

earthstar examiner

December 2007

Newsletter of the Missouri Mycological Society



PHOTO BY SHANNON STEVENS

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MINGO 2007 through the eyes of Joanna Brock

by Joanna Brock

This is my 12th MINGO—a weekend so important that I take a personal day from teaching Elementary School Music and I find substitute organists for the three churches I play on Sunday morning. This trip is worth it, each and every time. My arrival is full of hugs from annual friends who are truly as pleased to see me as I am to see them. Grab my name tag and check out the schedule. Oh, yes, and grab a wine glass and work on this report later. And then there is dinner, potluck, but not your average church potluck, oh no, I'm talking butternut squash soup, venison medallions wrapped in bacon

and pawpaw cream pie—to die for.

The *Welcome* by Shannon Stevens indicated that it is so dry that trees are falling down and we need to be aware of that while out in the woods. The Sundberg/Yates foray did have a tree come down. (Are there any trees around my tent?)

Our guest speaker on Friday night is Dr. Peter Avis, who was in Latvia last year when he got an email asking him to come to Mingo and, since he had heard of us, here he is. He is Assistant Professor of Biology at Indiana University, Northwest. His program is titled, *Mycorrhizae, Mycorrhizae: Cool Fungal-Plant Symbioses and their Underground Business*. The "business end" of

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Mingo 2007

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mushrooms is underground. It is when they have gotten enough to drink that they produce the fruit that has brought us all to Mingo. Fungi have three different lifestyles: breaking down organic matter, parasitic activities, and mutualism (between a plant group and the fungus). The very fine root tips, which look like puzzle pieces, make sugar for the plant.

Fungi play an important role in bringing nutrients to the plant. Dr. Avis' research has identified that an increase in nitrogen in the atmosphere from industrial burning of fossil fuels and fertilizer production is resulting in a decrease of many types of mushrooms—except for a specific *Russula*—"wanted dead or alive." Host plants can interact with different communities of fungi simultaneously. The underground relationships between plants and fungi are being used in truffle cultivation, and at \$800/pound, there is some of this cultivation going on here in Missouri. Truffle inoculated hazelnut trees—what could be better than that?

And then the group breaks into smaller clusters by interest and friendships. The mycologists gather around Dr. Avis to clarify and gain deeper insights. The musical group gathers outside to play the Irish harp and Irish flute and whistle to the accompaniment of spoons and metal chair drum. The bagpipes come out later.

Saturday's lunches are prepared and bagged and all is well. Then everyone sleeps so well in the cool night air.

Breakfast is served on the second day and all is right in the world of Mingo.

Everyone signs up for one of four forays, each with a leader and a mycologist. The longest signup list is the one down in the ditch (because it is so dry this year.) However, I just overheard that someone found oyster mushrooms and Steve Booker found a chicken of the woods Thursday. Success is looking more promising.

Grab a lunch and get ready for the group photo by Ken Gilberg before the forays begin. The word for this year is dry. However, Chuck Yates and I did find several baskets full of oysters. Dr. Walter Sundberg was his usual "every beginner's find is a jewel" self. He cannot help himself; he must teach and make it exciting. As I said, this is my twelfth year but I sign up with Walt's group because he always takes time to really teach me something—make that many things.

After the hot hunt, several take a dip in the lake and then shower up under the new shower heads donated to Camp



Latonka by MOMS and installed Thursday by Steve Booker. On Saturday, Cindy Weber, CEO of the Cotton Boll Area Girl Scout Camps, joined us and promised she'd be back.

Maxine Stone brought a photographer, Noppadol Paotthong, from the Missouri Department of Conservation to photograph all of our finds. The Department and Maxine are working together to write a guide to the mushrooms of Missouri—100 common to Missouri.

Joe McFarland spent the day at the Visitor's Center presenting a video for beginning mushroom hunters, to tell them about MOMS and what we do here every year. He said there was a small group in the morning and a larger group in the afternoon. The Visitor's Center was pleased with the presentation and also with the large poster Joe created and left with them. We are building our relationship with

Mingo and spreading the joy.

