

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA JULY, 2007 NEWSLETTER

Visit us at: www.wcaba.org

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DATE: Tuesday, July 24, 2007
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: Retrieving Swarms and Removing Bees under the new Law
HOSTS: **Abigail and Faith Miller, Sara Reeves**

This is the season of the year when beekeepers get antsy to start collecting that beautiful crop of honey. Our program last meeting was on use of the extracting equipment, and some beautiful honey was extracted. Let me remind you that you need to schedule use of the club equipment as soon as you have a particular date in mind that you want to extract. It's good to have a second date also in case someone else has already spoken for your preferred date. You can e-mail me at bostbees@juno.com or phone me at 512/863-3656 to be put on the calendar.

We regret that the beekeeping shortcourse that had been scheduled for June 30 had to be cancelled on short notice, due to the illness of the presenter, John Talbert. We hope we can find another suitable date in the near future. Twenty people had indicated they planned to attend. Tutor, Oakley, Exley, and Tuuk extracting honey



In light of the passage of new legislation effecting beekeepers during the past session (see reference below) we will talk about retrieving swarms in the Tuesday evening meeting, and explore how easy (or hard) it is. We will discuss what is involved in removing bees and is it for you. Bring a 'brief' account of your best and worst experience in dealing with swarms and/or removing bees to share with the group. Pictures are welcome. We may cover the purpose of the 'Swarm List' and help you decide if you should be on it. Is it a privilege or an obligation?

We welcome two new members to WCABA: McCartney Taylor of Austin, and Gary and Linda Bible of Liberty Hill. We hope these new members will find our meetings helpful and will enjoy getting to know other beekeepers and hearing their “beekeeping tales”.

We thank the donors of last month’s door prizes: Mary Bost, Juanita Duel, Cherie Miller, and Susan Gibson. Also, someone donated a large supply of garden produce and I failed to write down their name; please accept my apologies.

Winners were Juanita Duel, Veda Capps, Monica Holman, Ed Holazpfel, Emily Tuuk, Leroy Hampleman, Nathan Exley, Elizabeth Exley, Cherie Miller, Kitty Lockhart, Kim Arnett, Kay Oakley, Jimmie Oakley, and Gary Bible.

I get questions fairly often from people who want comb honey, or pollen, or beeswax. A lady, Meredith Duke who lives in Sun City, would like to buy enough beeswax to make a ½ cup (melted) wax to use in a “non-petroleum jelly”. If you can help with this, please let me know and I’ll be glad to put you in touch with her.

An article entitled “Beekeepers Can Remove Bees from Structures,” written by John Talbert in the May/June issue of the TBA Journal, tells that the onerous restriction for removing bees from a structure by beekeepers, has been removed by the last session of the Texas Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Rick Perry. Previously, beekeepers had to be licensed by the Structural Pest Control Board but the Sunset Advisory Commission recommended that the SPC be abolished and their responsibilities be transferred to the Department of Agriculture. However, the beekeeper wanting to remove bees from structures must register with the chief apiary inspector “as provided by Subchapter C, Chapter 131, Agriculture Code.”

Talbert recommends that “any beekeeper deciding to remove bees from a structure should certainly consider their level of experience and certainly have a plan to be able to control a possible Africanized honey bee situation. They also should not proceed without adequate liability insurance.” John Howe, a member of WCABA, is very experienced in removing bees from structures. If you should want to learn how to do this sort of swarm retrieval, perhaps you can offer to help him and thereby learn some good techniques.

In her book, *Robbing the Bees*, Holley Bishop writes the following interesting details about bees gathering honey: “Female worker bees will travel up to two miles from the nest in search of nectar, pollen, and water supplies for the hive....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 flexible 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.....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”.

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% to less than 17% water, ...the bees cap it with wax for storage.”

You crave something sweet but it’s too hot to light up a hot oven? Here’s a quick, simple recipe I found in a *Prevention* booklet. And it’s no-cook!

Chocolate Peanut Butter Balls

25 chocolate wafer cookies, finely crushed
1/3 cup TEXAS honey

1 cup + 2 Tbsp. confectioners’ sugar
1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp. smooth peanut butter

Mix the cookie crumbs and 1 cup of confectioner’s sugar in a large bowl. Whisk together in a medium bowl the honey and peanut butter until well-combined. Add to the cookie crumb mixture and stir well (the mixture may be crumbly at this point). Shape the mixture with your hands into 1” balls (the mixture should hold together as you shape it).

Set the balls aside at room temperature until ready to serve, or store them in an airtight container at room temperature for 2 to 3 days. Just before serving, roll the balls in the remaining 2 tablespoons of confectioners’ sugar. Makes 36 cookie balls.



Paul & Nathan Exley and Noah Hartley uncapping frames



Michael Tutor loading frame into the extractor

Bees

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Honey

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