

# Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association

**NEXT MEETING:**  
TUESDAY June 23rd  
7:00-9:00 Program  
On-Line Meeting only

## **2020 Club Officers:**

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Lisa Hoekstra

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Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are going to have our June member meeting virtually at 7 pm June 23rd via "Zoom" meeting software.

This will allow up to 100 WCABA members to listen in and watch our Beekeeping 101 session as well as conducting a Q&A.

You do not need to sign up for an account to join the meeting - just a device and internet connection are required.

If you are you planning to join from an iPhone or iPad, be sure to download this application first: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zoom-cloud-meetings/id546505307>

We look forward to seeing you Tuesday night @ 7PM!

## **Presentation by Dodie Stillman**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87094103363>

Meeting ID: 870 9410 3363

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799

Meeting ID: 870 9410 3363

Password: 096986

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kgr-R5HMRs>

# Interesting Bee Research Pearls

*from Phil Ainslie, President WCABA*

## Honey bees could help monitor fertility loss in insects due to climate change

Heat can kill sperm cells across the animal kingdom, yet there are few ways to monitor the impact of heat on pollinators like honey bees, who are vital to ecosystems and agriculture around the world.

In a study published in *Nature Sustainability*, researchers used a technique called mass spectrometry to analyze sperm stored in honey bee queens and found five proteins that are activated when the queens are exposed to extreme temperatures.

The proteins could be used as a tool to monitor heat stress in queen bees, and serve as a bellwether for wider insect fertility losses due to climate change.

Source: [University of British Columbia](#).

## Microalgae food for honey bees

A microscopic algae ("microalgae") could provide a complete and sustainably sourced supplemental diet to boost the robustness of managed honey bees, according to research just published by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists in the journal *Apidologie*.

Poor nutrition in honey bees is often an underlying factor in colony losses because malnutrition amplifies the detrimental effects of parasites, pathogens, and pesticides. Habitat loss, decreases in flowering plant diversity and large tracts of crop monoculture (cultivation of a single crop over a large area) all can potentially contribute to lessening natural pollen sources, which provide bees essential nutrition.

Now, research by ARS entomologists Vincent Ricigliano and Michael Simone-Finstrom has shown that the microalgae *Arthrospira platensis* (commonly called spirulina) has a nutritional profile that closely resembles pollen. Spirulina is a part of family of blue-green algae, which are single-celled organisms that exist individually or in chains or groups.

Source: [US Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service](#)

## 'Bee' thankful for the evolution of pollen Researchers discover wildflower's spiny pollen adapts to help plants reproduce

Over 80% of the world's flowering plants must reproduce in order to produce new flowers. This process involves the transfer of pollen between plants by wind, water or insects called pollinators -- including bumblebees. In a new study, researchers at the University of Missouri discovered spiny pollen -- from a native wild dandelion species in the southern Rocky Mountains -- has evolved to attach to traveling bumblebees.

## Honeybees: Pesticides disrupt nursing behavior and larval development

A newly developed video technique has allowed scientists to record the complete development of a honey bee in its hive. Researchers discovered that certain pesticides -- neonicotinoids -- changed the behavior of the nurse bees: they fed the larvae less often. Larval development took up to 10 hours longer. A longer development period in the hive can foster infestation by parasites.

Source: [Goethe University Frankfurt](#)

## Volunteers and Needs

WCABA beekeepers wanting to be on the **swarm capture** and or **extraction list** need to contact Phil Ainslie. Go to [wcaba.org](http://wcaba.org) and clic on “contact us”. Provide you name, phone number and the county or counties you will service. Your name will go on the group e-mail and messages will be sent to the group as the requests arrive.

WCABA is in need or **mentors**: If you would like to be a mentor go to [wcaba.org](http://wcaba.org) and click on “contact us”. Provide your name, email, and phone number. Your name will go on a group email for mentors. Messages will be sent to the group as requests arrive.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Dues: **\$20.00** per year - individual or **\$25.00** - family membership

New Member / Renewing Member

(circle one)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cash or Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print)

*To save postage cost may we send your Newsletter via e-mail?* Yes[     ] No[     ]

**Instructions:** print , fill out, and bring to club meeting , or mail with check to Membership

Mrs. Shirley Doggett - 400 C. R. 440 - Thrall, TX 76578 - Ph.512/924-5051

Visit our Website at:

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

or email to:

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

New Members - James Smith     Georgetown

Renewing members

Paul & Nancy Lippa

Jeff & Nancy Keys

# Extracting Gets into Full Swing

by Jimmie Oakley-Scholarship Chair

The Williamson County Area Beekeeper's club extractors and the extractor at the Bost Farm have been busy lately as the annual honey flow culminates in what appears to be a very good honey crop.

