



The Arizona Fun-Gi



Newsletter of the Arizona Mushroom Club

December 2006 Annual Meeting

December 13 we had our annual potluck/club meeting. We had 45 in attendance including two children and one on the way. Congratulations to Scott and Tanya Bates.

The food was once again soooo good. Joel Thalheimer made a mystery mushroom soup and at the conclusion of dinner asked if anyone could guess it. Gabe Zorn did: it was a ??????. Ok, what was it? Anyway, it was quite good.

Your Editor wanted Jean Gula's recipe for her pork dish. As with many good cooks, the recipe was more her preparing it as she went and there wasn't a "recipe" as such. *(I tried it anyway, based on her directions. Wow, was that good! ED)*

Dr Leathers led the post dinner announcements. Rosemary Leathers has the two Arora books in stock for members. If you would like one, see Rosemary.

Sandy Melgaard, our Membership/Treasurer reported the current balance was about

\$1200.

Renewal in the North American Mycological Association for club affiliation will be made for 2007. Members of our club can join for a reduced rate.

Sandy recommended that we move the annual meeting to a Saturday for those members who live out of town and for whom a weekday meeting is difficult to attend. Others indicated this was a good idea, but getting someone to find an alternative meeting place wasn't productive. More on this later.



Our Field Trip/Chief Mushroom Scout Terry Beckman indicated that the weather forecast for spring was for El Nino to give us rain in Jan, Feb & Mar. He will be watching the rains and the temperatures to see if morels are in our 2007 future.

It was then discussed that a new Newsletter Editor was needed as the last one Failed To Appear. Your previous Editor, Larry Morehouse, (that would be me) agreed to resume as Editor until a satisfactory replacement can be found. Dr Leathers thanked the others who without pay helped out the Club, such as Fred and Marilyn Bischoff, Jim and Ken Stanczak, and Gary Melgaard.

Then the Members were treated to a slide show by Gabe Zorn and Jim Murphy. This was not a repeat. There were many photographs of beautiful, ugly and nasty, tasty,

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President

Sandy Melgaard
Membership Secretary/Treasurer

Scott Bates
Webmaster

Terry Beckman
Field Trip Chairman

Larry Morehouse
Newsletter Editor

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poisonous and unknown mushrooms presented on screen. Gabe gave a lively and entertaining dialog with un-spellable scientific names juxtaposed with common names about each. We didn't know Gabe was such a good story teller. It was as much fun as it was enlightening. Thanks Gabe and Jim.

Time For A New Annual Meeting Place?

There is interest in making a change in our annual meeting to better accommodate those members who live outside of the Valley and those members whose jobs and family make the week night meeting difficult to attend. We need your assistance to accomplish this move.

Does a member have access to a church, club house, etc., which would permit us to have our meeting/pot luck at their facility? It would have to be able to accommodate approximately 50 people and have a screen or way to show video and be available on a Saturday night in early December. If anyone does, please contact Dr Leathers, Larry Morehouse or Sandy Melgaard.

Help the Editor

Please help out with any articles or suggestions for the next newsletter. Remember this is *your* newsletter.

Jim Stanczak Speaks Out

The following article is from our morel scout, **Jim Stanczak**. We were aware he knew how to find morels, but didn't know about this part of his mushroom lore (ED.):

My top ten favorite fungi, (I hate to include Scientific names because I have never ever pronounced one correctly in front of those who do know). Hey-if you don't agree, hit the website.

#10 TIE- THREE WAY

Sulphur Shelf (Laetiporus sulphureus): It is way to early. I pick the choice, juicy tops (right). If you can't cook this or make it taste good, but eat it anyway, I'll save you a trip with a tip. Wal-mart sells the same stuff with their worms. Add food color and wood glue.

Puff Balls: If it is a tough year, I can at least usually count on finding some of them even if nothing else is out. Still, like Terry says, they taste like what I season with.

Snow bank False Morel

(Gyromitra Gigas): Tastes Great! But they pop in the pan when you cook them. I wonder if it is the carcinogenic compound M.M.H.? Nothing loses a bag of these guys like a dozen or so morels. Then again, I'm still a cigarette smoker, so what the heck?

