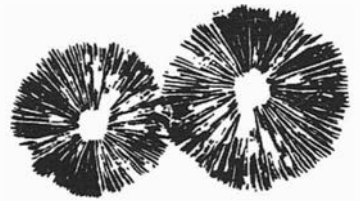


# SPORE PRINTS



BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Number 320

March 1996

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Patrice Benson

Thank you for making my term as President enjoyable and productive. During the past 2 years, we have continued to offer an excellent educational experience to our members and students all over the Puget Sound region, following in the tradition and purpose of the Puget Sound Mycological Society.



Because of the generous efforts of Joy Spurr, our slide collection has been upgraded and expanded to include images from some of the foremost Northwest mycologists and photographers. Speakers and lecturers have spread the word by donating their time to teach those fascinated by fungi. We produced a video titled "Puget Sound Mycology," informally titled "How to do a Mushroom Exhibit." Those who help raise funds through the production of our exhibit and book sales and membership deserve to be toasted and boasted about. We have a formal budget and financial statement and have finally produced a new roster and created a new membership database. We have almost completed our assembly of a computer to use for that database and whatever else we may create.

Some things take a tremendous effort and hours and hours of volunteer time, but are not apparent because they are performed simply to keep things running smoothly. Answering the mail and voice mail messages requires constant attention. Dedicated, designated identifiers of fungi answer countless phone calls and (sometimes unbelievable) queries. The microscopes, the office and storage, the library and correspondence, the taxes, the bill payments, the arrangements for permits, insurance, and reservations for field trips—all the varied jobs that keep our society together—require someone to take responsibility. The Wards mail the *Spore Prints* newsletter produced by the symbiosis of the Siegers. Brian Luther provides skilled identifiers and hands-on identification at our field trips. There are many folks who generously support the efforts of the leadership of PSMS to make our society fun and productive. I especially wish to thank Mary Taylor, who has been a steadfast and unflinching treasurer and who led this board to produce the first real budget we have had.

I have been delighted to have served as president of this society with such generous people to work with. I hope to support the next president with my experience as well as I have been supported by my mentor, Dick Sieger. Thank you, one and all.

We are sad to announce the death of Ferris Anderson on February 7, 1996. A long-time PSMS member and financial advisor, Ferris formerly served as PSMS treasurer and was currently treasurer of the Stuntz Foundation. Our condolences to his wife, Joyce, and their children and grandchildren.

## MUSHROOM VICTIM RECOVERING

Various Sources

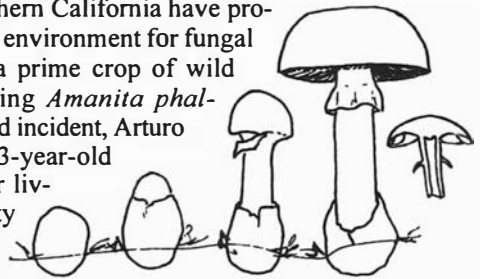
*San Francisco*—Jennifer Chang, 13-year-old victim of *Amanita phalloides*, the "Death Cap" mushroom, went home this week (2/24/96) after a successful partial liver transplant.

Jennifer, her mother, Rita Chang, and two brothers became sick on February 3 after eating a spaghetti sauce made from wild mushrooms and were admitted to a local hospital with severe gastrointestinal symptoms. They were transferred to the medical center at the University of California in San Francisco on February 6. Neither Jennifer's brothers, 11 and 14, nor mother suffered organ damage, and were released a few days after the incident. Jennifer was placed first in line on the waiting list for a liver transplant February 7 and received a partial liver transplant February 8.

According to Dr. Philip Rosenthal, who treated the family at the San Francisco hospital, the success rate for children who undergo liver transplants is over 90%. In Jennifer's case, the left lobe of a donor liver was grafted onto her damaged liver to help her liver cells regenerate. The surgery was so successful that surgeons removed the donor portion. Most liver transplant patients must take anti-rejection drugs for the rest of their lives, but the successful operation means Jennifer won't have to, doctors said.

Mrs. Chang, an immigrant from Taiwan, picked the mushrooms near her home by the Lafayette Reservoir 15 miles east of San Francisco. Dr. Bill Freedman, chairman of the San Francisco Mycological Society's toxicology committee who consulted with doctors on the case, said that the family apparently ate two kinds of poisonous mushrooms, one of which had not been identified. The unidentified, less poisonous mushroom made the family ill enough to bring them into Alta Bates hospital in Berkeley. *Amanita phalloides* often does not initially cause serious gastrointestinal symptoms, and it can take up to 3 days for the effects to become evident.