Since the bees arrived in April the Gaillardia (Indian Blanket) seemed to be slow in blooming in large amounts, but once it got started the flow from this local annual wildflower really filled up the boxes. An example of this is the deep (8 frame) box of foundation that was placed on top of the 2019 scholarship hives at the Georgetown Heritage Garden. The bees were able to draw out comb, fill it up, and cap it over in one month's time, wow! The result was a bountiful harvest for the youngsters of a very beautiful, tasty, bright yellow honey. *(see more pictures at end of article)*

I was able to pull 11 medium (10 frame) supers from my bee yard in the pecan orchard



*Shannon & Bailey Britt waits for bees to clear from top box of honey*



*Benjamin Oakley watches as Bailey pulls one last frame to extract*



at Hwy 195, and averaged 30 lb. per super. What's exciting is that I have other yards to pull, so the harvest is not over. The Monarda citriodora (Horsemint) still has some blooming left to do. Two other youngsters have used the Bost Honey House to extract honey this year, Carter Fojtik and his mom, Annie, and Sterling Kinghorn and mom Julie.



*Annie & Carter Fojtik observe CDC advice while extracting (its appreciated)*



*Julie Kinghorn pours up honey to be strained from son Sterling's hive*

Our WCABA members have been checking out the extracting equipment and reporting good results. So far Ed and Hattie Mora of Round Rock have used the equipment, Luke Fowler has checked it out twice. Others that have taken advantage of the three-frame extractor to remove their honey is Gary Carlile of Liberty Hill, Joseph Narlo from Georgetown, Jim Houstoun from Austin and our Vice President, Shannon Montez, from Liberty Hill. Rachel Glass of Ding Dong just returned the equipment setup after successfully extracting her spring honey.

The 2020 Scholarship Recipients are getting ready to extract honey from their hives for the first time and they are excited.

Remember, the club's equipment is there for your use, so call to reserve it if you're are ready.

To Reserve extracting equipment setup call or text Jimmie Oakley at @ 512/507-3009

# 2019 Scholarship Youngsters Extract Again



Who said Extracting as a Family isn't fun?



Bailey is happy to use the roller-punch, it's much faster



Aaron Bramwell takes his turn at uncapping the frames; the boys are holding down the Fort...



Draining the extractor... (Quinn)



Straining the honey... (Aaron)



Filling the bottles... (Shannon)



Now do it again, and you're DONE!



Shannon  
Bailey  
Reece  
Aaron  
Quinn  
(the crew)

The Finished  
Product !!!



# BiG Honey Bees, Beekeepers, Honey Friends and... a New Extraction Service

*from Linda Russell*

The BiG Citizens are excited that it's harvest time and would love to extract your honey for you!

BiG (Brookwood in Georgetown) is a God-centered innovative vocational community where adults with special needs, known as Citizens, are artisans, bakers, card and jewelry makers and more. They also extract and bottle honey that is then sold in the BiG Shop.

The back story: BiG was started by John and Erin Kiltz after Gracie, their daughter with Down Syndrome and a severe brain injury, finished high school and they could not find the right fit for her. The program started small and grew and grew. As the main campus in Georgetown reached maximum capacity and the waiting list was mounting, the satellite locations BiG Light and BiG Bee Cave were launched. BiG Light is housed at the Church of Christ on University Blvd in Georgetown where the Citizens make cookies, granola, fudge, do wood working and extract honey. The Bee Cave location is in Austin and their Citizens make soap and dog treats. All items are sold in the BiG Shop which is at the main campus located at 905 N. Church St. in Georgetown.

BiG's funding comes from product sales, donations, grants and Citizen tuition. Each Citizen earns a paycheck which serves as a great source of pride for their hard work.

Now back to BiG and honey bees. With some grant money and donations, BiG purchased five hives and colonies three years ago. Volunteers jumped in to help by engraving the hive facings and assembling parts as well as painting. The Citizens helped paint the hives. BiG Beekeepers were recruited. BiG Beekeepers (which are currently all WCABA members) care for the bees in their individual apiaries. The Citizens then harvest and bottle the honey. The other honey source is from generous 'Honey Friends' who donate supers of honey for extraction. These appreciated donors believe in BiG and have more honey than they want to keep. Please reach out to me if you are interested in becoming a Honey Friend ([lrussell6083@yahoo.com](mailto:lrussell6083@yahoo.com))

Last year, the Rotary Club of Georgetown provided a grant for a large radial extractor. As a way to grow into it, The BiG Honey Company is launching an extraction service. Interested beekeepers contact BiG Light Supervisor, Billy to schedule a date, drop off supers and buckets then pick up their honey and extracted supers. BiG keeps a percentage of the honey as payment. Care will be given to sanitize all equipment between extracting each beekeeper's supers. Billy's contact is [billy@bigtx.org](mailto:billy@bigtx.org).

The BiG Citizens and staff appreciate the generous support of so many in this enterprise.

In the words of Gillian Mattinson on why she became a BiG Beekeeper, "the minute it was announced at the WCABA meeting that BiG was looking for volunteers to host a hive, I was in! It seemed like the natural thing to do. Several high school graduates that I know are now part of the BiG community, and it has been a life changing experience for them and their families. To be able to contribute, in some small way, to this wonderful community is an honor. To combine it with taking care of a BiG hive is a pleasure."

