

Next Meeting March 11, 2002

SPORES Afield

The newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society

March 2002

From the President

Greetings to all CMS members and friends!

At the start of our 35th year, I look forward to a banner mushroom season and hope that the weather-gods will be kind to us.

My plucky scientist-contacts at The National Center for Atmospheric Research, in Boulder, indeed confirm that there is a fresh El Nino phenomenon forming in the center of the Pacific Ocean which will have direct consequences on Colorado weather - and our mushrooming fortunes - this summer.

In typical fashion, my NCAR friends stopped short of giving any ironclad guarantees that we will have a "more than normal" wet summer, but were willing to forecast a "better-than-50/50" chance for the kind of summer weather we all are hoping for.

Because I am an optimist, their circumspect prediction is good enough for me, and I wish to pass on my optimism to all my fellow CMS members.

I hope that you will participate in a most enjoyable and rewarding 2002 season.

Go forth and fungiply!

Tom Ruzicka

Speaker for the March meeting

Jon Sommer

Jon Sommer trained as a mycologist under David Largent and Kenneth Wells in California, where he received his master's degrees in 1980 & 1983. He has also done additional studies with Orson Miller in Montana as well as with other noted mycologists. He has taught mushrooming classes and workshops and led forays in California, Montana, Vermont and Colorado. He has been actively studying, photographing, and collecting fungi since 1975. Jon currently owns a real estate company in Aurora, and collects mushrooms in his spare time.

Jon's talk is titled:

"Learning to Identify the Most Common Edible and Poisonous Colorado Mushrooms"

Recognition of the most important features is critical for the identification of all mushrooms. Jon's program will introduce for the novice collector (and reinforce for those more experienced) the most important macroscopic features used in identification. While there are advanced techniques like the use of a microscope used to secure a specific identification for many mushrooms, in this talk Jon will discuss techniques that even the beginner out in the field can learn. These will aid in the identification of some of our most common edible and poisonous fungi.

Welcome to CMS!

This is the first issue for 2002 of *Spores Afield*, the newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for members to share experiences, information, and insight on mushrooms of Colorado and the Rocky Mountains.

The Colorado Mycological Society is a nonprofit corporation established in 1967 to advance the understanding of, and to stimulate interest in, the field of mycology. Our members collect specimens for identification, preservation and study. CMS is affiliated with the North American Mycological Association (NAMA). CMS provides consulting services to the Denver Botanic Gardens and the Rocky Mountain Poison Center.

Monthly Meetings

CMS meetings provide an informal opportunity to socialize and exchange information with others interested in mycology. Meetings are usually held the second Monday night of each month, from March through October, at 7:30 pm at the Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York Street, Denver, CO. The meetings are held in Mitchell Hall. There is no charge to get into the Botanic Gardens to attend the meetings. Members and visitors are welcome.

Spores Afield

Spores Afield is published from March through October by the Colorado Mycological Society. CMS dues are \$23 for the first year and \$20 thereafter. Send membership dues to CMS Membership Chair, Box 9621, Denver, CO 80209. All CMS members receive *Spores Afield* as part of membership.

CMS is an associate member of the North American Mycological Association.

Other Society Activities

Foray's:

When the mushroom season gets going, mushroom forays are led by experienced members of CMS to different locations around the state. We usually hold forays on Saturday and Sunday. These forays are limited to members only. Forays are probably the best way to learn to recognize different kinds of mushrooms.

(See Policy Change page 5)

Classes:

Classes in beginning mushroom identification are offered periodically. CMS sometimes sponsors classes on growing edible mushrooms, mushroom photography and other subjects.

Classes are occasionally available through the Denver Botanic Gardens and Rocky Mountain Natural History Association.

Mushroom Fair:

A mushroom fair is held each year in August at the Denver Botanic Gardens. August is the height of the mushroom season in Colorado, and members from around the state bring in a large variety of mushrooms for identification and display. The fair is open to the general public on Sunday. It is a great time to learn about mushrooms!

Our library is moving!

I would like to take this opportunity to offer a sincere thanks from all the members of CMS to Donna Bathory for her years of service as our Librarian. Not only has she kept 6 to 8 large shelves full of books in her home, she has also cataloged the entire collection and gotten books to the people who wanted them. Thank you, Donna!

Our library will be located at our Vice President's home. Chris Hardwick 303-237-0356

Books For Sale:

We also offer a variety of books for sale at each meeting. The books are usually available to members at a discount.

In Memory of Tomie Taggart

Editor's note: Tom Taggart offered these beautiful thoughts at the memorial service of his wife, Tomie Taggart. Tomie was a beloved CMS member, a mother, grandmother, chef, Spores contributor, and much more.