Leon gives me the scoop from the specimen room: there is a lichen eating a lichen. Barka thinks that is way cool. *Globifomes gavesolens*, a mushroom from the southeast, was used to make the house smell sweet in the old days. *Bjerkandera adusta*, named after a Swedish finder (can you tell?), is a polypore with a black pore surface. *Crocolophus cirrhatus* is almost never seen in books. However, it has been seen at Mingo in other very hot, dry summers. This orange, hairy, tooth fungus is very rare (and coveted) in Europe. This is the year of the white crusty mushroom on the Mingo table.

Saturday evening we hear from Dr. Britt Bunyard, editor of the NAMA *McIllosmia* and *Mycophile*, their newsletter. His talk is *The Evolution of Fungi*. Taxonomy and classification (changing the names of fungi) show us the path of evolution. *Assembling the Fungal Tree of Life* project (AFTOL) is

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moms

news & notes

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 7PM
Powder Valley Nature Center

If you are new to MOMS or an old-timer, I know that you will want to come to our Annual Meeting. We will be conducting business, planning the upcoming year and electing three new board members. Please mark your calendar now, so that you will have a chance to see who we are and what we do. Powder Valley is in southwest Kirkwood. If you need directions, look at our web site, www.missourimycologicalsociety.org, and click on "maps." Enter the building through the side doors. See you there...

Dues are due

All MOMS memberships expire on December 31, 2007. That means you will no longer be a member of this wonderful organization unless you write a check for \$15 NOW and send it, along with the membership renewal form on page 7 to our treasurer, David Yates.

I know that you will also want to become a member of NAMA (North American Mycological Association). NAMA is our parent organization and being a member entitles you to not only get their newsletter but also to be part of another wonderful mushroom group. Send a separate check made out to NAMA with the same renewal form. Take a look at their web site: www.nammyco.org for more information about them.

Four Checks – Four Great Offers

1. MOMS dues, \$15 (send to David Yates)
2. NAMA dues, \$32 (send to David Yates)
3. MOMS Winter Luncheon, \$20 members, \$25 guests (send to Elaine Fix)
4. Incurable Epicureans, \$15 (send to Linda Rolby)



Incurable Epicureans

The Incurable Epicureans are a culinary group of MOMS members who love to cook and to eat. There are usually four dinners a year. Each dinner has a specially planned theme and menu where the group may explore various regions of the world, culinary époques, or whatever else they think of that sounds intriguing. Usually the group gathers in the home of a member, but we also have used park shelters and working studios.

Because we meet most often in member's homes, the club must limit membership to 35. Dues are \$15 per person

payable the first of each year. The Incurable Epicureans is open to all MOMS members. The first 35 to pay their dues form the group for that year. Prior to each dinner a menu is e-mailed and every member who plans to attend signs up to bring one of the menu's dishes. They each research and prepare their chosen item as a means to learn more about the world of food.

If you would like to repeat your membership for 2008, or join us as a new member, please send your check made out to MOMS for \$15 per person, along with your address and email to: Linda Rolby, 10533 East Watson Rd. St. Louis, MO 63127

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Brad Bostarr, (08), Steve Booker (10), Maxine Stone (09),
Joe Walsh (10), Chuck Yates (09)
**year also runs until expire*

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Chief/Mycologic: Walt Sundberg
Educator: Don Dill
Fairy Coordinator: Gordon White
Incurable Epicureans: Linda Rolby
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Since 2002 the Missouri Mycological Society has been a proud member of Earth Share of Missouri, an organization that represents 71 other local, regional, national and international non-profit organizations. Earth Share's principal mission is fundraising via workplace-giving campaigns which enables more people to support environmental causes in an easy highly efficient way. Click out their website at www.earthsharemo.org

The Missouri Mycological Society is also a member of NAMA, the North American Mycological Association, which is a non-profit organization of amateur and professional mycologists with more than 60 affiliated local mycological clubs throughout North America. NAMA's mission is "to promote, pursue, and advance the science of mycology." To become a member of NAMA, please check out their website at www.nammyco.org



events

The Hawnting—or—Kindred Spirits

by Patrick Harvey

For weeks I have been looking forward to the Hawnting, one of our last forays this year and between times at work, haunting the weather pages to find out if the long dry spell would break ("Oh goody—it's raining!!!") Friday afternoon I planned to leave early but scheduling snafus meant that I couldn't leave until after five. Ten minutes out I realized I'd left without my boots.

