



President's Message

CECILY FRANKLIN

WHEN YOU HEAR the expression "rainy day", do you think that's good or bad? Mushroom fans love rainy days (the literal kind) because we anticipate what will come next. But now we are experiencing the figura-

tive "rainy day"—the time we hoped would never come, but for which we planned and saved, just in case.

I am pleased to announce that the **WPMC Board of Directors has unanimously agreed to automatically renew all 2020 WPMC members, at no cost, through 2021.** This is possible because of some generous donations over the years, along with prudent financial management. It's our way of thanking the members for sticking with us during a year in which we couldn't do all of the usual, in-person, fun mushroom stuff.

Nobody knows when we'll be able to resume but, in this time of uncertainty, it's nice to know that we'll all be WPMC members for at least another year. That's important, because we're already making big plans.

In this issue, you'll see the slate of Directors for next year; we'll be voting on these outstanding candidates at the October meeting. We're also announcing a new Membership Chair and a new Identifier. Even our newsletter has a new name: "Fungi, Fun & Friends!"

2020 Meeting Schedule

IN ORDER TO keep our members safe, monthly meetings will be virtual until further notice. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month.

Gatherings will be limited to mushroom walks with Allegheny Land Trust and "secret" walks, which are outdoors and restricted. (See page 6 for upcoming walks.)



SEPTEMBER 15

Leon Shernoff, Editor (above)
Mushroom, The Journal of Wild Mushrooming
Fall Mushrooms

OCTOBER 20

Photo Contest Winners
Election of Officers

(See page 2 for the slate of candidates)

NOVEMBER 17

Stay-home Pot Luck & Member Photos

IMPORTANT: All meetings and other events in this newsletter are subject to postponement or cancellation, due to Covid-19. Please check our website often for updates.

WPMC Membership Report

Dear Fellow Mushroomers,

I HAVE BEEN MEMBERSHIP CHAIR since 2011. I have enjoyed the job a lot, keeping the membership roster up to date, providing new members with a welcome package, sending out membership cards, and the infamous notices to remind Club members to renew their dues.

Well, it's time to pass the torch to someone with new enthusiasm to take on the job. With only a little arm twisting, **Kris Murawski** has 'volunteered' to be the new WPMC Membership and Communication Chair. I know that she will do a fabulous job and will bring some new insights to the position. I wish her well and will be helping her through a transition.

Currently, the Club has over 790 members. Despite the fact that we haven't had meetings and mushroom walks, we're doing

quite well. In 2019, the Club set a record of 1,008 members. Looking back at previous years, we are just under the 2018 membership, which totaled 794 members. So we're doing well, and the interest in mushrooming continues, even through the Pandemic of 2020. Let's hope that it is over soon.

Thanks again, it has been a good run. Stay healthy, wash your hands, keep your masks on, and stay physically distanced!

Jim Wasik, WPMC Membership (2011-2020)



WPMC member Kris Murawski will become the new Membership Chair.



WPMC Members to Elect 2021 Officers at October Meeting

WPMC MEMBERS WILL have the opportunity to elect next year's Board of Directors at the October 20th members-only Zoom meeting. The Nominating Committee (Cecily Franklin, Richard Jacob and La Monte Yarroll) have recommended the slate of candidates listed here. Nominations will also be accepted from the members present.



President **STEPHEN BUCKLIN**

Stephen is a Naturalist Educator for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, delivering outdoor science programs and public hikes out of the Frick Environmental Center, where he has worked since 2014. He has a BS in Ecology, Evolution, & Behavior from Penn State Erie. Stephen has been

a WPMC member since 2017 and became both Sales Co-Chair and Identifier in 2020. He has contributed several articles to the WPMC newsletter.



