

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA APRIL 2003 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, April 22, 2003
TIME: 7:00-Basic Beekeepers; 8:00-General Meeting/Program
PLACE: Community Center, 205 Main St., Round Rock
PROGRAM: Bee Swarms: Jimmie Oakley, Frank Hunt, John Howe
HOSTS: **Brian Rodgers, Karen Garmon**

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April and May are usually the busiest months for collecting bee swarms. Of course, we prefer to collect swarms from some place other than our own hives, so Jimmie Oakley will be covering that part of the process—what we need to do to prevent swarming—when he meets with the Basic Beekeeping group. Then the program will continue in the general meeting, discussing methods used in retrieving swarms and what to do after you get them back to your own bee yard. What if the swarm you retrieve is Africanized? Do you need to replace the swarm queen with a new queen? If you have questions, be prepared to ask the professionals.

What a great crowd came out last meeting, in spite of threatening weather, to congratulate the 2002 Ed Wolfe scholarship recipients on their successful year of beekeeping and to welcome the 2003 scholarship winners. We welcome **Joel Jorden, James McCoy, Caleb Oakley, and John Sivells** as the new class of beginning beekeepers. They received their woodware and beekeeping equipment and, with the help of former recipients, the **TBA Honey Queen, Vanessa Bounds**, and adults present, assembled their hives and frames. On April 6 these youngsters, their families, and several adults who also wanted to watch Jimmie Oakley's orientation and demonstration of installing a package of bees, came out to the Bost farm to receive their bees, then took them home to start their new and exciting experiences as beekeepers. A large number of other WCABA members came on Saturday to get the queens and packages of bees they had ordered. We hope both young and adult beekeepers will have a successful year with their bees making a good crop of delicious Texas honey.

We also welcome several new members to WCABA: Andrew and Sheila Wray, Wimberley; Vinton Stanfield and Lance Powell, Liberty Hill; Jerrell and Wanda Hein, Driftwood; and Gregory and Nancy Pekar, Belton. Renewing their membership for 2003 at the last meeting were David and Diane Forfia, Georgetown; Jim and Sara Reeves, Buchanan Dam; Louis and Dot Absnaider, Liberty Hill; Randy Oakley and family, Dale; Doug Branch, Austin; and Albert Morgan, Austin. Received by mail since the meeting are renewals from Clark and Wilma Polson, Marble Falls; Kenneth Miller, Elgin; Gary Rowland, Burnet; Luther Lucko, Leander; and Darryl Smith, Round Rock. There are still several members who have not renewed. We trust they are just procrastinating and will still count on being a member of WCABA.

Please mark this date on your calendar: **Saturday, May 24**. Bill and Julie Hein have invited our association to hold our annual **Field Day/Picnic** at their comfortable home near Jarrell. They have a large wrap-around porch, shade trees, and swimming pool which our

members thoroughly enjoyed as we visited and took part in several interesting bee-related demonstrations last year. Directions to their home will be included in next month's newsletter. We also need two or three members to offer to assist Julie in setting out the potluck lunch, so please speak to Julie or sign up on the host list assuring us that you can help. Incidentally, there are still several vacant spots on the host list; please consider whether you can bring refreshments on one of the available months.

Swarm season is upon us, and I need more people who are willing to retrieve swarms in order to refer callers to them. If you can do this, please let me know your phone number(s) and the area you are able to serve, either by calling me, sending me an e-mail (info is under my name on the title page), or by signing the swarm sheet.

We thank the folks who donate items for the door prizes, a real fun time in our meeting. Please help me be sure I have your name matched with your donation. Donors for whom I have names from the last meeting were Karin Cantlon, Joshua Oakley, Jeann Schmidt, and Wilbur Brinkmeyer. Lucky winners were Dianne Forfia, flower holder; Ray Hawkins, kitchen towels; Darlene Hawkins, wind spinner; Wilbur Brinkmeyer, chocolate bees; Anna Oakley, flower hanger; Vinton Stanfield, buzzy ball; and Louis Absnaider, thermometer.

