

Next Meeting April 10th, 2006

SPORES Afield

The newsletter of the Colorado Mycological Society

April 2006



The mushroom season is upon us. By the time you receive this issue of Spores we should be finding lots of oyster mushrooms *Pleurotus ostreatus* on stumps around town, see related article on page 6.

There are some important changes that I need to let you all know about. As you know I have been with CMS for 11 years now and in that time CMS has not had a dues increase, in fact at the board meeting in March none of the long time members for CMS could remember the last time dues were increased. It seems that the cost of everything is going up and CMS like a lot of other organizations is in a money crunch. **Starting May 1st the dues for CMS will increase to \$25.00 for renewals and \$28.00 for new members.** This increase is part of a budget plan laid out by William Windsor and the board of directors to keep CMS moving forward for many years to come. Without this increase and other cost saving efforts CMS could possibly cease to exist and none of us want that!!

This is your last issue of Spores if you have not renewed for 2006 so renew before May 1st to take advantage of the soon to be old dues rate. New members that joined at or after the 2005 mushroom fair will still be current through 2006.

There are several things that are not figured into the budget that could help substantially with cash flow and cost savings.

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Speaker for the April Meeting:

Jim Smailer, Executive Chef, Boulder Cork

Jim Smailer and his passion and respect for food has inspired him through his career as chef at the Boulder Cork Restaurant. Smailer strongly believes that all ingredients are gifts from the earth and the people who, with love, tend them. It is the chef's responsibility to prepare the food in a way that retains its integrity from source to table. Food is a reflection of our relationship with the natural environment.

Throughout his childhood, Smailer was strongly attracted to food - it's varied colors, textures, and flavors - as well as the actual activity involved in attaining the food. Growing up in eastern Pennsylvania and spending a lot of time in neighboring states, Smailer was accustomed to picking wild raspberries and blackberries, growing all types of produce, foraging for mushrooms, fishing in the Atlantic and crabbing in the Chesapeake.

Smailer's love of nature led him to a Biology degree. It was during his college years that he became involved in ceramics. In his work as a pottery student and later as an instructor of ceramics he became interested in searching out and processing natural clays, following and creating recipes for glazes, and firing his work in low and high heats. This creative process as a ceramicist has many parallels to his work as chef.

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Upcoming Events

- April 10th** Chef Smailer from the Boulder Cork Restaurant. See page 1 for more information
- May 8th** CMS member Jeffrey Dann, Ph. D. L.Ac will speak on the use of mushrooms in Chinese medicine.
Note: this meeting will be held in Gates Hall.
- June 12th** CMS member Ellen Jacobson.
"Where to go, when to go and how to go 'shrooming"
- July 10th** To be announced
- Aug. 12th** Fair Setup
- Aug. 13th** Annual CMS Mushroom Fair at Denver Botanic Gardens, The Fair identifier this year is Roy Halling of the New York Botanical Gardens.
- Aug. 14th** Roy Halling, New York Botanical Gardens. Topic to be announced.
- Aug. 17-20th** Crested Butte Wild Mushroom Festival, for more info: call Rodger Kahn at 303-322-5532 or 970-349-0238 or www.cbmushfest.com
- Sept. 11th** Cook & Taste, Chairperson William Windsor, contact him at wnwindsor@comcast.net. or 303-544-6069
Note: this meeting will be held in Gates Hall.
- Oct. 9th** Gary Lincoff on psychoactive mushrooms

Bring mushrooms for identification and display to any meeting.

All meetings are held at the Denver Botanic Gardens in Mitchell Hall at 7:30 PM unless otherwise announced.

This is your last issue of *SporesAfield* if you have not paid your membership for 2006.

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 Ave.
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303-278-9582

Please note on May 1st dues will increase to \$25 for renewals and \$28 for new members.

2006 NAMA Foray

The 2006 North American Mycological Association (NAMA) foray will be held at the Hinton Training Center, Hinton, Alberta, Canada, from Thursday, August 17 through Sunday, August 20. More in a coming issue of *Spores*. Or for more info now call Marilyn Shaw, 303-377-1278, or go to www.namyco.org.

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 their membership.

