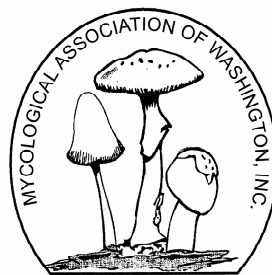


# Potomac Sporophore



December 2008

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**For forays: ext. 55**

## MAW DUES

**MAW 2009 dues are paid in January. Please send your check to:**

**Membership Chair**  
**4509 Windom Place, NW**  
**Washington, DC, 20016**

**Singles \$20.00/Households \$30.00. Those who joined the club after June 30 are paid through 2009**

## ELECTIONS

**At the December general meeting, MAW members elected the new board. Most of the board members will return for another year of service but there are three positions that will have a different person:**

**Jon Ellifritz –Programs**  
**William Needham - Newsletter**  
**Alan Remchuk - Culinary**

**We hope that the board members have a successful year and that all MAW members work together to make 2009 a great year for our club.**

## PROGRAMS

**Programs take place each month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at the Davis Library, MD at 7:00 p.m. The library is located at 6400 Democracy Blvd in Bethesda, MD. Please join us.**

### Guest Speakers:

**Jan. 6th -Rytas Vilgalys**  
**“DNA Sequencing”**

**Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Sveta Yamin**  
**“Ethnomycology in Russia**

**March 3<sup>rd</sup> -Beth Brantley**  
**“Fungal Tree Diseases.”**

### Forays

**Look for the March newsletter for the spring forays and for e-mail communications from Mitch Foyrnet, foray chair-person who will keep you informed about looking for the next mushroom: the MOREL**

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**The Seventh Annual MAW  
Fair  
Jim Sherry**

**It's pleasant to realize that for seven years we have had such beautiful sunny days for the fair, and again this year we had another perfect day.**

**And the public responded in large numbers. More than 1400 people entered the Visitor's Center; in contrast only 500 people entered the building last year, but last year we competed with the Harvest Fair.**

**Connie Durnan and Daniel Barizo managed the fair and did everything to produce a very successful event.**

**And MAW members were happy to provide their talents to create an atmosphere of wonder and an opportunity for learning for our guests.**

**Here are some of our members who helped at the fair:**



*Maria Dobrowolsky and Patrick in the Children's Drawing Room.*

**Maria has enjoyed helping the kids to learn about mushrooms in each of the seven mushroom fairs.**

**Sometimes Maria is very pleased to meet a child who has already learned a great deal about mushrooms or a child who is very interested in learning more about mushroom. Most of the children enjoy the fun of coloring the mushroom outlines that Maria provides. And the parents are pleased with the service that Maria provides.**

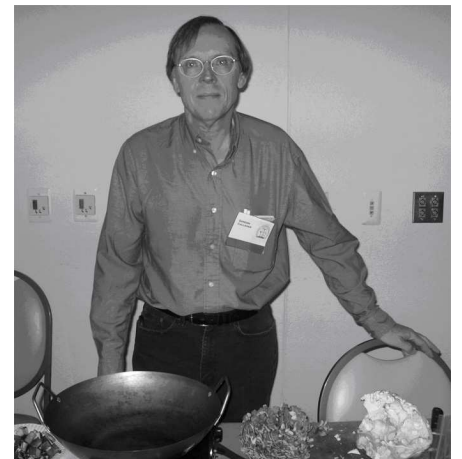
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**This newsletter is published quarterly by the Mycological Association of Washington. DC (MAW).**

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*Karen Adams has worked at the reception desk for MAW's seven fairs. She enjoys meeting the folks and telling them about MAW's programs.*



*Gordon Callahan cooked mushrooms at the fair, which were provided by Phillips Mushroom Farm in Kennett Square, PA. Gordon was one of the principle members who worked to establish our early mushroom fairs and we still use the format that he helped to put into place.*



*The Three Amigos  
Bruce, Jon and Mitch were all multitaskers at the fair. I have used this picture in previous. It's a favorite.*



*William Needham and Drew Minnis. Both gave lectures at the fair. William has been a regular lecturer at the fair and Drew is a new member, who is a mycologist.*

### **Those Darn Mushrooms Jim Sherry**

There are some mushrooms that one finds every year, such as the morel, the chanterelle, the chicken, the hen and the oyster. All of these mushrooms are choice, easy to recognize and grow abundantly in this area, though it depends on rain,

luck and hustle to find lots of them every year.

