a break from the responsibilities of a chairpersonship this year and just go have some fun in the woods.

We have a number of continuing committee chairs this year: **Bill Freedman** will continue his many years of service as our Toxicology Chair. It seems there were no mushroom-related deaths last year, and we hope this was helped by Bill and **Louise Freedman's** dedication to working with NAMA on the deadly Amanita poster now being distributed throughout the U.S. This year, I expect we will hear more from Dr. Freedman on the *Stachybotrys atra* problem in buildings and schools.

Fred Stevens and **Bob Mackler** have graciously agreed to continue their Co-Chairpersonship for the Scholarship Committee this year. Their combined expertise is essential in the review of applications, in forming the basis for selection of scholarship recipients, and for presenting their recommendations to the council for review and approval. Their willingness to continue in this important role is greatly appreciated by the council, and by the students receiving support for their mycological studies.

Michael Wood will continue as our Web-master extraordinaire. Over the past several years, Mike has built mykoweb.com into a world class web site. Anyone who has visited mykoweb.com knows that it is a fantastic source of worldwide mycological information, and by far the best online source of local species photographs and descriptions available. Mike is very generous in maintaining mssf.org, the MSSF member website, and is always responsive to making updates to keep the calendar, newsletter, and other time-sensitive information accessible and current, and to keeping the content well organized and useful. He also administers the MSSF mailing list at egroups.com.

Dr. Dennis Desjardin has been greatly appreciated as our Scientific Advisor for many years. Dr. Desjardin was an MSSF scholarship recipient when studying with **Dr. Harry Thiers** at San Francisco State University. Although now a world famous mycologist, he continues to show his gratitude for our support by attending many of our meetings, by speaking to us on current topics, by continuing to invite us to attend his Spring Fungi of the Sierra Nevada field study course, and by giving of his time and expertise, as well as that of his graduate students, for identification at our annual fungus fairs. He pays us back multi-fold each year for that scholarship given long ago!

This year, we have an equally talented slate of new council members and committee chairs with whom I very much look forward to working: **David Rust** will be our Vice-President, and will also Co-Chair the Fungus Fair committee along with **Tom Chester**. Watch out if you attend a fungus fair meeting this year, you might find yourself at a five course dinner as well! As mentioned above, **Sherry Carvajal** will be our Treasurer. **Jeanne Campbell** will be our Secretary (I hope we can keep her out of the woods enough to get to the council meetings!). Ongoing council members will be **Debbie Viess** and **Al Carvajal**. New

council members will be **Ron Pastorino** and **Mark Lockaby**.

I am very pleased to announce that **David Bartolotta** will be our new membership chair. I haven't quite been able to convince him to provide a complimentary massage with each membership, but am working on it! David claims that as membership chair he will have an excuse to play with his computer more often. But I know that he will also bring his charm to bear on making new and continuing members feel welcome, and to keeping these newsletters in your mailbox.

Dr. Jim Miller will be our new Foray Chair. Jim has been an MSSF member since 1982, and has attended numerous forays. He never tires of keying out collections and finding new spots. He has also been very proactive in giving talks to local community organizations, and would like to help us develop relationships with more local parks to open new territory for identification walks. You can expect the usual suite of organized forays this year, and perhaps a few in new areas as well. Please welcome and support Jim in his new role as Foray Chair.

Ken Litchfield will be our new Cultivation Chair. Ken is the Master Gardener at the Randall Museum, and has been instrumental in a myriad of cultivation activities over the past two years, including the Mushroom Demonstration Garden, and the in-progress completion of the portable cultivation lab. He also designed and built the Mushrooms in the Garden display at the San Francisco Flower and Garden show. Ken will manage both the educational display and the garden vignette this year at the Garden show, as well as the Cultivation table at the Fungus fair. His creativity, enthusiastic participation and expertise with both plants and fungi will continue to be instrumental to cultivation committee activities.

