

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA MAY 2005 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, May 24, 2005
TIME: 7:00 p.m.—Basic Beekeepers; 8:00 – Gen. Meeting, Program.
PLACE: Round Rock Community Center, 205 Main Street
PROGRAM: “When Should I Harvest Honey?”- Jimmie Oakley
HOSTS: **Julie Hein and Shirley Kinningham**

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Thank you, Charles Oliver, for presenting the program on wildflowers at the last meeting. We have been enjoying the beautiful crop of wildflowers brought on by the good rains earlier in the year, and were grateful for the good general rain that fell recently. We hope we will receive adequate showers to keep them blooming so the bees can take advantage of their nectar. I saw bees busy working the gaillardia in our yard today.



Our program this month will be on harvesting our honey: what should I look for when deciding to take a frame (or a super) of honey? What will happen if the honey is not “ripe”? What preparations should I make for extracting honey? These and other questions will be addressed by Jimmie Oakley Tuesday night.

The WCABA Field Day/Picnic date has been set for Saturday, June 25, at the home of Skip and Gayle Shaw (watch for a map to their home in the June newsletter). After checking dates and conflicting events, it was decided to postpone a May picnic. The Shaws have a shady yard that will be a nice setting for the various presentations and we can enjoy the cool summer breeze while we eat a picnic lunch and listen and observe the several informational programs. We hope you will mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend. We have been having approximately 50 people register at each of our meetings this year: let’s keep up this good attendance and bring an interested person to the meetings with you.



Once a beekeeper, it’s hard to give up those fascinating little creatures. A former member of WCABA, Don Atkins, called me this week saying he wants to get a hive of bees. His ad is in the Classifieds: read it and see if you know anyone who can help him. Don and Gayle were strong supporters (as well as initiators) of the Ed Wolfe Memorial scholarship program when they lived in this area. Don has included a donation to this fund along with his membership check. Thank you, Don and Gayle.

New members who joined at the last meeting were Rory, Tasha, Katelyn (2004 scholarship winner), Kyle and Kristen Heisch, Belton; Mike, Deborah and Michael (2005 scholarship winner)

Castellano, Round Rock; and Powell Fowler, Elgin. We have also received the membership dues today from Don and Gayle Atkins, La Grange. We welcome all these members and hope they will enjoy being part of WCABA.

We appreciate the door prize donations made at the last meeting. Donors were Faith and Abigail Miller, Amanda Gibson, Michael Castellano, Frank and Barbara Hunt, Beth Walker, and Tasha Heisch. (I hope everyone who donated is listed; there was a bit of a mix-up on the donor list.) Winners were Faith Miller, bee pouch; Cherie Miller, bee bear; Haven Medrano, bee frisbee; Elroy Lieberum, door hanger; Greg Pekar, fridge magnet; Bonnie Kinningham, eggs; Lindsay Chapman, bobble head bee; Kristen Heisch, hanging bee; Tasha Heisch, bee pouch; Mike Castellano, bee pouch; Donnie Brinkmeyer, bee frisbee; Frank Fajkus, cookies; and Mary Bost, lip balm.



Have you checked out our WCABA web site lately? Bill Hein, webmaster, is doing an excellent job of keeping it current, including posting the current WCABA newsletter, and has now added archived newsletters and former recipients of the Ed Wolfe Memorial scholarship. If you have a suggestion for something you would like to see added to the website, why not let Bill know by e-mailing him at webmaster@wcaba.org? To log onto our website, go to www.wcaba.org.

Gayle Shaw, WCABA librarian, reports that the following books for our library have been received and will be available for you to check out at the next meeting:

Queen Rearing and Bee Breeding by Harry Laidlaw

Beekeeping: A Practical Guide by Richard Bonney

Sue Bee Honey: Collector's Edition (Gayle says this has some great recipes)

Honey, The Gourmet Medicine by Joe Traynor

Honey from Flower to Table by Stephanie Rosenbaum

Honey Bee Diseases and Pests – Canadian Association of Apiculturists

Hooray for Beekeeping by Bobbie Kalman

It may be a little late to be thinking of making splits but if you have a very strong colony that you think may tend to swarm, splitting it can stave off the swarming tendency and increase your hive numbers. James Tew, beekeeping specialist with the Ohio State University, wrote about “Growing the Split to Full Size” in a March 2002 issue of *Bee Culture*. He recommended putting one frame of mostly capped brood and two frames of honey and pollen with about two pounds of bees in your starter hive. To be sure the bees will accept a new queen, place the queen cage in the hive and watch the reaction of the bees; if they appear to “attack” the cage and cling tenaciously to it, it would be unwise to release her. If they show interest in the cage but are gentle and can be brushed away temporarily, she can be released. If all does not seem well, take a quick look at the brood frame for eggs and/or the parent queen. If she is in the starter hive, replace the frame in the original hive: don't release the new queen until you are sure the old queen is not there.

When you release the new queen, be gentle and calm in your movements. Open the cage a bit, allow her to exit on her own. If she should happen to fly away, leave the hive open for thirty or forty minutes and sometimes she will return on her own. Check in 3-4 days for eggs. If she is not there and queen cells have been started, return the split to the original hive, using copious smoke.

If you have made a successful split, you will need to provide more room in 4 to 7 days. Place the nucleus frames in a brood box and supplement them with protein (disease-free pollen or pollen substitute) and thick sugar syrup or high fructose corn syrup. You can also use additional frames of honey if you have some available. To boost them even further, you can add a frame of capped brood from a stronger colony, but take care not to give them too much brood as that would "require feeding and nurturing resulting in an increased workload for your little colony." Also, number of bees can be increased by placing the new colony in the spot formerly occupied by the original colony which you will need to move farther away; field bees returning from foraging will come to their original site, thereby adding more bees to the new hive.

NOTICE: Not all the package containers/feeding can have been returned to the club to be sent back to Walker Honey Company. Clint has offered us a nice refund on all containers with can that are returned to him in good condition. If you still have yours, try to get it back to the club by the next meeting. Thanks.

*** * * Classified Advertisement * * ***

WANTED: 1 colony of healthy bees. Also looking for a used smoker, veil, and a two frame extractor. Please respond to:

Don Atkins

418 Stephen Ln.

La Grange, TX 78945

Phone: 979/242-2419

e-mail: twooldcrows@cvtv.net

State Honey Queens not only promote our honey industry, they also provide us with their favorite honey recipes. In her Texas Honey Queen brochure, Sarah Kornfield (now American Honey Queen) gave us the following recipe:

Honey Shortbread

1 C butter
1/3 C Texas Honey
1 tsp. vanilla

2 ½ C flour
¾ C finely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 300 degree F. Beat butter, honey and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add flour, 1 cup at a time, beating well. Add pecans. Pat into a shortbread mold or an ungreased iron skillet. Prick surface of dough deeply with fork several times. Bake 35 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire rack for 10 minutes. Cut into wedges while warm. Serve with tea or coffee.

Bees

Queens

Honey

Walker Apiaries

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

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