



WESTERN PA



MUSHROOM CLUB

Volume 3, Issue 5
President: Dick Dougall

Editor: Becky Plischke
V, Pres: Dick Duffy
Sec: Valerie Baker

December 2002
Treas: Jack Baker

ARTICLES WANTED

Please send us an article, recipe, joke, puzzle, story or cartoon for the newsletter.

Mail or email them to Becky Plischke today, morelbp@aol.com or mail to 129 Grant St, Greensburg, PA 15601.

TAKE US FOR A WALK

If you want to lead a mushroom walk in your area, we would be glad to come. Find a place to have a walk and scout it out. If it is a park or nature area, please make sure we have permission to collect mushrooms there. Call our Walk & Foray Chairman, John Plischke III at 724-832-0271 or email fungi01@aol.com. Do it today. He will put the walk on our schedule. Club Identifiers will help with the identification.

WILD MUSHROOM COOKBOOK Volume 2

Have you adapted a recipe that you have tried or created some of your own? We know you tried some of those edible mushrooms you positively identified this year and have used a recipe or two that were very good. Send them in! We cannot use copywrited material. We have received many compliments on Volume 1; let's make Volume 2 even better.

Send your recipes to Becky Plischke at morelbp@aol.com or mail to 129 Grant St, Greensburg, PA 15601.

GET INVOLVED

If you would like to get even more involved with our mushroom club, Club President, Dick Dougall is looking for a few good men and women to be committee members or chairmen. Call Dick at 412-486-7504 or email him at rsdme@imap.pitt.edu. Let him know what your interest is. There are so many talented people in our club; we have a place for you!

DUES ARE DUE

This is the last WPMC newsletter issue for the year 2002. That also means, unless you have already renewed your membership for 2003 that **your membership in the club is about to expire**. It is time to sign up for the year 2003.

In our first year, the WPMC grew from zero members to 170. The second year we hit 250 members. Right now, we have 325 members. We had 34 walks and forays and some tremendous programs at our meetings.

Mark Spear and Rebecca Miller again gave us lessons in how to grow oyster mushrooms and sent everyone home with an oyster mushroom kit. If we had to buy the kit, it would cost more than twice the amount of a club membership. They have already committed to have another cultivation class in 2003.

Elizabeth Barrow is the new webmaster of our club website. It has a wonderful fresh new look at www.wpmc4.homestead.com. Bob Lucas's Species List on our website has been updated and is outstanding. You will want to view it often.

The Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray, Mushroom Mania 4 had 145 people coming from 6 states. It was a tremendous success. Gary will come back again next year on September 13, 2003 for more mushroom fun.

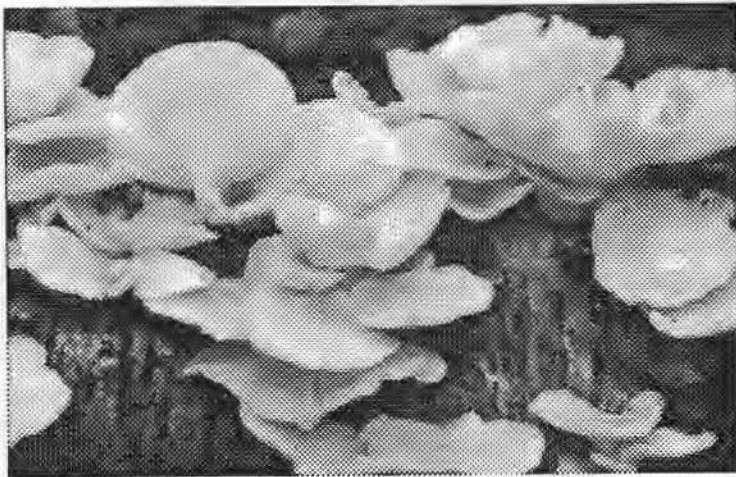
We have had five outstanding newsletters edited by Becky Plischke.

Thanks to our club mycologists and identifiers, our club members have been learning edible and non-edible mushrooms at a tremendous rate. That's a lot of bang for the buck. There is no place to get a better bargain for such a low cost.