Bill Hellums and **Bennie Cottone** will Co-Chair the Culinary Group this year. Those who are regular culinary group participants already know that having this team at the helm bodes very well for delighting your palette throughout the coming year. Bennie seems always to bring something scrumptious wherever he goes, whether it be a culinary dinner or a tailgate lunch during an informal foray. Bill has organized and cooked for various meals at the Mendocino foray, and is equally at home with camp cooking as in a professional kitchen. And Bill is the only person I know who has produced a freshly baked pie at 5500 ft. during a blizzard!

You may remember from the May, 2000 issue that **Yu-Shen Ng**, **Jessica Koeppel** and **Hilary Somers** bade us farewell as newsletter editors, and introduced our new editor (as of this very issue), **Beth Sampson**. Yu-Shen, Hilary and Jessica really took on a critical responsibility and handled it so efficiently and elegantly that they cannot be commended enough. And they were really good at nagging those of us who needed to remember to get content in on time when the deadline was approaching.

continued on page 8

Our Foragers' Report

By Patrick Hamilton

Welcome to another year of hearing about all the great mushrooms others, and perhaps you too, have found. This is my first season of writing this column and I follow some fine reporters of columns past. To wit (and I don't mean to imply that these fellows were especially witty, or not) most recently, Mike Boom and his fine "Fungal Follies" entertained and enlightened us in 1999, before him David Campbell's 1998 travelogue style "Mushroom Scoop" was filled with stuff from here and afar, but for the rest of the 90's (I think) and perhaps some of the 80's too (before my time) we had Bob Gorman's wonderful "The Forager" usually unusually packed with lots of good information.

I have been writing the somewhat offbeat cooking column for "Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming" for some years now so this column for the "Mycena" might have more food slant than those before me and surely its own synecopation. For those of you who do not know me, I used to live in Fairfax and Inverness but now reside in Cotati. I know first hand our area(s) very well from West Marin to the Sierra and from the Monterey Peninsula to the Oregon border, and beyond. I have friends with whom I foray who give me info about, and access to, their "secret spots" and I will not reveal them to anyone if asked not to. I have been on the commercial mushroom trail, as a participant observer, and traveled to Alaska, The Yukon, British Columbia, the Blue Mountains of Oregon ad infinitum in search of things mushroomy.

I have shared spots picking morels with Larry Stickney and been elbowed out of the way (good naturedly..?) by Norm Andresen, I withstood a blizzard and many other adventures with David Campbell, been frozen in the summer and gotten hot on long, long, steep, steep hikes in February with Mike Boom, sidekicked with Connie Green when she bought hundreds of pounds of black chanterelles, morels, whatever, cooked fungus to-die-for with Yutaka Wada, prepared and eaten smut with David Bartolotta, heck I have even been ex-communicated from and by the most holy of mushroom gods. In short, but in a wordy way, I have some worthy background for writing this column; but it will be made more your column by reports from you to me.

What we have now available to us that most former columnists did not is "onelist" or "egroups" or whatever we call that online bulletin board that Mike Boom (not Wood) and Mike Wood (not Boom) monitor in their particular, if not peculiar, fashions. Almost daily items are posted that refer to something about mushrooms and I simply copy and paste these articles into a file which I will use this season in "Our Foragers' Report." This will be all well and good but I still like to hear from your lips or from direct email to me about what you have seen and/or picked. Call me at 707.795.7353 or email me at MycoChef@aol.com. I like the clandestine part of only you and me knowing stuff and I won't tell a soul exactly where you found what, unless you want me to. I promise.

