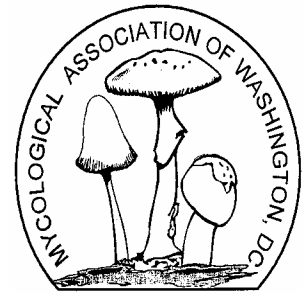


# Potomac Sporophore



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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jon Ellifritz, President  
301-422-7517  
president@mawdc.org

Ray LaSala Vice President  
202-332-8727  
vicepresident@mawdc.org

Terri Pick, Secretary  
301-916-9249  
secretary@mawdc.org

Agit Gadre, Treasurer  
301-881-6106  
treasurer@mawdc.org

William Needham, Programs  
410-884-9127  
programs@mawdc.org

Mitch Fournet, Forays  
301-656-9379  
forays@mawdc.org

Catherine White-Horne, Secretary  
301-937-9656  
memberships@mawdc.org

Ilona Conolly, Culinary  
410-730-5462  
culinary@mawdc.org

Bruce Boyer, NAMA Liaison  
703-803-0404  
namatrustee@mawdc.org

Jim Sherry, Editor  
410-531-2329  
newsletter@mawdc.org

Voicemail: 301-907-3053  
For next meeting: ext. 33  
For next foray: ext. 55

**MAW Information: 301-907-3053**  
**For next meeting: ext. 33**  
**For forays: ext. 55**

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## MAW DUES

**The 2007 club dues should be paid in January. Please send dues to:**

## MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

**1903 Powhatan Rd.  
Hyattsville, MD, 20783  
\$20.00 - Single; \$30.00 - Household  
Members who joined after June  
2006 are paid up till 2008**

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## ELECTION

**The election of the 2007 MAW Board of Directors took place at the December 2006 general meeting.**

**By acclamation, the nominees presented by the nominating committee were elected. There were no nominations from the floor.**

**Ray LaSala was elected President  
Daniel Barizo was elected Vice-President and Ann Dorsey was elected Culinary Chair.**

**All other board positions remain unchanged. J.S.**

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## JON ELLIFRITZ

**After serving on the MAW board for 20 years Jon Ellifritz has chosen to give up his position on the board.**

**For the last two years Jon was president of the club and for many years he was the foray leader. Along with Ray LaSala he is the most knowledgeable mushroomer**

**in the club and is establishing a reputation as a mushroom expert in our eastern states.**

**We will miss his leadership and his presence on the board and expect that he will have a continuing influence on club policy and on our activities. On behalf of the club members, thanks Jon. J.S.**

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## The Fifth MAW Fair

**The fifth MAW fair took place at Brookside Gardens on Oct. 1, 2006. All afternoon the room where the fair took place was full of excitement and buzz. It felt as though everyone was having a wonderful time; and that is the reason that it's a pleasure to participate in this annual event. Many of our members helped to make this fair a great success.**

**This year Jon Ellifritz, Mitch Fournet, Bruce Boyer, Jerry Rafats and Daniel Barizo were at the mushroom identification table showing the public the 167 mushrooms that the members collected and were busy answering the public's questions about mushrooms.**



Three guys at the fair

We want to thank all of the people who worked at I.D. tables. This work is the essential part of the fair and contributes substantially to what the fair is all about: educating the public about mushrooms.

Ray LaSala and Françoise Puvis-Allen were busy demonstrating their best techniques for cooking the mushrooms that were supplied by Phillips Mushroom Farm-located in Kennett Square, PA. The mushrooms donated by Phillips were: shiitake, portabella, hen of the woods, crimini, enoki, the trumpet mushroom, the beech mushroom and pleurotus.



Ray LaSala cooking at the fair (President-elect)

The always generous Waldemar had a great time teaching the public how to grow

pleurotus and shiitake on logs and various substrates.

Waldemar found over 100 pounds of hen of the woods the day before the fair and by the end of the fair much of it and his demonstration logs were given away or auctioned off.



Waldemar

Bruce Boyer led the first foray on to the grounds of Brookside Gardens. He was gone so long that I was wondering if he was going to return-he was gone for an hour and a half. When he finally got back he said that the group that he had led did not want to stop foraging. Mitch Fournet led the second group and had a similar experience. Bruce suggested that we should schedule the forays for a longer period next year.

Jon Ellifritz gave a lecture and slide presentation that he said was on the "101" level, but his presentations are always informative regardless of one's mushroom knowledge.

William Needham gave a presentation on edible and medicinal mushrooms. While I was in the room he was giving a history of how people have viewed mushrooms in the past and how mushrooms were used

and said that that long thin piece of material called a "punk," which we used to light fire-crackers with when I was a boy, was made from the tinder mushroom: *Fomes fomentarius* (native Americans carried this mushroom with them to start their fires and Jerry Rafats brought to the fair for display a beautiful crafted forest hat made of this same mushroom).

