

64th Annual National Morel Mushroom Festival

May 16-19, 2024

P.O. Box 184

Boyne City, MI 49712

www.bcmorelfestival.com

ELLEN AUTEN

Social Media & Content Manager for Petoskey Area Visitors Bureau



Ellen Auten is a Harbor Springs native where she spent high school and college summers working in various area restaurant kitchens. After graduating from Central Michigan University in 2017 with a degree in advertising and design, she now promotes all things Boyne City, Petoskey, Harbor Springs, Bay Harbor, Bay View and Alanson area communities to new and returning visitors!

RHYS JORDAN



Rhys Jordan grew up in the rural thumb-area before moving to northeast Michigan, working with Hope Shores Alliance for a short time before becoming a photojournalist with 9and10 News and later taking on the role of producer. He's been fascinated with morels for a long time but hasn't had luck hunting for them... and it'll be his first time ever trying them!

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TOM JOHNSON



Tom Johnson is the former president of the National Morel Mushroom Festival back in the 1990's. He is a birder, naturalist, and all around good guy. Tom hosts nature walks and wild edible guided outings. Tom's second home is in the woods.

TOM NAUMAN



Tom Nauman's first mushroom hunt was "in the womb" and he has continued his passion for finding the elusive morel for more than 70 years. Mr. Nauman has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Wild Indiana*, and *Outdoor Illinois Magazine*, and is the founder of The Illinois State Morel Mushroom Hunting Championship. He has attended the past 31 years of the National Morel Mushroom Festival in Boyne City and helped start the craft show there. Tom is a well-known lecturer on the subject of mushrooms where he willingly shares the secrets of successful morel hunting. He also discusses the conditions necessary for morels to grow: habitat, temperature, and weather. His lectures feature videos of time-lapse morel growth and morels releasing spores. Mr. Nauman's company, *Morel Mania Inc.*, will celebrate its 32nd anniversary this year. The business provides mushroom books, collecting bags, walking staffs, and other themed merchandise to mushroom

enthusiasts throughout the United States. The company's website is: morelmania.com

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DAVID LORENZ



Dave Lorenz, served as Vice President of Travel Michigan until retirement in December 2023. In this role, he was responsible for leading the state's tourism branding, advertising, and public relations efforts, overseeing the award-winning Pure Michigan tourism campaign and coordinating overall statewide tourism initiatives.

Mr. Lorenz is immediate past Chair of the National Council of State Tourism Directors, served as Chair of Great Lakes USA, the regional international marketing consortium and Cruise the Great Lakes, a two-nation destination cruise marketing organization and on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Travel Association. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Michigan Cares for Tourism and the West Michigan Tourism

Association. In his prior role, he was a board member of the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau, MotorCities National Heritage Area, Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Grand Rapids Hotel Advisory Board.

In 2023, he was named as the U.S. Travel Association "National Travel Director of the Year. He was a 2018 recipient of the HSMIAI "Top 25 Extraordinary Minds in Hospitality Sales, Marketing & Revenue Optimization, a 2023 winner of the "Stellar Legacy Award" from the Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association and in 1990, was awarded by the U.S. Coast Commandant, a "Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of notable services to the U.S. Coast Guard.

Prior to Travel Michigan, Mr. Lorenz was the Manager of Partnerships and Promotions, for Meijer, Inc. He also had 14 years of experience in radio broadcasting in roles varying from announcer and news reporter to numerous management positions.

Today, Mr. Lorenz serves as an Executive Consultant for MMGY Next Factor.

Mr. Lorenz attended Western Michigan University. He lives in Norton Shores, Michigan with his wife, Roberta.