



Symbiosis[©]

The newsletter of the Prairie States Mushroom Club

Volume 31:4

Winter

<http://iowamushroom.org>

Looking Forward

by PSMC President Glen Schwartz

Before we look forward to a new year, I want to spend a few moments looking back at 2014. In my opinion, 2014 was a great year for the Prairie States Mushroom Club. Our membership is up a bit, and our presence in central Iowa has greatly expanded thanks to Barbara. Our forays were well attended, although a few more forays would have been desired. Due to a scheduling conflict, we had two forays on the same day; one near Ames, and the other in southeast Iowa. This worked out OK as both were well attended.

Here at the PSMC, we have a history of finding unusual fungi, and we continued that tradition in 2014. At a June foray in Ryerson's Woods, we found a purple-edged *Mycena*. We are still not certain of the species as there are at least two *Mycenas* with purple edges. In September we found a huge *Bondarzewia berkeleyi*. Most of us in the club had never seen either of these mushrooms. Both have been preserved for the herbarium at Iowa State.

In February 2014, we had our first club banquet. Those of us that attended had a blast, and we hope this was the start of a new tradition. This provides a nice segue to discuss events planned for 2015. In previous years, the club would go dormant for the winter, just like most of the fungi we like to find. At our annual meeting in October, we proposed several events for the off-season. In addition to another banquet, we would like to host a seminar on mushroom identification. We have purchased some educational CDs from NAMA, and could watch them at another event. We could host a learning session on using a microscope for mushroom identification. These events will only happen if there is interest from the club membership. Please let the PSMC

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Distant Harvests (the Christmas edition)

By Susan Goldhor: President of the Boston Mycological Club

My guess is that by the time you read this, it will be more or less Christmas time. So let's talk about Santa Claus. Surely you've wondered about this bizarre figure. We know that Christmas is really a palimpsest over the real celebration, which is that of the winter solstice. I'm ignoring Chanukah, whose candle lighting is another winter solstice solace, but which was originally a very minor holiday that got inflated into a major one so that Jewish kids wouldn't be too jealous of their Christian neighbors. It doesn't really work, of course, because seven candles can hardly compete with a whole lit up tree and, no matter how many presents you get, you don't have the thrill of their arriving via a flying sleigh, pulled through the night sky by reindeer. Somehow, the Christians get it all. Not just the baby in the barn with the whole farm menagerie, and the three kings, and the shepherds, and the stars and the angels, but the fir tree, and the reindeer, and the thrilling ride through the night sky that magically gets to every home, and the delivery of presents via the chimney by a fat man in a red suit with white trim.

No doubt you can tell that I have given a great deal of thought to and made a serious study of Christmas. The bottom line is that Christmas, at least as celebrated in America, simply doesn't make sense. Theoretically, it celebrates the birth of Christ. This gives us the crèche, the angels, the kings, etc. Now we come to the tree, which is invariably a type of evergreen which does not grow in the holy land and which is often decorated with fake snow. This is usually explained by its being a

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Looking Forward

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leadership know what events you might want to attend. We are here to serve you. Email us at: iowamushroom@gmail.com

We have had some turnover in the club leadership this year. I consider this a good thing as new people have new ideas. We especially want to welcome Karen Yakovich as newsletter editor, and thank Gabby for his service as editor for the last year. We also thank Dave McDowell as our new Vice President, and Dave Layton as our new at-large board member. We also want to honor Barbara Ching for her selection as Executive Secretary to NAMA, our national parent organization. Way to go Barbabra!

We expect 2015 to surpass 2014 for the club. We have more events planned and a more diverse membership. With your help, we can continue to grow the club and offer programs that our members find interesting.

See you in the woods,
Glen 


Change in Editors

Gabby — Since I've recently moved to Chicago for work, I've had to (reluctantly) hand over the job of editing *Symbiosis* to someone more local. I really wish I could have stayed on, since after just a few seasons of foraying with the PSMC I already consider it one of my favorite things about Iowa. PSMC members taught me quite a bit about mycology, and inspired me to make mushrooming a lifelong hobby. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this very welcoming, knowledgeable and patient club, and for trusting me as *Symbiosis* editor. I'm sure Karen will do just as good a job as I did.

