

# Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association

**NEXT MEETING:**  
TUESDAY JUNE 25th  
7:00-9:00 Program  
Georgetown Public Library

## **2019 Club Officers:**

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Lisa Hoekstra

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**QUEEN CHAIR:**  
**Ginny Stubblefield**  
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## Meeting Night Changes

Tuesday June 25th  
Tuesday July 23rd  
**Tuesday August 20th**  
Tuesday September 24th

Meetings are the 4th  
Tuesday of each month  
except August when room  
availability caused a change.

## May Program

7:00 pm Jim Colbert - Varroa Mites - When, Why  
and How to Treat

8:00 pm Tara Chapman - Extraction and Harvesting



# **Bee Science Pearls**

## **From Phil Ainslie, President**

### **Fish and Bees “Talk” with Help from Robot Translators.**

“It’s the first time that people are using this kind of technology to have two different species communicate with each other,” says Simon Garnier, a complex systems biologist at New Jersey Institute of Technology who did not participate in the study. “It’s a proof of concept that you can have robots mediate interactions between distant groups.” He adds, however, that the specific applications of such a setup remain to be seen.

### **Honey Bee capable of understanding complex Arithmetic**

Scientists discovered that bees can “learn to use blue and yellow as symbolic representations for addition or subtraction,” according to the report published in the peer-reviewed journal *Science Advances*.

While many animals demonstrate an understanding of basic numbers for tasks such as foraging, shoaling, and resource management, more complex math can be done only by a limited number of nonhuman vertebrates.

The findings are significant because honey bees and humans are separated by more than 400 million years of evolution, meaning that “advanced numerical cognition may be more accessible to nonhuman animals than previously suspected,” the study found.

Scientists created an experiment using mazes to test whether 14 bees could use yellow and blue to add and subtract. The study found that the bees got the right answer 63% to 72% of the time.

While the testing pool was small, the findings are significant given that brains of bees are 20,000 times smaller than those of humans. According to *Science* magazine, this could lead to new approaches to artificial intelligence and machine learning.

### **Age matters: Young larvae boost pollen foraging in honey bees**

As larvae age, the diet they’re fed changes. So too do the pheromone signals they emit. In a paper published in the advanced online edition of the journal *Animal Behavior*, ASU alumna Kirsten Traynor, a research associate with the University of Maryland, Robert E. Page Jr., ASU university provost and professor in the School of Life Sciences, and Yves Le Conte, a researcher with Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, show that adult bees foraging for food use the changing pheromone signals of the young to adjust what nutritional resources they collect.

### **Biologists identify honeybee ‘clean’ genes known for improving survival**

Some worker honeybees detect and remove sick and dead larvae and pupae from their colonies. This hygienic behavior, which has a strong genetic component, is known to improve the colony’s chance of survival. The researchers narrowed in on the “clean” genes that influence this behavior to understand the evolution of this unique trait.

“Social immunity is a really important trait that beekeepers try to select in order to breed healthier colonies,” said Professor Amro Zayed, a bee genomics expert in the Department of Biology, Faculty of Science. “Instead of spending a lot of time in the field measuring the hygienic behavior of colonies, we can now try breeding bees with these genetic mutations that predict hygienic behavior.”

### **Honey bees can help monitor pollution in cities**

Honey from urban bees can tell us how clean a city is and help pinpoint the sources of environmental pollutants such as lead; new University of British Columbia research has found.

In a study published in *Nature Sustainability*, scientists from UBC’s Pacific Centre for Isotopic and Geochemical Research (PCI-GR) analyzed honey from urban beehives in six Metro Vancouver neighborhoods. They tested for miniscule levels of lead, zinc, copper and other elements and carried out lead isotope analyses -- akin to fingerprinting -- to identify where the lead came from.

Honey is able to provide such localized “snapshots” of the environment because honey bees typically forage for pollen and nectar within a two- to three-kilometer radius of their hives.

### **Weak honey bee colonies may fail from cold exposure during shipping**

Cold temperatures inside honey bee colonies may cause colony losses during and after long-distance hauling, according to a preliminary study by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists.

Smaller colonies are more likely to fail and fail faster, and many lose almost all of their bees within days of arrival. Robust colonies with 10 or more frames were able to maintain stable temperatures and populations.