Recent rains in Northern California have provided an ideal, moist environment for fungal growth, producing a prime crop of wild mushrooms, including *Amanita phalloides*. In an unrelated incident, Arturo Leybe-Sanchez, a 43-year-old migrant field worker living in Sonoma County 65 miles north of San Francisco, died on February 8, 3 days after eating a meal of *Amanita phalloides* he had picked in an unknown location.



## WANTED: ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

No experience required. An ideal job for new members. Write Lorraine Dod at 1415 140th Ave N.E., #17, Bellevue, WA 98005-4535 or call (206) 644-0826.



# Spore Prints

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## PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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SCI. ADVISOR:	Dr. Joseph F. Ammirati
EDITOR:	Agnes A. Sieger, 15555 14th Ave. N.E. Seattle, WA 98155

## CALENDAR

March 6	Cultivation class (pre-registration required)
March 13	Cultivation class (pre-registration required)
March 17	Microscopy Study Group, 2:00–6:00 PM, Board Room, CUH
March 18	Board meeting, 7:30 PM, Board Room, CUH
March 20	Cultivation class (pre-registration required)
March 22	<i>Spore Prints</i> deadline
March 27	Cultivation class (pre-registration required)
March 30	McDonald Park field trip, Carnation
April 1	Basic mushroom ID class (pre-registration required)

## MICROSCOPY STUDY GROUP     Brandon Matheny

The initial session of the Microscopy Study Group got under way with four dedicated PSMS members and our “Mentor of the Month,” Dick Sieger. Dick illustrated some techniques for mounting sections on slides and discussed possible specific areas of interest the group could explore, such as microscope use and maintenance, obtaining micrometers and a system for projecting onto a video monitor, and general educational endeavors like showcasing a bit of microscopy at PSMS general membership meetings. Dick also referred the group to several books and did not shy from expressing his fascination over Ascomycetes. If anyone is interested in attending a session, please feel free—from the general membership to seasoned veterans. We are a fortunate organization to have such a practical and educational resource for members to study microscopy! Any questions? Please call Brandon Matheny at 524-6467.



Our next session is planned for Sunday, March 17, from 2:00–6:00 PM in the Board Room at CUH.

## MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The March membership meeting was our annual meeting, held at the Survivors Banquet on March 1.

## MEET CAROL SMITH and STEVE GALEA

Inga Wilcox



Carol Smith joined PSMS in 1988 via the Herbfarm. Dr. Benjamin was teaching a class, and Carol had her first taste of a morel dish. She promptly signed up. Her prior exposure to fungi was limited to picking, identifying, and eating fungi found in her parent’s yard in Utah. Her father, a physician, gave her an identification book—dealing with fungi in Minnesota—but she managed to make it work for her. “Somewhat risky,” she now admits.

Steve Galea had come to Seattle working for Boeing. In 1992 he joined PSMS. At the 1993 fall exhibit, Carol manned a section called “Other Uses of Fungi” dealing with fungi in antibiotics, sourdough, and lichens used for dyeing. Walking to her car, she noticed Steve playing with his dog, a Dalmatian. She had a Dalmatian, and conversation ensued. The rest is “history.” Steve attended the show daily bringing in specimens for identification and later helped with the NAMA convention. Carol took responsibility for staffing the 3-year Barlow Pass study, with time spent in the laboratory of Dr. Ammirati evaluating the finds.

Both Steve and Carol are gourmet cooks. She likes puffballs as appetizers and verpas in a salad, while Steve’s favorite is the Hedgehog, one of the fungi he collects when out deer hunting. Carol is a registered nurse working at the VA Hospital, but finds time for hobbies. She teaches a class in paper making from recycled paper, transforming it into paper for book covers, writing paper, or wrapping paper, depending on the thickness of the product. She grows orchids, paints in oil, and does handicrafts. Steve brews beer, and both look forward to making wine from grapevines planted on their new property. Both like water and snow skiing as well as sea kayaking. If that were not enough, they are building a home that should be ready for occupancy soon.

Carol and Steve enjoy the group and know that the more you put into it, the more you get out of it. They appreciate the many members with a common interest, including a scientific approach to fungi against pure pot hunting.

Yes, wedding bells will be ringing for Steve Galea and Carol Smith on May 26th. We wish them lots of happiness.

*Gently, gently sleeping earth  
Warms to spring as persistent proof  
That aging’s merely preparation  
For that perfect transformation.*

*Let others ache to leave behind  
The perfect poem. It’ll suit me fine  
To leave my bones beneath a tree  
Becoming habitaceous—mycologically.*

—Warren Wolfe  
Minneapolis Star Tribune

## SPRING FIELD TRIPS

Wayne & Patrice Elston

It's spring field trip time! Wayne and Patrice Elston are the field trip chairs again this year, and they are in need of some helpful members to volunteer as hosts/hostesses. This is a great way to learn mycology, as spending time around Brian Luther and his team of identifiers is a large part of the "job." Being friendly, bringing doughnuts/fruit, making coffee, having folks sign in as they arrive, and having plenty of time to hunt mushrooms is the rest of it. Please call (206) 831-5581 to schedule your hosting Saturday and/or Sunday.