Now is the time to fill in the membership form for the year 2003 and send it in along with your check so your membership continues. You don't want to miss out on Fungi, Fun, and Friends! **Don't delay, the time to do it is today.**

OYSTER MUSHROOMS

by
John
Plischke III



*OYSTER MUSHROOM

(*Pleurotus ostreatus*)

(*Pleurotus columbinus*) (*Pleurotus salingnus*)

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Oyster Shelf, Shellfish Mushroom

FAMILY: Tricholomataceae

DESCRIPTION: It is a complex of species. The spring and summer ones tend to be more lightly colored but the fall ones can be white, gray or brown. Many grocery stores, such as Giant Eagle, sell them. *Flesh:* Its flesh is white.

Mushroom: This mushroom is shaped like an oyster shell or fan. When collecting oyster mushrooms, especially during the hot summer months, they tend to get little beetle like bugs that make a home between the gills. Sometimes the insects will fall out with a gentle tap. If not, discard the buggy Oysters. Don't put them in with the rest of the un-infested ones or the whole bunch will become buggy and you will get bugs all through your house once your mushrooms arrive home with you. They seem to get darker in color as the leaves fall of the trees yet even then, lighter ones can still be found.

Cap: It is usually 2 to 6 inches wide and about an inch thick but the largest one that I have found was 9 x 8 7/8 inches. They are smooth, moist, white to cream to tan to grayish or grayish brown or brownish. It is narrower where it is connected to the tree. Its edges inrolled when young and they can become wavy and lobed with age. It is somewhat rounded at the outer edge that is away from the tree.

Gills: they are white to whitish to cream, sometimes having a little yellow with age. Their edges are not serrated and lack teeth. They descend a little down the stalk if present.

Spore Print: White.

Stalk: It usually does not have a stalk but when it does, it is small and can be a little hairy.

Odor: Mild to mushroomy, it can smell sweet. *Taste:* Mild.

RANGE: North America. OH, PA, WV

WHERE TO LOOK: On deciduous hardwood trees usually ones that are dead. Look on stumps, branches, fallen trunks, and fallen logs. Also places where they cut up trees that fall on back roads where they throw the wood a little off the road. However, the wood is not typically just cut and fresh. We have found them rarely on underground stumps and roots. They often come back on the tree twice in the same year and come back for several years. They especially like trees by streams. It is often helpful to bring a telescoping pole and tie your knife on the end of it to cut them down if they are too high up in the tree to reach. I have picked them on aspen, beech, birch, willow, maple, oak, tulip poplar, and elm. Only once have I found them on hemlock.

HOW OFTEN THEY'RE FOUND: It is very common.

HOW THEY'RE GROUPED: They usually grow in shelf like

overlapping groups and clusters. They often can be found in great quantity. Occasionally entire fallen logs and trunks can be covered. **SOCIAL PLANTS:** Usually none. Only once did I find them on a log covered in moss through which they were growing.

WHEN TO LOOK: Look for them all year. My dad always says that he finds the first and last mushrooms of the year because he goes out December 31 and then on January 1st to collect them. If you are going to pick them in the winter, I recommend going out when there is a thaw and the temperature has been above 32 degrees. Then they should have started to fruit.

LOOK ALIKES: (*Crepidotus* sp.) such as the Flat Crep (*Crepidotus applanatus*) and the Jelly Crep (*Crepidotus mollis*) differ by having spore prints that have brown in them. The edible Leaflike Oyster (*Hohenbuehelia petaloides*) typically has a thinner flesh that is not as thick. The edible Elm Oyster (*Hypsizygus tessulatus*), which has a stalk and usually grows on elm, it has yellowish tones. (*Lentinellus* sp.) such as the Bear Lentinus (*Lentinellus ursinus*) and (*Lentinellus vulpinus*) have saw toothed gills that you need to look at from the side to see the serrated edges. The edible (*Lentinus strigosus*). The edible Late Fall Oyster (*Panellus serotinus*) which has a small stalk and whose cap can be greenish or purplish then fading to brownish but it only grows in the late fall and winter. The inedible Orange Mock Oyster (*Phyllostopsis nidulans*) has an orange hairy cap and orangish gills and it also stinks worse than feet, if not at first, by the time you get home and take them out of the bag. The edible Angels wings (*Pleurocybella porrigens*), which is smaller and grow on conifers such as hemlock. The edible Veiled Oyster (*Pleurotus dryinus*), which can have a ring on its large stalk. Some people consider the edible (*Pleurotus sapidus*), which has a gray lilacish spore print to be a different species than the oyster even though it looks the same except for the spore color, others consider it to be the same species. The edible Tree Volvaria (*Volvariella bombycina*), which has a pink spore print.