Honey bee transporters often worry about colonies overheating during shipping, which can cause a colony to die very quickly. However, chilling can be as damaging but less obviously. If brood -- bee larvae -- are chilled, it can result in developmental abnormalities when they emerge as adult bees. This could be the cause of smaller colonies failing within a few weeks of being shipped.

## **Think of honeybees as ‘livestock,’ not wildlife, argue experts**

The ‘die-off’ events occurring in honeybee colonies that are bred and farmed like livestock must not be confused with the conservation crisis of dramatic declines in thousands of wild pollinator species, say Cambridge researchers.

As with other intensively farmed animals, overcrowding and homogenous diets have depressed bee immune systems and sent pathogen rates soaring in commercial hives. Diseases are transferred to wild species when bees feed from the same flowers, similar to germs passing between humans through a shared coffee cup.

## **New research is helping lower the chances the pollinators and their offspring will die while they’re visiting the West Coast.**

Almond growers rent upwards of 1.5 million colonies of honeybees a year, at a cost of around \$300 million. Without the bees, there would be no almonds, and there are nowhere near enough native bees to take up the task of pollinating the trees responsible for more than 80 percent of the world’s almonds. The trouble was, bees and larvae were dying while in California, and nobody was sure exactly why. The problem started in adults only, and beekeepers were most worried about loss of queens

According to Reed Johnson of The Ohio State University, “Fungicides, often needed for crop protection, are routinely used during almond bloom, but in many cases growers were also adding insecticides to the mix. Our research shows that some combinations are deadly to the bees, and the simplest thing is to just take the insecticide out of the equation during almond bloom,” he said.



# Williamson County Area Beekeeping Association

## Meeting Summary - May 30th, 2019 Meeting.

The meeting was opened by Phil Ainslie, President

President's Announcements

1. If you are looking for a place to put your bees, want bees on your property, or are looking to buy/sell equipment please look on the website under Marketplace.
2. Phil Ainslie introduced Jimmie Oakley, who updated the members on the wellbeing of Mrs. Mary Bost. She is currently on hospice. Mrs. Bost expressed her gratitude, via Jimmie Oakley, to WCABA for the wind chime that was provided by the Association. The Bost family do not need disturbing at this time, and any requests for the extractor should be made to Jimmie Oakley. Jimmie read a letter that Mrs. Bost wrote to the WCABA news letter.
3. The executive board is in the process of looking into the viability of developing a scholarship program for youths with disabilities. This is in the very early stage, and would be the first scholarship of its kind. Updates will be provided in due course. The board is looking for members whom may have experience in this area to help develop the scholarship. This maybe a long term project.
4. The Texas Beekeepers Association Summer Clinic will be held on June 22nd at Conroe. It provides great information for all levels of beekeepers, and you can sign up via the TBA website.
5. Phil Ainslie introduced Mr. Russell. He in turn introduced, and presented Alaine Heivilin with a wonderful gift of a certificate of appreciation, a gopro, extra storage, battery charger, and many more accessories. She also received a new queen catcher !! Mrs. Heivilin was a mentor to Mr. Russell, and the adventure began. She discovered European Foulbrood in one of his hives and ended up treating all 8 hives, and also his neighbours 10 hives !!. All is good on the bee yard now.
6. Consider being a mentor. You may know more than you think, and you can help a fellow member. Give it a go !!

Beekeeping 101 - Your Hive in the Summer presented by Jim Colbert

Beekeeping 102 - Chemical free beekeeping presented by Nathalie Misserey

Members Present:- 82

Door Prizes. - 13 lucky winners

Bee Buzz - Linda Russell informed members that the next Bee Buzz would take place on Sunday June 2nd, from 2pm - 4pm, at Rudy's BBQ:- 2400 IH 35 Round Rock location .

The meeting was closed by Phil Ainslie, President.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th June at the Georgetown Library.

Gillian Mattinson.  
Secretary, W.C.A.B.A.

Post Meeting Note: Mrs. Mary Bost sadly passed away on June 5th., 2019.



