

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA OCTOBER 2003 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, October 28, 2003
TIME: 7:00 P. M.
PLACE: Round Rock Community Center, 205 Main Street
PROGRAM: Christi Stromberg – *Fall Planting of Spring Wildflowers*
HOSTS: **Beth Walker, Randy Oakley Family**

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WCABA observed National Honey Month at our September meeting by tasting the 18 samples of honey brought by our members, providing 11 jars of our honey that was judged and sent to the Texas Beekeepers honey booth at the State Fair in Dallas, and by enjoying the demonstration of cooking with honey presented by 11 year old Sarah Oakley, who used recipes provided by the National Honey Board. Everyone got to sample the results: *Fruit Salad with Honey-Lime Dressing*, and *Honey Morning Muffins with Honey-Orange Butter Topping*. Also contributed by the Honey Board was a gardening knee pad, won by Meghan Cantlon, and lip balm, won by Julie Hein and Nehemiah Hein, plus honey recipe brochures which were available to everyone.



In the Taster's Choice contest, Nathanael Hein won the Blue Ribbon, Joel Jorden won the Red Ribbon, and Wilbur Brinkmeyer and Gayle Shaw tied for the White Ribbon. Honorable Mentions were Nial and Darla Chase, Robert and Mary Bost, Jimmie Oakley, Frank Hunt, Dave Felps, Wilbur Brinkmeyer (second entry), Harold Kind, Stan Timmerman, James McCoy, John Sivells, Meghan Cantlon, Tyler Cantlon, Caleb Oakley, and Joshua Oakley. Mrs. Gayle Timmerman tallied the votes.

Members who brought two-pound jars of honey were Robert and Mary Bost, Wilbur Brinkmeyer, Meghan Cantlon, Tyler Cantlon, Julie Hein, Joel Jorden, Harold Kind, James McCoy, Caleb Oakley, Jimmie Oakley, and John Sivells. We are pleased that Caleb, Joel, James and John, all recipients of our youth scholarships, contributed honey. Criteria for judging included container appearance, level of fill, density, free of crystals, free of air bubbles and foam, free of wax, free of lint, free of other foreign matter, flavor, and brightness. We thank Bill Hein, Stan Timmerman, and Randy Oakley for judging the honey. When the State Fair has ended, all honey displayed in the honey booth will be contributed to the Happy Hills Children's Home in Granbury, Texas.



For Basic Beekeeping, Jimmie Oakley will demonstrate setting up the canopy for our honey booth for our Wesley Fest fund raiser, and will talk about what is needed for getting ready for it as well as what to do when helping in the booth. This is our main source of money to finance our youth scholarship program. Besides needing workers in the booth, we need honey donated by our members. **If you can donate honey—squeeze bears, pints, quarts, or any other amount, please bring it to the meeting Tuesday night.**

For our main program we are fortunate to have **Christi Stromberg, Horticulture Agent with the Williamson County Extension Service**. She will present a PowerPoint presentation on Spring wildflowers and how best to select a site and prepare the ground for sowing the seed. Come and learn.

Most of us have finished harvesting our honey and are now contemplating what we need to do to prepare our bees for winter. First, check to see if they have adequate honey stores; if not, prepare to feed them. Next, have you had a problem with mice overwintering in your beehives? If so, a mouseguard closure for the entrance would be advisable. Be sure the hive is tipped slightly forward to avoid rain water accumulating on the bottom board. Putting a rock or brick on the lid will prevent it being blown off in high winds. And last but not least, medicate to protect your bees from American Foul Brood and from Varroa Mites. A number of you bought Apistan strips at the last meeting, but we will have them for sale again Tuesday night. Also, we plan to make Terramycin grease patties as well as discuss using Terramycin and powdered sugar as a dust.

We had a number of nice donations for door prizes at the last meeting. Donors were Iris and Ian Kjos, Jacque Phillips McBride, Wilbur and Donnie Brinkmeyer, Gayle Shaw, Barbara and Frank Hunt, and Wanda Hein. Also, G. C. Walker contributed two antique honey glasses and a honey dispenser to be used in the basket the Oakleys are preparing for the TBA auction. We appreciate your thoughtfulness. Lucky winners of the door prizes were Adela Hein, Greg Pekar, and Gayle Timmerman (dozen eggs each); Robert Bost and Daly Young (bag of shelled pecans each); Joel Jordan (hanging plush bear); Benjy Cox (pair of hand rolled beeswax candles); Gayle Shaw (bottle of mead); Lance Stanfield (decorated picture frame); Vinton Stanfield (bee on a stick); and Marcus Young (decorated teapot).

We would like to remind our four 2003 scholarship winners that they will be expected to give their reports on their experiences as a first-year beekeeper at the November meeting. Pictures, anecdotes, and their experiences, both good and not-so-good, make for interesting reports. Also, our president will be appointing a nominations committee as officer elections take place in November. The best way to feel you are part of a club is to assist in whatever capacity you can, so please don't hesitate to volunteer if you can fill any of the offices; the nominations committee will appreciate you.

Jimmie has copied off several sheets of magazine subscription blanks, and I have them in my green box. You get a nice discount on the subscription price when you order using one of these blanks. If you are ready to order *The American Journal*, *Bee Culture Magazine*, or *The TBA Journal*, check with me or with Jimmie Oakley.