EDIBILITY: Edible and Choice

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS: They can be fried in butter. They are good in soups. They are excellent in oriental dishes. They can be cooked in scrambled eggs or used in omelets. They can be breaded. They go well with seafood such as crab. They are good in salads. They can be grilled. This mushroom can be used in recipes for the store bought mushroom. They can be frozen or dried although I prefer to freeze them.

MICROSCOPIC FEATURES: its spores are inamyloid.



A Cultivated Oyster Kit

If you were not fortunate enough to attend the club field trip and tour of the Sylvan mushroom farm you really missed out on something especially good. Not only did we get an education on how spawn was produced and how mushroom were grown but also we all got to bring home our own kit. Thank You Mark Spear and Rebecca Miller.



***VEILED OYSTER**

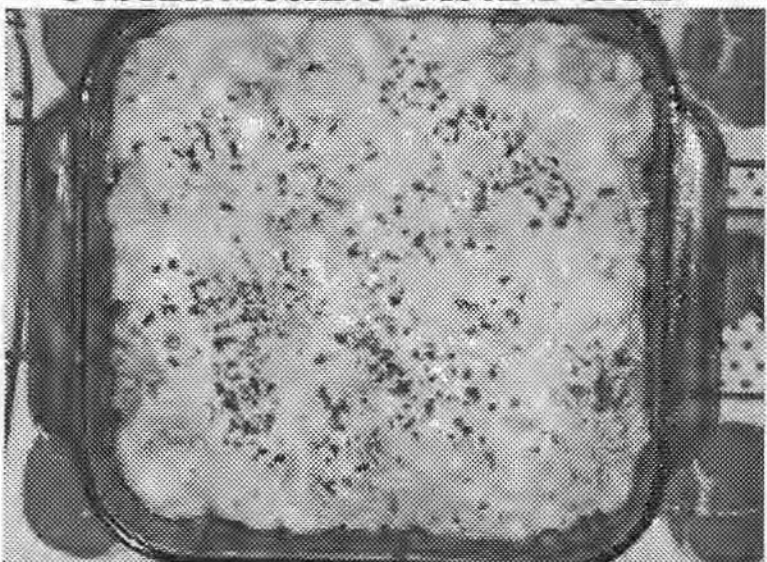
(*Pleurotus dryinus*)
 (*Pleurotus pometi*) (*Pleurotus subareolatus*) (*Armillaria corticata*)
 (*Armillaria dryina*)

FAMILY: Tricholomataceae

DESCRIPTION:

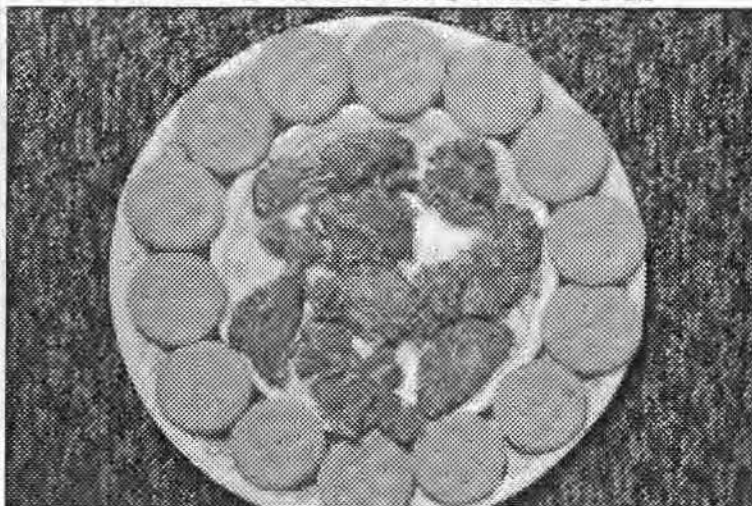
Flesh: Its flesh is white.
Cap: 2 to 5 inches wide. It is whitish. Its margin is inrolled when young. It is convex. Occasionally little pieces of the veil will be stuck on the caps outer edge.
Gills: They descend part way down the stalk. They are white.
Spore Print: White.
Stalk: 1 1/4 to 3 7/8 inches tall and 1/2 to 1 3/16 inches wide. It can have a ring. It is whitish. It may or may not be central.
Odor: Mild. *Taste:* Mild.
RANGE: North Eastern United States. OH, PA, WV
WHERE TO LOOK: On deciduous trees.
HOW OFTEN THEY'RE FOUND: occasional.
HOW THEY'RE GROUPED: singly to in groups or clusters.
SOCIAL PLANTS: usually none.
WHEN TO LOOK: July - October.
EDIBILITY: Edible.
MICROSCOPIC FEATURES: its spores are inamyloid.