Jeanie Porcini (a.k.a. Jeanie Campbell) called to remind me about what caused the stirring entrance she and David made to the MSSF summer (Arctic style) picnic in July. They were accompanied by very big, chunky, fresh "burns," and some "gray" morels too. These were by far the thickest "burns" I have ever seen. They picked them way up high around 7,800', and in

mid-July. Splendid showing, that. Amanita Rita (a.k.a. Debbie Viess) emailed me to relate that while blackberrying in West Marin, . . . "David (Rust) and I . . . stumbled upon quite a few Amanita phalloides under Tanoak. . . . I also found a fresh fruiting of two enormous Pluteus cervinus. . . . God bless our fog drip." (I say, "Amen."). Mike Boom took Connie Green and myself to his and Mike Wood's and Fred Stevens's secret Marasmius oreades spot. Reminded us of that quote of Mark Twain's, "Coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco". . . . It was not unlike an ill-planned trip to the Himalayas during the winter, without adequate supplies, in shorts. We did find some and the frostbite I suppose was worth every minute of the hunt. What's a few toes compared to being able to enjoy Fairy Ring Mushrooms in Scrambled Eggs?

I spoke to Connie just now (Aug. 11) to get an update on what should be available in the markets and restaurants for the next month or so. Finlandian and Estonian chanterelles are being shipped as well as some from Russia. I hear that the dark cargo bays are illuminated by those. . . . Lobster mushroom picking is going on along the coast in southern Oregon. Chanterelles are coming in from all around Canada and Matsutakes are starting to show in famed Terrace, British Columbia, prices unknown. Deana Apfel, a MSSF member who lives near Philo, told me about a camping trip recently in Anderson Valley where *Russula xerampelina* ("shrimps") buttons were found and fine indeed. Terri Beausejour reportedly has found a *Boletus edulis* in the East Bay hills and so has Mike Boom. Isn't that out-of-season picking kinda like poaching? Or is that jealousy rearing its ugly keystrokes?

There was much talk about corn smut (*Ustilago maydis*) on our online bulletin board last month. Roger Ecker, George Robin, Mike Wood, Barbara Sommer, et al., exchanged ideas, information, and recipes for this delicious yet impossible looking stuff that grows on affected ears of corn. If you can get some in a farmers' market or your own field, wherever, I say to check it out. I'll even share again a recipe that we made some years ago from lobster shells and bolete stock. If you share your smut with me.

Rina Hsieh, now married to our former foray chairman Henry Shaw and living in Bethesda, Maryland, called the other day to ask about preserving *Sparassis crispa* she had been told where to find growing in a public park. Seems that local members in her new local mycological society aren't in it much for the food part so she has much more bounty available for the taking than, say, our members have around here.

Fred Stevens posted the following message on our mssf@egroups.com (the "bulletin board") and I quote it because of its obviously pertinent information. I apologize to you who have already seen this, but for the majority of our members, those who are not tuned in to this rather new way of disseminating knowledge, I present it here. "If you can't wait for the start of the regular mushroom season, now is the time to look for fungi along fog-swept hilltops near the coast. Yesterday, Mike Wood, Jane Wardzinska and I walked around the campus of Skyline College in San Bruno. "It was a fairly typical August day: cloudy, drizzly, cold, in short miserable but perfect for mushrooms. We found about 30 species, many in surprisingly good condition although edibles like *Clitocybe nuda* and *Agaricus augustus* were not abundant." If you're interested in collecting fog drip mushrooms, keep in mind that location is everything. Only the most exposed trees facing the ocean will comb enough moisture out of the fog to produce fruitings. What this means is you need to cover a lot of ground, to find productive spots. Right now areas worth exploring include the

continued on page 7

New Fungus Threatens Oak Woodlands

By David Rust

Picture a coastal oak forest in the Bay Area on a typical summer day. A steady, cooling wind blows off the ocean. In the rising air currents, a steady stream of lemon-shaped spore sacs deposit a fine dust on the leaves of the oak trees. Later in the day, fog whips over the tops of the tallest trees. Moisture collects on the leaves; the fungal spore sacs break apart and deposit their offspring in the crown of the tree. Tiny zoospores with twin flagella swim in the fog drip and begin feeding on the outer layer of bark. The fungus penetrates the outer bark layer, its enzymes break down the circulatory system, and very soon the tree is dead. This is not science fiction, but it is a horror story. And it is happening in the coastal oak woodlands from Santa Barbara to Humboldt County.

