

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA FEBRUARY 2006 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 2006
TIME: 7:00 P.M.—Basic Beekeepers; 8:00—Gen. Mtg./Program
PLACE: 205 Main Street, Round Rock, Texas
PROGRAM: Walker's Bee Breeding Program—Dr. Clint Walker
HOSTS: **Melanie Medrano, Lerma family**

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If you were at the January WCABA meeting, you know how informative it was; if you missed the meeting, you need to read current articles in the bee magazines to know what beekeepers are faced with if they want to stay in beekeeping, be it hobby, sideliners, or commercial. Jimmie Oakley gave a very interesting talk on the changing conditions in beekeeping over the last year. He related some of the stories he heard from the commercial beekeepers at the ABF Convention and he listed some of the steps we need to follow to keep our bees healthy and better able to resist the effects of the Varroa mites.

Suzan Gibson led the “Beekeeping 101” discussion last meeting, starting with the basics: components of the beehive and basic equipment a beekeeper needs. This time, the topic will be about choosing the location for the hive, making it ready, and being sure you have the necessary equipment ready to work your hive.

We are very fortunate to have a great follow-up to the January program for our program this month. Even though this is an extremely busy time for queen breeders, Clint Walker has graciously consented to come talk to us about his breeding program and address our concerns about what kind of queens we are getting and what to expect of the bees that come as a result. We are very, very fortunate to have someone so knowledgeable and articulate to come talk to us. After the program, if you have some questions, such as the thinking on using hardware cloth instead of bottom boards to help get rid of varroa mites, Clint will have some very good ideas.

We appreciate Clint Walker's letting us know that, due to changing conditions, he has decided to forego sending more bees to pollinate the almond orchards in California and will, instead, be able to furnish a limited number of packages of bees to his customers, including WCABA club orders. Recently we mailed notices of this availability to our members and we hope you have taken the opportunity to check your hives and decided whether you need to order some packages or if new queens would fit your situation better. We have been receiving quite a few orders; you need to make your decision before the meeting Tuesday night if you



have not already done so. The deadline for letting Clint know how many packages of bees WCABA members want at the club discount price is March 3—right around the corner!

I shall be available to take checks, payable to WCABA, for bee orders before the program starts Tuesday evening. Also, you need to be a current member of our beekeepers club, so if you haven't paid your 2006 dues, please give Jeann Schmidt your membership application. If you don't renew your membership by March 15, you won't receive a newsletter.

Do you know a school age youngster who is genuinely interested in bees and wants to learn more about this fascinating insect by having his/her own hive? If so, tell them about our Ed Wolfe Memorial scholarship program and invite them to get an application blank either by downloading it from our web site (www.wcaba.org) or by contacting Jimmie Oakley. Their application with their handwritten paragraphs telling why they want to learn about bees should be mailed to Robert Bost, Chairman, 4355 C.R. 110, Georgetown, TX 78626 by March 10. The paragraphs indicating the youngster's interest and intent to learn about bees is the main criteria used in judging and rating the applicants. The awards will be made at our March meeting.

We thank Mrs. Marineile Wolfe and son, Neile, for their generous contribution to the Ed Wolfe Memorial scholarship fund. Mrs. Wolfe wrote, "Ed passionately supported the industry and the fellowship in the Williamson group" and "As Ed always put it 'Bee your very best!'".

Kim Arnett was elected Historian at the January meeting. She would like to gather pictures of the WCABA members and have them available for us to look at and be able to put names with faces. A great idea! If you have a picture you would be willing to contribute, please put your name on the back of it and hand it to Kim as soon as you can. If some of our charter members have pictures of those who helped get WCABA started, it would be so good to have that for our archives.

Since swarm season will soon arrive (seems as if Spring is already here), a swarm retrieval sheet will be passed around Tuesday evening and if you would like to be called to take swarms in your area, please be sure to sign it. Also, we still need a second host for June, July, August, and November; please consider adding your name if you can bring refreshments to one of those meetings.

We welcome Janice Oniz, Kyle, TX to WCABA. Two guests, Vernon Standley, Jr., of Georgetown, and James Lockhart, Thrall, visited at our last meeting; we hope they will consider joining WCABA. Those who renewed their membership for 2006 were Tom Hordnes Family, Jimmie and Kay Oakley, Benjy and Lisa Cox, Kim and Bert Arnett, Rick Lattanzio, Buddy and Cherie Miller, Santos and Melanie Medrano, James and Genevieve Friesenhahn, Olaf and Jeann Schmidt, and sending their dues by mail since the meeting, Ted Costuras, Robert Ruckriegel, and Robert Yurk.

Door prizes were contributed last month by Frank and Barbara Hunt, Jimmie Oakley, Faith and Abigail Miller, Melanie Medrano, Wilbur Brinkmeyer, and Suzan Gibson. Lucky winners were Harold

Kind, Vernon Standley, Haven Medrano, Melanie Medrano, Kim Arnett, Faith Miller, Lisa Cox, Gayle Shaw, Terri Hordnes, and Kory Hordnes.

In the December '05 issue of *Bee Culture* magazine, Dr. Steve Sheppard, Department of Entomology at Washington State University, points out that research and experiences in the past have relevance for understanding more about today's problems regarding mites. He states, "As various miticides were used and over used within the European community....populations of *Varroa destructor* were found that were resistant to control by fluvalinate" (Apistan strips). Other research has compared the infestation of Africanized and Carniolan bees by *Varroa destructor* mites in hives maintained in the same apiary. The finding of this study over a one year period was that the infestation level in the Carniolan colonies was "much higher" than in the Africanized honey bees.

A second research, done by Dr. Marla Spivak of the University of Minnesota, indicated that the role of honey bee hygienic behavior is a possible defense against *Varroa destructor*. Sheppard says, "The notion that the eventual solution to the *Varroa* mite problem will involve genetic improvement of honey bee stocks, rather than reliance on another version of a miticide strip, appears to be increasingly main stream."

Sheppard concludes, "A close relationship between hygienic behavior and another well-known trait known as 'suppression of mite reproduction' (SMR) has been reported. Overall, it is likely that hygienic behavior will continue to play an important role in honey bee breeding programs for the foreseeable future."

Want to celebrate George Washington's birthday? How about whipping up former Texas Honey Queen /American Honey Queen Colleen Henson Perrin's favorite recipe, Honey Cherry Surprise?

Honey Cherry Surprise

1/3 c Honey	4 oz. Cream Cheese	1/2 tsp. Lemon Peel	1 tsp. Vanilla Extract
1 tsp. unflavored Gelatin	3 Tbsp. hot water	1 c. sour cream	8 oz. Whipped Cream
9 in. Graham Cracker Crust	1 1/2 Bananas (sliced)	1/4 c. chopped Pecans	21 oz. Cherry Pie filling

Cream together honey, cream cheese, lemon peel, and vanilla extract. Dissolve gelatin into hot water. Mix gelatin mixture and cream cheese mixture well. Gently stir in sour cream. Fold in whipped cream. Layer crust with bananas and pecans. Place cream mixture on top of the bananas. Top off pie with cherry pie filling. Refrigerate at least two hours before serving.

For Sale: Used bee boxes, frames, tops, bottoms, misc. items. Mrs. Carson Smith, 512/255-2600.

Wanted: 9-frame spacers. Don Atkins – twooldcrows@cvtv.net or call 979/242-7419.

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