Which reminds me — I need to renew my PSMC membership so I can keep getting new issues of *Symbiosis*!

Karen — My family and I live in Corydon, IA, where we own and run a Breadeaux Pizza restaurant. We also live on a small farm with cows, sheep, guinea fowl, dogs, cats, a donkey, a duck, and a



chicken. My husband's name is Steve and our twins are Margaret and Lillian (6 years old). We love art and creating things. I make our soap and moisturizer, love to spin wool, crochet, knit, and sew. We are all crazy about nature. Unfortunately, I am the only mycophagist in our home. After reading *Mycophilia* by Eugenia Bone I learned of clubs called mycology societies. That is when I searched for one in Iowa, and found the PSMC. At my first meeting I was curious about the open editor position for *Symbiosis*. Although it was my first meeting, I already knew how important PSMC was to me. I will try to be helpful in any way I can as the editor of *Symbiosis*. Mushrooms are entirely fascinating. Maybe it is in hopes that I might actually see a Smurf or meet a pompous caterpillar. Fungi definitely spark my imagination. I have to stop and marvel at its wonder if I spot one. With the PSMC I know that this is alive in others as well. I look forward to learning with all of you. 

Distant Harvests...

(cont. from cover)

pagan holdover, especially beloved by Germans and other northern peoples, who were into celebrating the solstice. I can appreciate this, being pretty much pagan myself. Who wouldn't appreciate the greenery, the lights, and the wonderful smell during the darkest, most indoor time of the year? The attempts to explain Santa are pathetic. Is he a third century Greek saint named Nicholas who is said to have given some gifts to poor people? It's true that the name of Santa Claus is derived from Nicholas' Dutch name (Sinterklaas), and it's also true that Sinterklaas gives gifts to good children. Let us not forget, however, that he also comes from Spain by boat (switching to horseback when he reaches land), and takes bad children back to Spain with him, which makes some sort of sense when you think of the bloody works of the Spanish Inquisition in the Lowlands a few centuries ago and the dread they inspired. But where do we get the red and white costume, the round tummy (unsuited for a serious and probably gaunt saint and martyr), the North Pole locale, the flying reindeer, and the descent down the chimney? Where do we get the total non-Christian *weirdness* of this character? Even given the way he and his reindeer have been trivialized and cartooned, which makes him look like a Disney escapee, where did he originate? And the answer that I prefer above all others, is that Santa comes from Lapland, with forays into Siberia, and the shamanic use of *Amanita muscaria*, a widely used hallucinogenic and entheogenic mushroom. It's a safe bet that *A. muscaria* is the most recognizable mushroom in the fungal pantheon. With its brilliant red cap (apologies for the fact that it's often orange or yellow in our region), decorated with white warts, it has been called one of the most photogenic mushrooms in the world (by Gary Lincoff, who has an article about it in an issue of *Mushroom the Journal*). And, it is probably the most painted mushroom in the world, appearing in children's books as different as *Alice in Wonderland* and *Babar*, to say nothing of infinite depictions of evil or enchantment or rituals — although not rituals affiliated with religions commonly practiced here. If you were asked to illustrate a fairy tale toadstool, it's a safe bet that you'd use *A. muscaria* as your model. Found under birches and evergreens, it has a wide distribution — not only in the circumpolar regions, but much further south. However, given Santa's North Pole habitat, let us concentrate on the northern habitats and particularly on

Lapland and Siberia, following the lead of BMC member, northern explorer and writer, Larry Millman in his fictionalized/hallucinatory essay which appeared in last winter's *Fungi* magazine.

Larry starts his *Fungi* article as follows: "In 2003, I was traveling through the Chukotka region of eastern Siberia when I happened to eat Santa Claus. Or maybe I should say that I ate the mushroom traditionally eaten by certain shamans before they became Santa Claus. Or maybe I should just say that the composite figure of Santa Claus consists of, along with historical figures like Saint Nicholas, an anonymous shaman high on an entheogenic mushroom." He goes on to point out that Santa's shape is the plump, rounded shape of the mushroom, and much more.

