



# Morel Booster™

Morel Mushroom News From Morel Mania, Inc.

Editor: Tom Nauman

Issue No. 20 ♦ April 2013

## Sponsored By:



May 3 & 4, 2013  
Ottawa, Illinois  
Learn ♦ Hunt ♦ Auction  
Phone  
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To Register

fungimag.com

The National Morel Mushroom Festival  
Boyer City, Michigan  
The weekend after Mother's Day  
[morelfest.com](http://morelfest.com)

[morelmushroomhunting.com](http://morelmushroomhunting.com)

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Morel Mania, Inc.  
8948 Illinois Highway 18 • Magnolia, Illinois 61336  
email: [tom@morelmania.com](mailto:tom@morelmania.com)  
Phone: 815-866-0319 • Web Site: <http://www.morelmania.com>

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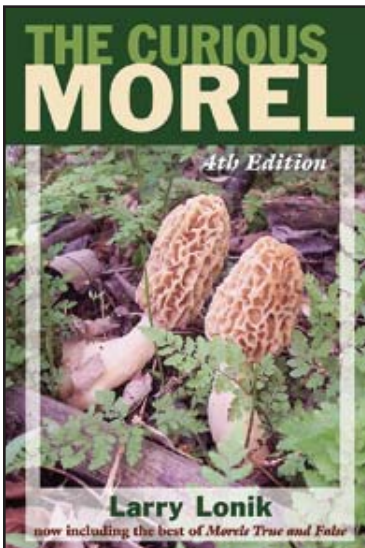
## Larry Lonik

January 31, 1949 -  
April 15, 2003

It's hard to believe that ten years can go by so rapidly. But, they say that life is like a roll of toilet paper; the closer you get to the end, the faster it goes. I don't think Larry knew the end was approaching.

He had stayed overnight, as he often did, on Tuesday, April 8. We shared a bottle of wine that evening, as we also often did. He said that our home near Magnolia was "four hours from anywhere" and since we were mutual customers of each other, his overnight stops were convenient to save us both on shipping charges. And, since he was always on the road, we wouldn't have known where to ship to anyway.

As he drove down our driveway, he taunted "I'll be pickin' mushrooms tomorrow". He was on his way to Missouri for an annual morel expedition with friends. The hunt usually was while riding mules. However, Larry had won a four-wheeler at the Minnesota Sports show that year and purchased a trailer to tow it behind his van. He was anxious to try it out in the woods.



As I understand it, during the hunt on April 15, one of his front wheels became tangled in a vine and the four-wheeler gently rolled over. Larry was tall enough that he merely stepped off as it rolled and was not injured in the process. He then uprighted the vehicle and drove it back to the farm house where he was staying.

While feasting on morels at dinner that evening he complained of some shoulder pain but protested when his friends said he should go to the hospital for x-rays. The friends insisted and took him to the local hospital to get checked over. The x-rays showed nothing and he was basically given a clean bill of health. But, while being discharged, he collapsed and the hospital personnel were unable to revive him. The coroner's report listed the cause of

death as heart failure. It was possibly from the stress of uprighting the four-wheeler.

If Larry knew he had a heart problem, he didn't share that knowledge with

*-Continued , see Larry Lonik on page 2*

Larry Lonik - continued from page 1



anyone. He wasn't overweight and didn't smoke, he seemed to be a poster boy for living a healthy lifestyle.

The knowledge he did share was about morels. He made dozens of appearances annually, authored three books on

the subject, and produced three videos (his *Motherlode* is still the ultimate morel movie and it's not even a "how to"). He helped start Morel Mountain, the first facility to grow morels indoors on a year round basis. He later grew morels indoors in his own facility.

Being 6' 7" tall, Larry was a giant among men. But, in a magic place I call Moreldom, he was gargantuan. Larry did more to promote morels than any other ten people I'm aware of. He had been featured in various newspaper, magazine, radio and TV appearances, including CBS News "Sunday Morning with Charles Osgood," Mother Earth News, The Food Network, The Wall Street Journal, CNN, National Public Radio and Martha Stewart Living.

As we talked morels over that bottle of wine that night, Larry's dreams and goals were greater than ever and knew no limits. He and his business had so many facets, most people couldn't even comprehend keeping it all organized. Yet Larry managed it (with help from Shelly Mazur, Jan Manning, and others) while being on the road five months of the year.