## Mary Blanton Lewis Bost

Mary Blanton Lewis Bost, age 97, of Georgetown, died on June 5, 2019. She was born on November 2, 1921, in Lytle, TX. Her parents were Ernest Lewis and Jessie Matthews Lewis.

Mary attended Texas A&I College at Kingsville, TX, beginning in 1939, where she met Robert Bost, the love of her life, whom she married on January 1, 1942. Mary and Robert were married for 64 years, until his death in 2006. They worked together as parents, school teachers and farmers and were lifelong best friends. Mary graduated from the University of Texas in 1962 with a Bachelor of Science in Education. She was a long-time, beloved educator who taught hundreds of local school children over the years. She began her teaching career at South Palm Gardens near Harlingen, TX, in 1941, later teaching in Georgetown, Liberty Hill, and for 23 years in Leander before retiring. She was a member of the Williamson County Retired Teachers Association.

Mary and Robert have lived on their farm near Georgetown since 1952, raising up to 5000 laying hens as well as hogs, cattle, and bees. Beekeeping became their main farming focus and enjoyment. After retirement, they maintained bee hives in many locations, including Georgetown, Llano and Smithville and sold their local, raw honey to six of the local area HEB stores. After Robert's death, Mary down-sized their honey operations, selling bottled honey to several small businesses and at the Sun City and Georgetown farmers markets. Mary and Robert were among the founding members of the Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association, where, for 20 years, Robert was chairman of the scholarship program for youth interested in learning beekeeping. This program was later named the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship Program. Mary served for two years as president of the Association and over 30 years (1986-2016) as newsletter editor. She was periodically interviewed by local print and television media as an authority on bees and beekeeping.

Mary and Robert moved to Georgetown in 1947 and became members of First United Methodist Church. Mary and her family served as members of the choir, on the administrative board, and were charter members of the Pathfinders Sunday School class. Mary also served as President of the UMW for two years and remained an active member.

Mary will be remembered by many in the Georgetown area for her love and dedication to her family, church, teaching, friends and beekeeping. She was loved, admired and appreciated for her gentle, loving, vivacious spirit, for living the values she upheld and for her quiet wisdom.

Mary is survived by her children: Dr. Robert O. Bost (Kay) of Edmond, Oklahoma; Dr. Richard H. Bost (Karel) of Catoosa, Oklahoma; and David E. Bost (Dr. Jane) of Round Rock; her grandchildren: Laura Bost Hensey (Chuck), Bryan Bost (Kimberly), Andrew Bost (Laurie), Christopher Bost, and Morgan Bost; her great-grandchildren: Erin and Solomon Hensey, as well as her brother Rev. Dr. C. Earle Lewis. Mary was predeceased by her parents; her loving husband, Robert; daughter-in-law, Dr. Diana Bost; granddaughter, Rebecca Anne Bost; her brothers Rev. Clem Lewis, Rev. Orion Lewis, and Minister John Lewis.

Special appreciation is given to her long-time Comfort Keepers caregivers, Jimmie Oakley and family; members of the Williamson County Beekeepers Association; members of the Pathfinders Class and First United Methodist Church, and those who provided her with transportation to and from Church.

Pallbearers will be Jimmie Oakley, Clint Walker, Rick Krueger, Robert Soulen, Romualdo Duarte, and Jim Turley. Memorial contributions may be made to Georgetown First United Methodist Church or to the Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association's youth scholarship program (the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship) in care of Jimmie Oakley, 425 Sapphire Lane, Jarrell, TX 76537.

# WCABA Honey Princess Report

*from Bailey Brett*

This week I visited a Montessori School in Austin and taught the kids about bees. There were about thirty children and they were so excited to meet a real honey princess and to see the observation hive I brought along.

A big thank you to Jim Colbert for letting me borrow his bees for the morning! The ages ranged from three to six, so I made sure to keep the topics simple. We found the queen in the hive, looked for “baby bees”, and where the honey was stored. We talked about the types of bees in a hive and the jobs they perform. I was asked lots of questions about bees, and also if I was a real princess!

When we were done I was given lots of goodbye hugs from the children and asked if I could come back every year. I'll take that as a good indication that my first teaching experience was a success!