Why Lapland along with Siberia? Well, for one thing, this is the home of reindeer herding as opposed to caribou hunting. One should note that if reindeer have any passion outside of rutting season, it's for *Amanita muscaria*, either the whole thing or those fractions remaining after it has passed through a set of human kidneys. Deer generally love human urine, which is a source of salt, and urine from an *Amanita muscaria* consumer must be absolute manna for reindeer. Honesty (and a small desire to shock) compels me to announce that reindeer are not the only consumers of post-*Amanita muscaria* human urine. *A. muscaria* contains both hallucinogenic and pathogenic compounds. The ratio of gain to pain varies; the North American species are said to contain more pain; the European, more gain. However, one nifty trick, which has been widely discovered, is that in passing through the human body, the hallucinogens come out in the urine relatively untouched while the toxic compounds are metabolized. Thus, if you're not overly fastidious, there are some real benefits to being a secondary consumer and in some northern cultures, the shaman will ingest the mushroom, and the ordinary folks, his urine. Richard Platt writes from England:

Lapp shamans used to eat the mushroom during the midwinter pagan ceremonies of Annual Renewal. The first effect of eating it was a deep coma-like slumber. When the shamans woke the drug

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Distant Harvests...

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stimulated their muscular systems, so that a small effort produced spectacular results – the intoxicated person perhaps making a gigantic leap to clear the smallest obstacle. The effect on animals was generally the same and a mushroom-maddened super-reindeer traditionally guarded each shaman. When missionaries first reached Santa's native Lapland, they found a thriving pagan myth of reindeer flight. Rather than oppose it, they shrewdly assimilated the stories into the folklore of Christmas and Saint Nicholas. The color scheme of his outfit is taken from the unmistakable red and white cap of the fungus. Lapps still scatter the mushroom in the snow to round up reindeer.

In addition, the Siberian winter dwelling, or yurt, had a smoke-hole in the roof, supported by a birch pole. At mid-winter festivals, the shaman would enter the yurt through the smoke-hole, perform his ceremonies and ascend the birch pole and leave." (Note: Siberians revere the birch tree and a sacred serpent is said to dwell at its roots. This is not a casual connection — the mycorrhizae of *A. muscaria* also dwell at the birch trees' roots. There has been a fascinating conflation over time of the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge, and at least one authority says that *A. muscaria* is the apple of that tree.) In any event, Judeo-Christian-pagan mythologizing aside, there's your chimney connection.

Continuing the birch linkage, Gary Lincoff, on the website given below, states:

The Koryaks use only this mushroom (*Amanita muscaria*) and no other. The shaman uses a few other mushrooms, such as the medicinal clinker fungus (*Inonotus obliquus*), but only those that occur on or about birch trees, which tribal peoples in the Russian Far East regard as sacred.

In Kamchatka, one birch in particular, the endemic *Betula ermanii*, is believed to be the pathway between the world we know, the upper world, and the underworld: a ladder is sometimes made of birch wood to give the shaman a visual means by which to ascend or

descend in the shaman's journey to effect a cure, offer protection from evil spirits, or secure a successful hunt. [When we tried to present the Koryaks with a gift of dried *Amanita muscaria* from Colorado, not only would they not accept it, but they told us they would not even use *Amanita muscaria* from the mainland, just a few miles across the Sea of Okhotsk. They only use the fly agaric associated with their local birch tree, which they regard as sacred, all others being profane.]