* * * * *

The coastal oaks of California are dying. Researchers have just named the culprit, a fungus in the genus *Phytophthora*, but have yet to devise a strategy to slow its path of destruction. First documented on tanoaks in 1995 by Marin County Horticultural Advisor Pavel Svirha, the disease has killed thousands of trees in Marin County and Santa Cruz County. The fungus is currently affecting three species of trees: Tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*). The California Department of Forestry has paid little attention to the epidemic, since tanoaks are of little timber value.

Phytophthora (pronounced Phy-TOF-thor-uh) is related to the fungus that caused the Irish potato famine, but it does not match any of the 60 known *Phytophthora* species anywhere in the world. How it came to Mill Valley remains a mystery.

UC-Davis plant pathologist David Rizzo, who identified the rare fungus, released his findings at the end of July to raise public awareness before the start of the rainy season, when the danger of spore dispersal through human actions will be at its highest. While it is possible this species of *Phytophthora* is being dispersed by air, spores are most likely being spread by hiker's shoes and animal's feet, bicycle and car tires, infected firewood, and soil moved in construction areas, according to Rizzo. "Preventing the movement of soil and wood will be critical to slowing the spread of the fungus to other oak woodlands," he said. Obviously, mushroom hunters who travel frequently to different forests should be especially careful to clean off their hiking boots and tires after visiting coastal woodlands. Since so little is known about the biology of this organism, the research team recommends taking extra precautions, based on how other *Phytophthora* species are disseminated.

Phytophthora appears to like the cool, wet conditions typically found along the California coastline. In petri dishes in the laboratory, its colonies resemble clusters of cotton fiber, and can produce thousands of offspring in just twenty-four hours. The offspring, called zoospores, are released from tiny lemon-shaped sacs called sporangia. The sporangia may become airborne in wind and active with moisture, so fog and moderate summer temperatures are ideal for its reproduction and dispersal.

Once in the tree, *Phytophthora* produces enzymes that dissolve the dead outer and living inner layers of bark. Oozing sores result as the cell walls break down and cankers form on the outer bark layer, often the first visible sign of trouble. As the disease progresses past the bark, the tree then becomes vulnerable to invasion by bark beetles, originally thought to be the cause of sudden oak death syndrome.

Three beetles have been found on affected trees, the Western Oak Bark Beetle, the Oak Ambrosia Bark Beetle, and the Minor Oak Ambrosia Bark Beetle. Through years of studying the progression of the disease, scientists now know that the beetles are not capable of invading healthy trees, but can be very destructive once trees are weakened.

Finally, after the layers of bark are destroyed and the beetles have drilled through the wood, another fungus, *Hypoxyylon thouarsianum*, a wood-rotting ascomycete, invades the tree and forms its characteristic small black fruiting bodies on the outer layer.

Rizzo says the ecological ramifications of *Phytophthora* are alarming. Coastal oak woodlands provide habitat for many forms of animal and plant life. There are at least one hundred species of mushrooms that grow in oak habitats, including many choice edibles. "I hate to think of a future without live oak and tanbark oak – and, of course, without chanterelles, black chanterelles, hedgehogs, Amanita velosa, Boletus aereus, and the many other oak-loving mushrooms that we cherish," says Mike Boom, former MSSF President. "As we find out more about this oak plague, we must do whatever we can to help."

Tanoaks seem most susceptible to the fungus, but now that it has also been found on black oaks, David Rizzo is concerned that it could cross the central valley and thrive in the black and canyon oak woodlands of the Sierra. So little is known about this new fungus, Rizzo and other members of the research team think immediate action to control it is called for. The scientific team initiated meetings with federal forest officials in August about quarantine – gating off uninfected forests in the winter during the wet season – the same strategy now being used to protect Port Orford cedar trees in Northern California and Oregon from a similar fungus.

