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Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

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Honorary Membership Awarded to Fred Stevens

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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, c/o Wade Leschyn, 1609 Valley View Ave, Belmont CA 94002. 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 Wade. 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 Wade at the same address. For further information email Wade at leschyn@rahul.net or call at 650.591.6616.

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Honorary membership in the MSSF is awarded to those individuals who have consistently and continuously contributed their time and expertise for the benefit of the Society over a long period of years. We do not have many honorary members. There is no rule as to when such an action ought to be taken. It is not an annual council decision. We want it to be based on merit alone. We now present a man with so many accomplishments to his account that we do not have space to list them all. He represents the standard with which we should judge those qualified to receive this honor.

At the Council Meeting on 4-11-2000, Fred Stevens was granted this honor. Quiet, unassuming, a leader in the true sense, he will probably be embarrassed when he reviews this list: joining in 1974, he was asked to assume the role of vice-president for the years 1976 & 1977; wrote his first Mycena News article in 1976, (he was to write many more); Foray Coordinator in 1976. Beginning in 1977, he volunteered to identify mushrooms brought in at the General Meetings. He still does. Since 1980 he has assisted Dr. Thiers and Dr. Desjardin ID crews in identifying fungi at most of our fairs in San Francisco (31 times), Coyote Point, (14 times) and Oakland (3 times). He still does. He was on the Mycena News Editorial Staff in 1977 and wrote lead articles by 1979 and for many years after. He originated the Cultivation classes in 1979 (to 1984). He was needed again for cultivation leadership from 1988 to 1989.

In 1981, he again contributed as a Councillor. From 1982 to 1985, he devoted much time to helping edit the new cookbook, Wild About Mushrooms. Annually, he has agreed to lead fungus fair forays. In 1982, he became our Foray Chairman. He joined others in leading the

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The Morel of the Story

As the morels begin to pop up in areas across Northern California, I am reminded of my first encounters with this elusive mushroom. Before I had ever tasted or even seen a morel, I could tell that they were something special. My evidence of this was the dreamy look on the face of a V.C.U. botany professor (back in the days when mushrooms were classified as plants) as he spoke of morels in our Richmond, Virginia classroom. I remembered that look when I met up with my soon-to-be boyfriend several years later in Wisconsin. His idea of an indispensable snack was a tin of dried morels that he carried with him everywhere. He ate them like candy. When he mentioned that he was going morel hunting, I piped up with, "Oh, take me!" His face immediately clouded over. After all, girls were one thing, but secret morel patches were another. He finally agreed

to take me along, on the condition that he would have to blindfold me first. I readily agreed and we spent a pleasant afternoon picking morels and lying on our backs watching a scarlet tanager dance in the elms above us.

It was over 25 years before I was able to repeat the experience of hunting morels. It was now 1999; my husband David and I had been avidly hunting mushrooms for several years, but had yet to try our hand at morels. We were anxious to find some, but had no idea where to look (burn areas? mountains? orchards?) and weren't sure if we'd be able to see them even if they were right at our feet. Larry Stickney took pity on us and gave us a sure-fire site (no pun intended), where he had

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President's Corner

This is my last column as president. It's been an interesting, and for the most part enjoyable two years. The presidency and council are being turned over to a talented and hardworking bunch. I look forward to working with Terri and the new council members. In parting here is two years worth of accumulated wisdom for our incoming president. I picture the MSSF as a very large and heavy ball that is slowly rolling along. It has a life of its own and it is your job and the job of the council to constantly nudge it from various sides to keep it on track. The track is your vision of what the MSSF should be and the direction you would like to see it headed. Two years ago when I took the job my goal was to have interesting speakers, numerous forays, a great fair and to find ways to use the amazing talents that the current 650 or so members have. I also wanted to make sure that the driving goal or force behind everything that we do is that the MSSF is an educational non-profit organization. The key words are educational and non-profit. If you keep focused on that you'll do just fine. Actually I have no doubt that Terri Beauséjour will make one of the best presidents that the society has had. I'd like to thank her for her sagacious advice, the brainstorming that we did and for listening to my occasional grumbling.

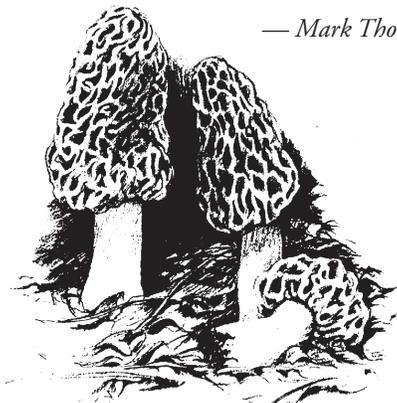
You'll do great.