In the interests of full disclosure, I must mention that some experts deny that Santa sprang from the imbibing of *A. muscaria*., stating that they are not impressed by the evidence. The problem is that I have yet to read a good alternative theory. Do we note that Santa's shape and dress bring to mind this magical mushroom? Do we allow that *A. Muscaria* is widely used to achieve an alternative state of consciousness, which endows the imbibers with almost supernatural strength and the feeling of flight? Do we admit that reindeer love it and that reindeer are absent from Anatolia, Holland and other putative Santa origins? Do we agree that Santa, with his northern home, is unlikely to have sprung from an Anatolian saint? To me, one of the most powerful arguments for a strong linkage between Santa and *A. muscaria* is the introduction of flying into the legend. Although I draw the line at believing that those who eat *A. muscaria*. can fly, I do believe that they experience a surge of strength and may feel as if they are flying. Mycologist Gary Lincoff (who has a related article in the last winter's issue of *Mushroom the Journal*, entitled "Magic Mushroom Therapy: Effective Medicine or Snake Oil"?) also has a report on the internet telling of his own experiences swallowing 5 grams of dried *A. muscaria*. after visiting Siberian Koryak shamans. (You can access it at: <http://www.nemf.org/files/various/muscaria/part2.html>.) Here are the relevant extracts from Gary's report:

A reindeer herd manager we interviewed told us that some of his herders ate the *Amanita muscaria* when they had to chase after runaway

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Distant Harvests...

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reindeer: the mushroom allowed them to go for long periods of time without stopping to eat or rest.”

At dinner, I rose to make a toast to our Russian guides. As I stood up, I pushed my chair behind me. It hit the wall and broke in several pieces.”

On leaving Kamchatka the next day by plane, I tried to attach my seat belt and pulled it out of the seat.”

Two weeks after returning home I was still feeling the effects of the relatively small amount of the fly-agaric mushroom I had consumed. The primary effect was a sense of power, an upwelling rising from my stomach.

The number of stories about flying, from cultures that use *A.muscaria* are impressive. Returning to the [Koryak](#), the English mycologist, John Ramsbottom relates a story about the fly agaric (wapaq) which enabled Big Raven to carry a whale to its home. In the story, the deity Vahiyinin (“Existence”) spat onto earth, and his spittle became the wapaq, and his saliva becomes the warts. After experiencing the power of the wapaq, Raven was so exhilarated that he told it to grow forever on earth so his children, the people, can learn from it. (Quoted from Wikipedia).

The Norse deity, Wotan, flies through the sky in a vehicle pulled by animals, and drops of blood from his steed are said to be the origin of *A.muscaria*.

Yes, Virginia, there *is* a Santa Claus, but he’s a Lapp/Siberian shaman who’s high on psilocybin.



Amanita muscaria: Photo by Jim Frink

And a short parenthetical excursion: before leaving Christmas, may I draw your attention to Tom Volk’s website (<http://tomvolkfungi.net/>), which not only lists his fungus of the month, but also his holiday fungi. His current list of fungi necessary for a merry Christmas includes not only *A. muscaria*, but also *Cladonia rangifera* (one of the reindeer lichens), *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (brewer’s and baker’s yeast, without which we would have neither bread nor alcoholic beverages, *Daldinia concentrica*, the coal fungus (for the stockings of bad children, I assume), and *Asterophora lycoperdoides*, the star bearing powder cap mushroom.

And, before leaving psilocybin, new findings are emerging on that front, the most amazing of which is not what this substance can accomplish, but that it is now being accepted as a therapeutic and entheogenic agent by the medical/psychiatric establishment. Those of us old enough to have experienced the trippy 60s and 70s remember magic mushrooms (psilocybin and lots of other stuff mixed in) and cactus buttons (mescaline and lots of other stuff mixed in) being used and abused with wild abandon. Since doses were unmeasured, mixtures unknown, and the folks swallowing the stuff hardly the most stable, it probably shouldn’t have surprised anyone that bad trips became common, with psychotic breaks and suicide attempts (some successful) part of the game. But, prior to this popularization of hallucinogens, starting in the 40s, a decade after Albert Hoffman synthesized LSD, “more than 1,000 scientific papers were published on psychedelics, and some 40,000 people took them in clinical settings. With

