

SPORE-ADDICT TIMES

Pikes Peak Mycological Society

Newsletter for October 20, 2003

MONTHLY MEETING:

WHEN? Monday, October 27th

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: The program is the annual potluck! So prepare a dish for all to share and show off your culinary skills at this annual event. Even better, share the goodies prepared by other club members for this occasion. You may bring anything you wish; salad, main dish, desert or what have you. The club will provide the drinks. Please bring your own eating and serving utensils. See you there!

President's Notes: by Bud Bennett
Another mushroom season has come and gone. By most measures it has been a success, depending upon your expectations. Certainly the *Boletus edulis* did not disappoint this year, and certain other edibles were plentiful. My dehydrator was going steadily for several weeks in August. As a mycophagist, I am satisfied with my preserved hoard that will carry me through the long winter. As an amateur mycologist, I am slightly disappointed in the lack of variety, although I did catalog eight species new to me. But I have not stumbled upon a single chanterelle for two years now. Oh well, like baseball: wait until next year...

Last month's discussion about a club website ended with the decision not to proceed at this time. A short poll during the meeting indicated that slightly more than half of the present membership owned a computer. The "pro" side argued that a website would allow easier access by potential new members and a way to distribute information more quickly. The "against" side thought that the expense did not justify the benefit and that it would not add much to the club's operation. I hope to see all of you at the upcoming potluck dinner. If I get ambitious, I may bring Renee's mushroom popovers – a culinary delight not to be missed!

Mystery Mushroom: The mystery mushroom last month was correctly identified as a *Boletus barrowsii*. by Ken Pals. He will provide the Mystery Mushroom for the April Meeting.

The theme of this newsletter is Forays. We have three contrasting foray reports.

The Foray From Hell:

by Bud Bennett and Pat Gustavson
At 10:00 a.m. on August 16, 2003 a group of six PPMS members gathered along a road in the Wet Mountains, the first stop of the day's foray to begin hunting for an expected bumper crop of mushrooms. Christa Howard was the foray leader. Others out for a good time were Jim and Inge Adams, Pat Gustavson, Willi Walker, and Ilse Stratton. Christa said "Be back in an hour" and the group marched into the forest. At 11:15 a.m. everyone had returned except Jim.

Jim was lost in the forest maze. The sky had become overcast with no hint of the sun for reference. He had no coat, no water and no compass. The foray group waited almost until 1:00 p.m. before setting out in search of Jim. Inge stayed behind with instructions to honk the car horn three times if Jim resurfaced. The group went forward with whistles and yelling (while continuing to search for their primary prey – the wily mushroom). The agreement was to rally at 2:00 p.m. and call Search and Rescue if Jim was not found by then.

Sometime before the deadline, Jim came walking out of the woods, no worse for wear

except for a torn shirt. The horn was blasted the obligatory triplet. Willi heard the horn and headed back with Pat. Christa and Ilse were together when the horn sounded, though they could not hear it. Christa turned to Ilse and said that it was time to return and she was heading back. Ilse acknowledged, but the hunting was too good to drop everything and return at that instant. When Christa returned, the group was complete except for Ilse.

Somewhere in the woods, Ilse noticed the time and quickly headed back with her sacks full of booty. She realized that she was lost when she found herself in a deep ravine. Tired and not wanting to head back in the direction she came from, her travels took her in the wrong direction. She was outfitted with a jacket and compass, but no water. She attempted to get back by following a trail that should have led back to familiar territory, instead the terrain became steep and more unfamiliar, so she turned back along the trail.

About 15 minutes after Christa returned to the group it was evident that Ilse was now lost. At this time the group began searching for her; it was late afternoon and the situation was serious. A Forest Service Official in a truck came by and was informed of the situation. He said he would return at 4:00 p.m. and notify authorities if she was still absent. He never returned.

Around 5:00 p.m. Pat and Willi drove down the mountainside en route to a campground twenty miles away to use their phone. They fortunately met Russ and Dana Payne only 8 miles away, who were just getting ready to leave the area with their ATVs. They had a charged cell phone and quickly placed an emergency call.

Willi and Pat drove back up to the cars to see if Ilse had returned. She had not! Christa and Inge had searched unsuccessfully for two hours. Christa, Willi, and Pat drove back down to the Payne's to inform them of such. Christa called and asked her husband to notify spouses of the situation. While waiting for the S&R Team, Christa learned that one of her treasured friends lived a couple of houses from the Payne's. This was the first time that they had been in this area.