At the April council meeting we looked at membership fees to see if they covered our fixed operating costs. The current fees are \$20 for individuals and families and \$12 for students and seniors. Some of our fixed costs are for storage (\$1116 per year), the newsletter and roster (\$13.50 per person per year), insurance (\$3.90 per person per year) plus speakers and the phone bill. Neither of the current membership fees are sufficient to cover our costs. Added up, the per person cost for our fixed costs is \$21.59. Based upon this, the council voted to increase membership fees for only the second time in the last 15 years. Beginning in December of 2000, the annual membership fee will rise to \$25 for adults and families, and \$20 for students and seniors. With over 40 events per year, I think that is a good value for the money.

Based upon his years of service to the MSSF, the council also voted to award an honorary membership to Fred Stevens. Bill Freedman has written an article in this issue awarding the membership and detailing Fred's outstanding and long-term commitment to the society.

Thanks for all of your help and for a great group of volunteers and I hope to run into you out in the woods.

— Mark Thomsen



April 18, MSSF General Meeting: Dr. Walt Sundberg

An Old California Surfer's Endless Foray

Our guest speaker for May will be Dr. Walt Sundberg. He will be speaking about the "Endless Foray," achievable by all of us in different ways: (a) through the years via "snapshots in time", (b) through extending our annual mushroom season via "armchair mycology", off season lectures, and/or classwork, or (c) through traveling to other parts of the country where the fungi are fruiting. Regardless of your "route", we will look via slides into where can you might go, what you might see, and some of what you might learn.

Dr. Walt Sundberg is originally from San Francisco (BA & MA from San Francisco State Univ., Ph.D. from Univ. of California/Davis) and was introduced to mushrooms and other fungi over 35 years ago by Harry D. Thiers (at SFSU) and Kenneth Wells (UCD). After this mycological seduction in California and other West Coast states, he moved to southern Illinois 28 years ago—and the learning has never stopped!

Dr. Sundberg has collected in many parts of the US and some parts of Canada and Puerto Rico. In addition to always on-going work on the mushroom genus *Lepiota*, he (with his students and other colleagues) is currently involved in documenting the biodiversity of mushrooms and other fungi in the lower-central midwest (Illinois, Missouri, and Kentucky) and the southwest (especially Arizona). He has authored numerous mycological research articles, is a past Editor of the Mycological Society of America's MSA Newsletter, and is the co-author of two mushroom books—*Mushrooms and Other Fleshy Fungi of Land Between The Lakes* (Tennessee Valley Authority; with John A. Richardson) and *Mushrooms: A Quick Reference Guide to Mushrooms of North America* (Macmillan Field Guide Series; with Alan Bessette).

With past help from the National Science Foundation (NSF), he spreads the word to educators about using fungi as a tool for teaching biological principles in the high school laboratory.

Dr. Sundberg often conducts mushroom identification workshops, lectures to mushroom clubs and other groups, and acts as a mushroom identification consultant for two regional poison control centers. He is proud of his long association with NAMA, the Missouri and Illinois Mycological Societies, other regional groups around the country, and the many friendships that mushrooming has provided. He enjoys working with all interested in fungi, especially "beginners," and looks forward to being at LAMS—renewing old acquaintances and meeting new mushroom friends.

The MSSF's general meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month—September through May—at the Randall Museum on Museum Way (near Buena Vista Park) in San Francisco. Doors open at 7:00pm for mushroom identification and general conversation; the meeting proper begins at 8:00pm.

Calendar, continued from page 10,

Carvajal at 415.695.0466.

Thursday – Sunday, June 8-11: NAMA Foray, Beaumont, Texas. Hosted by the Gulf States Mycological Society and NAMA. Deadline for registration is May 1, 2000. Contact plewis@jas.net for more information.

Sunday, July 16, 2000: MSSF Summer Picnic. To be held at Joaquin Miller Park in the Oakland Hills. Starts at noon. See inside this newsletter for details.

Thursday – Sunday, August 10-13: Northeast Foray, Connecticut. Hosted by the Northeast Mycological Federation, this foray brings many New England mycologists together. Contact Harley and Terry Stoleson for details: 203.268.3023 or htstoleson@sysmec.com

mid-August. Free cultivation workshop by Professor Mo-mei Chen. Anyone who is interested should call her during the first week of July at 510.528.8354 or mmchen@nature.berkeley.edu.

Mondays, August – December: “Higher Fungi” course. Held at San Francisco State University, this fall-semester course taught by Dr. Dennis Desjardin will cover many aspects of mycology. See inside this newsletter for full details.