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

CMS web-site: <http://www.cmsweb.org>

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This year our Foray Chair is Tom Ruzicka. Please contact Tom if you would like to lead a foray

CMS Web Site Has New Look

If you haven't visited the CMS Web site (www.cmsweb.org) recently, you are in for a surprise. Over the winter webmaster Bernie Seward totally rebuilt the site and gave it a new look. Back issues of the CMS newsletter *Spores Afield* have been archived and are easily accessible. New recipes and new articles have been added as well. Members comments and suggestion are always welcome. Just go to the Web site and click on the "Webmaster" link to e-mail Bernie.

(Presidents continued from page 1)

One of those cost saving efforts will be to offer the *SporesAfield* newsletter via e-mail to all interested members. I took a straw pole at the March meeting and it appeared that about 1/3 of the members attending the meeting would like an e-mail version. *There will still be a hardcopy SporesAfield mailed out to anyone who would not like to have it via e-mail.* Printing and postage costs have been going up (printing almost doubling from 04 to 05) and if we could get at least half the members of CMS to go with the e-mail version it would in turn cut printing costs in half, the more the merrier.

There are some great benefits to an e-newsletter such as color pictures, we could also have links to other articles and web-sites. We would also be helping the environment by not using so much paper, a lot of my favorite mushrooms grow under those trees!

We will be working with our webmaster Bernie Seward to hammer out the details. We will be announcing in an upcoming edition of *SporesAfield* as to when we will be ready to offer this e-newsletter.

We are busy reworking our brochure to reflect the changes in dues and to update our web-site information. We would like to increase membership to help out with the budget. Membership is an area that fluctuates from year to year and that is out of our control. We can however make brochures available at the meetings for you to pick up and give to friends and maybe people you run into while hunting mushrooms.

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(Speaker continued from page 1)

Accompanying his wife, Kate, he moved to Boulder in 1981 so that she might attend the University of Colorado and earn a graduate degree in Piano. Smailer hoped to get a job with the National Forest Service. Government freezing on hiring led Smailer to pursue work in another area for which he had skills: the preparation of food.

Jim has been chef at the Boulder Cork Restaurant for the past 24 years. Over this time he has insisted on using the freshest ingredient. The menu continues to change and reflect the growing demands and culinary sophistication of the Boulder market. Whereas many long time favorite menu items will never leave the Cork, new menu items and specials, often inspired by Smailer's travels, continue to keep the menu fresh and interesting. There is a flavor for all. The menu might include chanterelles from Scotland, heirloom tomatoes and figs from California, fresh wasabi and black trumpet mushrooms from Oregon, organic buffalo from Nebraska, chilies from New Mexico, and peaches from the western slopes of Colorado. In summer months Smailer picks up most of the restaurant's produce, often organic, from local farmers and markets. Fresh picked asparagus, cucumbers, and beets. Peppers, eggplants, summer squashes, warm field tomatoes, and sweet corn fill the restaurant and become part of nightly specials.

Although the Cork's initial reputation grew from its excellent beef preparations, Smailer and his genuine love of the ocean first introduced fresh fish to the Cork's menu 20 years ago. Delicious sea inspired menu items and specials continue to be an important part of the Cork's offerings. One might be offered wild striped bass from New England coastline, wild salmon from Alaskan and Pacific northwest waters, Nantucket bay scallops, fresh gulf shrimp, red snapper from Florida, opaka paka from Hawaii, or soft shell crabs from the Chesapeake.

Another interest of Smailer's is wine. He is respected throughout the wine community for his true knowledge in this field. He has built an extensive cellar which has received the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.

His wine experience includes hosting and designing wine dinners with numerous large and small wineries from around the world: Chalk Hill Simi, Beaulieu Vineyards, Jordon, Beringer, Trimbach, Joseph Drouhin, Catena, Vega Siscellia to name but a few.

Smailer is an avid bicyclist, mycologist and ornithologist in his time away from the restaurant.

(Presidents continued from page 3)

We really want people to know about the great benefits of being a member of CMS and the great wealth of knowledge and camaraderie that CMS has to offer.

Program chair Jason Salzman will be working on promoting CMS in the media in an effort to attract new members. He has some good contacts and lots of great ideas.

Yet another item I need to mention is the board voted on the use of the membership roster, please see the related article on page 7 for the results of that vote.

Please drop me a line or an e-mail with ideas that you think can help in fund-raising for CMS.