There are other mushrooms that one finds lots of at one time and then never finds them again, for example, I once found the resinous polypore covering a large log- the log is still there and it's still very large but I have never seen resinous on that log or any other log again.

Closely related to this is the experience one might have had of finding a legendary and unforgettable amount of a choice mushroom one year and never finding such an amount again. Just talk to some of the experienced mushroomers and they will smile blissfully about the year when....

Then there are mushrooms that other people find lots of but you are wondering where because you don't find them. I will put the meadow mushroom in this category. Where are they? Well, I have to modify this statement a bit because this year, finally, we did see some on lawn drive-bys but we never harvested any.

Then there are mushrooms that grow in abundance in the same place, year after year. The morel and the chanterelle are in this category. The club has been finding morels in a particular area in the Shenandoah Mountains for years and one of our members has been finding the chanterelle, lots of them, in the same section of a forest.

year in and year out. But this is not true of all mushrooms- studies shows that mushrooms do not grow in the same place year after year but are, instead, replaced by different mushrooms. This seems to be particularly true of boletes.

There are mushrooms that you see lots of but you say "ho-hum," The russula and the amanita are each in this category. It's true that some russulas and some amanitas are edible but usually they aren't the ones that you see in the woods. This year I saw lots of the *Amanita cokeri* but few other amanitas.

How about those mushrooms that are choice but not everyone likes their taste. You can find people who are not so terribly impressed with the morel, and others that really don't care for the chanterelle and certainly there are many who won't go near the oyster mushroom, and the chicken mushroom just doesn't suite everyone.

Finally, there are all those places where we don't find mushrooms. There are four sections of the Patapsco Valley State Park which we visit regularly. The park has large stands of white, scarlet and chestnut oak and many tulip poplar trees. The trees are healthy and have been growing undisturbed since

about 1910. One has to assume that there are lots of mycoorrhizal relationships between the trees and the underground mycelia but these 14,000 acres produce relatively few mushrooms. No one seems to have an answer to why this is so. though, the deer could be eating them.

.....

### **Mycoforestry**

Without fungi there would be no forests. Mycoforestry is the use of fungi to sustain forest communities. The goals of mycoforestry are: preservation of native forests; recovery and recycling of woodland debris; enhancement of replanted trees; strengthening sustainability of ecosystems and economic diversity.

**Waldemar**  
**By Jim Sherry**

Every club has a few members who work very diligently and with great energy to make the club a successful experience for its members. That is one reason why we are fortunate to have Waldemar Poppe in our club.

For years Waldemar was the culinary chair for the club and was especially famous for the prizes which he gave away at the club's Tastings. The prizes, which he provided at his expense, were for members whose mushroom dishes were the most liked at the Tastings. I remember one year when he gave away sixteen prizes: mushroom logs, plants, books, wines and a variety of other things. It was great fun.

Waldemar has a great many interests and only someone who has lots of energy and enthusiasm could manage to do all of the things that he does.

He has been interested in growing mushrooms and has grown shitake and oyster mushrooms for years. He has experimented with growing his oyster mushrooms on a variety of substrates, including phone books and even bathroom tissue.

For a number of years he showed his logs of shitake and oysters mushrooms at our fair and was principally interested in teaching the public about how to grow mushrooms. He is at heart a teacher.

Waldemar brought mushroom dishes to our monthly meetings. He was the only member who did this on a regular basis. Most of us assume that the club will provide food at our meetings

and it does but the hospitality person has a very limited budget and so the dishes Waldemar brought were always a highlight. Just recently he brought a chanterelle and spaetzle dish, which was one of his best, and he brought so much of it that we all had a second helping.

Waldemar has to be considered the master of the chanterelle-he finds so many. The first time I met Waldemar at a MAW meeting he had brought a chanterelle dish; he said that his granddaughter had found the chanterelles and he also brought strawberries and the chocolate sauce for the dipping. That was back in 2001.

Aside from growing mushrooms, Waldemar grows flowers, vegetables and fruit. He is a wine connoisseur, a gourmet cook and has traveled extensively in Europe and when he has some spare time he makes wood and metal objects with his lathe.

Waldemar is a very generous man, with a great spirit and most of all he is a loving opa, a good friend and a good man. He is not feeling well these days and cannot participate as much in club activities but we are sending Waldemar a salute and many thanks for giving so much to us for so many years.

## The Pleurotus

The pleurotus is not to be seen so far this season.