#9 TIE -2 WAY!

Slippery jacks (the yellow guys) (Suillus Granulatus/kaibabensis): Don't make me pick you. But I will. 99.9 % of the fun is picking one without maggots. Really not bad, but it is still too early.

Lobster mushroom (Hypomyces Lactiflorum): Not bad. Just takes too long to prep for the basket, sack or marsupial pouch. Then the prepped mush-

rooms need to be re-prepped for the table.

#8 TIE-2 WAY! (THEY ARE HEATING UP THE TAR AND GATHERING FEATHERS NOW)

Caesars mushroom (Amanita Caesarea): Fresh young buttons, otherwise, we may have 30 lbs of mushrooms to clean and cook. Great on pizzas.

Boletes (Boletus/Leccinum sp.): OK, Calm down and pick only fresh young specimens or we may have 130 lbs of mushroom to clean and cook.

#7 TIE-2-WAY

Shaggy manes (Coprinus comatus): First wild mushroom I ever ate; first love, never forgotten.

Honey mushroom (Armillariella mellea): I love the different looks you give us. Swollen or thin on the ground or on the stumps, plus the different colors. HELP!!

#6 Agaricus species: I picked a real interesting one in the salt cedars while getting skunked for morels during the springtime (early March). Mother-In-Law has eaten these also (Not first). A. Silvicola is excellent when young but make sure it smells sweet and has no volva, or you could die. Does all that excitement merit a higher listing?

#5 TIE-2-WAY

Golden Chanterelles

(Cantharellus Cibarius) I really need to learn a lot more about cooking you. Showy, fragrant, model on the mountain.

Oyster (Pleurotus Ostreatus) Happy days are here again or is it roll out the barrels afterwards.

#4 TIE-3-WAY

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Black Morel (*Morchella Elata/Angusticeps* group) A little low on the list after all these years. Maybe taking an old friend for granted. Put on an awful lot of miles in the car and on foot in search of you. Still love it.

Indigo Milk cap (*Lactarius Indigo*) Hedgehog (The mushroom formerly known as *Dentinum Repandum*): For me, never easy to find, always easy to eat. Hedgehog has been harder to find the last 3 years. These are not Hawk Wings.

#3 TIE-2-WAY

Lions Mane (*Hericium abietis*): Because I have only found 1. Not necessarily a diva in the pan.

Cauliflower mushroom (*Sparassis Crispa*) If I keep going to the White Mountains and find you with regularity you could drop on the list. What am I saying? Don't be greedy, cut 'em high.

#2 TIE-2-WAY

Yellow/White Morel (*Morchella exculenta/deliciosa*) Nothing like a pound of these cooking in a pan. I love your diversity. Each one richly imbued with its own distinctive color and ridge pattern. Can't stop looking when I find you. Mercifully, God divided day and night, so I have to.

#1 Fuzzy Truffle (*Geopora Cooperi*) Not only delicious, but I've never found one. But, Ken (*Jim's Brother*) and Terry have while looking for morels. RATS!!!!

How did Jim become our resident morel expert? He read an article about a Phoenix resident finding a morel under a pine tree in his yard. His quest began then. Read on:

...**But** hope came in the way of a newspaper article featuring Dr. Leathers and the AMC, given to my wife by her employer. And away we went to Flagstaff with the Club. "My people", I told my wife and daughter. And yes, we did find morels. In fact, way more than I ever found north of Yuma. My first morel find went like this. I say hello to Terry (*Beckman*) and ask, "Well, do you think we'll find any morels?" "We should" Terry replied. Then he pointed at the ground and said: "look, there is one by your foot-don't move, you are liable to step on it". And there it was, maybe 2 inches away. I was elated and embarrassed.

Since then I've seen quite a few trampled by others. Once I saw 3 cut morels and about 20 trampled. Someone missed the heart of the flush by the distance it took to stoop down. RATS. To this day I wish the number had been opposite. I got to know Terry Beckman the following year because I called to tell him I had found 56 yellow morels in desert riparian habitat. He called back and invited my brother Ken and I to a hunt because-well, hardly anyone ever calls to say they found morels. Ok, no one ever calls to say they found morels (at that time)! And so we have gone on great forays and really, bad forays. Punctured my tires, no one stopped to help me when broken down on the side of the road forays.