OYSTER MUSHROOMS AND CRAB



This meal is fit for a king. It is made using canned crab and noodles but I will not divulge the entire recipe here. Perhaps it will be in the next club cookbook. Send in your recipes today.

BREADED OYSTER MUSHROOMS



Make sure to try the Unfried Breaded Oyster Mushroom recipe. It is in the club cookbook.

CULTIVATION WITHOUT A KIT

If you find Oyster Mushrooms in the woods that are growing on a log, branch, or trunk that is dead you can bring the log home with you. What I do is to use a bow saw and cut the log into sections that are easy to carry. Typically, each section is 3 to 4 feet long and about 6 inches wide. Then I put them into the back of my truck or in the trunk and take the log home with me. I will put the log under a shady tree in my yard and water the log every month or so. With some luck, you should be harvesting Oyster Mushrooms for several years.

OYSTER MUSHROOMS & PORK CHOPS ON THE GRILL



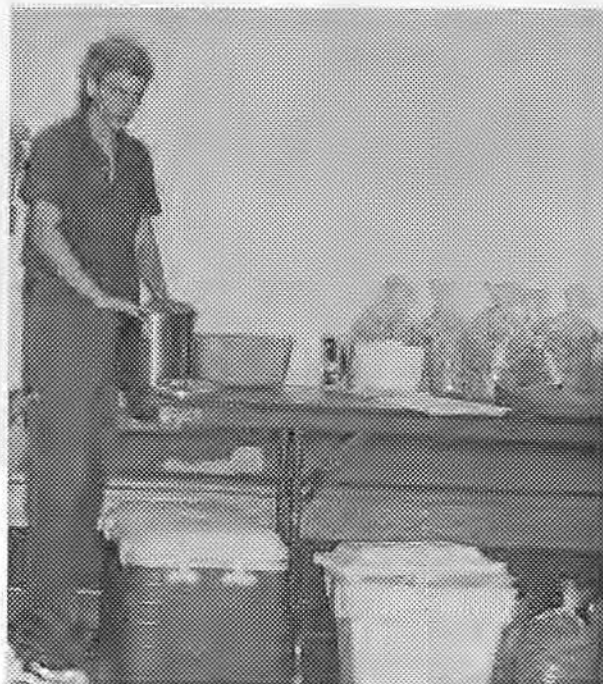
If you have not tried them, you are really missing out on something special. It is without a doubt the best way to eat pork chops. This is a recipe from Walt Sturgeon that is in the club cookbook.

For color photos from this article please see the Western PA Mushroom Clubs site at Yahoo Groups. The Photos are in the photo section. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpamushroomclub>



Members at the meeting anxiously wait for Rebecca and Mark to show us how to cultivate *Pluerotus ostreatus* the oyster mushroom.

OYSTER MUSHROOM CULTIVATION WITH MARK SPEAR & REBECCA MILLER



Rebecca shows us how to prepare the cottonseed hulls and mix the spawn.

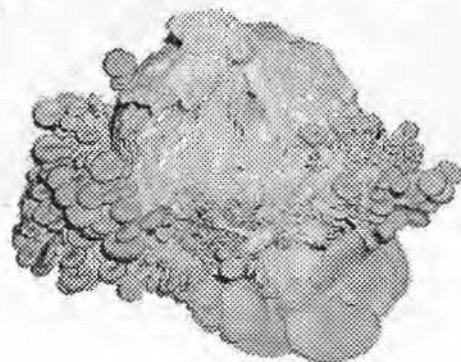


Club members Mark Spear and Rebecca Miller are two of the top professional mushroom cultivationists in the country. They studied mycology with Dr. Dick Homola at the U. of Maine and at Penn State. They generously share the art of cultivating mushrooms. They are going to present another cultivation program next year.