I would like to share with you a few exceptional experiences that Tomie and I shared. There were many in our life together.

One was a visit to Crater Lake in a snow blizzard. We were driving up the road to the south entrance. The closer we got to the ranger station, the heavier it snowed, and soon the snow began to cover the road and everything else. The ranger told us we would never be able to see anything or get through to the lake. So we went inside the ranger station and saw a film and looked at the exhibits. When we left, it was still snowing hard. We looked at each other. We didn't need to say a word, because we knew what we wanted to do—go up to the lake through the snow. Driving up, we couldn't see much of anything, except the signs along the road. We knew we were at the top because of the parking barriers and a sign describing the lake, but we couldn't see the lake. After a while, we threw a couple snowballs into the curtain of snow to see if we could hear the water. We were about to leave when the sky began to glow. The light turned into an opening in the clouds, and the sun burst through and exposed the lake shore to shore, with the island in the middle. We stood there awestruck—it was a beautiful sight with the snow on all sides. We hugged each other. Then it got dimmer and dimmer and the clouds closed. We didn't say anything to each other, and headed down. We would tell that story to ourselves, and it made us believers, you know.

Another exceptional experience was finding a mushroom that helped me win over Tomie's big heart. We were hunting in an area near Ward that had been picked and abused. We were told that we would never find anything in that area, but Tomie wanted to try anyway. After hunting for three

hours or more, we had three little dried-up matsutakes. Then I saw something pushing through the duff, and I pulled up a large one, not five or six inches across, but the largest one we had ever seen—over 12 inches across the cap. If we had recorded it at the time, it would be in the record books today. I did receive a passionate kiss.

We brought each other luck, and it continued all or our life together.

Tomie gave me a lot, and best of all, she shared her friends with me. I treasure all of you, like Tomie did. Nothing matters more than friends and family. That's what's really important in life. All the money and material success don't mean anything compared to friends and family.

In Memory of Ken Evenson

Dr. Kenneth M. Evenson, 6-5-32 to 1-29-02

Members of CMS will be saddened to learn that Vera Evenson's beloved husband, Ken, has lost his long battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). Ken passed away at home with Vera at his side on January 29.

Vera and Ken met in Bozeman, Montana and were married there in 1955. After studying in Europe and at Purdue University, they moved to Corvallis, Oregon, where both attended Oregon State University. Ken received a doctorate in physics there. They moved to Boulder County in 1963 where Ken began his career with the National Bureau of Standards, now the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

One of Ken's colleagues, Dr. John Hall, recently recalled those early years. He said this pair were definitely different than most of the others at the bureau. Their interests were "vastly broader", often focused on the natural world, hiking, skiing, camping, fishing and all the wonders of nature. Different, too, in their choice of a vehicle - a 1938 Seattle City Transit bus. It was perfect for travel and outings with their increasing family. Ken loved that bus and probably would have kept it
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forever, but finally relented and sold it to a friend. Eventually that friend returned it to the city of Seattle.

Many in the world of mycology may have known Ken only as Vera's unassuming helpmate. Always pleasant and friendly, but always in the background. When Vera was planning her book, Ken, an accomplished photographer, taught her methods to insure accurate color and ways to utilize natural light in the field, thus enabling her to produce her outstanding photos of mushrooms.

But Ken was a star in his own firmament, a world-renowned physicist in the field of optical spectroscopy. He was employed in the Time and Frequency Division of NIST in Boulder, attaining the title of NIST Fellow. In the early 1970s he conceived of and proposed measuring the speed of light by using the wave length and frequency of certain lasers. According to Hall, "Lots of world-class guys got interested." In 1972 he received the Samuel Wesley Stratton Award of the National Bureau of Standards for "extending the range of frequency measurement - (utilizing) methane-stabilized helium-neon laser and for using the result obtained to determine a new highly accurate value for the speed of light." His paper describing these results was selected as "one of the 100 most significant papers published by NIST in its first 100 years."

In 1991 he was the recipient of the American Physical Society's Earle K. Plyler Prize "For the invention and development of important techniques now commonly employed in molecular spectroscopy - for the study of important transient molecules." This work involved the detection of molecules in the upper atmosphere and in interstellar space. Dr. Hall singled out as of particular interest the molecule HO₂, which Ken had theorized must exist, and which he eventually found.

During the many years of his career he published over 400 papers and was the recipient of numerous other awards, including the Humboldt Prize which allowed the Evensons to live in Germany

for 9 months. In 1976 they lived in Brazil where he was a visiting professor.

Ken was known for his creative approach to science. On one occasion when the team needed a 60 foot long laser beam, but none of their rooms were that large, he brought a drill to the lab and drilled holes in a couple of walls to attain the required length.