Vice President **CARA COULTER**

Cara has been a WPMC member since 2018. The following year, she became a Club Identifier and had a winning picture in WPMC's annual Photo Contest. This year, Cara took on the additional responsibilities of Co-Chair for Walks & Forays. More recently, Cara created WPMC's

Summer Mushroom Bingo on iNaturalist, offering her own paintings as prizes. She received a B.S. in Natural Science with divisions in Biology, Sociology, and Anthropology from the University of Pittsburgh. With a lifelong interest in the natural world, Cara has held positions as a Wetland Scientist, Environmental Scientist, and even worked in the University of Pittsburgh's laboratories. Currently, she expresses those passions for nature with mushroom, plant, and insect ID, natural photography, painting and foraging.



Secretary **JULIE TRAVAGLINI**

Julie is the Senior Director of Education and Curriculum for Allegheny Land Trust (ALT). In that role, she has been instrumental in organizing many mushroom walks with WPMC. Julie has degrees in Biology and Education from Muskingum University. She joined WPMC in 2018 and

earned her "100" ID Button this year.



Treasurer **JARED DELANEY**

Jared will begin his second year as Treasurer. He joined WPMC in 2016 and became Sales Chair in 2018. Jared initially joined the club to learn more beyond the few edible species he found online. He also cultivates mushrooms at his home, growing oyster and lion's mane mushrooms

on sawdust blocks and shiitake mushrooms on logs. When not mushrooming, Jared works at PNC Bank as a Relationship Manager in Corporate and Institutional Banking.



NAMA Trustee (2 year term) **GARRETT TAYLOR**

Garrett joined WPMC in 2017 and became a Club Mycologist later that year. He also belongs to the Rochester Area Mycological Association, the Mycological Society of Toronto, and the North American Mycological Association (NAMA). Even though Garrett lives and works in New York

state, he regularly attends WPMC's monthly meetings, has led numerous walks, and has given interviews with local journalists. In 2019, he participated in a research project on mushroom toxicology with doctors from Allegheny General Hospital. Before joining WPMC, Garrett found an *Amanita* near his home in Cattaraugus County; it has since been given the provisional name of *Amanita cattaraugana*.

Out & About (Virtually) with WPMC



ON AUGUST 26, WPMC and the C.C. Mellor Memorial Library co-sponsored a Zoom presentation by WPMC Identifier **Stephen Bucklin**, entitled "Foraging for Fungi in Your Backyard."

View the presentation at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_pXQqshcaWV0qDzkO3v1fg



WPMC in the News

THE SUMMER 2020 issue of *FUNGI Magazine* included an article by WPMC President **Cecily Franklin**. WPMC was the first installment in a series called "Mycological Societies Forum." *The article is reprinted here, with permission:*

Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club

By **Cecily Franklin, President**

I'VE BEEN A MEMBER of WPMC since 2009, and I first joined the Board in 2011. I was elected President on October 2017, to become effective at the beginning of 2018. Fortunately, our Bylaws limit the President to three consecutive terms, so this will be my last year.

Before I even took office, one of our beloved members died. Then in March of 2018, our Honorary Member Gary Lincoff died. At the end of the same year, one of our founding members passed away. And in April of 2019, one of our Past Presidents died. I was beginning to feel like the Grim Reaper!

I've always believed that the most important job of the President is to have the right people in the right jobs, to keep them happy in those jobs, and to give them the resources they need to be successful. We have some very talented members who do an incredible amount of the work, and I'm always grateful when they agree to keep doing it. But while it's great to have continuity, it's even more important to have a succession plan. After all, we're an all-volunteer organization, and anyone can quit at any time, for any reason.

So far this year, we have a new Treasurer, a new Toxicology Chair, and two new Sales Co-Chairs. But I'm still looking for people to take over the Membership, Hospitality, and Scholarship Committees. It's an ongoing challenge, but we've been very successful. Here are some of our recent accomplishments:

- Since 2015, WPMC has steadily increased its membership level every year, surpassing 1,000 members by the end of 2019.
- During 2019, WPMC led 47 walks in 31 different parks in ten Pennsylvania counties. Many of these were in partnership with other organizations, including Allegheny Land Trust, Friends of Murrysville Parks, Indiana Friends of the Parks, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Phipps Conservatory, and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.
- Every year, WPMC hosts Mushroom Education Day, the annual Gary Lincoff Foray, and nine monthly meetings. These events feature WPMC experts, as well as outside speakers.
- WPMC administers an ID Button Program, to recognize members who can identify mushroom species at different levels. In 2019, eight WPMC members earned ID Buttons for their mushroom knowledge, ranging from 25 to 150 different species.