Morel, continued from page 1,

just harvested morels a few days earlier. Eagerly, we drove up Highway 50 to our hoped for rendezvous with the delicious Morchella. All the way up I feverishly studied Norm Andresen’s excellent articles on hunting morels (Mycena News, Feb. and April 1999), hoping to learn how to think like a morel. When we arrived at our destination, the woodland slope was covered in slash – normally a repellent sight, but in this case, a most welcome one. We clambered up; we clambered down. Where were all the damn morels? Finally I set my basket down in disgust and bent down to study a plant – and a morel popped into view! Remembering the adage to “stop and drop” (but don’t roll) when a morel was found, I stayed crouched down and scanned the area, discovering several more. My attitude instantly improved. As we thrashed through the slash, we discovered the secret microhabitats that the morels seemed to favor . . . depressions in the ground, in the lee of downed logs and under thickets of slash, all areas of retained moisture in otherwise xeric mountain habitat. All too soon it was time to set up camp. We happily counted up our bounty: 186 morels! In anticipation of our hunting success, our cooler contained a carton of cream, which translated into a scrumptious pasta with morels in cream sauce.

The next day, we found fewer morels, but were still learning the hows and whys of hunting. David found two beauties in a shallow depression in an area new to us, but no others anywhere around. When I asked David Campbell about them later, he called them “scouts”. Sure enough, the next weekend, the area was covered in morels, which we gleefully gathered in the company of David and Jeannie Campbell. Later that night we clustered around the campfire, our bellies stuffed with morels. Paper bags also stuffed with morels surrounded us. In a happy wine-soaked exhaustion, I closed my eyes, where visions of morels danced behind my eyelids.

— Debbie Viess

THE SILENCE OF THE MORELS

By David Campbell

morels
in the corner of the eye
he cannot believe
so much
they look
as if
they were
all
still
here
before
nor can she perceive
it seems
as though
they were
there
all still
hard for us
they be
to see them
so
much they show
unlike we thought
some folks just listen
for
scrapes and the groan
as dew edged pits
from fungal flesh
unfurl
they say
that’s the surest way
to score
we knew
when stopped
we finally heard
the roar
there were so many
we could tell
they’ve grown
’round here
long since
forever
morels
4/00



MSSF Summer Potluck Picnic

WHEN:

Sunday, July 16th from noon until you decide to leave.

WHERE:

Joaquin Miller Park in the Oakland Hills. Specifically, at the Redwood Glen picnic area at Sequoia Arena

DIRECTIONS:

Take Hwy 580 to Hwy 13. Take Hwy 13 north. Exit Joaquin Miller Rd. Drive East up the hill. Turn left on Skyline Blvd. Drive 1.2 miles up skyline. Turn Left at the sign for the Sequoia Arena. Take an immediate left and follow the road to the parking area. There will be signs posted to help you find the picnic spot.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Anything that you'd like to grill.
- Your own drinks, plates, eating utensils, table cloth, etc.
- A dish to share with the group (perhaps one with mushrooms!)
- Make sure to bring some warm clothes as it can get foggy and chilly.
- This is an informal potluck so bring what you need and plan to share. There are BBQ facilities, picnic tables and water taps available.

Latest Report from Mo-mei

I will be attending the 15th International Congress on the Science & Cultivation of Edible Fungi on May 15-19, at Maastricht, the Netherlands. Here is an abstract of the article that I will be presenting. Feel free to contact me (mmchen@nature.berkeley.edu) for the full article or for more details.

Cultivation Techniques for Dictyophora, Polyporus umbellata, and Coprinus comatus (commonly known as the long shirt mushroom, Zhu Ling, and Shaggy Mane)

ABSTRACT: Results of research on the bamboo long shirt mushroom (*Dictyophora indusiata*), Zhu Ling (*Polyporus umbellata*) and drumstick mushroom (*Coprinus comatus*) are presented. The conditions for growing these three edible and medicinal species are best in China and California where the weather conditions are optimal for all three species. Detailed information on cultivation strains, spawn production and substrates, pH, temperature, humidity, and nutrition requirements for each species will be presented.

Research has shown that *Dictyophora* cultivation requires special techniques:

Continued next column...

Two Mushroom Taxonomy Courses

Here are two mycology courses that may be of interest to you. Every year I teach a course entitled, "Spring Fungi of the Sierra Nevada," (Biol. 315) held at the San Francisco State University Field Campus on Hwy 49 near the Sierra Buttes in Sierra Co. This year the class runs from Sunday evening, 4 June until Friday afternoon, 9 June. The format is early morning lectures, followed by about 4-5 hours of collecting at various sites near the field station, then late afternoon microscopy in the laboratory and evening slide shows. Three meals per day are provided by the camp kitchen staff, and I provide the laboratory supplies and literature.

This June marks the 19th time the course has been offered. Through the years we have kept voucher specimens and a list of all taxa encountered, and I have written (and revised numerous times) a key for the determination of over 385 species of macrofungi. We will use this key to learn the local mycota, supplemented by additional literature when necessary. If you are interested in attending this class or just want more information about it, you can find it on the web at: <http://www.mycena.sfsu.edu/courses/courses.html> and you can register for the course at: <http://thecity.sfsu.edu/snfc/>. If you don't have access to the Internet, you can register by calling the camp manager, Jim Steele, in the evenings at 650-738-1814.