His sense of humor was legendary. He tinkered with an ordinary clock in his office to make it run backward. He also posed the question on a sign on his door, "What is the speed of dark?" And once, when working with alcohol lasers, he submitted an order for the very best alcohol: six cases of Chivas Regal. The order was not cancelled until it reached the very top level.

Last year, knowing that his colleague was very sick, Dr. John Brown of Oxford University organized the Kenneth M. Evenson Symposium. Some 100 scientists came to Boulder from all over the world to recognize and pay homage to Ken. Although he could no longer speak he communicated by writing notes and enjoyed the occasion immensely. According to Vera, he "just beamed" the whole time.

The recent "Nomination of Kenneth Evenson for Distinguished-Alumni Portrait Gallery" at the Dept. of Commerce in Washington, DC, highlights important aspects of his career: in 1983, due to his pioneering work, scientists around the world came to agree on a redefinition of the meter. "This definition has the effect of fixing the speed of light to be exactly 299,792,458 meters per second. In other words, this was the final word on the measurement of the speed of light." He also "worked on related high-accuracy measurements of spectral features of atoms and molecules, particularly in the far infrared region." And, "he made new observations that advanced our understanding of atoms and molecules and contributed to important studies of atoms and molecules in the interstellar medium as well as the upper atmosphere."

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Other areas of interest and expertise were far ranging. He was the chief of the Poorman Fire Department of their neighborhood in Sunshine Canyon west of Boulder. Often, sometimes single-handedly, he extinguished fires on roofs or grasslands. From time to time he was called on to administer CPR and other emergency care for his neighbors and the animals. Add fly fishing, fly tying, microbrew beers, and, of course, mushrooms. His office was often festooned with mushrooms, awaiting identification. He was more often than not at Vera's side on collecting trips. Recently, although very ill and unable to speak, he began drawing something that puzzled Vera. When finished with the graphic he wrote, "Gyromitra esculenta". It was a map to the site where they had found this mushroom, which is quite rare in Colorado. He was afraid Vera might forget where it was.

Ken is survived by his wife, Vera, their two daughters, two sons, a grandson (the light of his life), and imminently, another grandchild. A public memorial service will be held in early April. An announcement regarding contributions will be made at that time. *Submitted by Marilyn Shaw*

Ideas wanted for new CMS T-shirts:

Suggestions are requested for the new T-shirt design. How creative are you? We want your input. Send your ideas to the President Tom Ruzicka. A selection committee will decide which is the best idea and then Tom will develop the idea into a professional art design for the T-shirt. The member making the winning suggestion will win a T-shirt for free from CMS.

Send your T-shirt design ideas to:

Tom Ruzicka
President
223 N. Cedar Brook Rd.
Boulder, CO 80304
E-mail: tomruzicka@mindspring.com
303-447-2740

Membership Dues are Due

If you have not paid your CMS dues for 2002, please pay as soon as possible. If you are not sure if you have already paid, check your membership expiration date in the upper right corner of the mailing label of this issue. To renew your membership, send a check for \$20 and a note to:

CMS Membership Chair
P.O. Box
Denver, CO 80209

(Note: New membership is \$23)

If you have any questions as to the accuracy of the expiration date on the label or change of address, please contact:

Linda Deleon
14310 W. Fifth
Golden, CO 80401-5226
ldeleon@attbi.com
303-278-9582

Foray policy change:

Starting this season CMS will be handing out a Sign-up and Release form at each foray. Here's what it says: By attending this foray and signing this Sign-up and Release, I state that I am a current member of the CMS and that I understand the risks associated with hunting wild mushrooms, including but not limited to: Getting lost in the woods, possibly suffering life and limb threatening injuries as a result of exposure or slipping, falling, stumbling, etc. that may result in injury. I also am aware that cooking or eating wild mushrooms may be hazardous to my health, including sickness, permanent injury/impaired senses, even death. *Knowing the foregoing and assuming all risks, I especially release and waive any claims I may have or may have had and agree to hold harmless the CMS, its members, officers, directors and any other persons involved with the CMS from liability I might assert because of this event or the results of this event. I willingly assume all the above risks.* In a future newsletter you will get a copy of this form. The foray leader will also have these forms available.