I made safe arrival after dark and the gate was still open so I didn't have to resort to Plan B for the night. Campfire burning and everyone enjoying dinner—two kinds of chili, home-grown butternut squash soup (!!!), cheese and fruit and lots of other good things. I had a lot of people help get my tent up (thanks!), which went well after I moved it out of the gravel road. Singing Jim Croce and James Taylor, finishing off our meal with dark chocolate cherry cookies & port, and to top things off, a flashlight foray down the hills to the streambed. We actually found fungi in the dark! (Although no Jack-O-Lanterns or foxfire). Just enough gentle rain to soak into the ground a bit, and to enjoy falling to sleep to the sound.

Up the next morning, we planned our campaign over coffee. Steve Booker and his group hunted the lowlands of Pickle Creek, and Maxine and the rest did the Whispering Pine loop trail in search of the elusive lobster mushroom. We found a few, not too far

past the picnic shelter at the start of the trail. Soon after that the group stretched out, most going at their own speed, and after the first mile on the trail I didn't see anyone until the end.

I took my time circling through the woods. I came to groves of pine. After finding those first lobsters there was nothing else of note, save another good-sized one at the halfway point. No matter—the air was cool, sunshine everywhere, the leaves starting to turn, and there were interesting mushrooms wherever I took the time to look. *Amatium cinnam*, a huge honey mushroom, small white funnels that looked like some sort of

Clitocybe (Jay, what were those?), and others. We had a nice assortment at the end: *Phlebia incarnata*, *Laccarius chrysorrhoeus*, a couple over-the-hill *Grifola frondosa*, and even a couple of *Suillus*. Not much for the pot, but plenty to learn.

And speaking of learning, Michael Kuo drove down from Saint Louis after his book signing at the Missouri Botanical Garden to have dinner with us and share his wisdom at the collection table. He and Jay helped Barkha with her vouchers, and everyone else who stopped by the table learned more about identifying what we had found. Later that night, Michael gave a talk about different paradigms used in classifying fungi, and told us about his next book, *One Hundred Cool Mushrooms*. Afterwards, he and his wife, Kate, partook in another wonderful MOMS dinner.

Ken Gilberg offered everyone a concoction which was based on his famous *Ganoderma* elixir, diluted with rum, a touch of sweet vermouth and finished with a twist of lemon. Hot-cha-cha—one drink lasted me all night!. After a great dinner and powerful elixir, we got a big fire going and we sat and talked and laughed and laughed and talked and sat. Before we went off to our tents we had a visit from Mother Nature, in the person of Louisa. It was a colder night, but the moon was glorious, shining down through the pines.

Daybreak—a short foray up the hill to see what I could see and more coffee and campfire-warmed pastries to fortify ourselves for Round Two. Maxine and a few others went to hike the Trail Through Time at Pickle Springs and I led a convoy to Hickory Canyon. We went down the ridge into a series of box canyons and found it marvelously wet with carpets of moss everywhere, ferns on the cliffs above and more fungi to pour over, mostly *Russula*, *Amatium*, and even a *Laccarius*.

And as good as that was, lunch was even better—home-made red pepper mayonnaise with shrimp, fantastic pesto, submarine sandwiches, arugula salad, *Grifola frondosa* salad and hummus tortilla wraps, fresh apple cider, and on and on... That's one of the best things about MOMS—we eat so well!

And so goodbye to the lobsters until next year—or perhaps next Saturday, when we gather for Wild Times at Babler. I hope to see you all again soon!



Check It OOOUUUTTT !!!

by Brad Bomanz

You ask, "Check out what?" Why, the MOMS new website! Go to either the new domain—MOmyco.org—or the original domain—MissouriMycologicalSociety.org. There you will find beautifully laid out Web pages designed and arranged by MOMS very own graphic designer—Julie Ridge! Ta da!

When you visit our website you'll find all your favorite web information that you have come to know and love that had been provided by MOMS prior to this updating project, and a few new things. It still has information for new members, a calendar of events, mushroom items for purchase, a photo gallery that will be routinely updated (so check back often). All photos will only be those donated by you—MOMS' Members—with your name for credit so folks know who took those wonderful photos.