Ecological systems change over time, and often change is swift. One thing is known: this species of *Phytophthora* is in our woodlands, and we will have to adjust.

For more information, the UC Berkeley website has current information on research and monitoring activities: <http://himalaya.cnr.berkeley.edu/oaks/>. The UC-cooperative extension program in Marin county is also a good source of information: <http://cemarlin.ucdavis.edu/index2.html>.

David

The MSSF Library Is Open

The Library open one hour prior to the start of each general meeting and it stays open until the meeting starts.

Mourning, continued from page 1

mens, over half of them collected by Harry. It is the largest and most important collection of fleshy fungi west of the Mississippi.

Harry's work as a researcher and teacher has garnished more awards than we can list here; they include Distinguished Mycologist from the Mycological Society of America, and the Fellows Medal from the California Academy of Sciences, its highest award and the first ever presented to a mycologist. He was also honored by fourteen different taxa named after him, including the genus *Thiersia*.

Most of us remember Harry as an inspired advisor, working through specimen IDs at the Fungus Fair, lecturing at our monthly meetings, holding workshops, and leading forays. We can picture him walking along a forest trail, often accompanied by his wife Ellen, stopping to pluck a mushroom from the ground, patiently explaining the inevitably fascinating story behind it. Harry suffered endless questions both foolish and wise for his great delight in revealing the lovely intricacies of the kingdom Fungi, and we're all the better for it.

Harry leaves behind his wife and companion of many years, Ellen; a daughter, Barbara; and a grand-daughter, Mary. We extend to them our condolences and mark with great sadness the passing of a wise and compassionate voice from this world.

- Mike Boom

For those who wish to send cards or flowers

Ellen Thiers
6102 N. Imperial Dr., #149
Peoria, IL 61614

For those who wish to donate something in Harry's name, consider the following:

- The Thiers Mentor Student Travel Fund, which supports student travel to the annual Mycological Society of America meetings to present their research.

Attn: Dr. Judi Ellzey, Chair, MSA Endowment Committee
Dept. of Biological Sciences
University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, TX 79968-0519
Checks should be made out to: Mycological Society of America, Thiers Mentor Student Travel Fund.

- The Thiers Scholarship, sponsored by the Mycological Society of San Francisco, which supports graduate research on mushrooms, specifically in western North America.

Send to: Mycological Society of San Francisco
P.O. Box 882163
San Francisco, CA 94188-2163
Checks should be made out to: Mycological Society of San Francisco, Thiers Scholarship

- The Thiers Herbarium Special Trust Account #7-58931, which supports maintenance and upgrade of the Thiers Herbarium at San Francisco State University.

Send to: Dr. Dennis Desjardin, Director
Thiers Herbarium, Dept. of Biology
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave., San Francisco, CA 94132
Checks should be made out to: San Francisco State University, Thiers Herbarium Acct. # 7-58931.

For more information on Harry, including Dennis Desjardin's biography of Harry from which much of the information in this obituary was taken, try this NAMA web page: <http://www.mykoweb.com/boletes/index.html>.

To read an on-line version of Harry's seminal work on California boletes, try this Mykoweb page: <http://www.mykoweb.com/boletes>

MSSF Scholarship

The Mycological Society of San Francisco offers scholarships to full time graduate students who are majoring in mycology and attending colleges and universities in northern California. These scholarships vary in amount from \$500 to \$1,500 and are given in the name of Esther Colton Whited and Dr. Harry Thiers. All research proposals are welcomed, but special consideration is given to taxonomic studies of the higher fungi of the Pacific States.