Members anxiously anticipate a large oyster crop. They ask questions to make sure they get it just right.

This is the second year that Mark and Rebecca have prepared mushroom kits for everyone who came to our cultivation meeting. They are probably worth \$40 apiece. That is twice the price of a membership in the WPMC. Renew your membership today or miss out !



Instructions for Growing *Pluerotus_ostreatus* at Home

Pluerotus is commonly called the Oyster mushroom. It is ideal for the first time grower because it is well known, vigorous and tolerates a relatively wide range of environmental conditions. Refrigerate the small bag of spawn until you're ready to use it. It will keep for about a month, then you may see small mushrooms begin to form directly from the spawn.

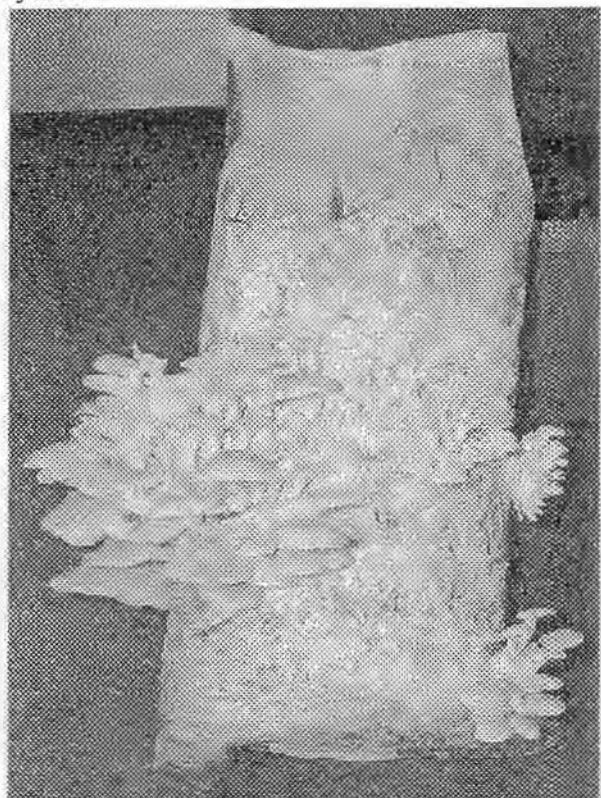
Procedure

- 1- Begin by pasteurizing the substrate. (We're using cottonseed hulls)
Fill a large kettle with water and immerse the substrate.
Boil for about 20 minutes. Pour off all of the excess water and leave the substrate in the covered kettle until it cools to room temperature.
- 2- While the cottonseed hulls are cooling cut holes in the plastic bag. Make 12 small holes about the size that a paper punch would make (about ¼ inch).
- 3- Mix the spawn thoroughly with the cottonseed hulls. Fill the mix into the plastic bag.
- 4- Keep the block at 65-75 degrees. To prevent the mix from dehydrating through the holes place a larger plastic bag very loosely around the growing block. The mycelium will completely colonize the cottonseed hulls in about 2 weeks.
- 5- On day 18-20 place the block in a good place to fruit. If you covered the block with a second bag remove it. A place that is cool and damp but well aired is best. The shady side of the house under some shrubbery would be a good choice, or try a spot in the basement or garage. If the air is dry sprinkle the block with water once or twice a day. If you're growing it in the house just hold the block briefly under the shower.

The best time for growing *Pluerotus* at home is April or October when the weather is perfect for them and the block will fruit easily in a shady place. But we are giving you these kits in July! It can be difficult to keep the environment damp enough in warm weather without restricting air exchange.

To get well-formed fruits it's necessary that the CO₂ be less than 1000 PPM. Typical outdoor air is approximately 340 PPM CO₂ but in a closed house CO₂ can easily reach 1000 PPM. If the CO₂ is too high the mushrooms will be 'coral' shaped. They will still be edible but the yield will be low.

Rebecca Miller, July 2002



Mark & Rebecca's kit produced three fruitings of oyster mushrooms.

LEGAL TO HUNT MUSHROOMS ON STATE GAME LANDS

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ACTUAL REPRINT OF THE LAW

Ch. 135

LANDS AND BUILDINGS

58 § 135.41

Subchapter C. STATE GAME LANDS

§ 135.41 State game lands.

(a) Restrictions limited. The following exceptions to §135.2 (relating to unlawful actions) pertain to lands and waters designated as State game lands:

(1) Mushrooms and fruits of berry-producing plants may be picked.