William implied in his lecture that mushrooms can keep us "regular" because their cell walls are made of chitin (kite-in), which is indigestible.



William Needham lecturing

Paul Goland did his usual work with mushroom books and other mushroom paraphernalia. I don't know how Paul is able to work so hard but his place is a vital part of the fair.



Paul Goland at his table

Karen Adams and Catherine White-Horne were at the membership desk all afternoon and were not only explaining what the fair was all about to the public but were also busy writing up memberships and selling raffle tickets.



Karen Adams and Catherine White-Horne at the membership table

Maria Dobrowolsky entertained the children with drawing tasks for her fifth fair and assisted at the tables.

Fred Seymour was at the library table and brought in copies of the articles about MAW that have been published in the D.C. newspapers. Fred said that he enjoyed the afternoon because so many people were interested in learning about mushrooms and in the books and printed material that he brought to the fair.

Bob Jaegly helped with various tasks and was very helpful with the clean-up. Derya Slivka and Gordon Callahan were also helpful with a variety of tasks as were some others whose name I can't recall.

Thanks to all the members who worked to make the fair a success. The people at the

garden were delighted with the fair and we were happy to present the fair to the public. J.S.



Picture of Waldemar, and Catherine and her children, Allister and Benjamin, at the fair.

### THE FALL TASTING

The most amazing thing happened at the fall tasting: eighty-seven people showed up.

Because my back makes standing slightly painful I decided to wait for the registration line to thin out. Forty-five minutes later I was still waiting for it to thin out. I then got in line and waited another 25 minutes to register. By the time I got back to the table where I placed my portabella mushroom soup, the pot was empty.

I was told that some people did

not use the little cups that I had left with the soup, but, instead, used bowls. Oh, oh,, was it that good! I did take second prize and with a recipe that I took from the web site of the people who supplied the mushrooms: Phillips Mushroom Farm, mentioned earlier on the fair piece.

Maria and I made 95 ounces of the soup, but with the number of people who came to the tasting, many of us ran out of the dish that we had prepared. I didn't get to taste the dish prepared by Nicky, whose shrimp dish was the favorite.

Here is the recipe for the portabella soup

### Cream of Portabella Soup

For four servings:

- 5 tb butter
  - 3 tb flour
  - ¾ cp chopped onion
  - 6 ounces of portabella mushrooms cup up with stems
  - Salt
  - 2 cps milk
  - 2 cps heavy cream
  - ¼ ts black pepper
  - ¼ ts dried thyme
  - 2 tbs marsala or sweet sherry
  - 1 ts chicken broth paste (Maria's addition)
- Cook the flour in 3tbs of butter, stir constantly and set aside.
- Saute the onion with remaining butter (2 minutes), add 2 tbs of water, then add mushrooms, salt slightly, reduce heat, cover and cook for 10 minutes, then add the rest of ingredients and almost bring to a boil and then add the butter-

flour mixture, while always stirring. Last, whisk the wine in.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Catherine White-Horne made a delicious Hen of the Woods pate for the tasting and the recipe follows:

### Mushroom Pate

½ stick of butter  
1 small onion  
2 tsp ground coriander (seeds)  
¾ pounds of mushrooms  
(Catherine used fresh hen of the woods)  
½ can creamed coconut  
2-3 tbs soy sauce  
Juice of one lemon

Saute the onions, gently. Add the coriander, then the mushrooms and sauté till very soft. Season with pepper and stir in the coconut milk, lemon juice and soy sauce. More salt? Blend and chill.

This pate could be cooked without mushrooms, Catherine used fresh hen of the woods but any mushroom might do. J.S.  
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### THE 2007 MAW PROGRAM

William Needham presents this tentative program schedule:

Feb.: Dr Paul Schmit will discuss his research on the question: “Why are some areas of earth host to a multitude of species wheres others have relatively few species.”

March: Elizabeth Barron will talk about the effects of harvesting morels on the morel population in the woodlands of

the Washington area. She would like our help in gathering data on this subject.

April: Dr. Amy Rossman will talk on “Fungi in your Landscape,” which will focus on common mushrooms that are found on lawns and in gardens.

May: Gary Lincoff- probably the best known mushroomer in the country and author of the “bible” we all use: the Autubon field guide on mushrooms, will be here in June. Gary will speak about the problems we have in classifying mushrooms.

June—In June we will have the tasting event that we normally have in May.

July: Tom Volk, Ph.D. is another speaker who is known throughout the mushroom community and we hope to have him speak to us in July.  
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### What Is That?

In the late fall, after all the leaves are gone and the sun is shining on a day without a wind, one can sit on a log in the woods and enjoy the experience of seeing the tree trunks and the spaces between the tree trunks and the contours of the distant and not so distant hills.