Thank you all for your continued participation in the Colorado Mycological Society.

See you at the next meeting.

CMS President, Norm Birchler

Authors, Artists, and Poets

The editor of *SporesAfield* needs your help. Please consider submitting an article, line drawing, digital photographs, a poem, editorial, comic, report on mushroom sightings, news items, announcements of upcoming events, or any other contributions to your newsletter. This is your chance to share with your fellow members. Send items by the 15th of each month to:

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Morel Stroganoff

By Bill Windsor — Reprinted from "The Tao of Mushroom Hunting," The Denver Post, May 21, 2003

Mushroom hunter Bill Windsor says to use dried morels rather than fresh. Drying concentrates the flavor, and morels reconstitute very well, although they will lose some volume. Reconstitute by soaking them in warm whole milk for 30 minutes.

Use just enough milk to cover the morels. At first, the dried morels will float on the surface. Stir often to be sure they absorb the milk. Before using, squeeze them to release excess milk back into the soaking bowl. Strain (for sand and silt) and reserve for use in the following recipes.

While the flavor of beef goes well with morels, the morels alone can carry this dish.

Ingredients:

30-40 reconstituted morels, sliced in half length-wise
1/2 large onion, julienne
2 tbsp butter
1 tsp teriyaki sauce
1 lb of your favorite beef cut, sliced into thin bit-size pieces (optional)
1 quart sour cream
Milk from the soaking bowl
2 tbsp Marsala wine
Pinch of crushed rosemary
1 bag egg noodles
Salt and pepper to taste
A few sprigs of fresh rosemary

Directions:

In a large sauce pan, sauté morels and onions in butter over medium heat until both are browned. Add the teriyaki sauce and the beef (optional). Quick-brown the beef, leaving the centers pink.

Add the sour cream, soaking milk, marsala wine and crushed rosemary.

Increase the heat to bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce and simmer 20 minutes, stirring often. This time is needed to allow all of the flavors to blend.

Meanwhile, cook the egg noodles according to package directions, being careful to not overcook them.

Place the drained noodles on each plate, then ladle on the morel/sour cream sauce. Place a sprig of the fresh rosemary on top as a garnish.

Editor's Note: you can find this recipe and many more on our web-site at: www.cmsweb.org

Dinner at your doorstep.

By Norm Birchler

One of the most common edible mushrooms you can find in and around your neighborhood are oyster mushrooms, *Pleurotus osteratus* and or *Pleurotus populinus*. Think about your area; do you have a park nearby with some old cottonwood stumps or logs lying around, is there a creek bed or irrigation ditch that has this same kind of habitat. These mushrooms grow shelflike on those stumps and logs. Within a half mile radius of my house I have at least 3 or 4 good reliable stumps and downed trees that produce these mushrooms once, twice or even three times a year. Occasionally I will find a small log that is fruiting oysters and I will take it home with me. Depending on how decayed the log is I can get mushroom fruitings off it for the next couple of years.

These mushrooms can be primarily found in the spring and fall with the largest fruiting happening in the spring. They can also be found in the summer in the mountains. Just to give you an example of how large a fruiting I am talking about check out this picture of Tom Ruzicka and a beautiful rosette of oysters he found right here in the town of Boulder.



When it seems to be prime time for oysters we do have an area that we like to travel to where there are proba-

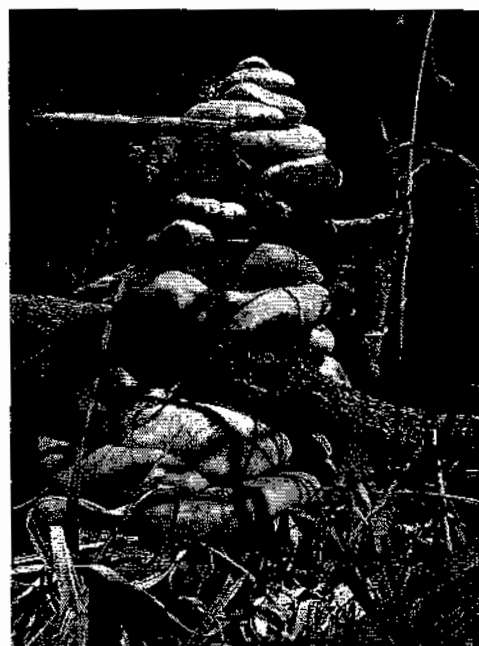
bly 30 - 40 dead cottonwood trees. I know someone else goes there because I have seen where they have cut the mushrooms from the trees, but I still always come home with plenty. If we hit it right, though, we can collect more mushrooms than we can carry or eat at one time so some get dried. These other pictures are from that area, I forgot the exact location or I would definitely tell you. Note the large cluster of oyster mushrooms

next to William Windsor's right arm in this picture.