A common question when someone learns you keep bees is, do you get stung working bees? Of course, bee stings go with the territory. In our early years, Robert was scratching his swollen hand one day when one of his students commented, "You must have been working your bees this weekend." And he was correct. As we became more and more desensitized, we hardly noticed getting stung. Jimmie Oakley sent me an interesting article by William Brantley on bee stings and remedies. I will copy some of it and summarize the rest. If you want to view the article, it was located on <http://slate.msn.com/id/2088863/>.

Brantley says, "When it comes to bee stings, most of us react somewhere between Smithers on *The Simpsons*—for whom one sting nearly meant death—and Jon Quinn, a beekeeper I visited recently, who was once stung more than 40 times and still had the wherewithal to count as he extracted the stingers. (Quinn's decade and a half of beekeeping had desensitized him to the venom.) For most, a sting means aching and swelling accompanied by a maddening itch.

"All of which I had forgotten until this past Fourth of July, when I was stung on the back of my arm. Surprised by the sudden pain, I slapped the bee off my arm, dug the stinger out, and went inside to ask for treatment advice. Everyone had a different answer. Ice! Tobacco! Benadryl! Butter! Ban Roll-On! I tried a handful but did so in such a haphazard way—sometimes applying two remedies at once—that I gave none of the remedies an opportunity to be effective. Or, if any were effective, I had no way of knowing which had worked. The symptoms finally died down after four and a half days, but the experience left me wondering. How exactly are you supposed to treat a bee sting? To find out, I went back for more."

Brantley looked into various treatments by consulting medical manuals, various family-health guides, talking to local beekeepers, a few pediatricians and pharmacists, an entomologist, and his own family (Mom). He also researched home remedies on the web. Then he was ready to be stung.

"I visited Jon Quinn, the beekeeper who runs North Forty Apiaries, in Woodbury, Conn.," writes Mr. Brantley. "Quinn held a bee with tweezers, shook it a little to anger it, and placed it over the area where I wanted to get stung. On my first trip, I received two stings, one on the top of each hand. Four days later, I returned for two more, which I took on the top of each forearm. A week later, I still had several remedies to test, so I ...got another on my right hand. After each sting, I scraped out the stinger. All stings were equally painful and the symptoms developed at about the same rate.

“I kept a running log of my symptoms—pain, swelling, and itching—qualifying the severity on a scale of 0 (asymptomatic) to 10 (severe). I logged a symptom score every half-hour, except while I was sleeping, of course. This allowed me to look back at the arc of relief each remedy provided (or failed to provide). I left the remedies on the sting areas for 25 minutes to 45 minutes (depending on suggested use), then (as gently as possible) cleaned the sting area. On average, I tested two remedies per day on each of the stings, spacing the applications at least five hours apart ... However, I used the remedies on an as-needed basis: If a remedy worked so well that the symptoms went away for longer than five hours, then I waited that long to apply the next remedy. I set my symptom score threshold at 7, the point at which symptoms became so severe that I had trouble concentrating on anything else. So if it had been at least five hours since I’d used the last remedy and my symptom score had returned to 7 or higher, then I knew it was time to apply the next remedy. Once a sting’s symptom score no longer returned to at least 7, I quit testing on that sting area. On average, I treated each sting for two and a half days.

“Some of the remedies I came across were supposed to “cure” the sting, either by breaking down the toxins in the venom or suppressing the release of pain- and itch-causing agents in the blood. Other remedies were only supposed to “soothe” the sting by relieving the symptoms. I was interested in symptom relief, especially since the effects of a bee sting usually last only a few days and don’t pose any long-term problems. I judged the remedies on how well and for how long they relieved the swelling, pain, and itching. I also considered their appearance, aroma, ease of preparation, and price—though honestly, when it comes to bee sting remedies, all that really matters is what stops the itch.”

Of the pharmaceutical remedies, Brantley found the worst were Skeeter Stick, Survivor Gel Stick, and Ban Roll-On. Bad-- Benadryl Extra Strength Itch Stopping Cream. Good—CVS Maximum Strength Hydrocortisone Cream. Excellent—Caladryl.

Of the home remedies, he found that a slice of raw onion was the worst, making his symptoms seem worse while trailing a pungent stink in his wake. Tobacco also was useless in affecting the symptoms. Honey did alleviate the symptoms for 30 minutes. An excellent remedy is a paste of vinegar/baking soda/ meat tenderizer. The remedies he rated best were toothpaste and ice, both of which are usually readily available.

The Northeast Kansas Beekeeper’s newsletter for October contained recipes for the prize-winning cookies at the 2003 Kansas State Fair. I would like to “borrow” one of these recipes for our newsletter, and perhaps I can include the others in upcoming newsletters. This recipe won First Place.

Honey Chocolate Chip Cookies & More

By Cherie Decker

1 C. butter	½ C. honey	½ C. sugar	1 C. brown sugar	2 eggs	1 tsp. vanilla
2 ¾ C. flour	1 tsp. soda	½ tsp. salt	2 packets Quaker Oatmeal Instant Cinnamon & Spice		
½ C. coconut	1 small pkg. Chocolate chips	½ C. Skor bits			

Cream butter, sugars, vanilla, eggs and honey. Add flour and oatmeal mixture. When well blended, add chips, coconut and skor bits. Use teaspoon to drop on cookie sheet, 3 to a row. Bake at 325 degrees until lightly browned. Remove from oven and let set a minute before taking off of cookie sheet. May need to spray spatula with Pam and clean after each tray of cookies. These turned out to be chewy cookies. You might want to increase flour if you want a different texture. Yield: 4 – 5 dozen cookies.

Eleven entries from Williamson County go to the State Fair Honey Booth in Dallas for display.



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