Our first field trip is a half-day excursion (9-noon) to McDonald Park in Carnation on Saturday, March 30, to look for *Verpa bohemica*. The schedule for the rest of the spring field trips will be printed in the April *Spore Prints*.

**General Instructions:** The meeting time at field trips 9:00 AM at the chosen site. Please bring a basket, knife, wax paper, compass, whistle, water, lunch, and a dish to share if you wish to join the potluck. Wear warm clothes. Include rain gear in your car or pack and wear hiking shoes or boots. Feel free to bring your friends, family, and sociable dogs.

From 9:00 to 9:30 or 10:00 AM, we check in, have munchies, and talk about the mushrooms we'll be searching for and the area around the camp site. We then head out to hunt in small groups. Identification is from noon to 4 PM. Potluck time is between 4 and 6 PM, decided on by the participants in the morning. The potlucks are always delicious, very fun, and HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!

The 2-day field trips can be attended one or both days. Meeting time is 9:00 each morning, with a potluck breakfast on Sunday for interested parties.

March 30

MacDonald Park  
(30 miles east of Seattle)



This is our traditional half-day trip to introduce newcomers to the mushroom *Verpa bohemica* and its habitat and what the appetite for the spring mushrooming to come. MacDonald Park is on the Tolt River about ½ mile south of Carnation in King County. Enter the park on N.E. 40th Street from State Hwy. 203. Watch for PSMS signs on the corner and use the day-use parking lot. We will meet at the main shelter across the suspension bridge at 9:00 AM for a general introduction to mushroom hunting. Then we will break into small groups and go out to gather specimens. Identifiers will be available around 10:30 AM. There should be *Verpa bohemica* under the cottonwoods in the surrounding area. We'll meet rain or shine. You may want to bring lunch.

## BASIC MUSHROOM ID CLASS

Marshall Palmer

A Basic Mushroom Identification Class will be held on six consecutive Monday evenings, 7-9 PM, at the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), April 1 through May 6. This class will introduce participants to the identification of gilled and non-gilled fungi and will include information on the biology of fungi, collecting and cooking edible mushrooms, and recognizing toxic look-alikes. *Mushrooms Demystified*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., by David Arora, will be the text. Some copies will be available for purchase at the first session.

Please note that the class will be limited to the first 25 registrants. (The class will be offered again in October.)

To register, send:

- (1) a check for \$30, payable to PSMS
- (2) a self-addressed, stamped envelope to

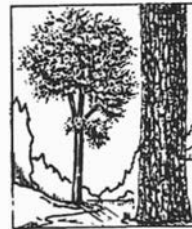
Marshall Palmer  
PO Box 95677  
Seattle, WA 98145

You will receive confirmation of your registration and further information after March 18. If you have questions, call Marshall Palmer at 527-6207.

## THE EARLY MOREL

Agnes Sieger

On March 30, we will hold our annual pilgrimage to the Tolt River to pay tribute to the first mushrooms of the Spring season, *Verpa (Ptychoverpa) bohemica*. Often called the early morel because of its timing and superficial resemblance to the true morels, *Verpa bohemica* fruits from late February through April, depending on the season. In the Pacific Northwest, it is associated with cottonwoods, often fruiting right around the drip line of



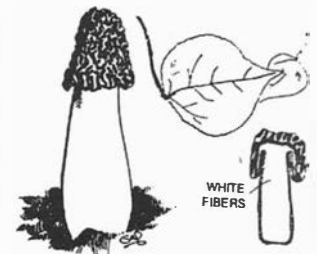
mature trees "when the cottonwood leaves are the size of a mouse's ear." Once you learn to recognize the cottonwood, a tall, dark, poplar-like tree with wrinkled bark that grows in damp river bottoms throughout western Washington, you can spot your hunting ground from afar. Finding your quarry amid the debris of the previous fall, however, isn't that easy.

*Verpa bohemica* is a medium-sized (3-8 in. tall), tanish mushroom with a wrinkled, bell-shaped cap which is attached only at the top, forming a skirt over the stem. The stem is long, at first whitish to cream in color and becoming tan with age, and filled with cottony fibers.

In contrast, true morels have pitted, not wrinkled, caps that are attached to the stems at the bottom (or in some cases part way up); their stems, while hollow, are empty.

