



Photo courtesy of Kevin Esser

# Morel Booster™

Morel Mushroom News From Morel Mania, Inc.

Editor: Tom Nauman

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## We're Late!

Don't get excited, I'm talking about this issue of the *Morel Booster™* being late, not the morel season. As the morel season approaches, I find that my time is not my own.

The episode of "*How The Earth Was Made*" on The History Channel did not air on March 2, as previously reported. It was shown on February 16. It's supposed to air again on March 9.

But, the footage showing my brother's property was left on the editing room floor. The production company did send me a copy on DVD. It truly was interesting and nicely done, but didn't have the local connection.

We have not had any reports to the Sighting page yet, but expect them at any time. Without a doubt, morels are already appearing in California and possibly some of the Southern states.

I awoke this morning from one of those dreams. No, not that kind of dream. True morel maniacs know exactly what I'm talking about. I have dreams of morels all year long, but they're more frequent and detailed as the season approaches. I wrote an article about one such dream many years ago that was titled "*The Dreams*". It's a favorite of readers and, on a stack of 100 Bibles, it really happened!

## The Dreams

*Originally published in May, 1999 by Tom Nauman*

The emails both arrived on the same day. The first was strange enough, "The mushrooms have been talking to me in my dreams for the past month! " But the second one almost had an eerie feel to it, "I've been having the dreams for a month now". (Insert Twilight Zone music). The unknowing might have had some chills run down their spine. But I knew exactly what they were talking about because I've also have had "The Dreams".

Some mushroom hunters are obsessed (maybe it's possessed) enough that they even dream of them. One particular dream happened in Mid-April of '90 or '91. It was a Saturday morning around nine o'clock. I was sleeping in after watching the late show on Friday night. I'd been out looking for mushrooms earlier in the week but hadn't found any. One minute the aroma

of the coffee in the kitchen drifting to the bedroom was telling me that I should get up. The next minute I was standing in a little wooded area across the road from the house, crouched over, leaning on my hiking stick, and looking for mushrooms.

POP-POP was the sound I heard next. And in the dream the sounds were accompanied by two grey morels bursting out of the ground. The sounds were loud enough that I sat straight up in bed. I immediately got up, got dressed, and headed across the road.

As I passed the doorway to the kitchen, Vicky asked me where I was going. I'm glad she asked because otherwise no one would believe me. I responded that two mushrooms had just come up across the road and that the sound of them popping out of the ground had startled me awake and that I was going to get them. Her response was one of "Yeah, Right". She'd seen me do strange things before but knew I was harmless so she resumed her appointment with coffee and the morning paper while I headed out the door.

Once across the road, I went to the exact spot in the dream. And, yes, they were there! Two grey morel mushrooms about an inch and a half tall each. It didn't really surprise me. I'd have been surprised if they hadn't been there because the dream was that convincing.

I looked around a little more and found nothing (I figured these two were a gift from the mushroom Gods so I shouldn't be too greedy). I harvested the two and returned to the house. I entered the kitchen and placed the mushrooms on the newspaper that Vicky hadn't even looked up from. I don't remember her exact words but I probably couldn't repeat them in print anyway. Her response was justified. We usually have an informal competition to find the first shroom of the season and I had just won for this season because of a dream.

I don't have explanation of how. But, it wasn't just a coincidence. Nothing similar has happened since. I do know that on that morning something special had happened. I had received a vision. From whom and for what reason are the questions I've yet to answer. And when someone mentions "The Dreams", I pay close attention.

### Morel Booster™

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*And winter,  
slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face  
a dream of spring.*

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

## Readers Write



Hi Tom,  
My name is Vanessa C. and my mom, Cindy N., ordered some of your carved morels for my wedding cake.

They were gorgeous and added beauty to our cake and was a nice tribute to the time my family has spent in the woods looking for morels. I shared them with people who helped with our wedding or

are great friends and they were impressed as well.

I have attached several photographs of our wedding cake, feel free to use them on your website if you so choose. - Vanessa



Hi Vanessa, I'm so pleased that you liked them. We were overjoyed to provide such a unique addition to a wonderful occasion. - Tom Nauman

## Morel Mania Appearances in March

We will be attending one event in March of 2010.

### Ohio Deer & Turkey Expo

Bricker Building  
Ohio Expo Center  
(State Fairgrounds) • 717 E. 17th Ave  
Columbus, OH 43211

#### Event Hours:

Friday, March 19, 2010 • 2:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
Saturday, March 20, 2010 • 9:00 am to 7:00 pm  
Sunday, March 21, 2010 • 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Target Communications produces this show. Their website for complete event information is at:

<http://www.deerinfo.com>

We enjoy being there to see old friends and make new ones. Bring a copy of this newsletter or our catalog and we'll deduct \$5.00 from your purchase of \$20.00 or more. Redeemable at these events only and only one discount per person.

## Herbie the Elm Succumbs to Dutch Elm Disease

An ancient elm tree in Yarmouth, Maine finally lost its ongoing battle with Dutch Elm Disease (DED). Being more than 200 years old, the tree was long ago nicknamed Herbie. Believed to have sprouted in 1798, residents of Yarmouth have walked under its branches and enjoyed its shade for more than two centuries.

Herbie's stately branches stretched 110 feet skyward and with a canopy that was 120 feet wide, it could be spotted from miles away. The trunk was estimated to weigh 10 tons. Its top limbs were 30 to 40 feet long, as big as some typical trees.

The tree was one of a few in Yarmouth that survived the initial infestation of Dutch Elm Disease in the late 1950's and was assisted by resident Frank Knight. Herbie actually suffered through 14 bouts of DED. But Knight, Yarmouth's volunteer tree warden, oversaw selective pruning, applications of insecticide, and injections of fungicide. Knight realized that he could not save all of Yarmouth's elms, so he concentrated on Herbie.

The American Elm species (*Ulmus americana*) is as old as America itself. In fact, the original Liberty Tree of American Revolution fame was an American elm. Millions of American elm and its cousin, the Red Elm or Slippery elm, met their demise with the onslaught of DED which first appeared in Ohio in the 1930's. Prior to then, the trees lined streets throughout most of America.

Yarmouth alone once boasted over 700 of the trees. Now only a dozen or so remain. Frank Knight had nursed Herbie for over five decades. He said as he witnessed the crew dismantling Herbie limb by limb, "It's been a beautiful tree. I'm sorry to see it go. But nothing is forever, it's pretty near my turn." Mr. Knight is now 101 years old.

Mushroom hunters take notice when they hear the term "dead elm" because they often find morels growing nearby. Will the death of such a massive elm cause an equally massive appearance of morels? Time will tell. A Red elm is usually more dependable to produce morels. But, with a tree of this stature, who knows? Anyone up for a trip to Yarmouth, Maine this Spring? Please report your discoveries to me. An elm of this size could sprout morels for many years to come.

## Other Scheduled Appearances for 2010

**Wisconsin Deer & Turkey Expo**  
April 9 - 11, 2010  
Madison

**Morel University**  
May 1, 2010  
Henry, Illinois

**50th Annual National Morel Mushroom Festival**

May 13 - 16, 2010  
Boyer City, Michigan

**Mansfield Mushroom Festival**  
April 24 & 25, 2010  
Mansfield, Indiana

**Spoon River Valley Scenic Drive**  
October 2 -3 & 9 - 10, 2010  
London Mills, Illinois