Mere words could never express the gratitude I feel having known Larry. Nor could they ever describe the void I feel realizing it may be a while before we go pickin' and grinnin' together again. Until then, Shroom On and Stay Curious. To quote a line from the movie *The Sandlot*, "Heroes get remembered, but legends never die."



**BRINGING HOME MORE  
THAN MUSHROOMS?**

**WE HAVE THE SOLUTION**

**See the Burr Paw at**

<http://www.morelmania.com/3Catalog/newmisc.html>

## 2013 Season is Looking Great

As reported last issue, the first morels found in the Central United States were on March 1 in Georgia. As of April 14, they are still picking! That's a six-week season. Chris Matherly of [morelmushroomhunting.com](http://morelmushroomhunting.com) reports that Georgia has had four fruitings and that they have found one-inch greys growing next to ten-inch yellows. Let's hope that trend continues north.

I thought we'd be finding some here in Central Illinois by this weekend. As of Monday, April 8 we had hit the ground temp of 46 degrees but it's at 41 this morning, April 14. At this point it's only a matter of days - or hours. And possibly only a matter of when am I gonna go check my early spots.

Check soil temps at:

<http://dtn.ilfb.org/index.cfm?show=1&mapID=20&showMenu=0>

Southern Indiana is supposed to get some warmer weather and rains through Thursday. It should make for good morels for the **Simply Music Simply Morels Festival** in Brown County, Indiana next weekend, April 19 & 20th. We also understand that they are planning to have the Indiana State Championship on Sunday, the 21st. Info and registration at:

<http://www.morelfestival.com/>

Likewise, conditions are looking really good for the **Midwest Morel Fest** in Ottawa, Illinois on May 3 & 4. They've moved the Morel University presentations and the Morel Museum indoors. Of course the University includes a field trip into the woods with expert faculty members. If you want to really learn the secrets of finding morel mushrooms, attend Morel University on May 3rd.

Then if you know you're good, but no one else believes you, imagine their shock when you bring home the Championship trophy. Enter the competition on Saturday, May 4. Total prizes are \$450 and bragging rights. There are also trophies for the largest and smallest morels found.

If you have too many or if you have none (but still savor the flavor) buy or sell at the Morel Auction on Saturday afternoon.

**For more information visit**

<http://www.morelmania.com/2Championship/MorelFest.html>

**There's a link to download the brochure  
in the upper right corner or click**

[http://www.experienceottawa.com/documents/2013MorelPamphlet\\_001.pdf](http://www.experienceottawa.com/documents/2013MorelPamphlet_001.pdf)

**To register for the**

**2013 Midwest Morel Fest**

**call the Ottawa Visitors Center at**

**815-434-2737**

**See the poster on Page 3**

**Good Luck to everyone**

**(unless you're poaching my patch)**

**Let us know how you're doing by  
sending your reports to the Sightings Page**

<http://www.morelmania.com/6Sightings/2013sightings.html>



MAY 3RD & 4TH  
**MIDWEST  
MOREL FEST**  
LEARN • HUNT  
AUCTION



www.EXPERIENCEOTTAWA.com

**Friday & Saturday  
May 3rd & May 4th**

Schedule of Events:

**Friday, May 3rd -**

- \* 3pm Hunt Check In
- \* 4pm Morel University Seminar
- \* 4:30pm Bus Departs

**Saturday, May 4th -**

**CHAMPIONSHIP HUNT**

- \* 7am Hunt & Auction Sign In
- \* 7am-2pm Morel Brunch In Park
- \* 7:30am Morel University Presentation
- \* 8am-2pm Old Town Farmers' Market  
And Hand/Homemade Market. Moonshine  
Tasting.
- \* 9am Illinois State Championship Hunt Bus  
Departs!
- \* 10am-1pm Old Town In Store Mushroom Hunt
- \* 1pm Mushroom Auction
- \* 2:30pm Championship Awards

All Events Take Place at  
Ottawa's Washington Park,  
Rt. 23 South Bound

Cost and Registration

13yrs and up ..... \$30.00  
12yrs and under.....\$15.00  
Walk-ins add.....\$5.00  
No Cancellations or Refunds!

For More Info:  
**morelmania.com**



Free Mesh Sack For All Participants!

**Sponsors**



For more information or to register please call the Ottawa Visitors Center at 815-434-2737

Registration Deadline April 27th, 2013, Walk-ins permitted if space allows, First Come—First Served.

