

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA APRIL, 2007 NEWSLETTER WWW.WCABA.ORG

DATE: Tuesday, April 24, 2007
TIME: 7:00 P.M.-Beekeeping 101; 7:45-Break; 8:00-Gen. Mtg/Program
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301 W. Bagdad, Bldg. 2 Rm. 2 , Round Rock
PROGRAM: Texas Wildflowers; Christi Stromberg, Extension Horticulturist
HOSTS: **Sally Tutor and Randy Oakley Families**

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It was so good having the TBA Honey Queen, **Rachel Seida**, and our WCABA Honey Queen, **Meghan Cantlon**, with us at the last meeting to present the achievement awards to our 2006 Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost scholarship winners, **Nathan Exley**, **Kacey Hordnes**, and **Caleb Nicholson**. Then we were able to introduce our 2007 scholarship winners, **Michael Holman**, **Michael Tutor**, **Noah Hartley**, **Matthew Kohn**, and **Evan and Emily Tuuk**. These young people, ranging in age from 12 to 17 years of age, indicated much interest in learning about bees and beekeeping. They spent the balance of the evening putting together their beekeeping equipment in preparation to receive their bees on April 21st. We trust this will be an interesting, exciting year of learning how to manage their bees and make a good crop of honey.



Our program at our Tuesday night meeting will be Christi Stromberg, Horticulture Agent, from the William County Extension Office. When Christi spoke to our group several years ago, she gave us some very pertinent pointers on growing wildflowers and other bee forage plants. A review for those of us who heard her presentation previously is very timely, and for our newer members, we know you will appreciate hearing her suggestions for increasing the flowering plants in your area. With the good rains we have had recently, we're hoping this will be a good year for flora in Central Texas. Christi puts out the Williamson County Horticulture Newsletter that can be received from her on-line or visit her at <http://williamson-tx.tamu.edu>. For more information on wildflower seeding visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wildseed/>

A record number of members ordered queens and/or 3# packages of bees this year. It totaled 60 packages and 187 queens, and they will be delivered to the Bost farm at Georgetown on Saturday, April 21. Jimmie Oakley will pick up the bees from Clint Walker's shop that morning and he usually arrives at the farm soon after 10:00. It would be helpful if one or two of our members will volunteer to help with the unloading and also help those who

come for their bees. Please contact Jimmie or Mary if you can help. **Reminder:** See map with directions to Bost Farm on-line at www.wcaba.org, reference newsletter current or archive and select March, '07 issue.

The scholarship youths should be at the farm by 1:00 with their hive bodies and other equipment, ready to participate in the orientation demonstration that Jimmie Oakley does so effectively. This is a good learning demonstration; any adults who would like to attend and observe will be welcome. Those members receiving packages of bees for the first time will benefit greatly by attending.

The Williamson County Area Beekeepers were represented at the Serendipity Children's Festival in Georgetown on Saturday, April 14th, put on by the Community Montessori School in Georgetown. Last years' scholarship recipient Nathan Exley and WCABA Secretary Elizabeth Exley were assisted by Jimmie Oakley as they showed the youngsters attending what honeybees looked like up close using an observation hive, and explained the importance of honey bees to those living in Williamson County. It is appreciated when our members volunteer their time to provide this valuable community service.



We welcome new members David Knipp, from San Marcos, and Dennis and Sandra Thompson, from Georgetown. Also renewing their membership are Jerrell and Wanda Hein, Larry Rogers, Louis and Dot Absnaider, Thomas Payne, Rick Lattanzio, and G.C. and Beth Walker.

Door prize donations were made last month by the Lerma family, Mary Bost, Karin Cantlon, Abigail Miller, and Amanda Gibson. Lucky prize winners were Christine Thompson, Sally Tutor, Patrick Hartley, Luke Tutor, and Caleb Oakley.

Do you need a good spot to place a bee hive? Mrs. Carson Smith says she has a good spot and would welcome bees as long as someone else was taking care of them. Also, Will Mason would be happy to have bees on his place near Jonah; he has fruit trees and 10 acres of pastureland with no one using pesticide anywhere in his area. Mrs. Smith's number in Round Rock is 512/255-2600. Mr. Mason's number is 512/930-1902. Mrs. Smith said she still has "10 supers and 5 smaller boxes' for sale too.

A friend gave me a column from *Woman's World* with the following tips for using honey:

*For shiny hair... put a teaspoon of honey in a quart of warm water; pour liquid over clean, wet hair. Let it dry naturally.

*Relaxing honey soak...for softer, smoother skin, next time you run a bath, add ¼ cup honey to the water.

*Hangover cure...the fructose in honey helps flush alcohol out of the system. Have a spoonful before bed. (Note: a man who attended AA told Robert they are advised at their meetings to eat honey. MB)

*Pimple potion...dab blemishes with honey to kill bacteria and speed healing; cover with small band aid.

*Ease digestion...honey's enzymes aid digestion. Try eating a teaspoonful next time you get heartburn.

*Better lip balm...add honey to petroleum jelly to make it fragrant and delicious.

There has been much media coverage lately of the disappearing bees, or Colony Collapse Disorder. An article in a recent (April 14) Austin American-Statesman newspaper gave good coverage and quoted several well-known Central Texas beekeepers as well as beekeeping authorities regarding this

anomaly. Paul Jackson, chief apiary inspector for Texas, said it could be caused by a virus, mites, or pesticides. A hive may be full of honey and bees and then two weeks later, only the honey and a few young, unattended bees will remain as the adult bees disappear and die away from the hive. Researchers are working to try to determine the cause and recommend an appropriate treatment.

Clint Walker said most of the bees he lost last year were on the cotton crops in West Texas, and he suspects the culprit was a pesticide used on the cotton. Mark Jones, owner of BeeCARE supplies in Austin, said his customers “haven’t been complaining.” Dewey Fain of Llano said he hasn’t had any problems. Don Crofut of Austin reports that 15 to 20 colonies disappeared last year but this year he has been working on “getting his bees stronger by treating them with thymol” and he is also feeding them with “fructose until they are ready to make honey from nectar, typically around May.”

If you did not see this article in the newspaper, I’ll have it with me at the meeting and you will be welcome to read it in its entirety. It has much good information that space will not allow me to write here.

The January/February ’07 issue of the American Beekeeping Federation Newsletter had such an interesting cookie recipe (see below) that I tried it and I can see why it won First Place in the ABF cookie contest.

Oatmeal Cranberry White Chocolate Cookies

2/3 C butter or margarine (softened)		2/3/ C HONEY	2 large eggs
1 ½ C Old-fashion oatmeal	1 ½ C flour	1 tsp. baking soda	½ tsp. salt
1 6-oz. pkg. of Craisins (dried cranberries)		2/3 C white chocolate chips	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using an electric mixer, beat butter or margarine and HONEY together until light and fluffy. Add eggs, mixing well. Combine oats, flour, baking soda and salt in separate bowl. Add to butter mixture in several additions, mixing well after each addition. Stir in dried cranberries and white chocolate chips. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 10-13 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack. Makes 2 ½ dozen cookies.



Scholarship Recipients (Tutor & Hartley) Assembling their Bee Boxes after the Meeting

Bees

Queens

Honey

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