For all you fanatics who always want to know where it has rained, now or in the past, (to increase you chances of bringing home something for the dinner table) there is a "Precipitation" page. And there's a page for those wanting to book a speaker for their next meeting or social event.

For those who are more scientifically minded, MOMS now has its vouchered mushrooms available. Each vouchered mushroom has documentation photos and scientific facts about its characteristics that are specific to that

specific specimen collected and not information copied from a field guide. If a mycologist was consulted to validate the identification, the mycologist is credited for their support. If the mycologist enlisted reference material that is not readily available, that is also listed and is available for viewing or downloading for your future reference. By clicking on any thumbnail photo, a high-resolution photo will be downloaded for maximum detailed viewing, including high-resolution photos of the specimen's spores. This allows a university facility, students and scientifically minded individuals easy access to information, which until this time, was only available by traveling to the Dunn-Palmer herbarium located at the University of Missouri in Columbia where all vouchers are stored and cared for by the herbarium's curator, Dr. Robin C. Kennedy. MOMS owes an enormous amount of gratitude to Dr. Kennedy and her assistant Baadi Tadych for their ongoing patience, understanding, hard work and support.

For those wanting to know what mushrooms you would find during any given month, the new Species List Web page is capable of generating that list. Or if you want to

know all the mushrooms found at a given location, or maybe the same location during a specific time period or date, or maybe all the mushrooms ever found during a specific time period or specific date, it can do it all!

This is just a sampling of what awaits the visitor to MOMS' updated website. I hope you enjoy the website and look forward to your visits, time after time.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Kent Lemp, without whose hard work and help this website would never have seen the light of day; Linda Mueller, for her continued guidance and support; Julie Ridge, for her high degree of enthusiasm, expertise and patience with both the website and the newsletter; and above all, the support of the Board of Directors, whose vision and dedication initiated this wonderful project and enabled it to come to fruition. I am truly humbled and will be eternally grateful.



We are ever so grateful to Brad for spearheading this whole project. We probably have the most important Web site of any club in the US.
— Ken Gilbert

Charleville Winery Foray

by Chuck Yates

I cancelled our scheduled foray at Charleville Winery, on Sunday, August 19. The dry weather conditions and the fact that no one called to R.S.V.P. were the reasons for the cancellation.

Gary Steps rescheduled the foray for Sunday, September 9. We had five people come to the foray, and three of us hunted. Before lunch we collected hundreds of chiggers and few mushrooms. Lunch was great, as were the tastings of wines and microbrews. Jack and Joel Russell are wonderful hosts. After lunch, while Gary's friends were chasing Frisbees, we discovered puffballs (*Cabotia sp.*) and meadow mushrooms (*Agaricus campestris*).

Wild Times at Babler State Park

by Jan Simons

Almost twenty wild (and not so wild) MOMS members enjoyed a beautiful fall day at Babler State Park on November 3. Steve Booker had a fire going which served two purposes: heating the rabbit stew and the venison chili and warming those of us who were cold. As always, there was lots of good food and drink—sassafras tea, pumpkin and black bean chili, blackberry pie, venison sausage, apple sauce, nasturtium dip, porcini (thanks Sarah)—all home-made, of course, and delicious. A new tradition was started: we now have an "official" drink (and it's not wine!). Steve brought blackberry juice and Joanna brought vodka and somehow they ended up in the same glasses and now both are gone!

We had three new members join us: Green Light, Bunny, and Stan. Green Light has recently relocated from a lifetime in northern California. Other attendees were Brad Bomanz, Gordon White, Charlie Raiser, Barb Steps, Jane House, Barb O'Brien, David Sacks, Joanna Brock, Sarah Davis, Cheryl DeCain, Donna and Patrick Harvey, and Leland Von Behren.

After a couple of hours of good conversation and food and drink, some departed, some went looking for mushrooms, and some took a lovely walk on this wonderful day. Next year we are planning to hold the event on the first Sunday in November instead of Saturday so that a few more folks can join us.

