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Spore-Addict Times



MONTHLY MEETING:

WHEN? August 26, 2002

WHAT TIME? 7:00 PM; the meeting will come to order at 7:30

WHERE? Pikes Peak National Bank,
2401 W. Colorado Ave. (across from Bancroft Park). Enter at the door on Colorado Ave. just west of the bank door. There you will find stairs and an elevator. You may use either.

PROGRAM:

Ken Pals from the Fountain Creek Nature Center and a longtime member of PPMS will present some mushroom trivia that he has collected over the years capped by the slide show "Fungus Amongus". Many of our current members have not had the pleasure of seeing this most interesting film. This will be a great stimulator for some animated conversation as we munch on the "goodies" afterward.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES:

"MUSHROOMING IS A CONTACT SPORT", a quote from Doug McKay, Bonnie McKay's husband. If you have not heard, Bonnie McKay, a member of PPMS until this year, broke her ankle. She and Esther Price went foraging to see what they could find to help with the CMS Fair that took place the weekend of the 10th. While I don't know all of the specifics, Bonnie and Esther were up on the Gold Camp Road area. They split up to cover more ground. Bonnie slipped and fell on some rocks and broke her ankle. She ran cold water over it until Esther returned after about an hour and a half to help her to their car. She is in a boot and using a wheel chair and cannot walk on it for a while yet. Our best to Bonnie for a speedy recovery.

The time has come and gone for our scheduled fair. It was canceled because of the lack of moisture and mushrooms. The CMS Fair was held as scheduled, although I missed it for the first time in about twenty years or so. Some of our members did make it (see the following article) and others helped gather mushrooms for it. I want to say a big THANK YOU to those who made the effort. Marilyn Shaw told me by e-mail that the fair went surprisingly well, with

a steady, light flow of "customers". The species total was about 65; the normal count is around 250 to 300.

The plan to tour the new State Park in North Cheyenne Canyon had to be scrapped because they could not accommodate larger groups. Small groups are encouraged to do this tour on their own.

We are going to have a program! My thanks to Ken Pals for graciously giving his time to make this happen. I will bring Goodies! I will get ice cream and cookies with bowls and spoons for our refreshments. See you at the meeting.

Dennis Craig

We join Lee Barzee and her family in sorrow for the loss of her son Leo who died suddenly of a heart attack while on a trip to Alaska. Leo was a pure joy to all who knew him. He was only 48 years old.

EXCERPTS FROM THE PPMS MINUTES:

by Ilse Stratton

President Dennis Craig called the meeting to order.... Although no guests could be introduced, an impressive number of members (27) were in attendance.

Delicious refreshments were served by Vita Weiniger and Christa Howard (mushroom shaped cookies on mushroom napkins!) and Brian Molanphy came bearing goodies from the CC Campus kitchen (I assume). Thanks for keeping the spirits high in a dismal mushroom season!

Mystery Mushroom

Bud Bennett correctly identified the mystery mushroom as the *Agaricus campestris* and his name was the first one out of the hat. Way to go Bud! Not only did you win but you were the first *man* to win the prize of \$5.00! There were a total of 5 entries, 4 of which were correct. In addition to the winner, correct entries came from Pat Gustavson, Liz Ras, and Rhea Woltman. Bud Bennett agreed to provide the next puzzler, which you will find on page 4.

The Mystery of the Daisies by George Davis This past winter we bought a Shiitake log from Fungi Perfecti intending to grow and harvest a bountiful crop of Shiitake mushrooms through the winter. It didn't work. There wasn't anything wrong with the mushroom log; I just didn't have (or wouldn't take) the time required to coax it to fruit. By March, we capitulated, feeling sure we would have plenty of mushrooms to gather in the mountains. How wrong we were! Anyway, we buried the Shiitake log in the flower garden and forgot about it.

Last June we planted two small pots of daisies in our garden. They were already blooming and they were identical in every way. We removed the old blooms as soon as they were spent so new ones would blossom and keep the plants healthy and in bloom. About a month or so after the transplant we noticed that one of the plants had grown to about twice the size as the other one. We checked the automatic watering system to be sure that both were receiving the same amount of water and they were. What could be causing this profound difference?



The only thing we could come up with was the almost forgotten mushroom log buried in the garden in almost the same place as the larger, more vigorous of the two daisy plants. We knew the log was active because it had produced 6 to 8 Shiitakes in early spring but none during the heat of summer. But, would a saprophytic fungus such as the Shiitake stimulate growth in the daisy plant? Or could some fungi spores of the type sold by Fungi Perfecti to stimulate growth in plants have gotten into the Shiitake log and if so could that be the answer? What do YOU think?

The Denver Colorado Mycological Society Mushroom Fair by George Davis
Frieda and I along with Lee Barzee and Winnie Fairbanks attended the CMS Mushroom Fair this year. We really didn't know what to expect given the type of year it has been. So, we were not surprised by what we found.

