

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Website address: www.wcaba.org

WCABA FEBRUARY 2007 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, February 27, 2006
TIME: 7:00 P.M.-Beekeeping 101;7:45-Break; 8:00-Gen. Mtg/Program
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301 W. Bagdad, Bldg. 2 Rm. 2 , Round Rock
PROGRAM: "Plants that attract bees"; Mark Ney, McIntire's Nursery, G'town
HOSTS: **Marcus and Jody Young, Mary Bost**

We are very fortunate to have Mark Ney from McIntire's Nursery in Georgetown to be our speaker Tuesday evening. He will be talking about plants that attract bees, when to plant them, and other items that relate to bees. This is the time of year when beekeepers look forward to gardening and landscaping that will be beneficial to our helpful social insects: bees. We thank Elizabeth Exley for contacting Mr. Ney and making arrangements for him to bring us this worthwhile information.

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Come to the meeting early so you can take advantage of the well-planned presentations that Suzan Gibson makes in Beekeeping 101. Keyed to assist the novice beekeeper, her programs invariably have information that experienced beekeepers also appreciate and benefit by attending.

Wow! What a good crowd we had at our last meeting, and besides that, we welcomed several new members: Tom and Lisa Kutch and Kimberly from Cedar Park; Brian Johnston, Liberty Hill; Leroy Hampleman, Georgetown; Jarrett and Deborah Cravey, Round Rock; David Kohn, Florence; and Marissa Little, Austin. Also, guests were Speer and Robson Macartney, Janice and Noah Hartley, and Kent and Kristin Knight. Former members visiting were Chris and Stephen Windsor. We hope these new people enjoyed coming to the meeting and found it both interesting and informative.

Members who renewed at the last meeting are Stan Timmerman, Doug Branch, Steve Poldrack, Clyde Anderson, Edward Holzapfel, Jimmie and Kay Oakley, Taysha and John Howe, Gayle and Skip Shaw, Wilbur and Donnie Brinkmeyer, Jim and Sara Reeves, Buddy and Cherie Miller, Frank and Barbara Hunt, Juanita Duel, Benjy and Lisa Cox, Harold Kind, and Marcus and Jody Young. Since the meeting, William and Evalyn Scott, Alma Konze, Royce Johnston, and Santos and Melanie Medrano have mailed in their dues.

A big **Thank You** to all of you who signed the Host Sheet. Now you won't have to be "bugged" to sign at each meeting. This is the first time the host list has been completed this early in the year that I can remember—and I've been a member since 1980.

February and March are months filled with activity for WCABA members. School-age youths (preferably 10-15 year olds) who are interested in learning about bees and the fascinating hobby of beekeeping need to obtain and submit their applications for the **Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost scholarship** award by contacting Mr. Jimmie Oakley, jloakley@juno.com or phone number 512/388-3630. The applicants must write **in longhand** their essays telling why they want to learn about bees and submit their completed application by March 10. It is also helpful if a parent writes why he/she thinks their child is interested and will be responsible for tending the hive. Each scholarship consists of the material to make the hive, equipment to work the hive, and the package of bees to start the colony. These awards are made at the March meeting. A mentor will work with the recipients, and each winner is asked to attend meetings, especially the Beekeeping 101 program, and must make a report of his/her experiences at the November meeting.

The second activity is making our orders through WCABA for **queens and/or packages of bees with a queen**. Please check your hives now, make your plans for this year's bee yard, and contact Mary Bost at bostbees@juno.com or write her at 4355 C.R. 110, Georgetown, TX 78626. Clint Walker gives WCABA members a discount when we make one order as that saves him a bookkeeping chore. Queens from Walker Honey Company will be \$15.00 each; 3# packages of bees with a queen will be \$70.00. Marking queens, add \$1.00, clipping and marking, add \$2.00. Money to pay for your bees needs to be given to Mary by March 27. The bees will be brought to the Bost Farm on Saturday, April 21, for you to pick up.

You must be a current (2007) member of WCABA to receive this bee order discount. Please, if you need to pay your dues when you pay for your bees, pay with two separate checks. It's very confusing to have both payments made by one check. Membership checks are passed on to Jeann Schmidt and I keep the bee checks until all have been paid for.