And this is also a time when one can find those unheralded fungi, mostly polypores, which are busy consuming the dead trees of the forest.

These little guys are not mentioned much but I wonder if knowing their names helps us to know the woods in a way that

creates for us a different and more intimate feeling for the forest.

I know that there are some who will say. “if you can’t eat it why bother with it.” And William S. said “a rose by any other name...” William N., though, said that if you can’t name it, you haven’t seen it. Is this true! It wouldn’t apply to a beautiful woman at a cocktail party (where did they go). Still, most people who don’t know mushrooms rarely notice them. Why is that? Anyway, here are some fungi that are more noticeable as the sun rises and sets lower in the sky:

*The Trametes elegant.* This polypore is all over the place. Douglas Bassett the polypore expert told me that it came up from the south when he lectured at our club three years ago. It grows on fallen trees and often grows at the sawed end of a log. It’s an irregular, half-moon - shaped polypore that had a white bumpy surface. It,s not elegant at all ( its name refers to its thinness).

It is zoned but not in colors, it grows in zones and they take on colors, often green, from algae. I see it mostly on fallen tulip poplars. It does not seem to grow on standing dead trees. The guide books don’t mention this polypore but you can google it.

The violet toothed polypore or *Trichatum biformi*

This is a polypore that you are very likely to see in the forest. It looks grayish white and is about the size of a quarter or a half dollar, though its margins are usually drooping down. It grows

prolifically on both standing and fallen dead trees. You can see hundreds of them on a tree and Lincoff says that it can reduce a tree to sawdust, though he doesn't say how long it will take for this to happen.

For a long time I never actually saw the violet color on this fungus and still do not see it often. But it does have a very definite violet margin which is beautiful- you just have to see it early in its life, or it's possible that some never show a vivid violet. What you usually see is the faded, grayish color but whenever you see them, lined up like soldiers in disarray, you know that it the violet tooth polypore because no other fungus gives the same appearance

You can also identify it because its margin is broken with indentations that remind one of the teeth that of that boy on the cover Mad Comics, or look for the faded remains of its former colors on the margin.

#### Crowded parchment or *Sterium complicatum*

This fungus is noticeably orange and can cover a large part of a dead tree. The individual fungi are about the size of a nickel or a dime. It's the most prolific of the steriums, (the false turkey tail is also a common sterium) It's a parchment and as it grows older it may fuse with its neighbor to form a continuous patch. This year I have not seen as many of these fungi as I saw last year when they seemed to be growing on many logs. This is odd because one does not think that the amount of a particular

polypore in an area varies with the year. Maybe they ate what was edible in this area. Like many of these fungi, it causes white rot.

The gilled or multi-colored polypore- *Lenzites betulina*. When you first encounter this polypore you would think that it has gills, but what looks like gills are actually an arrangement of pores and tubes. Some experts, though, say the "gills" really are gills.

The colors of this fungus are zoned into beautiful patterns of tans and oranges. It seems to grow on small logs and is just too tough to tear when young, though it is soft and velvety. Generally, it grows in clusters This fungus might be mistaken for the turkey tail.

The thin-maze polypore (*Daedaleopsis confragosa*) The pore surface of this fungus is a maze and if you scratch it when it is young it will take on a pink hue. The upper surface is zoned in browns and yellows and looks somewhat like the multi-colored polypore. But the thin-maze is hard. I don't see this often but I see it more often than the thick maze polypore.

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#### *Irpex lacteus*

This fungus grows on smaller fallen branches and gives a branch the appearance of having been painted in white or antique white paint. Under a magnifying glass one sees what looks like many small open mouths or, perhaps, teeth. This fungus spreads along the substrate and can grow for many feet.

There you have it, seven fungi. I did not describe the turkey tail or the false turkey tail because they are well known. If you want to see pictures of these fungi you will easily find them if you "google" them and hit the image button. J.S.

#### NAMA

New members might not be familiar with NAMA which is an acronym for the North American Mycological Association. NAMA is a kind of umbrella organization for all the amateur mushroom clubs, like MAW, in North America

Each year NAMA sponsors a foray that brings together many of the people in the U.S. and across the world who have an interest in eating, cooking, growing, photographing, identifying and studying mushrooms.

In 2007 the NAMA foray will take place in West Virginia. You might want to consider going to this foray since it is to take place so close to home.

If you join NAMA you will receive a copy of the *Mycophile* bi-monthly. Bruce Boyer who is the club's contact person with NAMA will be happy to give you more information about joining NAMA. J.S.

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Oh, amanita, my amanita  
I hear they've changed your name.  
But still you have a stately white  
And still your bite's the same.  
J.S.

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**SEEING MUSHROOMS**

When you were a kid were you the child that your mother sent into another room to find the scissors? Can you find that grocery item that you want when the clerk says: "it should be on aisle 10." What about those mats on the tables of fast food restaurants that test your ability to find the hidden animals? Is finding things a general talent that some people have more than others?