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compounds supplied in bulk to psychiatrists by drug manufacturer Sandoz, the field drew smart, ambitious researchers, not to mention celebrity test subjects . . . Bill Wilson, founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, took LSD with psychiatrist Sidney Cohen (later head of the National Institute of Mental Health's drug abuse division) and compared the experience to those that catalyzed his sobriety; he tried unsuccessfully to make the drug a part of the AA program." (Quoted from "A Trip to Therapy", Fall 2010, Proto Magazine, published by Mass. Gen. Hosp.) Psychotropic drugs seemed to have enormous and incompletely understood promise for a wide variety of conditions almost impossible to treat by other means, including severe migraine cluster headaches, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and the overarching depression accompanying a terminal diagnosis. And then, all the work was dropped, and institutional support for the projects and the substances disappeared. Psychiatric research lost a promising treatment for conditions that were then, and still remain, essentially untreatable and devastating.

It's good news that a few stalwarts are using psilocybin again for medical research, with new publications appearing in the journals. The MGH article (you can download it easily from protomag.com if you want to read it in full and get further references) specifically mentions the work of Charles Grob, a UCLA psychiatrist who has used it successfully to treat terminally ill patients, unable to enjoy the time they had left, because of the severe depression that accompanied the diagnosis. (Federal law still acknowledges no medical uses for psilocybin but, like the massive supertanker that takes miles to change course, the government is rarely a rapid regulatory responder.) In fact, the more I read about psilocybin (note that the researchers are using measured doses of the pure substance in a very carefully monitored clinical setting), the more impressed I am by its power and potential for granting medical and spiritual well being. Isn't it amazing that we've accepted Santa's red and white outfit, his northern origin, his flying reindeer, his chimney habit, and his bulging mushroom shape for so long, while ignoring the real gift that he brings?

Happy Solstice to all and to all a good night! 

NAMA Executive Secretary

- Q. How long have you been a NAMA member and why did you join?
- A. I have been a NAMA member for at least 5 years; I joined for the same reasons I wanted to become the Executive Secretary: I wanted to learn more and have even more fun.
- Q. What are your duties as Executive Secretary?
- A. I'll respond to inquiries that come to the association via its website and by email, help distribute the newsletter, particularly to those who prefer paper copies, and work with the various committees on their communications. I'll also attend the annual meeting and as a result, go to the annual foray.
- Q. How/When did you become interested in this position?
- A. I get the NAMA newsletter by email and the email with the most recent email said they were looking for a new executive secretary. This kind of role works well with what I can do—I'm not a scientist, I'm an English professor.
- Q. Have you attended any NAMA events, and, if so, what did you think of the organization?
- A. I have not attended any events yet but always find the website and newsletter interesting and that's how I knew I would enjoy being more involved.
- Q. What did you do to celebrate?
- A. My husband told me not to get too big for my basket!



NAMA 2014 Pre-Foray Dye Workshop

Exploring Fungal Pigments with Alissa Allen and Liann Finnerty

By Lynn Ovenden

Twenty students enjoyed this all-day workshop in the beautiful Nature Center of Camp Arnold. When we arrived in the morning, we found 20 place-settings at 5 long tables, each with a set of handouts, and at the front, a long array of simmering dye-pots, baskets of fresh and dried mushrooms, pre-mordanted bundles of un-dyed wool, Alissa's binders of recipe cards (with the yarn resulting from hundreds of dye tests), and a rainbow display of garments made with fungal-dyed yarn.

Alissa created this workshop in honor of Patrice Benson, her mentor. It was clearly a labor of love, an extravaganza with 44 dye samples, that required a year's preparation: collecting, testing, drying and pre-measuring the mushrooms and lichens that we used, fermenting the lichens, washing and pre-mordanting and labeling 44 skeins of un-dyed wool, plus (!) pre-dyeing the silk scarves for the afternoon's work on textile design. The Tyvek labels on each skein were critical to avoid mix-ups.

Using fungal dyes is a surprisingly recent craft. It started with experiments by Miriam Rice and Dorothy Beebee in the 1960's and 1970's. There is still lots to learn. In her travels, Alissa tests new recipes all the time, even when camping. Recipes vary in the type of fungus, mordant, pH and temperature and duration of the hot dye bath. The 44 recipes we used during the workshop are some of her favorites.

each pot were several big mason jars of tap water. Each jar would become a separate dye bath. Over the next hour, we added to each jar a pre-measured quantity of dried mushroom, then set the pH to be either acidic, basic or neutral by adding vinegar, household ammonia or nothing. With a quick stir, color bloomed. We added the pre-mordanted skeins of yarn to the matching dye baths to soak at about 180°F for an hour.