A second course that may be of interest to mycophiles who want to experience a more in depth coverage of mushroom taxonomy and evolution, is a class called "Higher Fungi" (Biol. 800), held every other Fall semester in the Dept. of Biology at San Francisco State University. This Fall, beginning the last week of August, 2000, I will offer the course on Monday afternoons from 12:00 - 5:00. That's right, five hours straight, once per week, immediately following what I hope will be fungus-productive weekends. This class is open to the public, upon instructor consent, through the SFSU Extended Education program. The 15 week semester is spent studying fleshy Basidiomycetes. Come learn how to identify California mushrooms using available monographs; learn how to correlate macromorphology with micromorphological structures; learn who is related to whom and the evidence in support of these relationships; join us on 4 weekend forays. If you are interested, check out more information on the web at: <http://www.mycena.sfsu.edu/courses/Higher.html>

— Dr. Dennis E. Desjardin

(1) inoculation of the tough mycelium with a "sharper applicable tool," and

(2) careful management of the fruiting stage during which the basidiocarp (egg) breaks and cast skirts. Zhu Ling cultivation requires selected high-quality sclerotia and cultivated rhizomorph logs.

New data show that *Coprinus comatus* mycelium, when grown on corn media, rapidly produces spawn. Liquefaction of fruiting bodies at outdoor production can be prevented by effective growing measures.

- Mo-Mei Chen

Culinary Corner

Do you remember the excitement of holidays as a child? Do you remember a constant array of aromas from the kitchen? Do you remember a table so bountiful that you couldn't decide what to take? Do you remember how loud all those simultaneous conversations could be? That is how the Society's Culinary Group celebrated Greek Easter on April 3rd. As you walked up to the door, you could smell the garlic marinated lamb roasting in the oven, you could spot the table loaded with appetizers and you could hear the laughter from every direction of the room. Just so you can imagine you were there, let me tell what we ate.

The appetizers table was laden with Taramasalata (Juanita Ilnicki), Chanterelles marinated in Vodka (Lowell Herried), Shitake Won Tons (Bennie Cottone), Mushroom Humus (Dulcie Hieman), Crimini and Cashew Dip (Monique Carment), Crackers and Salmon (Olive Bavins), Shitake Salsa with Nasturtiums (Kathleen Madsen), Red Potatoes with a Mustard Dip (Honorio Sarmento), Truffle Pate (Emmy Lou Miller), Macadamias nuts (Hal Waterman), and a Crimini, Feta and Olive Marinade. On the adjacent table, Leon Ilnicki had prepared a delightful Retsina and citrus fruits Punch. After we were gorged on appetizers, we followed the Greek Easter tradition and cracked our hard-boiled and dyed Red Eggs sent by Wade Leschyn.

The dinner started with a Avagalemo Soup (Karin Roos) that was the best that I have ever had tasted; and a Greek salad (Honorio Sarmento) of fresh lettuce, red onions and tomatoes topped by creamy feta cheese.

This course was complemented by several kinds of pita bread (Bill Hellums).

After a short break, we lined up for the main course. A bed of the most wonderful creamy Eggplant (Peter Hart) you can imagine was placed on the plate. Then generous slices of succulent Roasted Lamb (marinated by Luccia Paulazzo & roasted by Tom Sasaki) were placed on top of the eggplant. Finally, the lamb was covered with a Demi-Glace Morel Sauce (Julie Swazo) good enough to die for. On the side, you could have Rosemary Roasted New Red Potatoes (Ana Uznanski) and Steamed Carrots, Green Beans with Onion Compote (Hal Waterman).

The dinner ended with a wonderful homemade Baklava (Fred Kron) and fresh coffee (The Rodins). The Baklava had generous amounts of several kinds of nuts sandwiched between perfectly browned layers of buttered filo dough.

It will be very difficult to top this meal but there are several volunteers who are brave enough to try it. In May, they will be creating a Cinco de Mayo meal that I am told will feature Seabass with Cepes (boletes) as the main dish. See you there!

— Sherry Carvajal

P.S. Several people requested the recipe for Karin Ross marvelous soup. So to save time here it is:

AVGOLEMONO SOUP

(Adapted by Karin Roos)

For the broth:

4 pounds of skinned,
defatted chicken pieces
2 1/2 qts water
1 onion, chopped
3 carrots, chopped
1 bunch of parsley
1 bunch of celery
The peel of one lemon
salt and pepper to taste

For the soup

2 quarts strong chicken broth
1/2 cup raw rice
4 eggs
the juice of 2 lemons
1/2 cups chopped parsley (or parsley and
arugula mix)

To prepare the broth:

Place all the ingredients in a large pot. Bring to fast boil. Reduce the heat and keep cooking until the broth is reduced to 2 quarts (about 1 to 1 1/2 hours). Cool and skim off the fat. An alternate method to making the broth is to replace the chicken parts and the water for 3 quarts of low salt chicken broth. Place the vegetables in the pot and cook until reduced to 2 quarts.