Psychologists think that any human trait varies in amount from one person to another. It's true that some people can find things where others didn't see them - there are some people who wouldn't see a giraffe that was in the same room with them unless it bit them.

It's probably true that some people can spot mushrooms more quickly and more often than others.

It is also true that people who are not looking for something, such as mushrooms, never seem to see them. If you didn't grow up looking for mushrooms how many of them did you notice growing on the roadside before you developed an interest in mushrooms!

I saw only a few mushrooms before I took an interest in them. A barber sees the haircuts of others when out and about.

It's certainly true that once you take an interest in something, you see it much more often. If you are thinking of buying a new car, particularly a model that you have never owned before, you begin to see

that model every time that you drive on the highway.

One certainly sees mushrooms much more often, even if one is not consciously looking for mushrooms, after one takes an interest in them

Those people who have an interest in mushrooms often see them while driving their car and they are often looking for them. I seem to be looking for them all the time, if not consciously, then subconsciously. One of the reasons for this is that finding mushrooms, i.e., the act of actually seeing them in the moment, is a thrill- a kind of rush, probably the same rush that a collector has when he spots something in an antique store that he is looking for. It's sort of like finding a treasure. Well, it is! J.S.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

*Field Guide to Wild Mushrooms of Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic* by Bill Russell, Pennsylvania State University Press, A Keystone Book, 2006, 236 pp.

There are a number of reasons why this book is a useful addition to one's collection of mushroom field guides

The first is that this guide book describes local mushrooms. Its focus is on central Pennsylvania, where many club members foray, but it also includes the Mid- Atlantic States. This insures us that we can look forward to finding many of the mushrooms described.

The second reason is that the book describes only 100 mushrooms.

There are probably some members of MAW who can name and describe 100 mushrooms but most of us can not. To focus on a manageable number, such as 100, seems like a user- friendly idea.

This guide is not meant to be comprehensive-it will not replace Lincoff, Roody or Phillips, but when foraying in this area, it will be useful to have it with you. In particular, beginners and youngsters can use this guide without feeling overwhelmed.

A feature of this guide that I like is that the author writes in a casual style. He deliberately avoids using those words for which the reader might need to use a glossary. Mr. Russell writes in the first person, drawing on his personal experience. The book jacket states that Bill Russell has been studying and teaching about mushrooms for 50 years and that and he brings this experience to his writing.

Another aspect of the book that is thoughtful is that the 100 mushrooms he describes are arranged by the season in which the mushrooms are likely to be found. You may not agree entirely with the season into which the author places a particular mushroom but nature doesn't always accommodate these kinds of classifications. There are 13 mushrooms listed for spring, 57 for summer, 19 for fall and 11 for winter. The pictures of the mushrooms and the commentaries are all

arranged according to the four seasons.

The book is slightly larger than a business envelope and has a laminated semi-rigid cover, for easy field handling. J.S.

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### What Happened to the Mushrooms?

After our house was built in 1970, there was an incredible amount of mushrooms growing in both the front and back yards. For about 10 to 15 years there were a variety of boletes, and earthstars, hygrophorus, russelas, coprinus micaceus, tricholoma, various agaricus cortinarius, lepiota procera amanitas, masses of puffballs, and hen of the woods Then the amount of mushrooms growing in the front and back yards werer fewer and fewer.

Today we find green russulas, maybe a bolete or two, hen, two varieties of puffballs, lbms ,

blewits, agaricus and an occasional chicken, but the “old days” are gone.

Is there a reason for this? The explanation may be this: we find more mushrooms in these areas because these areas were stripped of trees, dug up and planted with grass! More than half of our land is still forested and we have not, over the years, found mushrooms in these forested areas. So, we found mushrooms, fleshy mushrooms, in the areas only (and still do) where the ground has been dug up .

I am eager to see if mushrooms will grow on the lawn of the new house that was recently built in our neighborhood The trees on this lot were logged and the root balls were torn up and a new lawn was planted.

There is a theory that mushrooms are more likely to fruit on land where there has been a disturbance or, at least, vibrations. This may explain why one finds mushrooms on forest paths.

When I first started looking for mushrooms I formed the

impression that I found more mushrooms on the park path than in the woods.

I asked Gary Lincoff about this and he told me a story about the time when he was young and went into a park with a group, along with his mentor. The group left the mentor on the park path and went into the woods to foray When the group returned they saw that they had found fewer mushrooms than the mentor. J.S.

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Thanks to William Needham, Jon Ellifritz, Ray LaSala, Waldemar Poppe, Mitch Fournet, IlonaConolly, and Larry Goldschmidt for your contributions to the Potomac Sporophore and to Derya Slivka for your help with MAW’s website. Jim Sherry, editor



SENIOR  
MUSHROOM  
FORAY