Now we moved to lichen dyes. The yellow dye in some lichens is simply extracted in boiling water. For other lichens, a purple dye can be coaxed from the lichen tissue in a covered jar of ammonia solution for 3 months, and the fermenting jars need to be shook periodically and briefly opened to change the air. Alissa called the deeply colored solutions that resulted 'dye liquor'. Altogether, we tried 6 species, i.e. 6 jars of hot water to which Alissa added either dried lichen or the prepared lichen liquor. No pH adjustment or mordant was required for these recipes. The skeins of un-dyed wool were added to each dye bath and left to soak at 180° for up to an hour.

Throughout the process, Alissa explained the role of mordants, pH adjustments, the types of dyes that come from different fungi, and the ethics of collecting dye mushrooms and dye lichens in a sustainable way ... for example, to gather <10% of a mushroom patch and to only gather lichens that have fallen from their substrate.



Cathy, Liann, Reba, Alissa and 44 dyed skeins.
Photo: Alissa Allen

When we arrived, Alissa and her helpers (Cathy, Reba and Liann) already had 3 large canning pots simmering on propane stoves. In



Both photos:
Alissa Allen



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NAMA 2014 Pre-Foray Dye Workshop

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The NAMA 2014 Patrice Benson Memorial Foray fungal dye class.
Photo: Alissa Allen




Student holds her big leaf maple scarf.
Photo: Alissa Allen

Time passed quickly. By 11:00 we removed the dyed skeins of yarn from the jars, rinsed them, spun out excess water and hung them to dry and be photographed. After lunch, the skeins were cut so each student could attach a length of dyed yarn to a recipe card.

How proud we felt! Though really, Alissa and her helpers did it all.

The afternoon activity, textile design, proved more demanding for the creativity-challenged. Alissa had two pre-dyed silk scarves for each student. Liann explained how she had prepared (1) a concentrated brown dye from *Pisolithus*, and (2) a thickener (gum tragacanth with iron mordant), to add to the *Pisolithus* concentrate or to any of the dye baths leftover from the morning. We

were invited to apply the thickened dye mixture to a scarf in a design of our own by freehand painting, a stencil or a block stamp. Several students brought home made stamps they had created for class, while others used items from nature. We tried them all. Intense excitement filled the room. After applying the dye, each student ironed their scarf between paper towels to set the color, then washed the scarf to remove all trace of mordant and thickener, and dried the scarf again. Most of us tried out a different design on our second scarf, praising each others' work every step of the way.

It was a fabulous day. I left with a new appreciation for the rich possibilities of mushrooms and lichens. I am grateful to all the creative people who explore the fungal world and share with others the beauty they find 



Eight dye baths in one canning pot.
Photo: Lynn Ovenden



Alissa measuring vinegar to bring a dye bath to pH4. Photo: Lynn Ovenden



A recipe card from one of Alissa's binders.
Photo: Lynn Ovenden

DUES ARE DUE for 2015!

Change in Policy on Print Copies of *The Mycophile*

The cost of printing and mailing *The Mycophile* continues to rise. *NAMA spends more than twice what we charge for this service.* Except for people who have already paid for a print membership for 2015, as of November 1, 2014, **we will be asking for \$15 per year for a hard copy black and white subscription to *The Mycophile*. This is in addition to your membership dues. This change applies to all member categories, including Lifetime members.**

- By giving NAMA your email address, you will receive a full color pdf file that you can print in either color or black and white at home.
- For members with a household membership, we can send the electronic color version of the newsletter to both members if we have both email addresses.
- The major benefit of the email newsletter is that you receive it immediately upon publication, and don't have to wait for the print copy to be published and mailed.
- For members who have not provided us with an email address, we will mail a notice of this change.