Unlike other verpas, and most large ascomycetes, *Verpa bohemica* has only two spores per ascus instead of eight. For that reason, modern taxonomists have split it into its own genus, *Ptychoverpa*. What each ascus lacks in numbers, however, it makes up for in size; the spores are huge.

Although considered a good edible by many, this mushroom causes gastrointestinal upsets and loss of muscular coordination in some people and should be approached with caution. Many field guides recommend parboiling it and throwing away the water and eating only small amounts at a time. The effects may be cumulative, so don't pig out on it several days in a row, even if it is the only edible mushroom out at the time.



## MUSHROOM TRIVIA

The common field mushroom, *Agaricus campestris*, is calculated to produce 1800 million spores at an average rate of 40 million per hour. A large Giant Puffball will produce about 7 billion spores. The air is always full of fungal spores. The highest count in Britain was 161,037 per cubic meter near Cardiff on July 21, 1971.

## HURRAY FOR LIFETIME AND CHARTER MEMBERS

**Charter Members:** Elsie Burkman (C-7), Dr. Billy Johnson (C-142), Arthur Kaku (C-65), Elsa Kopta (C-66), Russ Kurtz (C-68), Ilene Marckx (C-78), Lois Ohlson (C-91), George Rafanelli (C-153), Joy Spurr (C-169), Florence Tsukui (C-162), Mary Volz (C-5), Ben Woo (C-4)

**Lifetime Members:** Gilbert Austin, Dennis Bowman, Margaret Dilly, Morrill Gatcomb, Kern Hendricks, Carl Hermanson, Hildegard Hendrickson, Charles Kessner, Coleman Leuthy, Brian Luther, John Orth, George Rafanelli, Bob Ramsey, Dave Schmitt, Dick Sieger, Joy Spurr, Mary Volz, Helen Wasson, Ben Woo

(We're sorry you weren't properly honored in the 1995 roster.)

## MISSING BOOKS

Lorraine Dod

If you have, or know the whereabouts of, any of the following PSMS books, please notify Librarian Lorraine Dod, 1415 140th Ave N.E., #17, Bellevue, WA 98005-4535 – (206) 644-0826.

<i>The Chinese Mushroom</i>	Shu-Ting Chang
<i>Common Edible Plants of British Columbia</i>	A. Sczawinski
<i>Discovering Wild Plants</i>	Janice Shofield
<i>Ethnobotany</i>	Erna Gunther
<i>Exotic Mushrooms, Nouvel Atlas</i>	Romagnese, Henri
<i>Glossary of Mycology</i>	Walter Snell
<i>Harper's Mushroom Guide, A Tabular Alpha</i>	Harper
<i>Juhend Alamate Taimede</i>	L. Jarva
<i>Morel Hunter's Companion</i>	Nancy Smith Weber
<i>Mushrooms &amp; Toadstools</i>	John Ramsbottom
<i>Mushrooms of North America</i>	Roger Phillips
<i>Nos Champignons</i>	Max Loosli
<i>Psilocybe Mushrooms &amp; Their Allies</i>	Paul Stamets
<i>PSMS Mushroom Poisoning in NW</i>	PSMS
<i>Some Pacific Northwestern Lichens</i>	Daniel Stuntz
<i>Teonana Catl Hallucinogenic</i>	J. Ott
<i>Trees of Seattle</i>	Arthur Jacobson
<i>Wild Mushrooms</i>	Linus Zeitmayr
<i>Young Person's Guide to the Fungi</i>	Bryce Kendrick

## MUSHROOM STROGANOFF

Rose Elliott

*The Classic Vegetarian Cookbook*

2 TBs butter	2 tsp tomato paste
1 TBs olive oil	Freshly grated nutmeg
2 large onions, chopped	Salt
2 cloves garlic, chopped	Freshly ground black pepper
2 lb mushrooms,* sliced	Paprika, to garnish
1 C crème fraîche, or thinned sour cream	

\*Use a mix of wild mushrooms or a mixture of oyster, chestnut, and shiitake mushrooms with button mushrooms to make up the weight or simply use all button mushrooms



Melt the butter with the oil in a large saucepan over moderate heat. Add the onions, cover, and cook for 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another 2–3 minutes.

Add the mushrooms and cook, uncovered, over moderate heat until the mushrooms are tender and much reduced, and most of the liquid has evaporated, 20–30 minutes.

Stir the crème fraîche and tomato paste into the mixture, turn up the heat, and bring to a boil. Allow to bubble for 1–2 minutes.

Season with nutmeg, salt, and black pepper and sprinkle with paprika. Serve with boiled rice. Serves four.

*Crème fraîche.* Stir 1 tsp commercial buttermilk into 1 C raw 30% cream. Let stand at a temperature between 60° and 85°F until thickened. Stir gently and refrigerate until ready to use.



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