We waltzed in with our meager findings consisting of about two dozen species of FRESH fungi. I say "fresh fungi" because they were almost the only fresh specimens at the fair. We had collected our treasures about a week or so before the fair on the banks of a stream along the road to the Craggs. The only exception to that was the almost perfect *Boletus edulis* and some other species collected by Esther Price at an undisclosed location (maybe the same one where VP Cheney spends a lot of his time).

When we went up to the Craggs we were relieved to find the stream still flowing, although not very briskly, and we were pleased to find some forms of fungi fruiting in the cool, moist moss in areas along the stream. Just finding and collecting them was a refreshing experience. We preserved them by carefully placing each specimen in a wax paper bag, then we placed the paper bag in a plastic bag, sealed it and put it in the refrigerator. This procedure works very well with non-fleshy fungi and less well with fleshy mushrooms.

When forced to make a decision like the decision to cancel the Mushroom Fair here in the Springs I am sure Dennis and Ken Pals agonized somewhat over whether or not they had made the right call. In my opinion they made exactly the right call. That is not to say that CMS made a wrong call by having their fair as scheduled. They too made the right call. The Denver club showed a great deal of courage and flexibility by having a Mushroom Fair in spite of the virtual lack of fresh specimens to display. The workers showed up and tastefully placed the mushrooms so that there appeared to be many more than there actually were and they made use of some dried specimens that were very well preserved. Some vintage giant puffballs of various genera that looked as if they had just been plucked were especially impressive.

The display they managed to come up with coupled with the static displays they always have in use for the fair were very impressive. The visitors I talked with seemed to be fully aware that this is not a year for mushrooms and they were quite content to have a look at what was

available and use the static displays to learn more about mushrooms that normally fruit in this area in abundance.

This may be a first: To the best of my knowledge only one *Boletus edulis* was in the fair and it was the one that Esther Price found and generously sacrificed to the Denver Fair. How does Esther come up with the mushrooms she finds? She looks! And looks and looks, everywhere. There is simply no better way than that.

RECIPE

Noel Damon sent me the following recipe for morels before he received a recipe from Jim Provci, our Michigan member in response to Noel's plea for a recipe for dried morels. Maybe we here in the Springs had a hard time empathizing with Noel and his problem of an over abundant supply of morels. Noel writes:

This is not so much a recipe as a cooking method. Faced with the need for a quick meal and a bunch of those dried morels, this is what I came up with. Soak a handful of dried morels in hot water to reconstitute. Slice them thinly and sauté with three slices of bacon cut into dice. Meanwhile bring a half cup of beef stock (I fess up, I used beef soup base) to a boil. Add this to the mushroom mix and cover, reducing heat to low. While all this is going on I added 8 oz of small shell pasta to 3 quarts of salted boiling water. When the pasta is done (al dente) drain it well. Add 2 or 3 tablespoons of dry marsala to the 'shrooms and stir, cooking briefly. Add the pasta and mix in enough sour cream to create a sauce. I served this with some fresh parmesan cheese, but in truth I preferred the mix without the cheese as it tended to hide the meaty flavor of the 'shrooms. A few grates of black pepper rounded it out.

While we had a great year on the morels, I still haven't found any of the Kings, maybe this year. I hope the year ends well for the folks in CS. Take hope, the fires this year may provide a bounty for next! Noel Damon

An e-mail from NAMA follows:

NAMA (North American Mycological Association) has scheduled a foray for October 10-13 to Diamond Lake, Oregon. We expect some 250 attendees. NAMA plans to have a fund raising raffle at the foray and is presently looking for donations. Would your club be willing to donate some raffle items? Items with your club's logo like a T-shirt, apron, cookbook, or any item that you might find of interest. If another individual needs to be contacted for this, could you do that or let me know who that might be.

Please let me know if you can donate such items. They can be shipped to me or brought to the foray by any of your members that plan to attend. Please let me know what works best and what the items are. At the foray, we plan to display a list of items and who donated them. My shipping address is:

**NAMA Raffle
c/o Igor Malcevski
20407 78th Ave. SE
Snohomish, WA 98296-7991**

MYSTERY MUSHROOM by Bud Bennett

The ground around me is littered with Douglas fir cones. I've been up for a while. My smooth convex cap is purple-brown and relatively large, about 4 inches across. My soft and waxy gills are grayish, closely spaced, and merge into my thick white stalk. The stalk is nearly an inch in diameter and tapers slightly as it traverses its 3 inch length. I had a veil, but there is no trace of it now. Spores are smokey-grey to black. My most distinguishing feature is the bright yellow color of my stalk just before it disappears into the ground. I am edible and some say I am excellent in spaghetti sauce. I am the most common and widespread member of my genus, as my name may indicate.

WHO AM I?