We appreciate your help and understanding in the prudent financial management of our organization.

Easily renew online using PayPal at www.namyco.org/join/index.html.

DUES	MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES
\$25	Members of NAMA-affiliated clubs receiving <i>The Mycophile</i> electronically
\$40	Members of NAMA-affiliated clubs with mailed subscription to <i>The Mycophile</i> in (\$25 + \$15 = \$40)
\$30	Individual/family membership NOT associated with a NAMA-affiliated club receiving <i>The Mycophile</i> electronically
\$45	Individual/household membership NOT associated with a NAMA-affiliated club in North America requesting a mailed copy of <i>The Mycophile</i> (\$30 + \$15 = \$45)
\$55	Individual/household membership outside North America requesting a mailed copy of <i>The Mycophile</i> (\$30 + 25 = \$55)
\$15	Student membership (electronic only)
\$60	Sustaining membership
\$500	Life membership (receives <i>The Mycophile</i> electronically)
\$15	Lifetime members (mail subscription to <i>The Mycophile</i>)

NAMA Seeks Executive Secretary

The Board of Trustees seeks a replacement for this important post. Nominations for this position are encouraged. The Executive Secretary of NAMA is appointed by and serves at the discretion of the Board of Trustees for a three-year term, which may be extended subject to annual review. The Executive Secretary reports to the NAMA President and is an ex officio member of all NAMA Committees except the Nominating and the Awards Committees. A modest annual stipend of \$5,000 goes with this position.

If you are interested in applying, please submit a brief biographical description of your qualifications and experience to: David Rust incredulis@yahoo.com. 

PSMC Annual Meeting

October 18, 2014 Grimes Farm, Marshall County IA

1. Call to Order. Glen Schwartz called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.
2. President's Remarks. Glen said that despite a year that was not the best for fungi we experienced excellent turnouts at our club events. He drew attention to a National Geographic article on glow-in-the-dark mushrooms by Taylor Lockwood. Several new mushroom books were displayed and Mike Krebill had a number of them available to purchase.
3. Secretary's Report. Dean Abel said that a report for the 2013 meeting was not available.
4. Treasurer's Report. Roger Heidt presented a detailed financial statement. The bottom line is that we have a 2014 ending balance of nearly \$1800.
5. Committee Reports.
 - a. Website. Glen urged everyone to check out our website and photo pages. The site has received a lot of well-deserved praise for our online design and content. We publish an event calendar, foray lists and photos. Glen and Roger keep it up to date.
 - b. Newsletter. Gabby Schulz has moved to Chicago and asked to be replaced although he said he would hang on until a replacement was named. Karen Yakovich volunteered to give it a try. Past editors Dave Layton and Mike Krebill said they would be happy to work with her and show her the ropes.
 - c. Promotion. Cody Gieselman was unable to attend. Several suggestions were bandied about. Dave McDowell suggested that we could sponsor trail benches that identify PSMC as the donor. Working with county and park representatives is often the best way to go because we benefit from the publicity they generate.
6. Old Business
 - a. Banquet. The first PSMC winter banquet was organized by outgoing Vice-President Barbara Ching. More than twenty attendees made their way to Ames in February to enjoy mushroom dishes prepared by Barbara and Jennifer Knox using wild mushrooms collected by Marty Augustine. Michael Ching helped in locating the banquet space and cleaning up afterwards. Everyone thought we should do this again.
 - b. 2014 Calendar Sales. All the calendars were sold or given away. Printing cost for 200 calendars was \$950 (paid in 2013). The club took in \$219 (2013) and \$745 (2014) so the 2014 calendar cost and sales broke even. The calendar project was not intended as a money maker and was highly successful as a promotional endeavor.
7. New Business
 - a. 2015 Calendar. 150 calendars were printed at a cost of \$725. This was paid in 2014 and all income will be reported for 2015.
 - b. Election of Officers. Nominations were open for the position of Vice-President and At-large board member. The slate of nominees was finalized and then accepted unanimously. The PSMC officers for 2015 will be President Glen Schwartz, Vice-President Dave McDowell, Secretary Dean Abel, Treasurer Roger Heidt, and At-large Member Dave Layton.
 - c. Dues. Dean raised the question of reducing yearly membership dues in light of the surplus in our bank account. It was the consensus of the group to maintain dues at the current rate of \$15/year and to determine worthy projects on which to spend our money.
 - d. A motion was made and approved to purchase a DVD of the NAMA educational programs that will be available to members to enjoy or use as programs in presentations to other groups.

