

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA SEPTEMBER, 2007 NEWSLETTER WWW.WCABA.ORG

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DATE: Tuesday, September 25, 2007
TIME: 7:00 P.M.-Honey Tasting/Judging-Break; 8:00-Gen. Mtg/Program
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301 W. Bagdad, Bldg. 2 Rm. 2 , Round Rock
PROGRAM: “How to Stay Young the First 100 Years”, Dr. Stephen Tranter
HOSTS: **Karin Cantlon, Brian Johnston**

What good fun we had at the ice cream social last month, visiting with fellow beekeepers and welcoming new members to our group as we ate delicious ice cream and cookies. We also watched a very interesting video about bees; “Tales from the Hive”. It has beautiful photography as well as good narration. An additional pleasure was having Jimmie and Kay Oakley’s children and grandchildren present to honor their parents on their 43rd wedding anniversary with a bouquet of flowers and a beautiful cake.

Our meeting this month will begin with another fun activity: Honey Tasting. Yes, another year for the now famous and always enjoyable Taster’s Choice Contest. It’s always interesting to taste the various flavors of Central Texas honey. We have a full agenda planned, so come early and bring your samples of honey (a small baby food jar of honey is adequate); don’t put a label on it as it will be numbered and someone will correlate the numbers with the person who provided the sample. Each person will get to cast three votes for the honeys they like best, or you can vote three times for one sample if you think it is outstanding. The results of the voting will determine the Taster’s Choice for 2007. A blue, red, and white ribbon will be awarded for first, second and third place. Come, bring your honey, participate, vote, have fun.

Also, you are encouraged to bring a two-pound queenline jar of your ’07 honey to be judged while we are tasting the samples. The honey will be judged on container appearance (cleanliness, no finger marks), level of fill, free of crystals, free of bubbles and foam, free of wax, free of lint or other foreign matter, and most important—flavor and brightness (clarity). The honey will not be judged against other entries but against standard of quality. The jar should have your label on it as it will be sent to the State Fair in Dallas, displayed with other Texas honey in the TBA honey booth for three weeks, and then donated to the Happy Hill Farm Academy and Home in Granbury, Texas.

Our program this month is one that should be vital to all of us. Entitled “How to Stay



Young the First 100 Years,” Dr. Stephen Tranter of Georgetown Family Wellness in Georgetown will discuss the factors vital to our good health. He and his wife, Dr. Patricia Felder, have been in practice in Georgetown for 25 years and are well respected by their patients as well as various organizations in the community.

We welcome three more member families to WCABA: Lacy and Christophe Vain and children of Georgetown, Aisha Kessler and Adam of Austin, and Robert Saxelby of Cedar Park joined our club at our last meeting. This brings our total membership to 94, and since each membership may include spouse and children, we have well over 150 people who could attend at any time. Please take time to get acquainted with new members and make them feel good to be a part of a friendly, helpful group of beekeepers. Guests were Doug and Lorrie (Oakley) Anson and Allison and McKenna.

The extracting equipment that the club owns is beginning to be used more frequently as members want to harvest their honey crop. Use of this equipment is part of the benefit of being a member of WCABA. To schedule a date to use this equipment, call Mary Bost, 512/863-3656 or e-mail her at bostbees@juno.com. It would be advisable to have a second time in mind in case someone else has already asked for it on your preferred date. For our newer members’ information, to use the equipment (at your home) pick it up at the Bost farm and after use, clean it thoroughly and return it within 3 days. If there is a complication, such as bad weather, call to see whether the time can be extended. If no one else has scheduled use of it, we try to accommodate our members.

Door prizes were donated last month by Harold Kind, Kay Oakley, and Wilbur Brinkmeyer. The winners were Luke Tutor, Nick Kohn, David Kohn, Emily Tuuk, and Isaac Oakley.

I have been selling honey at the local Farmer’s Markets in Georgetown and Sun City this year, and it’s interesting to me that so many people are concerned about the loss of bees. They are becoming aware that it’s not just a problem for beekeepers; the loss of pollinating bees will be felt in food production as well, and will therefore affect everyone. Even people who call about bee swarms state that they don’t want the bees killed as they know how important it is to try to save the bees.

Several of you have been kind enough to call my attention to articles on the Internet concerning the Colony Collapse Disorder. One such article had some up-to-date information that I shall pass on in case you missed it. Credited to CBS News, it is entitled, “Virus Is Newest Suspected Bee-Killer”. It states, “Scientific sleuths have a new suspect for what’s been killing billions of honeybees: a virus previously unknown in the United States.”

Scientists have been using “a novel genetic technique and old-fashioned statistics to identify **Israeli acute paralysis virus** as the latest potential culprit. They now plan to infect honeybees with the newfound virus to see if it is the killer. “At least we have a lead now we can begin to follow. We can use it as a marker and we can use it to investigate whether it does in fact cause disease,” said Dr. Ian Lipkin, a Columbia University epidemiologist and co-author of the study.

Other suspects are parasitic mites, pesticides, poor nutrition and the stress of travel as beekeepers move their hives of bees around the nation to pollinate various crops when they come into bloom. It may be that the newfound virus only adds insult to injury that the bees are already suffering. Finding the virus should be a red flag that a hive is at risk and should be quarantined, according to the scientists.

Scientists have found that “blasting emptied hives with radiation apparently kills whatever infectious agent that causes the disorder. That has focused their attention on viruses, bacteria and the like, to the exclusion of other noninfectious phenomena, like cell phone interference, also proposed as culprits.”

Colony Collapse Disorder was first reported in 2004, the same year that U. S. beekeepers began importing bees from Australia—a practice that had been banned since 1922. If Australia is the source of the virus, that could be an ironic twist as Australian bees were brought in to bolster the U. S. bee populations that had been devastated by the Varroa mite. Officials are discussing reinstating the ban.

On a more hopeful note, “preliminary research shows some bees can integrate genetic information from the virus into their own genomes, apparently giving them resistance.” Ilan Sela, a Hebrew University of Jerusalem professor, said about 30 per cent of the bees he has examined had done so. These “naturally ‘transgenic’ honeybees theoretically could be propagated to create stocks of virus-resistant insects”, according to Dr. Lipkin.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED RECIPE

Dr. Tranter has graciously shared his famous recipe for making barbequed baby back ribs so that is the recipe for this month's newsletter. Thank you, Dr. Tranter.

Doc's Baby Back Ribs

Grill 3 racks of baby back pork ribs to medium, to remove fat. Cut into 3-4 rib portions, dip in barbeque sauce and place in a covered pan. Pour the remaining sauce over the ribs. Bake at 250 degrees for 3-4 hours. Serves 9-12.

Barbeque Sauce

Mix 1 large bottle (48-50 oz.) ketchup, ½ qt local Texas honey and 12 shakes Tabasco.

Jimmie & Kay Oakley
Celebrate their 43rd
Wedding Anniversary at the
meeting. Congratulations.



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