CMS Officers for 2002

President (Board)	Tom Ruzicka 303-447-2740 tomruzicka@mindspring.com
Vice President (Board)	Chris Hardwick 303-237-0356 cchardwick@yahoo.com
President Elect (Board)	Larry Renshaw 303-648-0048 lmr@aaahawk.com.com
Secretary (Board)	Joanna Seward 303-455-3519 jseward@aol.com
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Toxicology	Marilyn Shaw 303-377-1278 marihshaw@aol.com

Mushroom Fair	Jae Lucas 303-697-4417 juanie@starband.net.
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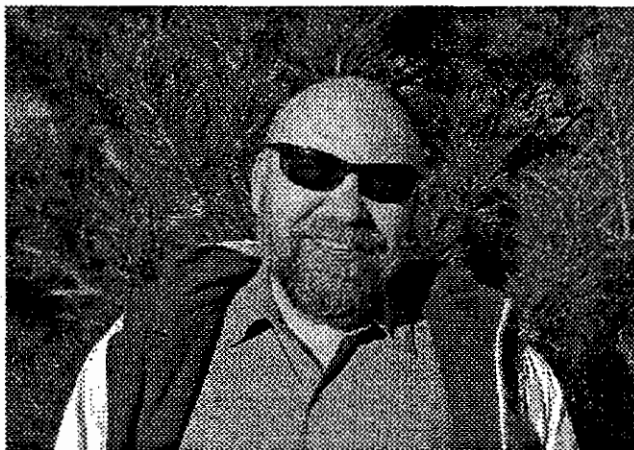
Upcoming Events

March 11th	Mr. Jon Sommer will talk on Identifying Common Edible and Poisonous Colorado Mushrooms.
April 8th	Steven Miller, "Russula and Lactarius from the Rockies" (Backup: Mushroom Identification)
May 13th	Cathy Cripps (topic TBA)
June 10th	To be announced
July 8th	To be announced
Aug. 9th	Foray with Jack States, collecting for fair
Aug. 10th	Fair setup
Aug. 11th	Annual CMS Mushroom Fair at Denver Botanic Gardens
Aug. 12th	Jack States (topic TBA)
Sept. 9th	Nancy Smith Weber, "Morels"
Oct. 14th	Terri Jensen and Karen Aguiar, "Medicinal Mushrooms"

CMS Website

Don't forget the CMS website! CMS is on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.cmsweb.org>. The website has been **recently updated** with information on the society's events, forays, and links to other sites in an easy to use format.

Member Profile



Name: William Nicholas Windsor

Birth Place: Freising, Germany

Town of Residence: Boulder

Years in Colorado: 2

Years with CMS: 2

Years collecting: 17

Are you a member of other clubs?

Rocky Mountain RAT (Rider Association of Triumph)
Colorado Mountain Club
American Motorcyclist Association

What do you do with the club?

I enjoy the presentations and socializing, as well as the forays.

What do you do for a living?

I am housing developer for the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. Although the Coalition provides many services, my role is to develop residential facilities for the homeless and very low income families and individuals. It's a great job that's both challenging and rewarding.

Schooling:

I were edumakated at Long Island University at Southampton College. Graduated in 1975.

Favorite Foray (local):

On my very first foray in Colorado I took my daughters up to the peak-to-peak highway in the hopes of finding morels in late June. I picked a spot that looked like a good habitat where the aspen leaves were still tiny and bright green at about 10,000 ft. elevation. After describing the mushroom and letting my daughters know that morels are VERY difficult to find, my youngest daughter pointed down to our feet and asked; Is that one?

Sure enough, there were three large black morels right where we were standing. After hunting morels in the area these past two years, that location is the only one that has yielded morels for many miles in any direction.

Favorite Foray (out of state):

Missik, Michigan, Mother's Day, 1989.

What was found?

Morels! (Do we detect a theme here?)

I was hunting deep into a forest with just moderate finds. While following a hollow, I came upon a small cluster of about 8 morels. Looking ahead was another cluster, and two more clusters to the side. In an area about 600 square feet I found about 75 morels.

Favorite general area to hunt:

Everywhere!

Why?

Because there are mushrooms everywhere. My primary interest in fungi is culinary. I just love to eat them. There are great edible mushrooms to be found just about anyplace.

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Techniques for finding mushrooms:

I use a combination of science (habitat) and intuition (ommmmm). One of the best methods to locate hard to spot fungi is mental imaging. When the fungi blends into the background environment the brain can be used as a subconscious filter to help spot them. To do this, I picture the target mushroom in my mind for several minutes. During morel season, I do this often, sometimes even dreaming about them.

Once in the woods how do you proceed?

I have found that moving one foot first, then moving the other foot yields good results. Other combinations tend to make me fall down.

OK - I always look for habitat first if I am seeking a specific mushroom. Then I let intuition guide me. If I feel that a specific area has potential, I slow down my pace and increase scanning for the mushroom. If my intuition is strong, but I am not finding any mushrooms I call out for them (Oh, morels ...reveal yourself to me). This is also a great technique to get others who are hanging about to move away from you.

Editor's Note:

I would like this column to become a regular feature as a way for members to get to know each other. If you would like to be interviewed please contact me at:

onebwwd@aol.com

303-440-7123

Norm Birchler