And from Honey Friend, Kathy Fulton, "Beekeeping is a passion, but BiG is a mission. Being able to support their great work within our community has been a blessing."

On a personal note, we moved to Georgetown six years ago so that our special needs daughter, Kelsey would have a meaningful life. She loves having friends, being productive and earning her own money. She never complains about going to work. BiG has been an answer to prayer.

Sadly, Gracie Kiltz, passed away unexpectedly September 8, 2018. Her beautiful smile and spirit brightened all who were around her. She is greatly missed and leaves a legacy that is immeasurable. The BiG story continues.

Come by and visit BiG @ 905 North Church Street. Shop, sip a latte, have lunch. It's a happy and happening place. For more information go to [brookwoodingeorgetown.org](http://brookwoodingeorgetown.org).



*BiG Light Citizens Bottling Honey*



*Customer at the BiG Shop*



*BiG Light Citizens Uploading Supers*



*BiG Citizen Painting Hives*



*BiG Citizen and Program Manager, Jennie  
with BiG Hive*



*BiG Honey*



# July Newsletter

*from S S Brantley, Life Member Texas Beekeepers Association*

July will be the end of the major honey flow in most of East Texas. Extracting the honey crop can now begin in earnest. I encourage new beekeepers to pull at least one frame of capped honey from their hive to find out what beekeeping is all about. Until you have experienced it, you will not understand how great it is to taste that first sample of honey from your own hive, produced by the bees you have caring for these past several months. You will never taste honey that sweet and wonderful again.

New beekeepers may ask, "How do I get the honey out of the frames?" If you have not used plastic foundation, you can cut the comb out of the frame into a container. If you cut out comb from wax foundation, be sure to pull out all of the support wires. You can then crush the comb by hand and strain it through cheesecloth. Cover a second container with cheesecloth and crush the comb by hand over the cloth. Let the crushed comb lay on the cheesecloth for several hours, allowing the honey to drain into the container. Do this in a warm, bee-free area. After it appears all of the honey has drained, you can then bottle the honey from the catch bucket. You may wish to put the squeezed wax outside on a metal or plastic tray for the bees to clean-up the remaining honey. Do not leave this out for the night-time animals to find and enjoy. Also, be aware that bees may become aggressive during the clean-up process.

If you have foundation in your frames, contact a bee club or an established beekeeper to see if they would assist in extracting your honey. Extracting honey with a Radial Extractor works well as the frames are placed in the extractor like spokes on wheel and honey is extracted from both sides of the frame simultaneously as the wheel spins. If you use a Tangential Extractor, you can extract honey from only one side at a time, requiring multiple steps to extract both sides of the frame. Extract about half the honey from one side of the frame. Stop and remove the frame,

turn the other side to the outside and extract all of the second side. Stop, return the frame to its original position, and finish extracting the first side. During this process, always insert the frame so the bottom bar leads into the spin, making the honey flow out easier.

Now is also the time to check your hives and reduce the entrance on any weaker hives. This will help the hive guard against robbing and predators. Hives with large populations may be vented to help dissipate heat by slipping the telescoping cover toward the rear of the hive and resting the cover on the lip of the inner cover. This allows air be drawn in the front entrance and out the vent top.

After extracting your honey crop, do a mite check. Recent studies show the highest mite load occurs in August. If you have a high mite count in July, treatment will help reduce your mite load. Select a product that will work for you, considering your past treatment choices and current conditions. Some treatments are temperature sensitive. If you are not sure which treatment to use, check with your bee club or established beekeepers in your area. Regardless of the treatment you choose, always read and follow the label directions. **THE LABEL IS THE LAW** and governs the successful use of the product. If you started new colonies in the spring, check them for room to grow. If necessary, add another brood box or move a NUC to a full-sized box.

Splits can still be made if there are mated queens or queen cells available to put in them. If you want the split to make their own queen, there must be a plentiful supply of drones still in the hive. A shortage of drones could result in the virgin queen not mating properly, causing the split to fail quickly or to die during the winter. Splits should be fed with 2:1 sugar syrup to assure continued growth during the hot and dry weather ahead.

Check hives for beetles and add beetle traps of your choice to keep them under control.



*Bee on Duranta Blossom*

# 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. Your name will be put on the calendar to reserve it for you. If you decide to cancel, let me know.
2. I will have to meet you at the Bost Farm (4355 C.R 110, Georgetown, TX 78626) when you pick up or return equipment since there is a locked gate there now. If you have not checked out the equipment previously, I can meet you at the Farm at a specific time to go over the proper use of the equipment and the procedure.
3. Members have 3 days to use the equipment, not counting Sunday, and return it.
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 strainers, plastic buckets, and uncapping tub with tools. You must supply your own plastic or glass jar containers, or honey bears to store your extracted honey!**