- Many WPMC members contribute their time and expertise by leading mushroom walks, making presentations, holding workshops, or hosting display tables for other organizations. These include other mushroom clubs, garden clubs, and retirement communities.
- WPMC holds an annual Photo Contest to recognize photographic talent within our membership. Many of the photos taken by WPMC members appear on widely respected mycology websites, including Michael Kuo's mushroomexpert.com and Gary Emberger's Fungi Growing on Wood.
- In 2019, WPMC established a new Fungarium at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. This museum has been added to the list of Partner Fungaria for the North American Mycoflora Project.
- In 2019, several WPMC members assisted doctors at Allegheny General Hospital with an ongoing toxicology research project. The results have been submitted to the American College of Medical Toxicology.

WPMC Summer Mushroom BINGO 2020 Results



WPMC Identifier **Cara Coulter** and her son **Tristan** created some of the prizes for the Bingo winners.

WPMC IS PLEASED to report the results of our WPMC Summer Mushroom Bingo 2020. We had 21 participants, who posted 197 observations. The top three winners, in the order of their first Bingo, were:

1st place: **Carson Gross**, with 2 Bingos

2nd place: **Garrett Taylor**, with 5 Bingos

3rd place: **Dirk Cappel**, with 3 Bingos

Each of the top three winners received a painting created by WPMC Identifier **Cara Coulter**, who also created the Bingo game. They also received a prize for each additional Bingo. There were three Honorable Mentions, with one Bingo each: **Silas Claypool**, **Cara Coulter**, and **Carissa Mendez**.

Cara commented, "I was so excited to see so many people getting involved. Was awesome to see. For such a dry month, you all did so well. I'm super proud of all the participants. It was tough out there!!"



WPMC Scholarship Committee Awards Two Grants



WPMC'S SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE recently awarded grants to two university students in support of their mycological studies.

WPMC member **Daniel Gillies** received a \$500 grant for his "Study of the Response of *Trametes versicolor* to Environmental Conditions through Measurement of Color Band Zonations in Wild and Cultured Fruiting Bodies." Daniel has an engineering degree from Purdue and is currently enrolled in the Fisheries and Wildlife program at Oregon State University. Daniel is also taking Botany classes and hopes to finish with at least a minor in Botany, as well.



Thomas Roehl, a member of the Mycological Association of Washington, DC, received a \$1,000 grant for his project, "Examining the genetics of mushroom

development in the cultivated edible mushroom *Flammulina velutipes*." Thomas is pursuing a master's degree in Biology at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, where he is advised by Todd Osmundson and Tom Volk. After receiving his bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Virginia, Thomas enrolled in graduate school to further pursue mycology and hopes to start a career in the field.

WPMC Scholarships & Grants

WPMC ADMINISTERS an annual Scholarship/Grant program to promote wild mushrooming by providing monetary support for educational events, projects, research, or mycological studies by individuals or institutions. Application forms are available on the website and must be sponsored by a WPMC member. For more information or to register, go to:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/education/wpam-scholarship-grant-application/>

WPMC Offers "Secret" Mushroom Walks

WPMC'S MYCOLOGISTS AND IDENTIFIERS have come up with a way to increase our outdoor activities, while adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing, the "secret" mushroom walk.

Secret walks will be limited to 20 participants, who are selected randomly (not first come-first served). Those selected to participate will be notified of the location 24 hours in advance and will not be eligible to participate in the following walk. WPMC Identifier **Cara Coulter** is working with the other Identifiers and Mycologists to schedule additional secret walks. If you would like to lead a secret walk, email Cara at cab399@yahoo.com.

WPMC Names New Identifier and Awards ID Buttons



Dirk Cappo is WPMC's newest Identifier

WPMC IS PLEASED to announce the addition of its newest Identifier, **Dirk Cappo**. Dirk submitted a list of 200 known mushrooms, which was reviewed and approved. The WPMC Board unanimously approved of making Dirk an Identifier.