To prepare the soup:

Rinse the rice well under running water, bring the broth to boil, add the rice and until tender, (about 15-20 minutes). Remove from heat. Beat the eggs until light and frothy, slowly add lemon juice while beating. Pour slowly about two cups of hot broth into the egg mixture, mix well and then pour it into the rest of the broth, while stirring.

Garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

I hear he came into money and moved to a portabello

Submitted by Irma Brandt

Farewell from the editors

This is our last issue as newsletter editors, and we want to give a heartfelt thank you to all of the MSSF members who contributed to the Mycena News this year. We believe that the Mycena News is one of the best mushroom newsletters available because we have so much great content from our dedicated members. We very much enjoyed putting together the Mycena News these past two years and thank the MSSF for giving us the opportunity to give something back to the society. We are pleased to announce that Beth Sampson will be taking over the editing and layout of the Mycena News next year. You'll find Beth's contact information on the front page.

Hope to see you all in the woods this coming Morel season!

All the Best!

Hilary, Yu-Shen & Jessica

MSSF Morel Hunter Strikes Out

at 1999 National Morel Hunting Championship in Boyne City, MI

“Finding Morels Is Easy” the headline read in the April 1999 edition of Mycena News. On May 15, 1999, after carefully reviewing the article line by line to completely refresh and confirm my memory of every detail, I boarded one of many buses with around 400 morel enthusiasts and we caravanned to a secret spot for the hunt.

To my surprise and astonishment, the area was not only off-limits to logging, but also abset of any evidence of forest fire! Worse yet, the area had experienced drought conditions and the weather had been on the cool side. “Look around the base of ash trees,” people advised me — some said ash trees no larger than three to four inches in diameter while others said only ash trees larger than four inches!

Armed with all this morel hunting wisdom, the starting sirens sounded. What ensued was a mad rush of humanity in pursuit of the \$150 Grand Champion prize or one of the other three prizes of \$50/\$75/\$100 per hunting category. The terrain covered rolling hills, an occasional small stream, medium density of trees and shrubbery and a fairly heavy leaf cover.

Sixty minutes later, a warning siren sounded giving notice that there were 30 minutes left in the hunt. After the final siren sounded twice, hunters had one minute to turn their mushrooms in to the hunt officials or endure penalties of 10 mushrooms for each tardy minute! No worry for me (except that I didn't want to cause a man hunt) as I managed to humbly and quietly ease back on to my bus — with my environmentally safe nylon mesh hunting bag completely empty. (The bag's environmental in that its bottom mesh is intended to seed the forest with fresh spores from the picked mushrooms.)

Eighteen morels took the Grand Champion prize and a single morel was all that was needed for some of the other prizes! Locals said that this had been one of the worst morel seasons ever; nevertheless, our beautiful condo line scenic Lake Charlevoix in the charming little town of Boyne City made for an enjoyable event — we even stayed and extra night! I just don't think about the alternate May 15-16, 1999 Sierra morel camping where, based on reports I heard from others in the MSSF, I confidently could have collected 20 pounds!!

— Gene Shulding

(Back cover of the 39th Annual National Morel Mushroom Festival brochure from Boyne City, MI - May 13-16, 1999)

Volunteer Needed

Are you looking for a fun way to give something back to the MSSF? The T-shirt committee is looking for a new person to run the show. You don't need to know too much about mushrooms, just have a desire to offer beautiful, well designed t-shirts to our very loyal buying members.

Time commitment involves a few hours of design and ordering coordination for the year, and a few hours a month, at the Monthly General Meeting, selling items before and after the meeting. It's a great gig for someone with some style and design savvy. If you're interested, contact Lisa Bauer at 415.695.8889 or Mark Thomsen at 510.540.1288.

— Lisa Bauer

Remembering: Terence McKenna

On April 3, Terence McKenna died of brain cancer in San Rafael. He was 53. For those of you not familiar with McKenna, he was a proponent of the theory that human intelligence and consciousness arose through the ingestion of psychedelic mushrooms — just one of many of his out-of-the-mainstream theories that involved psychedelic mushrooms.

Although I personally don't believe in most of what McKenna espoused, he had a lively and challenging mind. Mycology has lost a bright dab of color this week.

— Mike Boom

Mushrooms

Overnight, very
Whitely, discreetly,
Very quietly

Our toes, our noses
Take hold on the loam,
Acquire the air.

Nobody sees us,
Stops us, betrays us;
The small grains make room,

Soft fists insist on
Heaving the needles,
The leafy bedding,

Even the paving.
Our hammers, our rams,
Earless and eyeless,

Perfectly voiceless,
Widen the crannies,
Shoulder through holes. We

Diet on water,
On crumbs of shadow,
Bland-mannered, asking

Little or nothing.
So many of us!
So many of us!