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Crockpot Yogurt

Elsie Callender, Owner/editor at Richly Rooted
<http://richlyrooted.com>

What's in yogurt?

Essentially milk, cultures, and sweeteners. Make your own, and you get control of which sweeteners go in, while also saving money. And since yogurt is one of the best things you can be eating, it's a great recipe to incorporate into your cooking habits.

I eat yogurt almost every day, so that I have good bacteria living in my guts to help my digestion. Eric and I figured out that we can make twice as much yogurt for half the price of the cheapest store-bought! We did this based on Wal-Mart milk (\$3.68/gal) and Wal-Mart Great Value plain yogurt (about \$2.40/32oz). And if you can find milk for cheaper, and the yogurt you usually buy is more expensive (say, Publix brand or the smaller, fruited cups), you'll save even more.

Here's the basic recipe I've been following.

Yogurt making involves three main steps:

1. Preparing an environment conducive to bacteria growth
2. Allowing time for the bacteria to grow
3. Adding desired flavours to the finished product

For about eight cups of yogurt (64oz.), you'll need eight cups of milk and about six tablespoons of full-fat plain yogurt that contains live and active cultures (it should say somewhere on the package).

1. Take the yogurt starter out of the fridge and turn your crock pot on low, while you heat the milk over medium on the stove. Stir milk occasionally. When milk becomes bubbly and frothy, let it continue to foam for a couple of minutes. In the meantime, check the temperature of the crock pot. It should be nice and toasty, but not burning to the touch. If it's too hot, turn it down to the "keep warm" or lower setting while the milk cools. When the milk is no longer burning to the touch, mix about a cup of milk with the yogurt, stirring gently. Pour the remaining milk into the crock, then gently stir in the yogurt mixture.
2. Turn off and unplug the crock pot. Wrap it in one or two bath towels and let it sit several hours, or overnight. In the morning, place the crock directly into the fridge to let it cool and continue to thicken. (Do NOT stir it or dip into it, or it won't thicken as well!)
3. After 2+ hours, dip into the fresh yogurt and enjoy it over fruit, or swirled with honey, maple syrup, vanilla or peanut butter. Flavour individual portions of yogurt just before you eat, rather than the whole batch. If whey liquid forms over the yogurt batch, stir it in (the yogurt will become runnier) or pour it off and save it to add to soup, smoothies, or lemonade. Set aside about 1/3 cup of the fresh yogurt to be the starter in the next batch.

Troubleshooting: If you want a thicker yogurt, experiment with the amount and type of starter you use, and be sure to use whole milk or raw milk. If the crock pot doesn't work for you, try another method of keeping the culturing milk warm. You could divide the milk mixture into several large glass jars, and keep them in a large cooler of warm-hot water. recipessuggest.suggest.

Prairie States Mushroom Club
c/o Roger Heidt
125 Timber Ln.
Robins, IA 52328-9632

PSMC Web Site:
<http://iowamushroom.org>



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PSMC Annual Meeting

(cont. from pg. 10)

- e. The club approved making a donation of \$50 to the Marshall County Conservation Board to thank them for the use of their facility for the today’s annual meeting.
 - f. As a welcoming gesture it was decided to present a 2015 calendar to new members when they joined.
 - g. The club agreed to continue its outreach programming to county conservation boards and other groups (scouts, garden clubs) to cosponsor forays and other activities.
 - h. It was hoped that winter activities might be organized while we wait for spring to come again, e.g. mushroom identification workshops or cooking classes.
8. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:00 pm.

Submitted by Dean Abel with corrections offered by Barbara Ching, Mike Krebill and Roger Heidt 