

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA NOVEMBER 2003 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, November 25, 2003
TIME: Basic Beekeeping-7 P. M.; Gen. Mtg/Program-8:00 P.M.
PLACE: Round Rock Community Center, 205 Main Street
PROGRAM: Scholarship Recipient Reports, Election of Officers-2004
HOSTS: **Robert & Mary Bost, Konrad & Elizabeth Bouffard**

PRESIDENT

Frank Hunt
512/478-8905
[Huuntt@aol.com](mailto:Huntt@aol.com)

1 st. V.P.

MEMBERSHIP

Jeann Schmidt
512/869-4107
jfwschmidt@juno.com

2 nd. V.P.

PROGRAM

Jimmie Oakley
512/388-3630
jloakley@juno.com

3 rd. V.P.

NEWSLETTER

Mary Bost
512/863-3656
bostbees@juno.com

SECRETARY

Barbara Hunt
512/478-8905
[Huuntt@aol.com](mailto:Huntt@aol.com)

TREASURER

Harold Kind
512/246-8455
haroldkind@cs.com

HISTORIAN

Jimmie Oakley
512/388-3630
jloakley@juno.com

Our program last month was a timely reminder that Fall is the time to plant wildflower seeds. Since flowers provide most of the nectar our bees bring back to the hive, we need to plant and/or encourage the natural growth that makes nectar more available to them. We appreciate Christi Stromberg, Williamson County Horticulture Agent, for bringing her PowerPoint presentation, "Fall Planting of Spring Wildflowers".

Our program this month will be presented by various members of our association: the four recipients of the Ed Wolfe Memorial scholarships, **Joel Jorden, James McCoy, Caleb Oakley, and John Sivells**, will give their reports on their experiences and activities with their bees this year; **Robert Bost** will report on the Wesley Fest honey booth; and **Jimmie Oakley** will report on the TBA Convention. Also in the business session, officers will be elected to serve for 2004.

The Host/Hostess sheet will be passed around at this meeting so we can begin signing up to bring refreshments next year. We enjoy the brief time we get to munch and visit, so please consider when you would like to bring your favorite goodies and put your name down for that month. If something unexpected comes up and you need to change, we try to accommodate you. Also, some of you may want to pay your dues for 2004: remember, you get a bargain for \$10.00—the monthly newsletter, the use of the extracting equipment, the opportunity to learn about beekeeping and hear experiences of long-time beekeepers. We are pleased that Stephen Poldrack of Round Rock and Buddy and Cherie Miller of Marble Falls have already paid their 2004 dues. We were happy to have Stephanie Leatherwood of Leander visit our meeting. She may become a member, especially if she could travel with someone.

Last month it was announced that Cara Walkup had invited us to come hear a program of Christmas music, and many of you expressed your interest. This will be an opportunity to get into the Christmas spirit and enjoy the beauty of the season. Here is the information about this free concert:

The Council Oak Bells of First United Methodist Church in Round Rock is hosting a free concert at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 9, in the church's new sanctuary. Entitled "JOY TO THE WORLD", it will feature Christmas music from all around the world, played by an adult group of advanced musicians who ring a full five octaves of English handbells. It will conclude with a fun sing-along of favorite carols.



This church is a beautiful new sanctuary, having been dedicated only a few weeks ago. It is located at 1004 North Mays in Round Rock—the corner of Highway 79 and Business 35 South. It is just south of HEB with entry to the parking lot from Mays Street. We hope you will come and bring your family and perhaps some friends (they don't have to be beekeepers).

The weather was pleasant for most of Wesley Fest weekend—at least until mid-afternoon Sunday—and with good donations of honey, and some very good sales promoters, our honey booth was quite successful. We want to thank those of you who donated both time and honey. I hope I haven't missed naming anyone; if so, please forgive me.

Stan Timmerman, Julie Hein, Joel Jordan, Robert and Mary Bost, Jimmie Oakley, Frank and Barbara Hunt, Randy Oakley and sons, and Karin, Meghan and Tyler Cantlon donated honey. Frank and Barbara Hunt also donated beeswax candles and Chuck and Sandy Wohl donated money. Deborah and Joel Jordan assisted Robert and Mary Bost in bottling and labeling the honey for the booth.

Those who worked setting up the booth and/or selling honey were Pat, Deborah, and Joel Jordan; James and Thomas McCoy; Bill, Julie, Nathaneal and Emmanuel Hein; Frank and Barbara Hunt; Harold Kind; Jeann Schmidt, Jimmie and Kay Oakley; and the American Honey Queen, Katie Danuser. We were happy that Queen Katie was introduced over the PA system and she invited folks to come by the honey booth.



Someone inquired recently about donations for door prizes; donations are entirely voluntary, and can be anything you think appropriate. Sometimes it's something you made (bread, cookies, mouse guards), sometimes it's garden or farm produce or plants, many times it's something that caught your eye when shopping and you wanted to share. We appreciate all these donation; it makes for a fun time.