Requirements include two letters of recommendation, one from a professional mycologist, a brief statement describing the research project, and agreement to present the results at a general meeting of the MSSF. Send inquiries/materials to Robert Mackler, 157 Mesa Ct., Hercules CA, 94547. Deadline for applications is December 10, 2000

Forager, continued from page 4

pinus at Baker beach in the Presidio where *Boletus edulis* should now be fruiting and the ridge tops at Pt. Reyes where a variety of fungi, especially litter and wood decomposers ought to be coming. A couple final thoughts: parking is restricted at Skyline College except for Sundays, and since the weather in August can feel very much like January, be sure to bring a rain shell and or warm clothing. . .

Skyline College Finds August 6, 2000

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Agrocybe praecox</i> | 17. <i>Hygrophorus gliocyclus</i> |
| 2. <i>Agaricus semotus</i> | 18. <i>Laccaria? Naucoria vinicolor?</i> |
| 3. <i>Agaricus augustus</i> | 19. <i>Lactarius deliciosus</i> |
| 4. <i>Agaricus bisporus</i> | 20. <i>Lepiota acutesquamosa</i> group |
| 5. <i>Agaricus californicus</i> | 21. <i>Lepiota</i> sp. |
| 6. <i>Clavaria vermicularis</i> | 22. <i>Marasmius plicatulus</i> |
| 7. <i>Clavulina cristata</i> | 23. <i>Marasmius oreades</i> |
| 8. <i>Clavulinopsis laeticolor</i> | 24. <i>Psathyrella</i> sps (2) |
| 9. <i>Clitocybe nuda</i> | 25. <i>Ramaria myceliosa</i> group |
| 10. <i>Dacrymyces deliquescens</i> | 26. <i>Russula sanguinea</i> |
| 11. <i>Dacrymyces palmatus?</i> | 27. <i>Suillus fuscotomentosus</i> |
| 12. <i>Geastrum fornicatum</i> | 28. <i>Suillus pungens</i> |
| 13. <i>Gymnopus villosipes</i> | 29. <i>Tricholoma fracticum</i> |
| 14. <i>Hypholoma fasciculare</i> | 30. <i>Volvariella speciosa</i> |
| 15. <i>Hebeloma crustuliniforme</i> | |
| 16. <i>Hygrophopsis aurantiaca</i> | |

Thank you Fred!

If your name was not written herein but you would like it to be, there is a simple way. Call me, don't be afraid you can call me, call me and . . . The deadline for articles is the 15th of each preceding month and I need to get information for the "The Foragers' Report" at least 5 days before that.

I want to mention here that Connie Green and I were not able

continued on page 8

Preamble, continued from page 3.

They have also helped Beth to make the transition, and I assume that those helpful little email reminders of the approaching deadlines will again be forthcoming.

I am sure I could go on and on, there are so many others who make each year a success, even when not serving on the council or on a committee, just by showing up and freely sharing their talents and enthusiasm. If you would like to get more involved in our volunteer activities, please do contact one of the council members or committee chairpersons and express your interest. Contact information is listed elsewhere on this page. Or just show up at some events and get to know us. The rewards are grand, as evidenced by our motto (first coined by Norm Andresen): Come for the Fungi, Stay for the Fun!

Terri

Save the Date/Help with the Fair

If you have some great ideas, a little time, and want to help out with this year's fair, the first fair committee meeting will be held at the Randall Museum on Tuesday, September 26th at 7:00 p.m.

If you can't make this meeting, but would like to be part of the committee, please call David Rust at (510) 430-9353 or Tom Chester at (415) 665-7520.

Mark your calendar:

31st Annual Fungus Fair
December 9th and 10th
Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park

Forager, continued from page 7

to be some of the first ones up to the Plumas National Forestburns this past spring. We became like many others who wait until they are very sure of just exactly where and when to go. In our case though we simply couldn't go earlier because of other commitments (unbelievable, huh?). We ended up waiting for reports from others, which was an unusual step for us scouting-type foragers, and we did manage to get up there a few weekends later and pick over 120 pounds of "burns" in an afternoon and the following morning. Before you get mad at us let me tell you that it was a Sunday, a very hot Sunday, on a western slope and that many of the mushrooms were drying on the vine. No one had been there before us so we figured that no one else would be behind us in time to pick any still worth picking later (there were no babies) so we did indeed take them all. With all these horrible, yes horrid, fires burning from here to eternity right now I bet that next spring might really be good. . . .