We are shelves, we are
Tables, we are meek,
We are edible,

Nudgers and shovers
In spite of ourselves.
Our kind multiplies:

We shall by morning
Inherit the earth.
Our foot's in the door.

Sylvia Plath
13 November 1959
(submitted by Laxi Way Ludé)

Addendum, based on McKenna's web site: "Born in 1946, author and explorer Terence McKenna spent twenty-five years in the study of the ontological foundations of shamanism and the ethno-pharmacology of spiritual transformation. McKenna, the founder of Novelty Theory (a branch of fractal dynamics), traveled extensively in the Asian and New World Tropics, becoming specialized in the shamanism and ethno-medicine of the Amazon Basin. With his brother Dennis, he is the author of *The Invisible Landscape* and *Psilocybin: The Magic Mushroom Growers' Guide*. A study of the impact of psychotropic plants on human culture and evolution *Food of the Gods* has recently been published by Bantam. His latest book is, *True Hallucinations*, a narrative of spiritual adventure in the jungles of the Colombian Amazon. McKenna was the father of two children, a girl fourteen and a boy seventeen."



In Memory of MSSF Member, Jules Eichorn

Passed Away 2-15-00

We say farewell to famed MSSF member, Jules Marquard Eichorn

Few of us are known beyond the society of our friends, workmates and family. MSSF member, Jules Eichorn, to my knowledge, literally scaled new peaks of popularity in several areas. Although his education mainly concerned music—he was an instrumental and choral music teacher in North School, Hillsborough for 35 years—his greatest love was of climbing the Sierra Nevada Mountains. In 1930, he took up rock climbing. He was the first to climb the rugged East Face of Mt. Whitney, and ultimately one of the Minaret peaks was given his name. In 1934, Walter Starr Jr., a famous mountaineer, died exploring the Minarets south of Yosemite. His body was discovered by Jules. His reputation was such that he was asked to train National Park Forest Rangers in Yosemite Valley to rescue stranded mountain climbers. Love of the outdoors led to the awareness that there was much work to be done to save our open spaces. So he became an early environmentalist and joined the Sierra Club. His devotion to conservation, political activity and spokemanship in this cause led to being elected as a Director of the Sierra Club for 8 years.

Our family first met Jules and his family in 1968 when he was a Sierra Club Wilderness Threshold leader. Our introduction to mushrooms occurred at East Lake. After about 5 miles of climbing, my daughter Toby, then 5 years of age, sat down and said she was out of energy and could walk no more. Jules suggested that Toby separate some crevices in the ground and showed her that coral mushrooms were pushing up the soil. They removed them and placed them in bags. Then there were Russulas to be gathered, and others were found that kept Toby preoccupied for the remaining 3 miles to the Lake. There, for the first time, we watched people eating wild mushrooms. When they returned to breakfast the following day, and were healthy, we agreed to try some too. On our return to civilization, Jules insisted that we attend a general meeting. What we experienced changed our lives forever.

Jules joined the MSSF in 1965. A councillor in 1968 and 1969, he was very active in the Culinary Group. At meetings, he was listened to with great respect as he calmly helped us solve difficult problems.

One of the legacies he has left us is his son, David, who is a currently active and admired member of our group.

We were fortunate to have had a person of Jules' distinction as an active participant in our activities. My family went on a trip expecting to find a man of the mountains. What we learned was that he was a mountain of a man.

- Bill Freedman



May is the month of mountains and morels. It's a time to look eastward from coastal fungal haunts to montane forests, retreating snowbanks, and the possibility of *Morchella elata* and its ilk rising like a million tiny phoenixes from the ashes of last summer's fires. If we're lucky, that is.

At this writing in mid-April, we haven't been tremendously fortunate with weather. We've had a repeat of the sunny, dry, and breezy weather that plagued us in December, bringing out shorts and beach apparel, but little in the way of fungi. In a selected few spots in the East Bay, I've seen a few remnant *Amanita pantherina* and a couple of highly unusual and somewhat withered *Amanita magniverrucata*, their highly warted caps fitting right in with the withered theme of local fungi.

Debbie Viess reported a few *Amanita velosa* here and there, including some white specimens—not something to play with in the frying pan given its close resemblance to the deadly poisonous *Amanita ocreata*. I suspect that there's more going on fungally along fog-swept stretches of the peninsula and north bay, but haven't heard from anyone who's been looking.

All eyes right now are on the Sierra Nevada mountains where it's been equally dry. On a recent trip up Highway 50 with friends, we found sunny weather, no snow, and no fungi—with the exception of two tiny *Chroogomphus rutilus*—at 3500 ft. of elevation. Some of the soil was moist, but lacked any mushrooms.

Higher up, at 5500 ft., the sky was blue and the air warm: 65 degrees on the 7th of April! We found a few patches of snow still on the ground, but most of it had sublimated, evaporating directly into the air with no run-off of water. Our major fungal finds were squirrel-chewed *Hygophorus subalpinus*, a cucumber-scented *Tricholoma olida*, and an un-IDed *Cortinarius*. We ditched morels and settled for trying to describe the undescribable smell of a freshly peeled Jeffrey pine branch.