IN ADDITION, the following WPMC members have earned ID Buttons: **Dean Gross** (10), **Cheree Charmello Andrews** (75), and **Julie Travaglini** (100).

Congratulations to all!



Dean Gross displays his "10" ID Button and mushroom wallpaper.

To learn more about the ID Button program and how to submit your list of known mushrooms, go to:

wpamushroomclub.org/about/button-id-program/

BOOK REVIEW



**Submitted
by Cecily Franklin**

The Way Through the Woods: On Mushrooms and Mourning

By Long Litt Woon

SPOILER ALERTS START early in *The Way through the Woods* by Long Litt Woon. The subtitle, “Of Mushrooms and Mourning” warns us that something bad happens. And then, right there on the first page, her husband unexpectedly dies. “Eiof went to work and didn’t come home.”

Woon (as her friends call her) weaves two narratives in this book, describing the devastating loss of her husband and how mushrooms (of all things) helped her to recover from grieving and find new meaning in life. You might say she found “Fungi, Fun and Friends” in other parts of the world. I like to think of her book as a story of “Lost and Found”.

Not sure what to do with herself without Eiof, Woon signed up for a beginning mushroom class offered by the Greater Oslo Fungi & Useful Plant Society. It was something the two of them had discussed but never got around to. The aim of the course was to teach how to recognize about 15 different species of fungi. At the first class, Woon was quickly overwhelmed and intimidated by how much there was to learn. “I felt the fear of being the class dunce well up inside me.”

After the first class, the next item was a field trip. “It was incredible to be able to use my newly acquired skills straightaway.” She soon became hooked and, before long, felt competent enough to take the certification test for mushroom inspectors. In Norway, mushroom inspection is so well established that people are directed to the Norwegian Mycological Association’s inspection service, which requires training and an official exam.

I remember the moment I walked into the examination room. Along one wall was a long sideboard, and set out on this, on a row of paper plates, were the test mushrooms that awaited me. These I would have to identify one after another, in the order determined by the examiner. I sat at the end of a long table in the middle of the room. Way down at the far end sat the administrative director of the association, who was acting as observer. The proctor sat halfway between us, stone-faced, saying not a word. The examiner was the only one to move, shuttling briskly between the sideboard and me, furnishing me with a steady stream of test mushrooms. It seemed to be over in no time. After a short wait in the corridor, I was called in and informed of the results. I had passed. I was a certified mushroom inspector!

As most WPMC members know firsthand, it was hard to feel depressed when you were with Gary Lincoff. Woon shares a couple of experiences with Gary, including this one in Central Park:

While on a visit to America, I was invited on a private mushroom hunt in New York by no less a person than the late, great Gary Lincoff. We met as arranged in Central Park, said our hellos, and then, without any more ado, he began to march briskly and purposefully from one tree to another. I had to walk fast to keep up and not lose sight of my guide in one of New York City’s best hunting grounds. Then we came around a bend and there was one of the park rangers. He gave a little cough to attract our attention. “Have you been picking mushrooms?” the elderly ranger asked. We had been caught red-handed. “What sort is that” he asked amiably, pointing into Lincoff’s basket. Lincoff answered promptly, listing the species by their Latin names. “It is my duty to inform you that it is forbidden to pick flowers or plants in Central Park. There, my job is done!” the ranger said, grinning as he sauntered off.

Later in the book, Woon describes another encounter with Gary Lincoff at the Telluride Mushroom Festival:

*My most spectacular find—a mushroom that aroused quite a lot of mycological interest—was made not in Norway, but in the United States. It happened on the last day of the Telluride Mushroom Festival. Gary Lincoff was reviewing all the mushrooms found on that day’s expedition. I was feeling a bit tired, so I sat down on a large rock nearby. Glancing around, I noticed two fairly large white mushrooms in the grass. When I showed the others my mushrooms, Lincoff gave a great whoop and almost jumped up and down with excitement. It seemed likely that what I had found was *Boletus barrowsii*, or the *White King Bolete*. My find was remarkable enough to be mentioned in Lincoff’s closing speech at the festival.*

Woon loves to cook and offers many suggestions for preparing mushrooms, including soup, mushroom bacon and jerky, roasted or pickled mushrooms, paté or sauces, and even deserts. By the end of the book, Woon realizes that she has made the transition from amateur to “hopeless mushroom freak... abnormally fixated on mushrooms.” Welcome to our world, Long Litt Woon!

