

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA AUGUST 2006 NEWSLETTER

DATE: Tuesday, August 22, 2006
TIME: 7:00 – Ice Cream Social, General Visitation
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301 W. Bagdad, Bldg. 2 Rm. 2 , Round Rock
PROGRAM: “Cowboy” Honey Bears – Gayle and Don Atkins
HOSTS: **Gayle Shaw and Sally Tutor**

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The Beekeeping 101 question and discussion period last month was practical and the meeting was much to the point as everyone gathered around and took turns at the new extractor as Jimmie Oakley demonstrated steps in extracting honey. The extracting equipment has been put to good use this past month. If you still need to use the club equipment, be sure to contact Mary Bost by phone or e-mail to get your name on the calendar for the date you want to pick it up at the Bost Farm. Please have an alternate date in mind in case someone has already asked for the date you prefer to use it.



Don and Gayle Atkins have offered to donate their supplies of plastic honey bear containers and the materials they use to make the bears into cowboys. They will also show us how they do it with two bears Tuesday evening. These cowboy bears sell for a good price and will benefit our Scholarship program when we sell them at Wesley Fest in November. Thanks, Don and Gayle, for your generosity and help.

We always have a good turnout for our August Ice Cream Social, so come ready to enjoy the ice cream and the bee and honey conversations. Several people signed the sheet saying they would bring ice cream or “fixin’s” but more donations will be welcome. We’ll eat first (so the ice cream won’t get too soft) and then we’ll learn how to trim honey bears after that.

Looking Ahead: When we are busy pulling your honey crop and extracting that “liquid gold”, it is the perfect time to remember that our WCABA program in September will feature our honey tasting and honey judging activities. For our new members’ information, the “Taster’s Choice” honey tasting contest is a fun time when members bring in small jars (such as

baby food jars) of honey and everyone is invited to taste the various honeys and then vote for the three they like best (it doesn't have to be honey from *your* bees). The ones with the most votes (marks) is declared the "Tasters Choice" and blue, red, and white ribbons are awarded to the first, second and third highest vote-getters.



For the honey judging, please bring a two-pound queenline jar of your own honey to be judged by the following criteria: 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. Each of the criteria is given a number from 5 to 15, and those entries whose numbers total a certain percentage of 100 points will be awarded a blue ribbon. These jars of honey will be displayed in the TBA booth at the State Fair in Dallas.

Our scholarship winners are also asked to save enough honey to fill six honey bears to donate to the Wesley Fest scholarship fund raiser in November. Jimmie Oakley will provide the 12 ounce honey bear containers for you to use.



We welcome Glenn Williams of Kalona, Iowa and Veda Capps of Salado, TX (recruited by Juanita Duel) as our newest members. Dr. John Thomas has taken advantage of the half price offer and sent in his check to become a new member. Also, we thank Marcus Young for renewing his membership. Visitors at the last meeting were Ann and Bob Singleton and Joseph Lee Ochoa, neighbors of Gayle and Skip Shaw, who would like to have someone put bees on their place near Jarrell at 7801 FM 1105; also, Jean and David Kirkland, FM 972, Georgetown, who formerly had bees and who still have equipment which they would like to sell.

Door prizes last month were donated by Wilbur Brinkmeyer, Mary Bost, Suzan Gibson, Barbara Hunt, Taysha Howe, Faith Miller, Randy Oakley Family, Colter Chase, and Steve Poldrack. Lucky winners were Veda Capps, Joshua Oakley, Russell Tutor, Darla Chase, Ann Singleton, Abigail Oakley, Greg Pekar, Jeann Schmidt, Sharon Hulings, and Kay Oakley.



We thank the members who finished filling out the host calendar last meeting even though some of them had already served as hosts this year. Everyone seems to enjoy munching on the goodies; we need to be ready to take our turn as host and also to "feed the kitty" to take care of providing beverages and paperware which the Oakley's purchase and bring to the meetings each time.

The August 2006 issue of Bee Culture magazine has begun having a “Kid’s Corner”, a new feature for our beekeeping kids compiled by Kim Lehman of Austin. It will appear every other month in Bee Culture, and I think our WCABA kids will enjoy it.

An article in this same issue, entitled “Little Momma” had some interesting ideas in it. I’ll try to excerpt part of Walt Wright’s story and hope that you’ll have a chance to read it for yourself. He says, “Little Momma was a smallish queen hived with a very small swarm” which “wouldn’t fill a medium baseball cap”. Their chances for survival were bleak, but his wife had a soft spot for struggling colonies so she would pilfer a frame of honey, brood, or pollen to support the swarm’s survival. Over the summer, they did not increase in size and “Little Momma was still smallish”. To help them survive the winter, his wife gave them a few frames of honey and wished them well.

In February, the Wrights found a queenless colony that had a good cluster of bees but no brood. A queen replacement was not available so early in the season, so they put Little Momma and her crew, now down to two frames of bees, on newspaper on the queenless colony. “The next time I saw her” says Wright, “she was magnificent.” Dark colored (so he knew it was the same queen) she “radiated good health and purpose”. He didn’t try to replace her, and that hive equaled the production of others in that outyard that had a better start. *From little beginnings, big things can happen.*

A tall glass of ice-cold lemonade sounds appealing on these hot days. The following recipe was in the Wisconsin 2004 Honey Queen’s brochure which Harold Kind gave me.

State Fair Honey Lemonade (by Angela Fisher)

12 oz can lemonade (frozen concentrate)

¼ cup honey

Mix honey with ¼ cup warm water. Prepare lemonade as directed on package.
Add honey and water mixture. Makes 2 quarts.

Angela’s Quick Honey Tips

Stir a spoonful of honey into your morning juice.

Sweeten coffee and tea with honey.

Dip apple slices or other fruit in honey.

Eat a spoonful of honey before your morning jog.

To replenish fluids after exercising, stir a spoonful of honey into a glass of water.

Bees

Queens

Honey

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