Other Sierra foragers had better luck. Mark Thomsen and friend Joon found a dozen small morels within a couple miles of the Forest Service ranger station out of Groveland, the first morels I've heard reported near Yosemite. Further north around Lake Almanor, the intrepid Herman Brown found a lot of dry habitat, but also stumbled into a nice patch of *Gyromitra montana* (nee *gigas*) that ended up in the frying pan. I assume Herman stayed well clear of the toxic monomethylhydrazine that evaporates during cooking.

The Lowden fire, east of Redding on highway 299, is the most active morel spot at this writing. Larry Stickney, Barbara Sommer, and foray chair Norman Andresen all report picking morels there, although Norman reported many drying up, so by the time you read this it may be a literally fruitless trip.

Our possible salvation right now is the delightfully gloomy weather that's settled in during the last week, dumping rain in the Bay Area

and sprinkling rain and snow in the Sierras. All those dry fire and logged areas are getting a good soaking, and may come through with morels yet. The MSSF 50th anniversary foray outside of Groveland at the end of April stands a good chance of finding morel fruitings; you'll know for sure by the time you read this in the newsletter.

As you pick (or miss) morels this spring, enjoy what may be one of the last relatively unfettered morel seasons in USFS forests. The US Forest Service is experiencing a climacteric, going through changes of purpose and structure that can have profound effects on recreational mushroom picking in the years to come. In the past years, we've suffered on and off from erratic regulations that vary from district to district, from outright bans on collection to per-pound fees to season passes to benign neglect. As an example, Mark Thomsen reports that the Groveland ranger station this year wants \$150 for a season morel pass, although they've always been confused about regulations in the past and may be equally confused this year.

The truly big changes are going on at a national level, where the Forest Service is reconsidering its commitment to logging and more logging. On the plus side, the USFS may curtail logging out fungally-productive forests. On the minus side, they're now looking for alternative sources of income, and one of those sources is mushrooms, which they consider a "product" that must be paid for.

Recreational pickers stand to be hit on two sides. On one side, regulations written for commercial collectors may also affect recreational pickers, who may need permits and may also need to pay by the pound for what they pick. On the other side, commercial collectors may also be hit by fees for recreational use of USFS lands. Trial programs already in place in some districts charge for parking at USFS trailheads and require permits for hiking on USFS trails. What was once free enjoyment of nature's largesse becomes a ticket you have to buy for a lottery chance to find mushrooms.

Recreational mushroom pickers have thus far had little to no input to USFS policy decisions. Connie Green and David Arora recently attended a conference in Washington D. C. that dealt with the USFS and forest products that range from pine nuts to ginseng roots to mushrooms. Connie reports that there were, fortunately, no environmental objections to picking mushrooms (unlike the East Bay Regional Park District, who still seem to believe that mushrooms are plants). There wasn't, however, any sense that mushroom picking was a recreational activity, and—outside of Connie and David—there was no one to speak for recreational pickers.

Now is the time for us to speak out on a national level. The USFS hasn't settled on any mushroom picking policies yet, and is in a state of extreme flux. I suspect that the only viable conduits are letters to our U.S. senators and representatives; most USFS employees have little to no input on setting USFS policy. Some points I personally think are germane to the discussion:

- By simply cutting back on building roads for logging (in effect, a logging industry subsidy), the USFS can save considerably more than they'll make in recreational and mushroom collection fees.
- By setting a fair national collection policy, we can get rid of the currently confusing system of buying (or not needing to buy!) very

Continued from previous page...

different permits for each USFS district. We might have something much more similar to a fishing license that's valid throughout a state. Or, better yet, no permit at all.

- Making the USFS dependent on income from recreational use might promote more development, especially since the USFS is looking to private corporations to help build and maintain campgrounds. Think of Yosemite and you can see the direction this can go.

I'll get off my soapbox now and bid you a fond farewell; this is my last Fungal Follies column. I hope in the future to write some articles that concentrate less on reportage and more on different topics of mycology. In the meantime, my best wishes for mushrooms and the chance to enjoy them in the wild.

— *Mike Boom*

Forays for Morels

On May 6 and 7, we'll be heading out to the Megram fire site in Shasta - Trinity National Forest. This area is a bit far (a 350 mile drive from the Bay Area) but definitely is the best location that I can locate for this season's morel foray.

The area is a gorgeous forest. Last year's fire burned from 1500' to 5000' much of it canape burn, tan oak on the lower elevations and fir in the higher areas. There is good access to level areas from the road and a very large area to cover.

We will stay at Hawkins Bar camp ground with Happy camp as a fall back if Hawkins Bar is full. Meet at the campground entrance at 9:00 am Saturday. (If in doubt, just look for my big green van near the campground entrance around 9:00am.)