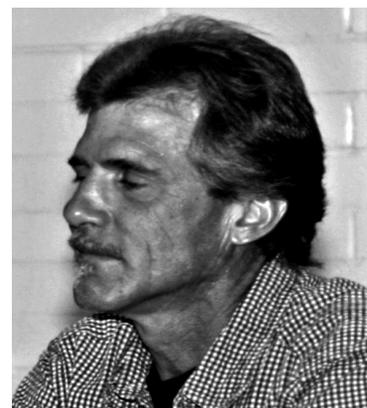
I know persistence pays off. And checking new areas without completely giving up on the old stand-bys. I remember on the Rim after everyone had left, I had to check out one more, ok, three

more spots. My daughter allowed this on the condition we stopped at Denny's on the way home. 50 yards from where we had stopped with the club were 177 morels in a spot no larger than 10 feet by 5 feet. And they were not there the week before. Darn, we were so close. That was the patch we had hoped to find for the Club Members. But I also found out on subsequent forays that I find less running around looking for the magic patch then to just stay with the club and point out what we do come across. That is vintage morel hunting.

And what about the length of time to hunt? Well-that's about a 2 week window (sometimes longer, sometimes shorter) in any patch they are coming up. But in Arizona that could mean 2 weeks in March down low, say at 2200 feet, 2-4 weeks at 5000 feet, and as late as June (San Francisco Peaks). Another 3 months of little to no work done around the house. Couple that with duck and quail hunting and the work window gets a bit lean.

Well here's hoping the "work around the house" window gets real lean this year. **BEST OF LUCK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

By *Jim Stanczak*



Wild Mushroom and Onion Soup

Ingredients:

Olive oil	3 oz.
Butter	2 oz.
Onions, sliced medium	8 medium
Dried wild mushrooms (cepes, morels, or porcini)	2 oz.
Salt	2 tsp.
Soy sauce	2 TB.
Sugar	1 tsp.
Gruyere cheese	8 oz.
French bread slices	16

Procedure:

Place the olive oil and butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onions and slowly sauté them, stirring occasionally.

2. Sauté the onions, slowly without browning them for about 30 minutes.

3. While the onions are cook-

ing, combine the mushrooms with 8 cups of water and the salt, soy sauce and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to a boil and then simmer until the onions are done sautéing.

4. Add the onions to the mushroom liquid and simmer for another 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350.

5. Brush the French bread with oil and toast lightly. Ladle the soup into 8 bowls. Float 2 slices of French bread on top of each soup bowl. Top with 1 oz. of cheese each.

6. Place the soup bowls in the oven for 6 to 10 minutes to melt the cheese. Serve immediately.

Serves 8.

(Recipe Contributed by Terry with no promises. Ed.)

drome in the study period ending December 2005 and only one other death was reported which was from an allergic reaction. There are mushrooms other than *phalloides* that have the same syndrome. The *pantherina*, which is common in Arizona, falls under another type of poison, Isoxazole Compounds. There were no deaths in this category. There were many people who suffered liver and kidney failure from eating mushrooms of several kinds. After reading Jim Stanczek's article where he admits to eating *Gyromitra*, I read with trepidation the grim warning for consumption of this mushroom: "Though many people still eat *Gyromitra esculenta*, the large number of cases found where there was liver and /or kidney damage will, we hope, lead individuals to cease this practice. "

I recommend the whole article: McIlvainea, Journal of American Amateur Mycology, Volume 16, Number 2, Fall 2006: Thirty-Plus Years of Mushroom Poisoning: Summary of the Approximately 2000 Reports in the NAMA Case Registry, by Michael W. Beug, Marilyn Shaw, and Kenneth W. Cochran.

The NPR article had this information on the Death Cap: **POISON:** Ingestion of death caps account for as many as 90 percent of mushroom poisoning deaths worldwide.

HISTORY: The death cap is

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The Death Cap

Laurel Leathers sent a notice of an article she had read on the NPR web site about the Death Cap, *Amanita phalloides*. The Article indicates that the Death Cap was imported to the US, probably on the roots of imported trees. It is found on the East and West coasts and is spreading. I couldn't find any information on *phalloides* being found in Arizona. The NPR Article coincides with a comprehensive article in *McIlvainea* on mushroom poisonings.