Mingo 2007

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way ahead of other "tree" projects. Mushrooms are about 80,000 of the known species of living organisms. Since fungi are fleshy, there are very few found in fossils, however we do have spores that have been around for some 500 millions years. There have been about three extinction events since then and after such an event there is a surge in development. Five hundred million years ago is as far back as we can go to find organisms that actually look like mushrooms. 250 million years ago we begin to see actual fruit bodies. The layers of soil from the area of an extinction event by asteroid activity contain an abundance of mold spores.

At the end of another wonderful and diverse (Irish to Dylan) music session, I drove down to my tent around the tip of the lake and there, like deer in the headlights, I found a bag full of *Arumaria wellii*. I rushed back to the specimen table with much excitement. I found more when I went back to the tent. My weekend has been most exciting.

Dr. Leon Shemoff, editor of *Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooms*, is not the mycology professor that his expertise and personality would lead you to conclude. He has a doctorate in music composition. Sunday morning, Leon spoke on *How to Know When You've Found an Unusual Mushroom*. He presents photos of some beautiful "scarlet cups" of several species and some scarlet puffballs. The *Calosporium* has a gelatinous looking but very tough stalk that falls away as the mushroom develops. The common name is "hot lips" because the mouth of the puffball is red in all three of the species. This opening is stunning and Leon goes on to talk about many other mushrooms. He points out small differences which can tell you that what you are seeing is not exactly what you first think it might be, and that difference tends to name the new species.

This is the first year I have stayed to taste the results of David Yates' Mycophagy Workshop and I am so glad I did. I gained a few pounds and stayed up until midnight to complete lesson plans. I will never miss this brunch again. I will not have to eat again for a week. My compliments to the chefs.

Here's what David and his crew created: Lotus Root Salad with Oyster Mushrooms (some that I collected); Sesame Soba Noodles with Shiitake; Chicken of the Woods Enchiladas with Chipotle and Pepita Sauce; Mushroom Consume with Lobster Mushrooms and Matsutake; Thai Curry with Vegetables and Shiitake (my mouth still burns).



Sunday, February 10, 2008
Webster Groves Recreation Center
12:00 - 4:00 pm

19th Annual MOMS Winter Luncheon

by Elaine Fix and Maxine Stone

Here we are again thinking about our fabulous Annual Winter Luncheon. Yes, it's time to mark your calendar, get out your best recipes, and send in the registration form on page 7.

This year we are very fortunate to have Dr. Tom Volk as our guest speaker. Dr. Volk is Professor of Biology at the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse. His biography fills many pages. Over the years he has won awards, written papers, done much research, traveled to distant lands, taught many courses and created a well-respected web site. Dr. Volk has taught varied courses such as Medical Mycology, Advanced Mycology, Latin and Greek for Scientists, Food and Industrial Mycology and many others. He is an expert on the mold. He also studied with our good friend and Chief Mycologist, Dr. Walter Sundberg. Look up www.TomVolkFungi.net and see what this brilliant man is all about. It's an unbelievable web site—and very "user friendly." The subject for Dr. Volk's talk will be "Sex and Mushrooms." Did you know that mushrooms actually have sex? You won't want to miss this talk!

As many of you know, the Winter Luncheon is "pot luck" and the food is extraordinary! Bring a main dish, salad or dessert. We do not have any cooking facilities this year, so if you bring a hot dish, use a crock pot or some other device to control the temperature. Indicate the name of your dish and your name, so when going through the line people will know what it is they are eating. If you'd like, bring some copies of the recipes.

Registration begins immediately. There is always a large turn out for this event, so make sure to send in your registration form now. The cost is \$20 for MOMS members

and \$25 for non-members. However, if your registration is post marked before January 15, 2008 you will receive a \$5 discount, making the cost \$15 for MOMS members and \$20 for non-members.

Of course, it wouldn't be a Winter Luncheon without a raffle. This year we have many good prizes, and we promise that the raffle will move along quickly. Unfortunately, we can't promise that you'll win a prize, but many people walk away with their arms full! Raffle tickets are \$10 a dozen or \$1 each. If you have something to offer for the raffle, mark it on your registration form.