On May 13 and 14, we'll be heading to another new location for the MSSF Pumas National Forest. This is not as long a drive as the 6/7 foray but is still further than normal. Last year, there were several fires in this area

We will stay at the Black Rock campground on Little Grass Valley reservoir. If this campground is not open yet the fall back location is Sly Creek Campground on Sly Creek Reservoir, which is just down the hill from Black Rock. Meet at the campground entrance at 9:00 am Saturday.

For more details or questions, please call Norm at 510.278.8998.

— *Norm Andresen*

Fred, continued from page 1,

mushroom walks for the public at Land's End. He has served on the Scholarship Committee from 1983 to this date. In 1985 and 1988, he accepted Co-chairmanships of the SF Fungus Fairs. From 1981-1988, he coordinated the habitat table arrangement at the Coyote Point Fairs and conducted a Sunday morning educational program for Coyote Point Museum members. He was Program Chairman in 1988 & 1989 and, in 1988, with much prodding, allowed himself to be elected President, a job undertaken with considerable reluctance. He served on the Nominating committee 1989, and also as editor of the Mycena News to 1991. He initiated the Mushroom Watch section of the newsletter in 1988-93. Foray Chairman again in 1989. For his service in 1988 he should have been given the Honorary Golden Truss Award, for that year he was President, Editor of the newsletter, Coordinator of the Fungus Fair, identifier of fungi everywhere, Program Chairman and organiser of an intense cultivation program!

In the last decade, his activities have continued along the same pattern. By the 90's, the electronic age had burst in on us, and Fred soon mastered the intricacies of Faxes and Internets. In 1990, he joined Mike Wood to help develop the prize-winning network mushroom site, Mykoweb contributing many prize-worthy macrophotographs. That year, he took on Forays; was a regular contributing editor of the newsletter; managed Mushroom Watch. He has led all the popular annual Mills Canyon forays in Burlingame since 1992.

Recognized as one of our truly expert amateurs, Fred is one of our leading taxonomists, not only for fleshy fungi, especially the genus *Agaricus*, but also for slime molds and lichens.

He continues to contribute to our many programs. We owe him a heavy debt of gratitude. As you review Fred's history, you may think that his being made an Honorary member doesn't seem to be quite enough to express our full thanks for so much of himself as he has given to us all.

— *Bill Freedman*

NOTE:

The MSSF Annual
Membership dues
will increase to \$25
December 2000!
\$20 for Seniors &
Students.



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50 YEARS!

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Calendar

Monday, May 1: Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner: For information or reservations, contact George Repinec at 415.731.5115 or Sherry Carvajal at 415.695.0466.

Friday – Sunday, May 5-7: Southern California Morel Foray. Sponsored by LAMS and SDMS. To be held in the morel hotspot of Southern California—the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains. Cost: \$80/person until April 3, \$90 after. Cost includes lodging and meals. For more info, contact Steven Pencall, 909.781.8993 or SPencall@genesishnetwork.net

Saturday – Sunday, May 6-7: Foray for Morels at Shasta - Trinity National Forest. See inside this newsletter for full details.

Sunday, May 7: Mushroom Madness in Marin. A participatory, afternoon culinary feast in Ross, CA. Contact Loraine at 415.454.0914 or see inside last month's newsletter.

Saturday – Sunday, May 13-14: Foray for Morels at Pumas National Forest. See inside this newsletter for full details.

Tuesday, May 16: MSSF General Meeting. Walt Sundberg will be the guest speaker. Randall Junior Museum, S.F. Doors open at 7pm for mushroom identification, book sales, cultivation tables, and various displays. See inside for details.

Wednesday, May 17, 2000: Lichen Society Lecture – “Ecology and Physiology of the Usnea-eating Snub-nose Monkey by Dr. Nina

Jablonsky.” 7 p.m., California Academy of Sciences, University Herbarium, 1001 Valley Life Sciences Bldg. University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Jablonsky, Curator and Chair of the Department of Anthropology, distinguished author and editor of numerous books and papers, and current editor of the Journal of Human Evolution, has been studying the Snub-Nose Monkey for 14 years. We will learn how the Snub-Nose Monkey can exist on a diet of Usnea as Dr. Jablonsky explains the physiology and ecology of this high elevation mammal. There is no charge for the evening. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Judy Robertson, 707.584.8099 or jksrr@aol.com if you have questions.

Sunday, May 21: Mushroom Madness in Marin. A participatory, afternoon culinary feast in Ross, CA. Contact Loraine at 415.454.0914 or see inside last month's newsletter for details.

Sunday - Friday, June 4 – 9: “Spring Fungi of the Sierra Nevada” course. See inside this newsletter for details, or call Jim Steele, in the evenings at 650.738.1814.

Monday, June 5: Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner: For information or reservations, contact George Repinec at 415.731.5115 or Sherry

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