So use good information like that which will always be in this column to not only find lots of good mushrooms but also to better your life. And to make people jealous, mad, irked, happy—you insert the correct word to describe your feelings about people who pick so darn many morels.

'Til next time, so long for now folks.

Patrick

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September General Meeting: Matteo Garbelotto

The Latest Research on Sudden Oak Death

General meetings of the MSSF occur regularly on the third Tuesday of each month, at the Randall Museum in San Francisco. Guest speakers start at 8:00 p.m., but many other activities begin at 7:00 p.m. (including open library hours, special exhibits, t-shirt and book sales, and general conversation). Members often bring in mushrooms for identification and general sharing.

We're starting our first general meeting this September 19 with Matteo Garbelotto, a UC-Berkeley mycologist, who has been working with Sudden Oak Death syndrome for three months with a team of researchers from UC Davis. He was one of the two people to isolate and identify *Phytophthora* as the probable initial cause of infection. Garbelotto is currently investigating the etiology of the disease, how it travels from one tree to another, how it survives, and is working on a *Pytophthora*-specific fungicide. Come learn about steps being taken to halt this recently-discovered fungus that has ravaged oak woodlands in Santa Cruz and Marin counties, and threatens the entire California coast.

How to Get There

Morel Season Recap

By Norm Andresen

The morel season went pretty well this year. In early April Lorie Gallagher alerted us to an event via the mailing list. A fire at the south end of Clare Eagle Reservoir near Lewiston was visited by a number of MSSF folks including our then president Mark Thomsen. The site produced a lot of somewhat dirty, but large mushrooms.

At the end of April, during the 50th anniversary foray, the MSSF visited the Pilot fire in Groveland. Many hunters did very well; the big find occurred at the upper side of the fire, under burnt fir forest along a creek. The excellent accommodations that were provided through the efforts of Tom Sasaki at the 50th anniversary foray brought many faces that we do not normally see at morel forays. Bravo Tom!

The first weekend in May we visited the Megram fire in Shasta/Trinity National Forest. The morels were almost everywhere we checked, but they were small (Mike Boom calls them raisins). The only place that mature morels were abundant was at very low elevations (3000ft) in exposed slash. Unfortunately, we did not find the spot until late the last day. While some people may think this was the foray leader's plan, there IS a certain amount of luck involved in every foray. It is not unusual for it to take a couple of days to figure out the fruiting pattern in a new place. This particular foray was well attended by expert collectors.

The foray to Black Rock Campground/ Devils Gap fire in Plumas National Forest was our next hit. We almost didn't make it to the fire because a large snow bank blocked our path, but the intervention of a large SUV eventually got us through. We found morels large in size and number and there was plenty for all. I think we all went home with the same question: how am I going to dry all these mushrooms?

It seems that dozens of people, including our scientific advisor, Dr. Dennis Dejardin, picked at Devils Gap for at least three more weeks. I saw one fellow with a laundry basket full to the brim! Memorial day weekend the morels were still popping in Plumas National Forest. I found morels in a number of spots, and have been told that many other places were hot.

The Lookout fire was loaded with commercial collectors, but we had no trouble filling our baskets; it was that good! The Pigeon did not produce well for me, but Dave Campbell reported good collecting. Also the Buck's Lake fire produced vast quantities of morels and was a favorite with commercial collectors. This same week the Megram fire was fruiting morels gangbusters. Unfortunately I was unable to attend, but the Humboldt Mycological Society cleaned up, I was told.

At the MSSF picnic we were dumbfounded by the arrival of Dave and Jeanne Campbell with a large basket of fresh morels that they had collected the day before on July 15! Apparently Dave had been watching over a small fire at 8000ft near Bear Valley for months, it was an impressive payoff.