(2) Open fires are permitted, except when the fire index rating used by the Bureau of Forestry, Department of Environmental Resources, is high, very high or extreme.

(3) Snowmobiles, as defined in 75 Pa.C.S. §7702 (relating to definitions) may be driven January 15 through April 1 on designated areas, roads and trails-marked with appropriate signs.

(b) Closure of game lands.

(1), When the threat of forest fires exists, the Director has emergency authority to restrict the use of smoking materials on State game lands or to close State game lands to hunting, trapping, fishing, recreational use and other activity which may be or become detrimental to those lands or the flora or fauna thereon until the Director removes the restrictions. Emergency restrictions or closures will be announced to the news media.

7/17/99

The Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray Mushroom Mania 4

145 people came from 6 states, making Mushroom Mania 4 one of the largest fall forays in the United States. We want to thank the 40 plus people who generously donated their time and talents to work the event. We particularly want to thank all of you who came, collected, studied and consumed mushrooms.

Next year this annual foray will be held on September 13. Mark your calendar now and plan for another day of Fungi, Fun and Friends. Gary Lincoff will again be back to head the foray. Thanks, Gary!

Although it was dry, our enthusiastic mushroom foragers scoured the woods and turned up with a huge collection of mushrooms. Check the Species List, compiled by Bob Lucas, on the website for a complete list of mushrooms that were found. Bob has attached pictures to the Species List to make it easy for you to review the mushrooms to help fixate them in your mind.

Sign up for your 2003 club membership today and give an application to a friend for a Christmas present.



Gary Lincoff, mushroom expert extraordinaire, teaches our members the fine points of identification.

2003



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MUSHROOM CLUB

The purpose of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club is to promote the enjoyment, study, and exchange of information about wild mushrooms. Everyone who has an interest in wild mushrooms is welcome to become a WPMC member. Members are entitled to:

- The WPMC newsletter
- Nine monthly WPMC meetings
- Free participation in WPMC Walks
- Fee discount for WPMC Forays
- Fee discount on WPMC sponsored merchandise

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Interests: Learning Mushrooms Microscopy Club Committees
 Eating Wild Mushroom Toxicology Cultivating Mushrooms
 Mushroom Walks Books Dyeing With Mushrooms
 Mushroom Photography Taxonomy Mushroom Art
 Other _____

Dues enclosed: \$ _____ (\$20 Family, \$15 Individual, \$10 Full time student)

RELEASE

I (We) realize that when engaged in wild mushroom activities, that serious physical injury and personal property damage may accidentally occur. I (We) further realize that there is always the possibility of having an allergic reaction to or being poisoned by the eating of wild mushrooms and that these adverse reactions to eating wild mushrooms range from mild indigestion to fatal illness.

Knowing the risks, I (we) agree to assume the risks, and agree to release, hold harmless, and to indemnify the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club, and any officer or member thereof, from any and all legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred by myself or my family during or as a result of any mushroom identification, walk, foray, field trip, excursion, meeting or dining, sponsored by the club.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Return completed signed and dated form with check payable to W PA Mushroom Club to:

Jack Baker, 1413 Parkmont Rd, Allison Park, PA 15101

6/02

(over)

Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club

Name: _____ Phone: _____ e-mail _____

Address: _____

WE NEED YOUR HELP

WHAT AREA WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP WITH?

PLEASE CHECK THREE POSSIBLE ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Scout for walk locations
- Help organize forays
- Lead walks
- Work on newsletter committee
- Contribute articles, photos, etc. to newsletter
- Assemble and mail newsletters
- Help with web page
- Line up speakers for meetings
- Host guest speakers and mycologists
- Record meetings, discussions, events
- Sell club items, tee shirts, cookbook, etc., at meetings
- Publicize meetings, forays, events
- Club Historian
- Recruit members, maintain list of members
- Outreach-- speak to other clubs, nature centers
- Call or e-mail members
- Give a program at Club monthly meeting
- Produce or acquire teaching materials, resources, handouts for meetings
- Welcome and orient new members
- Coordinate coffee/refreshment
- Participate in special projects
- Record mushrooms that are found
- Conduct research on questionable mushrooms
- Help with mycophagy (mushroom cooking)
- Help with sign in at walks and meetings
- _____
- _____

Find something you would like to do. Check the appropriate boxes. We can have a lot of Fungi, Fun, and Friends but it takes your participation to make it happen.