tify as oyster mushrooms. This is one of the first mushrooms I try to teach people about because it is so plentiful and so tasty and there is not really

I know there are other good edibles in the your area but none are quite as distinctive, large and easy to identify



anything else in the plains of Colorado at the same time as oysters that looks quite like it.

Get yourself a couple of good guide books like Vera Evenson's "Mushrooms of

Colorado" or David Arora's "All that the Rain Promises and More" and learn these mushrooms, you will enjoy them for the rest of your life. As always consult an expert if you are new to mushrooming or are in the least bit unsure of your identification.

There's a long time saying around the club: "There are old mushroom hunters and there are bold mushroom hunters, but there are no old bold mushroom hunters". Always be careful!

Board votes on use of Membership List

On Monday, March 13th, 2006 the CMS Board of Directors met to conduct business and the use of the membership list for commercial purposes (both private sector and not-for-profit) was reviewed and voted upon.

Background - In 2004, the CMS Board of Directors voted to restrict "commercial" use of the CMS membership roster. The issue gained the attention of CMS membership in 2005 when some members complained about receiving unsolicited mail and e-mail. At that time, other members contacted the Board to express their desire to receive unsolicited material, especially if it were mushroom related. In response, the Board agreed to re-visit the policy after polling members for their comments on the matter.

Twenty members responded to the issue with 14 members requesting that CMS continue with its existing policy and 6 members requesting that we change the policy to allow the commercial use of the membership roster to some degree. The Board meeting was open to members to comment on the issue and several members participated in the discussion.

After some deliberation and discussion, the Board had a split vote with the majority in favor to continue its current policy of not allowing "commercial" use of the roster. It was passed that the CMS roster can not be used by either members, not-for-profit or for-profit companies and organizations for commercial and mass mailing purposes. Notices of mushroom events in Spores always carry contact information, so those who wish can give their names so they can be contacted directly

The Board would like to thank and commend the members who expressed their opinions on this issue. All opinions and comments were well thought out and expressed with strong and persuasive arguments on both sides of the issue. Your participation in the management of CMS was, and continues to be, appreciated.

Bill Windsor
Board Member
Spores Afield

Hark! The sound of mycelium running.

By William Windsor

I drove past one of my favorite morel foray grounds yesterday evening. It was cold and wet outside with a mixture of rain and snow. Looking at the grounds as I drove by revealed a dreary visual landscape. The sky was dark grey and cold and wet. The ground too was dark and lacking any greenery. Looming upwards from the ground were stands of narrow-leaf cottonwood trees, barren of leaves. It brought joy to my heart. Its spring-time in Colorado and the mycelium are running.

I have been concerned with the weather along the front range during most of the winter. While the mountains were blessed with ample snow pack, the Denver metro area and Boulder has been very dry. Since the very first mushrooms of spring are found in the 'flatlands' a long dry winter needs a wet spring to allow a strong fruiting of Oyster Mushrooms and Morels. The current miserable weather conditions for us humans are perfect for the mushrooms. The ground is slowly warming and it is wet. Mushroom mycelia are waking from their winter stasis and sending out new thread-like mycelium through the ground.

We are already hearing reports of findings of Oyster mushrooms. It is still too early for Morels, but it's definitely time to start paying attention to the 'indicators' that 'announce' an eminent fruiting of these most delectable edible mushrooms. Start watching the ground for mints and poison ivy. When both are about 8 to 10 inches tall, Morels will soon fruit. Likewise, start scanning the ground when you see that the leaves on the narrow leaf cottonwood are about the size of a dime to a quarter. Are you seeing the yellow flowers of Oregon Grape Holly? All of these plants are found in morel habitat and these specific stages of growth will help confirm that the timing is right to seek these delicious fungi.

Its miserable outside and I couldn't be happier.