NAMP Has New Name and Logo

THE NORTH AMERICAN MYCOFLORA PROJECT (NAMP) has a new name, a new logo, and even a new mission! Fungal Diversity Survey (FunDiS) is dedicated to a world in which the fungal kingdom is fully documented, understood, appreciated and protected. The FunDiS mission is to equip citizen and professional scientists with the tools to document the diversity and distribution of fungi across North America. These data will help increase awareness of the critical role of fungi in the health of our ecosystems and allow us to better protect them in a world of rapid climate change and habitat loss. To learn more about FunDiS, visit their website:

<https://fundis.org/>



ALL WALKS ARE ON SATURDAYS, beginning at 10 a.m., unless noted otherwise. Please read carefully for any registration requirements or fees. We're always adding new walks to the website at www.wpamushroomclub.org/events so check back often for updates, directions, and much more!



WPMC Walks

Saturday, Sept. 5 at 10 a.m. / Secret Walk in Westmoreland County

Meet WPMC Identifier **Richard Jacob** at a secret location for a socially distanced walk in Westmoreland County. The walk is free, but attendance is limited, and registration is required. To register for a chance to participate:

https://wpamushroomclub.org/events/secret_walk_in_westmoreland_county/

Friday, Sept. 11, 10 a.m. / Cook Forest (Clarion County)

Under current rules at Cook Forest State Park, all programming is limited to 25 participants. All participants must bring a mask, and social distancing will be observed. In order to comply with Cook Forest requirements, WPMC will schedule one or two "secret" walks in Clarion County. Attendance will be limited, and registration will be required. To register for a chance to participate:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/events/cook-forest-state-park-2/>

Saturday, Sept. 12 / 20th Annual WPMC Gary Lincoff Foray

WPMC plans to offer one or more "secret" walks in North Park on the morning of September 12. To register for a chance to participate:

<https://wpamushroomclub.org/events/the-twentieth-annual-gary-lincoff-mushroom-foray/>

Sept. 26 – 10 a.m. / Wingfield Pines with Allegheny Land Trust

Meet WPMC Mycologist **La Monte Yarroll** and WPMC member **Julie Travaglini**, ALT's Senior Director of Education and Curriculum, in the parking lot of Wingfield Pines (Upper St. Clair). Attendance is limited and registration is required. Fees: \$5 for non-WPMC members; free for WPMC members (use code 20WPMC20). **NO WALK-INS.**



To register: bit.ly/altoutside

Other Walks, Forays, & Events

Many of the other mushroom clubs have also cancelled or postponed events this year. Check their websites to determine the latest status of events.

NOTE: The Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club does not endorse or support the commercial harvesting of wild mushrooms from any state, county or city park. WPMC does promote the gathering of mushrooms—where permitted—for recreational, educational and scientific purposes.

Important Walk & Foray Information

- Try to dig up three of the same species at different stages of development.
- Don't pick old mushrooms; leave them to drop spores.
- You are responsible for not getting lost. If you have a tendency to wander off, stick like glue to the others. We won't wait for you, and we won't come to look for you.
- Don't take the identification of the person standing next to you; they might not know as much as you do. Only Club Mycologists and Identifiers should be used for advice.
- The Walk Leader will tell you when to be back at the walk starting place, where the mushrooms will be put on paper plates and the Walk Identifier or Club Mycologist will put names on only the mushrooms they know well.
- Take notes and pictures to help you remember the mushrooms. You should go home and check books yourself.
- Whether you decide to eat a mushroom is ultimately your responsibility alone.
- **Help Keep Our Parks Clean!** When mushrooming, it's easy to bring a plastic grocery bag to collect cans, bottles or other trash you find. Trash cans are generally found nearby. If not, take it home for disposal.