Return completed form to: Jack Baker, 1413 Parkmont Road, Allison Park, PA 15101

11/02

(over)

WALKS & FORAYS by John Plischke III

Walks and Forays are completed for the year. Therefore, I would like to make a report to the membership. We had 34 walks and forays to give you many opportunities to socialize and learn mushrooms. In Allegheny County, we had 11 mushroom walks at 9 different locations throughout the county. We had 2 walks in Butler County and 2 in Washington County. In addition, we had walks in Warren, Forest, Indiana, Franklin, Clarion, Schuylkill, Pike, Lawrence, Mercer, Cambria, Bedford and Somerset Counties. Simply stated, we hunted mushrooms in 15 different Pennsylvania counties. We also had 2 opportunities to hunt mushrooms in Ohio, one in Washington, DC, one in New York, and one in Oregon.

Not counting Mushroom Mania, we had 14 different club members participate as either a Walk Leader or Identifier. I want to personally thank those Walk Leaders and Identifiers who helped make this possible. I particularly want to thank our club members who came out to learn mushrooms and socialize with us. Few mushroom clubs have such opportunities available. If you add our 34 walks and forays to our 9 monthly meetings and our 5 informative newsletters, which totals 48 opportunities to learn mushrooms. This is all for a cost of \$20 for a family membership. What a bargain! Send your membership application for 2003 in today.

We are already putting together the Walks and Forays for the coming year. If you would like to lead us on a mushroom walk or have a suggestion for a walk location, please call or email me and I will try to set it up. Please do so today because the calendar fills in quickly. By the way, a morel extravaganza is already in the planning stage.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Dick Dougall

The Gary Lincoff Mid-Atlantic Mushroom Foray, known to our club as Mushroom Mania 4, was a great success. I had my doubts about a mushroom foray during a severe drought, but the enthusiastic participants went out, scoured the walk habitats, and came up with a surprising amount of mushrooms. I will let John Plischke give you the details. I especially want to thank John for chairing this event, and thank all the people who helped the club in so many different ways to make this run so smoothly. I could not begin to list everyone by name because there were so many truly helpful people.

I would like to give a few personal impressions of the day. One was the food at the end of the day. I was overwhelmed by the array of food choices we had. Becky and Kim Plischke worked tirelessly in the kitchen preparing a true banquet for everybody. They deserve a special thank you for their efforts. The club is truly blessed to have their knowledge and experience available. Becky informs me that many of these recipes will be coming out in volume 2 of our cookbook. I would like to ask anyone interested in helping produce the next edition of the cookbook to talk to Becky.

Gary Lincoff was truly impressed by the amount of mushroom knowledge he found among our club members. Gary mentioned that, like most mushroom clubs, our mushroom mania participants had the age range skewed toward the higher end. He is correct; we really need to generate interest in our children and grandchildren. I personally experienced a start in this direction on the two walks I took part in for MM4. In the morning, Zarrin McDaniel Leff was on our walk to Squaw Run Park. Zarrin is a teenager who is an enthusiastic forager. He has also published an article in our August/September issue of this newsletter.

For the afternoon walk, the Orner family (Rusty, Claire, Walker and Ashton) took part in the walk I was on. It was amazing that their two preschool children were on these walks. The younger boy was in a three-wheeled stroller! The stroller wasn't just on the easy parts of the trails, I remember last year helping lift the stroller over some logs and through some pretty rough terrain in North Park. The Orners live in Brookville where they run an herb farm with a variety of events. (You can check out their website at www.quietcreekherbfarm.com.)

I was truly inspired and energized by participating in Mushroom Mania 4. I am already looking forward to MM5.

"Largest Mushroom Club in the Ten-State Area"

Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club
1413 Parkmont Road
Allison Park, PA 15101

DUES ARE DUE **OYSTER MUSHROOMS** **OYSTER MUSHROOM CULTIVATION** **ARTISTIC SPORE PRINTS**

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5933 Wellesley Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

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Legal Council: Mike Lloyd

Past President: Mary Woehrel 412-828-3266

marigold@sgi.net 43 Meadowvale Dr, Cheswick, PA 15024

Past President: John Plischke (See Mushroom Mania Chair)