Besides being able to order bees at a discount, membership in WCABA has other advantages: use of the club extracting equipment at no cost, receiving the club newsletter, getting a discount on the subscription price of bee magazines, receiving good informational programs, and fellowship with other bee enthusiasts. Our membership of \$10.00 is by the calendar year and we ask that all renewals be made by the March meeting. If you haven't renewed by March 15, you will get a reminder card instead of a newsletter.



In the January newsletter, a brief description of the book, Finding Conway by Elizabeth Batista, a 16 year old member of WCABA, was given. This is an adventure story, well told, about three teenagers. It would make an excellent gift for a teenager; we highly recommend it. Elizabeth will donate half the price of the book to WCABA for each book we buy. Jimmie Oakley has the books: their price--\$19.95.

Door prize donations last month were made by Dadant, Juanita Duel, Beth Walker, Kay Oakley, Kim Arnett, and Karin Cantlon. Winners were Juanita Duel, salt and pepper shakers; Jim Reeves, subscription to ABJ, Jarrett Cravey, magic towel; Marissa Little, bee socks; Robson Macartney, bee jingle; Barbara

Hunt, bee T-shirt; Stan Timmerman, salt and pepper shakers; Terri Hordnes, candle in holder; and Benjamin Oakley, bee apron.

Several people e-mailed me regarding the article entitled “Mystery Illness Wipes Out Bee Colonies” which appeared in newspapers and on the internet. Researchers “are scrambling to find the cause of the ailment, called Colony Collapse Disorder. Reports of unusual colony deaths have come from at least 22 states. Some affected commercial beekeepers—who often keep thousands of colonies—have reported losing more than 50 percent of their bees.” If you didn’t see this article and would like to read more about it, ask to see my copy or check the WCABA Web-site for a reprint.

In her book, “Robbing the Bees”, Holley Bishop writes, “Female worker bees will travel up to two miles from the nest in search of nectar, pollen, and water supplies for the hive. That’s more than 8,000 acres of perusal at the disposal of each colony....When a bee spots and smells a likely flower, she lands on the blossom or any part of the nearby plant that will support her forty-milligram body weight. She unfurls her proboscis from beneath her chin; like a tiny elephant’s trunk, it searches out the nectar pools, then sucks until all of the liquid within its reach is taken up. Draining up to 1,500 nectaries in this way, a bee fills her stomach or ‘honey sac,’ collecting up to half her weight in nectar before returning heavily to the hive. If nectar is abundant, achieving a full load can take as little as fifteen minutes. She might also be in search of pollen, the plant protein that bees feed their young, which she collects in saddlebags on her rear legs, packs into pellets, and transports back to the colony. Or she may go in search of a drop or two of the five gallons of water it takes to hydrate and cool the colony each year. These various hive duties add up to five hundred miles of flight in the lifetime of an average bee.”

Arriving at the threshold of the hive, “ a returning forager empties her stomach and relays her load of nectar to waiting young ‘house’ bees who dutifully move off to process the nectar, extending their long tongues to offer the droplet to the warm drying air of the hive. Soon, they offer the nectar to other worker bees, who deposit it in storage cells and fan their wings to dry it further. When the honey is fully cured, reduced from 80 percent to less than 17 percent water, or from the consistency of sugar water to that of molasses, the bees cap it with wax for storage.” This is only a small portion of Holley’s very interesting book on bees.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

The recipe below is directly from the new brochure of **2007 Texas Honey Queen, Rachael Seida.**

Apple Butter ~

12 cups thick applesauce, fresh or canned 1, 6-ounce can frozen apple juice or concentrate
1 ½ cups **Texas Honey** 2 tsp cinnamon ½ tsp nutmeg ½ tsp ginger 1 tsp ground cloves

Mix applesauce and apple juice concentrate in a heavy pan. Add spices and honey; don’t over sweeten. Cook slowly and stir often until thick enough to round up a spoon (this will take awhile). Pour into hot sterile jars and seal, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Process 10 minutes in water bath.

Yield: 6 pints

Bees

Queens

Honey

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