Walks & Forays Check List:

- Bring a buddy or two. **Do not forage alone!**
- Dress for the weather, carry a rain poncho
- Bring drinking water and lunch
- Insect repellent
- Basket for collecting
- Knife for cutting mushrooms
- Wax or paper bags (no plastic) to keep mushrooms separated
- Whistle
- Compass
- Hand lens
- Cell phone & camera
- Notebook & pencil
- Field guide for identification
- Band-aids
- Garden hand-clippers

Lincoff Foray Goes Virtual

THE 20TH ANNUAL Gary Lincoff Foray will feature one virtual presentation in the afternoon. WPMC President **Cecily Franklin** will interview **Long Litt Woon**, author of *The Way through the Woods: On Mushrooms and Mourning*.

"I received Woon's book for Christmas and, when I was done reading it, I found her Facebook page and sent her a message. We discussed how we could get her from Norway to Pittsburgh to speak at our annual Gary Lincoff Foray. I think we could have gotten her as far as New York City, but I don't think she wanted to take the Megabus to Pittsburgh, like Gary always did, so we quickly gave up on the idea.

"Then Covid came along and changed everything. Woon contacted me again to see if I would be interested in doing something 'virtual'. After that, things fell into place with the help of a grant from NORLA, which is Norwegian Literature Abroad. And now, Woon will be with us after all!" said Cecily.

The interview is scheduled for Saturday, September 12, at 1:00 p.m., but you can also watch it any time after that on YouTube "WPMC Talks":

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUadnAVTMINFMOgIHO4WjA>

Funding for this presentation is made possible by a grant from Norwegian Literature Abroad (NORLA)



Last Chance to Enter Photo Contest!

WPMC President Cecily Franklin took this photo of Frost's Boletes in August.

WPMC Identifier **Josh Doty** will continue to judge members' photos for this year's Photo Contest and will announce the winners online. Entries are already coming in, so join the fun.

Deadline for Submissions: September 30, 2020

Maximum of 5 Entries per WPMC member

Submit high resolution JPEG files minimum 1 MB

Email to Josh Doty: wpmcphotocontest@gmail.com

You must be a member of the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club in good standing to enter. Club dues must be up to date.

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NOTE: The WPMC will automatically renew all 2020 WPMC memberships, at no cost, through 2021.

WPMC Board Approves Changes to Bylaws

THE WPMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS approved several revisions to the club's Bylaws. The most significant changes involved WPMC's committees. As shown below, we have added language to Article III, Section 14b, to document three existing functions:

Communications Committee – Shall send, by either electronic or postal mail, newsletters, announcements of monthly meetings, special meetings, walks and forays, etc.

Sales Committee – Shall purchase and maintain a supply of books and other mushroom-related merchandise for sale at WPMC meetings and other events.

DNA Barcoding Committee – Shall collect and document specimens for DNA analysis; submit specimens and documentation to an outside laboratory for analysis; retain, analyze, and report results of DNA analysis.

Extra Donations Help Fund WPMC Projects

LOOKING FOR A WAY to support WPMC beyond paying your annual dues? Make a donation anytime; it's tax-deductible (if you itemize deductions) because WPMC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations may be made in honor or in memory of a loved one. Your employer may even match your contribution. Make checks payable to Western Pa. Mushroom Club and submit them to the Treasurer, **Jared Delaney**.

WPMC Newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club is published five times a year: March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December. Articles, photos, news items and other submissions should be sent to the Editor at least 6-8 weeks prior to targeted distribution. The Editor cannot guarantee that submissions will be included in the next newsletter. The Editor reserves the right to make spelling or grammatical corrections and may suggest content changes to the author. Material published in the newsletters may only be used in other non-profit publications with expressed permission and with appropriate acknowledgements.

Cecily Franklin, Editor
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NEVER EAT AN UNIDENTIFIED MUSHROOM!

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