Print the brochure at:

[http://www.experienceottawa.com/documents/2013MorelPamphlet\\_001.pdf](http://www.experienceottawa.com/documents/2013MorelPamphlet_001.pdf)



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## Where We'll Be This Spring

**Simply Music  
Simply Mushrooms  
Morel Festival**

**April 19 & 20**

Bill Monroe Bluegrass Hall of Fame & Campgrounds  
Brown County, Indiana  
[morelfestival.com](http://morelfestival.com)

**Midwest Morel Fest**  
May 3 & 4  
Ottawa, Illinois  
[experienceottawa.com](http://experienceottawa.com)

**National Morel Mushroom Festival**  
May 17-19  
Boyer City, Michigan  
[morelfest.com](http://morelfest.com)

**Mansfield Mushroom Festival**  
April 27 & 28  
Mansfield, Indiana  
[mansfieldvillage.com](http://mansfieldvillage.com)

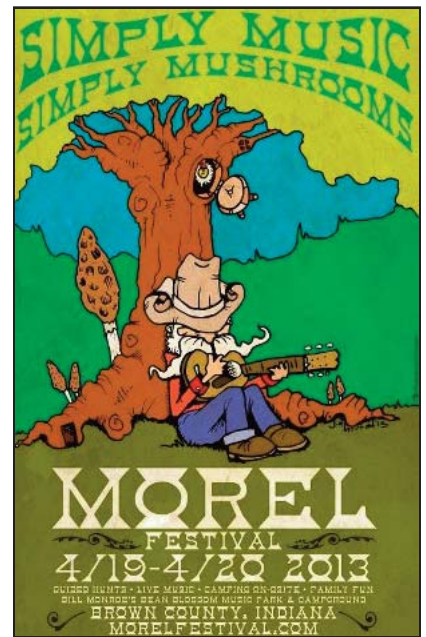
**Morel Fest Iowa**  
May 18  
Bass Pro Shops - Altoona, IA  
[morelfestiowa.com](http://morelfestiowa.com)

## Other Mushroom Festivals

**Spores N' More Mushroom Festival**  
April 19 & 20  
Findlay, Shelbyville, Sullivan, & Windsor, IL  
[lakeshelbyville.com](http://lakeshelbyville.com)

**Mountain Mushroom Festival**  
April 27 & 28  
Irvine, KY  
[mountainmushroomfestival.org](http://mountainmushroomfestival.org)

**Lewiston Mushroom Festival**  
May 11  
Lewiston, MI  
[lewistonchamber.com](http://lewistonchamber.com)



FRESHLY COOKED MORELS

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual MORELFEST

Saturday, May 18, 2013 @ Bass Pro Shops - Altoona, IA



**MORELS for LUNCH**

Join over 3,500 outdoors enthusiasts and morel mushroom lovers for our fun-filled day of activities on Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> at Bass Pro Shops in Altoona, IA.

8:00am - 2:00pm  
Activities For All  
- FREE Give-a-ways  
- Merchandise Discounts  
- Morel Mushroom Seminars

11:00am - 2:00pm Lunch  
**FRESH COOKED MORELS** (served w/choice of side dish while supplies last.)

12:00pm  
Winning team will be crowned the 2013 SHROOMIN' CHAMPIONS

**Hunt Morels, WIN THOUSANDS!**

Beginning April 20<sup>th</sup> and limited to ten teams of two pickers. In a four-week competition, YOU will decide if your team of Morel Mushroom hunters has what it takes to find the most morels (on any turf you find them on) before the GRAND WEIGH-IN. The 2013 SHROOMIN' CHAMPIONS will be crowned, at NOON, on stage, at Altoona Bass Pro Shops, on May 18th.

**\$5,000** (in cash and prizes)

- 4 weekly weigh-ins (only fresh morels accepted)
- Up-to-Date standings displayed at Bass Pro's entrance
- Donate or Sell your morels at weekly weigh-ins

REGISTER at [www.morelfestiowa.com](http://www.morelfestiowa.com) or (515-447-0815)



We don't have complete information on all the festivals. but here's a list of others which you should be able to find if you do a Bing or Google search. We only wish we could attend them all.

- **Richmond, MO**
- **Wyoming, IL**
- **Mesick, MI**
- **Muscoda, WI**

We understand a new festival is planned for Hadley MI on Sunday, May 5. Contact them at [hadleychamber@yahoo.com](mailto:hadleychamber@yahoo.com)

## New Illinois Club

There is also a new mushroom club for Southern Illinois with a foray planned in June <http://www.mushroomco-op.org/GiantCity2013.html>  
More info next issue.