Volunteers are needed to help set-up, clean-up, registration, maintaining the buffet table, etc. Please sign up on the registration form if you'd like to volunteer.

The location for the Winter Luncheon is new this year. We have a lovely room at the Webster Groves Recreation Center. We will be dining at round tables with festive flower arrangements along with linen tablecloths. Wine and soft drinks will be provided. The recreation center is located near Hwy 44 and Elm Ave.

Directions to the Webster Groves Recreation Center:

Take Hwy 44 west to the Elm exit in Webster Groves. Go south. Take a left at the first light which is Glendale Road. Take your first left into the parking lot. The recreation center is on your left. Go in the main front door.

If you should have any questions or comments about this year's Winter Luncheon please contact Elaine Fix, Winter Luncheon Chairperson, at 636-462-3025 (home) or 314-277-6186 (cell) or EFix@earthlink.net.

registration

2008 MOMS & NAMA

MOMS 2008 Winter Luncheon

Sunday, February 10, 2008, 12:00 – 4:00 pm
Webster Groves Recreation Center

Number attending: _____ Members \$20 (\$15) _____ Guests \$25 (\$20)

For registrations postmarked by January 15 there will be a \$5 discount, making the cost \$15 for MOMS members and \$20 for non-members.

Amount for luncheon: \$ _____

Add money for raffle tickets (\$1/ticket or \$10/12 tickets): \$ _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Attendee Name(s): _____

Attendee Name(s): _____

Phone number: _____

I would like to volunteer the day of the luncheon Yes No If yes, what would you like to do? _____

I have something to donate for the raffle Yes No If yes, what would you like to donate? _____

Please make your check payable to **Missouri Mycological Society**.

Please mail your payment by January 15, 2008 to **Balme Box, 206 Williamson Dr., Winfield, Mo. 63389** (confirmations will not be sent)

Missouri Mycological Society and NAMA 2008 Membership Form

All memberships end each December 31.

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

e-mail _____

Missouri Mycological Society family membership – 1 year/\$15\$ _____

Make your check payable to **Missouri Mycological Society** and send to David Yates.

North American Mycological Association Membership:

NAMA dues are due concurrently with MOMS dues. To keep your NAMA membership current or to become a NAMA member, send an additional check for \$32 made out to NAMA (this reflects a \$3 discount from the \$35 regular membership).

Affiliated Club Members – 1 year/\$32\$ _____

Send both checks to: **David Yates, 3654 French Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63116-4043**



Remembering Felicia

*By Barbara McDermith
and Ken Gilberg*

Felicia Bart, an active member of the Missouri Mycological Society since its beginnings in 1986, died at the age of 98 on October 26, 2007, at her home under the care of her family with the help of a hospice program. "A cat scratch became infected and from there bad went to worse." We heard the news from Sherry Kay of the Kaw Valley Mycological Society. KVMS members also proudly claim Felicia as theirs.

Felicia attended every Mingo except the last two. She was a walking field guide, mystic, and esteemed elder.

She would drive the 400-mile, six-and-a-half-hour drive from her home alone in her old Valiant, her eyes barely reaching over the dashboard, her hands at eleven o'clock and one. Often she'd sleep in the sedan when she needed rest on her two-day drive. The trunk of her car was filled with photography equipment, binoculars, and field guides, with only a few personal items included. In her wisdom, she knew her priorities! On the way to her last Mingo, in 2005, she had an accident and got pretty banged up. She didn't want much fussing over. Several of us imagined it a possibility that we'd cremate her at the evening bonfire. Perhaps she'd have liked that, but she still had a couple more years.

Around the campfire at the Hawnting this fall, we shared a (blessed) moment of silence for Felicia. Her nephew, Steve, was at her bedside for her last weeks. He relayed phone calls from MOMS members to send good wishes to Felicia. We can picture her even then with her very special, ever-present smile.

Missouri Mycological Society

3654 French Ave, St. Louis, MO 63116

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'08 Calendar Preview

- Tues. 1/8** 7PM. MOMS Annual Meeting, Powder Valley Nature Center
- Sun. 2/10** Noon. Annual Winter Luncheon, Webster Groves Recreation Center
- 4/25-4/27** Morel Madness
Mark Twain Lake State Park