# It's Extracting Time!!

by Jimmie Oakley – Equipment Coordinator

It's that time of the year again. The extracting equipment is starting to be reserved and used by WCABA Members. For our new members or any of you who have not used either of the two club extractors previously, here are some reminders of what you need to do to check out one of the two sets of equipment:

1. Call Jimmie Oakley (512/507-3009) to request a date to use the equipment. Have an alternate date in mind in case your preference is not available. He will put your name on the calendar to reserve it for you. If you decide to cancel, let him know.
2. If you have not checked out the equipment previously, ask Mr. Oakley if he can meet you at the Bost Farm at a specific time to go over the proper use of the equipment and the checkout procedure.
3. Members have 3 days to use the equipment, not counting Sunday, and return it. day
4. When you return the cleaned equipment check it back in using the "check sheet" to assure you returned it all, and make sure you communicate (text or cell) with Mr. Oakley so he will know it is available for the next member.



**WCABA Club extracting equipment is pictured to the left and includes the extractor, a variety of sieves and filters, plastic buckets, and uncapping tub with tools.**

**You must supply your own plastic or glass jars, or honey bears to store your extracted honey!**



## July Column from S.S. Brantley Marshall Beekeepers Association

July is the month you have been looking forward to since the first signs of spring began to awaken your hives. This is the month you find if you have a bounty or a bust!

Honey extraction should be in full swing now. Honey that is not fully capped can be pulled, shaken to see if it is wet (rains out of the frame when shaken), and extracted for personal use, for sale or for gifts to friends and family. I also encourage you to set aside your best looking and best tasting honey to enter in your local or state honey contests. In the 2019 International Honey Tasting Contest, three entries from Texas placed in the top thirty best honeys in the world. What an honor that would be!

When you are removing supers of honey from your hives, here is a tip that may keep your supers from dripping honey all over your equipment. If possible, go to the beeyard the day before you plan to pull the supers. Break them loose and move each super forward, backward or sideways enough to break any comb filled with honey that was attached to the frames above or below that super. Do not move the supers far enough to leave a crack in the stack for robbers to gain entry. Overnight, the bees will clean the broken cells of honey. When you pull the supers the next morning, you should not have honey dripping in the bee yard to start a robbing frenzy or making a sticky mess on your equipment. Remove only the supers you plan to extract that day. The honey will still be warm and extract much more easily. If you have to hold supers overnight, make sure to protect them from beetles and moths.

If you are returning supers to the hives for the bees to clean up, it is best to do this late in the afternoon, near dusk if possible. The bees will remove most of the honey residuals in the comb by morning, greatly reducing the tendency for robbing.

After the bees have cleaned the supers, you will have to decide if you are going to leave them stored on the hive all winter or if you are going to remove and store them. If you do remove your supers, stack them and use the paradichlorobenzene moth crystals to protect from moths.

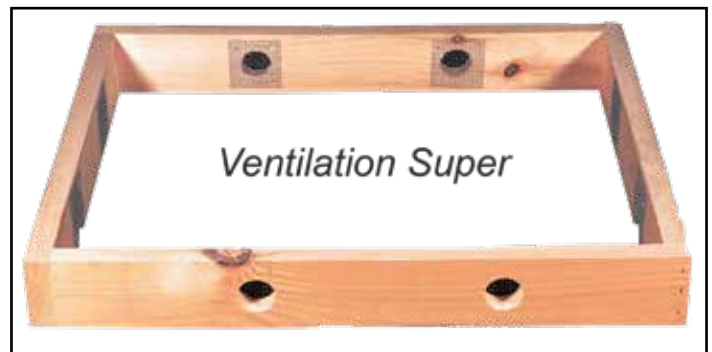
If you run double brood box hives, you may want to leave at least one super on the hive. The bees will use this super to store any honey produced in the summer and fall. The stores will then be used as winter food. If the bees are able to store enough, you may not need to feed sugar syrup during the winter period.

Although we have enjoyed an unusually wet spring, we are about to move into the hot and dry summer. You can help your bees deal with the hot and dry conditions. Bees will be using increased amounts of water to cool the hive as the temperatures rise into the upper 90s and above. Make sure they have access to a reliable water source. Consider using a shade board, such as a 2-foot square of plywood, on top of the hive to reduce excessive heat. Allow heat to vent out the top of the hive by providing some kind of ventilation path. You can use a Ventilation Super or you can slide the telescoping cover back, allowing the edge of the Outer Cover to sit on the edge of the Inner Cover. A good strong healthy hive will have enough bees to prevent any robbers from entering underneath the raised Outer Cover.