At about 7:00 p.m. Search and Rescue arrived, information was taken and a parade of vehicles headed up the dusty dirt road. A rescue operation was quickly in place using ATVs and a German shepherd. It was not successful. One of the S&R persons, using gloves, took a personal item from Ilse's purse for the dog to smell. Christa, being the last person to see Ilse, was asked to take them to where she was last seen. Though it was dusk, Christa walked in and led them to the exact spot. The dog tried to track Ilse but it kept going around the trees and circling back and forth. The S & R man didn't know what was wrong with the dog. Christa told him the dog was just following where Ilse went. She told them that's what we mushroomers do, we go in circles. In the meantime, as dusk settled in, Ilse knew she had to prepare for the night. She had lost her jacket and it was getting cold. She went into the woods bordering a meadow, and emptied the bags of her once precious booty. Mushrooms were no longer important. She stuffed the bags with leaves then used them to insulate her arms. She cut branches for additional protection and settled down for a long chilly night. The next day at 4:00 a.m. the group returned to the UMB Bank. This was the initial meeting place where the carpools were formed. There were several suspicious characters parked near Ilse's car. As they approached the car immediately drove away. Ilse's car had an intrusion alarm – which sounded loudly and lights flashed when Inge reached in the partially open window to try and unlock the car. Fortunately, it stopped once the car was relocked. Christa had lost her keys in the mountains so Inge and Jim took her home for a second set of keys. Willi discovered that her car had been moved back and was also damaged. A bogus note was left on the windshield. Pat had left a phone message for Ilse's husband, Richard, that Ilse had carpooled and her car was at the UMB Bank. Pat learned upon arriving home that her husband, Ralph had given the wrong directions to Ilse's husband (that the car was at the Pikes Peak Bank on Colorado Avenue). All of this was corrected by about 7:00 a.m.

After the sun rose, Ilse proceeded to trek out of the forest. Eventually she came to a road and hitched a ride back to the rendezvous point. When she arrived, S&R teams from

three counties and a helicopter, which had just landed, awaited her. She was in good condition, only a little dehydrated. She said the dandelion greens she ate did not quench her thirst. She had expected that perhaps her husband would be there waiting. Such a surprise greeted her! S&R remarked they felt if she had attempted to go back to where she initially was she would have been found sooner. It was such good news that the "Foray from Hell" ended well.

The Long Foray by George Davis
Frieda and I went on a mini vacation in September. We went to KS, AR, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Don't worry, this is not a travel-log. However, we did go into the woods for a foray at every opportunity. Those excursions were very rewarding in mushrooms that we do not see in our area. They were also rewarding to a multitude of ticks and chiggers that set up housekeeping on our legs and torsos. Frieda and I were about even on the number of mushrooms and ticks we collected but she was the clear winner in the chigger category. They are much easier to acquire than they are to eradicate. It is embarrassing to go to a hotel desk and ask for isopropyl alcohol and a pair of tweezers, then you feel compelled to add, "we have ticks".



We found *Amanita ocreata* (Destroying Angel) in abundance as close as northwest Arkansas along with such things as *Amanita caesarea*, pg.4, and some other mushrooms, including Amanitas, that we could not identify. I suspect all of these are also



fruiting in eastern Kansas. Do you suppose they need only sufficient moisture to move into our area? Could be!

Our prize find was *Omphalotus olearius*



(eastern Jack-O-Lantern) in the Smoky Mountains. We found only one fruiting, but there were several clusters in the fruiting. We collected a few to examine later. We wanted to see them glow! We had our opportunity in Louisville, KY.

As instructed in our KS mushroom book we took them into the bathroom of the hotel room, closed the door and sat waiting in total darkness. We were supposed to sit for 10 minutes to allow our eyes to become accustomed to the darkness. Ten minutes is a very long time sitting on the floor of a completely darkened bathroom. We waited for what seemed to be ten minutes for the darn things to glow but they didn't. Our patience gave out and we decided it just wasn't going to happen.

We decided that maybe if we put it in a paper bag and closed it up tight for a long time it just might glow. So I did that and placed it in the bathroom.

At 4:30 the next morning I awakened and felt my way into the bathroom, closed the door and waited only a moment, then carefully opened the sack and peered inside.

Wow! It was really glowing! An eerie greenish color, like something vile and evil. I quickly awoke Frieda and said "It glows". She bounded out of bed like a shot and into the bathroom she went. We sat in there taking turns looking at those things for several minutes suppressing the urge to call someone in the club to share our find. It was indeed an interesting experience for us!



Amanita caesarea

Solo Foray Report by Brian Molanphy
On an August Saturday, when I couldn't find any other PPMS members to go hunt, I set out on my own to the Craggs. I thought I could remember a few spots there by myself. I encountered lots of camping and picnicking traffic. Further up the trail, folks were upgrading the trail to the summit of Pikes Peak. I didn't find much up there by the trail workers (where in the past I had found boletes), but further down by the water I found my favorite, *Tricholoma flavovirens*, along with *Albatrellus confluens*, *Lactarius deliciosus*, *Boletus edulis*, and *Catathelasma ventricosa*. Near the trailhead parking lot, a hiker told me that another hunter had been there just before me and had swept up all the boletes. Driving back down in second gear, I snatched the occasional glance to either side of the road. A big white gob on a tree made me stop. An enormous *Pleurotus*

pulmonarius (top of photo)! I parked and found that despite the mushroom's size it was fresh.



And on the ground below, several good-sized *Lycoperdon titleistata* (bottom of photo). The *Catathelasma*, though by no means as flavorful as *Tricholoma magnivelare* ('matsutake'), was very good, well-cooked. I found the *Pleurotus* free of worms, and cooked it with corn and zucchini. It was delicious, though it took longer to cook than I had anticipated. The *Lycoperdon titleistata*, though also free of worms, turned out to be inedible, no matter how long I cooked them