Mz Myco-MANNERS

Friend Gets What He Deserves

DEAR MZ. MYCO-MANNERS: Whilst picking morels this past spring with several dear friends I fear that I made an etiquette faux pas. As I honed in on a particularly fruitful patch, my dear friend of 25 years cut in front of me. I of course threw him down the hill. Despite my paying for the E.R. visit and offering him a fresh morel dinner in apologia I sense a distance in our formerly warm relationship. How might I make amends and perhaps prevent such misunderstandings on the future?

p.s. I KILLED in my morel pickings this year.

NOT-SO-GENTLE READER: Mz. Myco-Manners is concerned that a delicate flower, such as you, would be so undignified as to "throw" a man down a hill. Proper etiquette suggests that a light PUSH would accomplish the same goal. Many strong-willed ladies return from forays these days with soiled dirndls due to unnecessary overexertion. Your graciousness to absorb the expenses of the E.R. visit is commendable; and economical (it would have cost you more to buy those lovely morels). As to his sense of distance to you; isn't that just what you wanted when you sent him on his down-hill voyage? He had the gall to step front of you, and he got what he deserved. Should you wish to show friendship to this rube, place some duff and mushroom covered gauze over an infested, deep pit. Whilst on the far side of said pit, call him to you with promises of a cold glass of lemonade. He will see the duff and mushroom covered gauze and will let his Myco-Greed guide him to the depths as he pounces on the little "patch" he has just found.

Woman to woman-yours truly,

Mz. Myco-Manners

Mz. Myco-Manners is an exciting new feature of Mycena News!

Have Mz. Myco-Manners address your pressing myco-etiquette questions too! Get ready for that next big foray with the courteous yet competitive advise only Mz. Myco-Manners can give. She shuns publicity and therefore cannot let her real identity be known, but you can write to Mz. Myco-Manners c/o your friendly newsletter editor. Your questions will be dutifully passed along.

Please send your questions to: Mz. Myco-Manners
c/o Beth Sampson
1227 Masonic St. apt#8
San Francisco, CA 94117

Or email questions to Mz. Myco-Manners:
y49@slip.net

All of these fires happened the previous summer. The site locations and maps were downloaded from the National Forest websites. But it takes going to the places beforehand to assess each place for quality of burn, to find foray locations. I have noticed that as soon as the next fire season starts the National Forest Service takes down the last years' fire maps. The MSSF mailing list (set up by Mike Wood) is a great place to exchange mushroom info. If you find mushrooms or a good-looking spot, put it on the web. We (and that includes YOU) all will benefit in the long run!!!

Our new foray chair is Jim Miller. I hope you will give him the same great support and understanding you gave me.

Norm

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September, 2000 vol 50:9

Calendar

Saturday and Sunday September 2-3: Cultivation Class with Mo Mei Chen. Dr. Mo-Mei Chen will be offering a cultivation class in Berkeley from 9AM to 5PM September 2-3. For more information and registration contact Mo-Mei Chen at (510) 643-0633 or email at mmchen@nature.berkeley.edu.

Monday, September 11: Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner. Dinner will be pot luck. To make reservations call George or Sherry. Please make your reservations by Friday September 8th.

Tuesday September 19: MSSF General Meeting. UC-Berkeley mycologist Dr. Matteo Garbelotto will talk about the newly-discovered fungus that is invading coastal oak woodlands. Doors to the Randall open at 7pm for mushroom identification, book sales, and various displays.

Tuesday September 26: Fair Committee Meeting. Meeting starts at 7PM. Bring your ideas and positive energy. For more information see the fair announcement on page 8 of this issue or contact Tom Chester at (415) 665-7520 or email Tom at: tlc1@well.com.

For the most current Calendar information, call the MSSF hotline at 415.759.0495 or check the MSSF website at: <http://www.mssf.org>