When our beekeepers in Williamson County and the surrounding area were trying to organize, one of the leaders in the effort was Bill Victor of Hutto. He retired from beekeeping about 10 years ago, but his daughter, Brenda Raesz, and her husband continued keeping bees until his health failed. She called me today and said that she and her husband had discussed donating much of their beekeeping equipment to WCABA to be used, if possible, to help young people starting out in beekeeping. Either Brenda or Bill (or both) will be at the meeting Tuesday night with a list and description of what is available, and she wants this donation to be in her late husband's memory.

Queen bees are elusive creatures. Many times when looking for the queen, we have to be satisfied with evidence that she is there and doing her job: laying eggs. But what if you need to requeen? It is absolutely necessary to find and kill the old queen if you want to requeen a hive as you cannot get bees to accept a new queen if the old queen is still in the hive. Following are some ideas taken from the *Bee Buzzer*, the newsletter published by the Northeastern Kansas Beekeeper's Association.

Plan to requeen early in the year when there are fewer bees in the hive.

Plan to look for the queen during the warmest part of the day. During this time most of the field bees are out of the hive and this makes looking for the queen easier.

The first place to look for the queen is in the brood nest on frames with hatching brood that has some eggs in it.

Carefully scan each frame as you pull it out, looking carefully for her; glance at the frame next to the one you pull out. Sometimes you can see her on the face of the frame still in the hive.

If this doesn't work you can:

Slip a queen excluder between your two hive bodies and in 3-4 days you'll know which half she's in because you'll only have eggs in one half of the hive which narrows the search area.

Another pretty drastic method is to get a light colored sheet of plastic or a sheet and set it down in front of your hive. Remove all frames from the hive (having another box handy works well). Shake all bees from your lid, inner cover and bottom board onto the sheet. Set your bottom board back up and put one hive body back. Put a queen excluder over the hive entrance. Carefully shake or brush the

bees off each frame, being careful not to step on the bees. As they run toward the hive entrance, watch for the queen. Check each frame again before returning it to the hive.

The next method requires more equipment but is also pretty drastic. Move the hive aside. In its place, put a single story hive containing empty combs. Above this add a queen excluder and an empty deep super or hive body. When everything is ready, smoke the colony well and shake off the bees from each comb onto the queen excluder. Then while holding the frame inside the empty hive body, shake the bees off the frame, into the empty box. After shaking each frame check the sides of the hive body and the queen excluder, looking for the queen. Place the bee-free combs in an empty hive body. As with the previous method you will eventually find the old queen if you do everything right. The next step after you find the queen is to put the hive back to its original form.

Now check your stomach and see if she isn't crawling around on you!

If you still haven't found her and there are sealed queen cells, then they've swarmed.

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Honey Vanilla Cheesecake with Gingersnap Crust

Crust:

32 old-fashioned crisp gingersnap cookies, crushed

2 Tbsp. sugar

1 egg white

Filling:

4 oz. reduced-fat cream cheese

1 cup honey

16 oz. 1 %-fat cottage cheese

1 Tbsp. vanilla extract

1 cup fat-free ricotta cheese

cup fat-free egg substitute

2 Tbsp. cornstarch

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a food processor or blender, crush the gingersnaps with the 2 tablespoons sugar. Add the egg white and process long enough to moisten the mixture. Press the crumbs into the bottom and up the sides of an 8- or 9-inch springform pan to form a thin layer. (If the crumbs are too sticky, use a sheet of waxed paper between the crust and your fingers to press the crumbs into place.

Bake 10 to 12 minutes in a 350-degree oven until the crust is brown and firm to the touch. Remove from the oven. (If the crust slides down the side of the pan, use a rubber spatula or the back of a spoon to press it back in place.) Reduce heat to 300 degrees F. Fill an oven-proof dish with about 1 inch of warm water; place at the back of oven to provide steam for the cheesecake while it bakes.

Use a paper towel to wipe out the food processor or blender. Add the cream cheese, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese and cornstarch; blend until the mixture is smooth. Add the honey, vanilla and blend again. Add the egg substitute, blending until the mixture is smooth and even-colored. Pour into the prepared crust. Bake 20 minutes on the lower rack of the oven. Reduce oven temperature to 250 F and bake 60 minutes longer or until the sides are set and the center is fluid but not sloshing. Turn off the oven and allow the cake to cool 1 hour in the oven. Remove and cool to room temperature. Chill covered overnight before slicing.

Bees

Queens

Honey

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