Among the many interesting facts, the article indicates how difficult it is to pinpoint many of the poisonings, such as freezing raw mushrooms which allows bacteria and molds to grow which can then mimic mushroom poisoning. (I didn't know that) Another interesting fact was how few poisonings there are, including people who have eaten *Amanita pantherina*.

Amanita phalloides poisoning is classed as Amatoxin Syndrome. There were 16 deaths reported from Amatoxin Syn-

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not native to the United States. Harvard biologist Anne Pringle and other scientists believe it came from Europe, traveling to California among cork or oak tree seedlings.

WHERE: In the United States, death caps are found in the West Coast's cool coastal regions, but it also grows in the mid-Atlantic coast and in the northeast.

APPEARANCE: The mature death cap usually is metallic green but can vary from light yellow to greenish-brown. The death cap can easily be mistaken for nonpoisonous species as it is not distinct in appearance, taste or smell.

METHOD OF ATTACK:

The toxins found in the death cap block the production of DNA, which causes cell death — especially in the liver and kidneys.

SYMPTOMS: Initial symptoms of death cap poisoning appear 6 to 24 hours after ingestion. Because of this delayed onset, many patients do not associate the symptoms with eating wild mushrooms. For 12 to 24 hours, the patient will have abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Drinking fluids may ease the symptoms, and many mistakenly assume that the danger has passed. However, the toxins continue to attack the liver and kidneys, which can lead to coma, organ failure, and possi-

bly death.

NO KNOWN TREATMENT: Treatment with fluids can help alleviate the initial symptoms, but there is no known cure for death cap poisoning. Death occurs in 20 percent to 30 percent of all known cases, and in more than 50 percent of cases for children under 10 years old.

Sources: *Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Harvard University Herbaria, Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany*

Health & Science

On the Trail of the Death Cap Mushroom

by Richard Harris

From the NPR web site: npr.org.

2006 White Mountain Foray

The summer/early Fall foray of The Arizona Mushroom Club proved to be one of the most successful collecting trips our Club has enjoyed in quite a while. The collecting was very good by comparison to the previous summers, although we have had good collecting in some years, when the rains came in the week following our scheduled forays, or at least when the mushrooms came UP the week following our forays.

Most members who attended the foray of 2006 in the White Mtns. collected ample amounts of the golden chantarelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*), *Boletus edulis*, the King Bolete was also in abundance, along with various species of *Amanita*, especially *A. rubes-*

ens. Only a few *A. caesarea* (Caesar's Amanita) were out in this area but other collectors found several closer to the Rim Country on the way home. Several other species of the genus *Boletus* were also found, a few edible and several of the poisonous or questionable ones.

New members found a good variety of things they had not either seen or noticed before and thus learned what features to look for in order to be able to identify the mushrooms properly. Most newcomers felt the trip was quite worthwhile and that they profited greatly from it.

With scattered showers coming into Arizona in late January and throughout February this year (2007), the morel season could start and be fairly good during April, May and June. Everyone

should plan to save a few weekends for the morel (*Morchella*) forays during these months. If more rain and/or snow falls in March and April, the better the collecting should be, although sufficient moisture has probably already fallen to provide for fair collecting in a few more weeks.

Everyone should pray for rain and keep your fingers crossed. We hope to see you on some of the forays this spring as well as after the monsoons arrive (hopefully) later in the year.

**Chester R. Leathers,
President**

(Reminder: Keep your email address current and check the Club Phone #, as morel season approaches because a morel foray could be called with only a few days notice. ED.)

Newsletter of the Arizona
Mushroom Club

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Would you like a polo shirt, hat, or patch displaying club logo? If so use the form to the right to order from Marilyn or Fred **Bischoff**. They need minimum orders before they can send in an order, so you may have to wait until enough requests have been given.

REMINDER: If your address doesn't show this year, 2007, then our records indicate that your dues are DUE. 2007 was due by Jan 1, 2007. Remit to **Sandy Melgaard**, Membership/Treasurer .

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