Donations at the last meeting were made by Deborah Jordan, Karin Cantlon and family, Robert Bost, Jacque McBride, and the Honey Board. Lucky winners were Elroy Lieberum-garden kneeling pad; Sandy Wohl-molded beeswax; Stephanie Leatherwood-cookies; Thomas McCoy-hand/lip balm; Nathanael Hein-beeswax candle; Karin Cantlon-bee spacer bar; Jim Reeves-bee-imprinted socks; and Joshua Oakley-beeswax candle.

Quite a few members have purchased Apistan strips needed to medicate for control of the Varroa mites, but G. C. Walker left more strips with me in case someone has missed the opportunity of getting some. If you haven't medicated yet, you may want to check your drone brood to see if you have a large enough infestation to medicate this fall; if not, you might prefer to purchase strips to install about the middle of January to avoid having a problem next spring. If you install them at that time, you will be able to remove the strips before the honey flow begins as flowers begin blooming in March/April. Remember, strips should be removed six weeks after installation to avoid the mites developing resistance to Apistan.



Even though bee activity has slowed due to the dearth of flowers on which to forage since cooler weather has arrived, there is still much a beekeeper can do during the winter months. As you make your final check of your bees, check to see if they (1) have sufficient honey stores for the winter; (2) have a large enough population to survive until brooding begins next spring; (3) if the queen is still laying eggs, even if it is a smaller number. If they don't have enough honey, plan to start feeding sugar syrup (or if you have some old honey, mix it with water and feed, using a Boardman feeder). If the hive is weak or queenless, combine it with a stronger hive which you can split next spring.

While you are checking your bees, observe their hives: do you need to repair or replace any of the wood ware? The American Bee Journal has an article entitled "Make the Most of Your November Downtime" in the current (November) issue, which has some good suggestions. The author, Jeffrey L. Ott, says that frames are the most fragile piece of equipment as they are "pried, pushed, dropped and whirled" and may come apart at inopportune times: when we are trying to "find an elusive queen in a particularly aggressive colony on a very hot day" or when we are extracting. Good maintenance not only helps avoid such problems but "it has been proven that replacing brood frames reduces AFB spores, excessive castes and chemical residues in a hive."

Also check the hive tops as well as the joints of the boxes and repair and repaint as needed. Bottom boards absorb more moisture and tend to rot out sooner. Clean or replace as needed in the Spring. And use paint generously to protect your wood ware.

Smokers will wear out, too. Bellows can be replaced, but if a hole has burned in the side of the canister, it's time to trash it and buy a new one. Hive tools need to be cleaned and sharpened. Check your veil for holes; repair or replace it. If you need new equipment, get out your catalog and make your order before January as prices probably will be higher when the new catalog arrives.

Lastly, think about the year that is almost past and give thanks for this year's bounty and pray for a better one next year.

Remember, WCABA does not have a December meeting, so we hope you have much for which to be thankful this Thanksgiving, that you have a joyful and Merry Christmas, and a prosperous, peaceful, and Happy New Year.

This recipe was in the Northeastern Kansas Beekeeper's "Bee Buzzer" and was submitted by Taylor Morgan, third place winner at the Kansas State Fair Honey Show.



Bee Nutty Choco-Chip Cookies

½ c. honey

¼ c. packed brown sugar

2 c. flour

½ c. peanut butter

1 egg

½ tsp. each soda & salt

½ c. butter

1 ½ tsp. vanilla

1 c. chocolate morsels

Combine honey, peanut butter, butter and brown sugar in large bowl; beat until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla, mix well. Combine flour, soda and salt; mix well. Stir in peanut butter mixture. Stir in morsels. Drop onto ungreased cookie sheet and flatten each drop slightly. Bake at 350 degrees, 8-10 minutes. Remove and cool.

FOR SALE NEW & USED BEE SUPPLIES

...If You Need It, We Probably Have It...

New #1 deep frames, 70 cents each.

New 6¼ Boxes; New Western Cedar bottoms and tops.

6¼ budget-grade frames, 65 cents each.

Used 8 and 10 frame bottoms and tops, \$1 each in lots on 100.

Used 5 3/8 Boxes w/frames, \$2 each; used 5 3/8 Boxes w/fdn.

Nose Trucks and Barrel Trucks, Crimp Wired Foundation, 25# for \$95.

Bee Suits w/zipper veil, Smokers, Helmets, Uncapping Knives, Bee Veils.

G. C. WALKER, 8059 E. U.S. HWY 190, Rogers, TX 76569

Phone: 254/983-2891 - e-mail: Walker2bee@aol.com

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WALKER HONEY COMPANY

PO BOX 615 ROGERS, TEXAS 76569

"a texas family concern since 1928"

Clint Walker III, Ph.D

(254) 983-BEES

Fax (254) 893-2337

Janice Glisson Walker

e-mail: txhoney@vvm.com

Williamson County Area
Beekeepers Association
4355 County Road 110
Georgetown, Texas 78626