Colonies with weak populations should have the entrance reducer installed to help the hive bees defend the entrance against robbing.

Nucs started during the latter part of the honey flow should also have the entrance reduced. After at least 21 days, check these nucs to ensure that they do have a laying queen. Feed them sugar syrup through the summer to help them grow strong enough to survive the winter.

July is also a great time to melt wax in a solar melter. Do not discard wax in your beeyard, it attracts undesirable pests. It is also a valuable product. If you do not collect and resell wax, consider making your scrap wax available to fellow club members who do melt and re-sell wax.







# New Scholarship Recipients Plan to Extract

Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair



As the Indian Blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*) and the Horsemint (*Monarda citriodora*) begin to bloom out in our area, and the bees finish filling the combs, it is time to start thinking about extracting the spring/summer honey the bees have stored up.



The honey flow in the Williamson County (Central Texas) area usually starts about April 15<sup>th</sup> (about the time we get our nucs/packages) and may extend till the end of June. This prompts extracting honey over the fourth of July weekend or thereafter. With the early and continued rains, and good blooms there appears to be something to extract too.

The WCABA Scholarship Program, is nearing the end of the first full super-year of the expanded curriculum. Last year's scholarship recipients are about to pull honey in the 62<sup>nd</sup> week of the program while the current year recipients will be extracting in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of their beekeeping year. The youngsters in both groups will use the Best Honey House at the end of June to extract and process what they pull. A good yield is expected.



Inspection, inspection, inspection seem to be all that they were asked to do, but from those inspections a benchmark was established, and the youngsters could slowly see how their colony was progressing. Going from a nucleus of five frames to a three-story stand of 22 deep frames of drawn comb in 10 weeks is impressive.



Now the prospect for these youngsters to get some honey from their hives is exciting and we will report on how that went going forward. Stay tuned...

Meanwhile, Carter Fojtik, last year's scholarship recipient experienced a first; first crop. Because of slow colony build up and the setback of a queen loss his hive did not produce a surplus last season. This year was a different story. With the help of his family and his mentor he harvested his first crop from the hive in his back yard. Hard, yes, sticky, yes, FUN, DEFINATLY! A good time was had by all.



Hive standing tall

Pulling the Frames of Honey

Golden Harvest-Happy Beekeeper

The Fojtik's: McKenna, Darrel, Annie and Carter

On the other hand, another success story is the Talentino boys, Marius in his third year and Alessondro in his second year. Beekeeping in God's Country east of Lockhart they continue to be blessed with an abundance of local honey from their orchard bee yard.

You may remember their article from last year's newsletter accounting how it took them four days to extract from their three hives. Well, they did it again. Their apiary has grown and so has the size of their honey crop. They now have five hives and between them they extracted 19 gallons (~228 lbs).



*Alessandro, Gia(Mom) & Marius, hives all supered*



*Growing their Beeyard*



*Alessandro, Marius & Gia, everyone working the hives*



*Full of Bees, Full of Honey?*



*Alessandro: Wow, I did that?*



*Marius, Justin (Dad) and Alessandro Talentino: Beekeepers Outstanding in their Field!*

**New Members**

|                               |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Gary & Laura Cassens          | Georgetown   |
| Alicia Froelich & Paul Ortner | Liberty Hill |
| Roy & Caroline Markham        | Round Rock   |
| Ben Roberts                   | Round Rock   |
| Sarita & Larry Marshall       | Burnet       |

**Renewing Members**

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Carolyn Barnes      | Leander    |
| Dena & Jason Collar | Georgetown |

Visit Our Website:

[www.wcaba.org](http://www.wcaba.org)

Email Us At:

[info@wcaba.org](mailto:info@wcaba.org)

Write to:

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Georgetown TX 78626

**Texas Beekeepers Association**

**Annual Convention**

**November 7th - 9th, 2019**

**San Antonio Airport Hilton**