Usually, it is in November when I start to find this mushroom, though it's rumored to be found in each season.

I have occasionally found the pleurotus in the spring and in August of 2006 I found that five logs cut from a tree that was brought down by the hurricane Isabel in September of 2003 sprouted hundreds of pleurotus simultaneously, but that was the only time that I found pleurotus in August, which did prompt me to wonder if the pleurotus sprung forth on those logs at that time because the people who bought that house where the logs were resting moved the logs, thereby stimulating the growth of the pleurotus. Who knows?

Most of the pleurotus that I have found I have found in November and December, which is the best time to find them because those that one finds in the fall are more tasty (they have a darker color). Today, Dec. 3rd, I walked along my stream in order to examine the trees that have fallen near or across the

water and I saw no mushrooms except for decrepit violet tooth polypore and some discolored tramedes polypore.

In the past I have found the pleurotus on a variety of tree logs: tulip poplar, beech, oak, black locust and mulberry. I have found it on living trees (only the tulip poplar) but most of the time I have found it on tulip poplars near water so I walk along the stream.

It may be that most of the trees in this area that have produced pleurotus in the past have already surrendered the nourishment that the pleurotus seeks. I think that a tree can only feed the pleurotus for about four years after the tree dies.

Still, others report that the pleurotus is not very much in evidence this year-anywhere. J.S.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Seasons Greetings

J. S.

It's difficult to appraise this season's harvest of mushrooms. Some people were satisfied with their morel harvest and others said that the chanterelles did fine.

The reports on *Grifola frondosa*

suggested that it was found in some abundance and the

chicken mushroom, well it's always iffy.

I noted before that I didn't see any pleurotus.

But the other mushrooms: the russula and corts and lactarius seem to be scarce and few people ran into any boletes or the honey mushroom.

For some reason I kept finding the *Amanita cokeri* and I drove by more *Agaricus campestris* than I usually do.

It's not that there was no rain, though we scarcely had any in August. For the year we were above average in rain but below average in mushrooms?

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## I, the Mushroom

Jim Sherry

Now you see me, now you don't

There you'll find, there you won't.

I'm under the pine, I'm under the oak,  
I'm in the ground that's had a good soak.

Look in the forest, look by the brook,

Look in the orchard, it says  
in your book.

Is that me or a stone in the  
sun?

Is that just a leaf on the  
bank of the run?

You'r trudging and  
climbing and peering  
around.

You'r looking for places  
where I may abound.

But it's really not easy, you  
can't find me fast  
It's not like I'm growing the  
way you grow grass.

If you could find me like  
leaves on a tree  
There would be little  
pleasure in finding just me.

.....

### The Yellow on the Tree

Jim Sherry

I saw a patch of yellow  
clinging to the tree.  
What it was I didn't know  
and didn't want to see.  
But still it bothered me-  
not to know what that  
yellow was that was  
clinging to the tree.  
It was on the bark. just  
three feet high and it  
beckoned unto me.

And I didn't want to go and see  
that yellow on the tree.

But, I went to see that yellow on  
the tree- it was a leaf that  
floated down and caught its  
stem on the bark, on the bark  
of the tree. on a little niche on  
the bark of the tree-a yellow  
poplar leaf on the bark of the  
tree on a yellow poplar tree.

### Songs

Jim Sherry

Oh Verosa, My Verosa,  
I hear they've changed your  
name.

Still, you are a stately white,  
and still your bite's the same.

Oh Russula, My Russula  
Who has knocked you down.  
Who has taken such a bite  
and left you to be found.

Oh Grifola, My Grifola  
You'r so hard to clean,  
I scrape away all that waste,  
But make you much too lean.

Oh Morchella, My Morchella  
You'r such a ghoulish guy.  
You give a splendid feast  
just when that elm's to die.

Oh Edulis, My Edulis  
In every land you'r king  
In every land they sing your  
name. But what is it?

.....

This is the last newsletter  
that I will edit. Next year  
William Needham will assume  
the work of publishing the  
newsletter.

William has been a great  
help to me over the four years  
that I have edited the  
newsletter. He has written an  
article for almost every issue  
that I have worked on.

I will still be involved with  
the newsletter and I hope that  
William receives help from  
other club members.

Some members may be  
reluctant to write for the  
newsletter. All you need is the  
first sentence of the article and  
it then becomes a lot easier  
than you may think. J. S.



