

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA OCTOBER, 2008 NEWSLETTER

WWW.WCABA.ORG

(for meeting directions see website)

DATE: Tuesday, October 28, 2008
TIME: 7:00 P.M.—Beekeeping 101; 8:00--Program
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301W. Bagdad, (Cafeteria Dining Room), Round Rock
PROGRAM: Planting Wildflowers for Your Bees, Deryn Davidson
HOSTS: **Barbara Hunt, Harold Kind**

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Our program this month will be given by one of our new members, Deryn Davidson. She is the Horticulturist/Gardens Volunteer Coordinator at the LBJ Wildflower Center in Austin. She has worked in this field for 10 years and has been at the Wildflower Center for three years. Deryn will talk about how to collect seed, clean it, store it and plant it. She will also give suggestions on some of the best as well as easiest wildflowers to propagate as well as some sources where seed can be bought. She will also discuss the anatomy of the flowers, what and where bees can forage and why they like them. Sounds interesting, doesn't it!

There was a variety of honey samples to taste at the last meeting. Everyone could vote three times on the honey samples they liked best, and the ones receiving the most votes won ribbons. The winners were: Blue ribbon—Juliette Martin; Red ribbon, a tie—Michael Tutor and Jimmie Oakley; and White ribbon, also a tie—Joseph Clarkson and Mary Bost.

Blue ribbons were also awarded to each of the entries in the honey judging, if the 2-pound jar totaled 90% or more in the following categories: container appearance and level of fill; density; free of crystals and bubbles/foam, wax, lint or other foreign matter; flavor; and brightness. Receiving blue ribbons were Ana Lerma, Caleb Jones, Michael Tutor, Jimmie Oakley, Joseph Clarkson, Janice Hartley and Mary Bost. Juliette and Jessica Martin also brought honey after the meeting which meant that all our scholarship recipients would have a sample of their



honey displayed at the State Fair in Dallas. We thank Janet Church, Deryn Davidson, and Sara Reeves for serving as judges.

Our annual fundraiser—**Wesley Fest**--that enables us to pay for the bees and equipment we award to our Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Scholarship winners each year will be held in **Georgetown Saturday, November 1 and Sunday, November 2**. The location has changed from its former site to a new one: the Wesleyan Estrella located on Williams Drive in northwest Georgetown. This is a beautiful wooded area and the Wesley Fest volunteers will do everything possible to make this beneficial to all its vendors as this is the way they fund their charitable activities. Directions will be available at the meeting, and on website.

The WCABA booth is No. 19, (in the middle row west of the pond) and we will set up early Saturday morning. Volunteers—YOU—will man the booth throughout the day and again from noon until late Sunday afternoon, when the booth will be dismantled and stored until next year. The honey that is sold in the booth in support of the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship Program is donated by club members or purchased from club sources. If you do not have honey to donate, money donations used to buy the honey needed for us to sell will be very much appreciated. A sheet will be passed around for you to indicate your honey/money donation.

The honey booth serves to educate the public about the value and benefit of honey bees in the Central Texas area as well as inform visitors of the scholarship program itself. Present and former scholarship recipients are encouraged to participate in the booth thereby promoting honey and the scholarship program. An observation hive (depending on the weather) is always an item of much interest and allows volunteers to show and discuss what goes on in a bee hive. Jimmie Oakley will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting Tuesday evening and you are encouraged to look at it and sign up for a time when you can help.

Jimmie Oakley, who worked in the TBA honey booth at the State Fair the last weekend, said that Paul and Cindy Jones, Caleb, Rachel and Rebekah, worked in it Saturday, Oct. 17, and reported having a great time.

Other upcoming items to keep in mind: the TBA Convention will be held in Plano Thursday, Nov.6-8 (Jimmie will have more information at the meeting); new officers for 2009 will be elected at the November meeting and we hope you will say “yes” if asked to serve; the 2008 scholarship recipients will give their reports of their first year in beekeeping; and if you want to avoid waiting in line to pay your ‘09 WCABA dues (still only \$10.00 per calendar year), Sally Tutor will be happy to take your membership--either new or renewal--application. Jimmie Oakley is treasurer of TBA and he will be ready to take your membership in this very worthwhile organization of beekeepers.

We welcome new members Chris and Shirley Doggett of Thrall and trust that being members of WCABA will be beneficial to them. We also were happy to welcome Scott, Roberta, Nathanael, Samuel and Paul Thelen of Briggs who visited last meeting and hope they will consider membership in WCABA.

Door prizes were donated last month by Deryn Davidson, Jimmie Oakley, and Kim Arnett. Lucky winners were Paul Thelen, the mini canister; Stephen Gardipee, the bee honey/jam spreader; and Kim Arnett, bee earrings.

“Just Starting Out? Get to A Meeting!” is an article in the July '08 **Bee Culture** written by Jennifer Berry, Research Coordinator at the University of Georgia Bee Lab, and it has some common sense ideas. She says that with all the recent flood of media attention focusing on honey bees and their problems, a varied large group of people are becoming interested in beekeeping. With each new beekeeper, there “is one less person who knows nothing about bees and one more person hopefully informing others about the importance of bees and other pollinators.” (I, too, am asked many questions at Farmers Market regarding what people are hearing on TV and reading in the news. Perhaps you have, also. MB)

Berry has been getting phone calls and e-mails daily requesting information about how to become a beekeeper, so she suggests (1) join a beekeeping association, (2) attend regular meetings, (3) acquire a mentor, (4) subscribe to a beekeeping journal, (5) get hands on experience by working with an experienced beekeeper, (6) do your homework and find out as much information as you can and keep informed.

Books and articles will help with the fundamentals, says Berry, but attending bee meetings may be “one of the best things you can do as a beekeeper.” Why? To learn from other beekeepers more experienced than you, to find a mentor living near you, to keep up on the newest information, and to be with people who are interested in something you like—bees. They have the hands on knowledge, plus they can tell you about the mistakes they’ve made in the past in order to help you avoid those same mistakes.

Another reason to attend meetings is to get acquainted (networking) with beekeepers in your area who may be willing to help you with supplies you need right then. It also gives you someone to bounce ideas off of, someone to borrow a super from or a frame of brood, as well as to know that other beekeepers may be experiencing the same problems you are.

“But probably the best thing?” states Berry, “You’re hanging out with a bunch of people who understand what the heck you are talking about”” The people you’ll meet at beekeeper meetings are from all walks of life, down to earth, friendly and eager to help new beekeepers.” So there you have it. We hope, if you’re a new beekeeper or are interested in becoming a beekeeper, you’ll consider attending the meetings we have at WCABA in Round Rock as well as the TBA Convention in November and the Delegates meetings that often have interesting hands-on sessions.

Chat Lerma has generously shared her family’s favorite cookie recipe. She said her 12 year old daughter, Rachel, had made the cookies she brought to our meeting recently.

Giant Honey and Oat Cookies

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| ¾ cup butter or margarine, softened | 2/3 cup TEXAS honey | 1 ½ cups sugar | 3 egg whites | 4 cups quick |
| cooking or old-fashioned oats | 2 cups all-purpose flour | 1 tsp. soda | ½ tsp. salt | |

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease cookie sheet. Beat butter, honey, sugar and egg whites in a large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed, or mix with spoon. Stir in remaining ingredients.

Drop dough by level ¼ cupfuls about 3 inches apart onto cookie sheet. Bake 11 to 14 minutes or until edges are light brown (centers will be soft). Cool; remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Yield: 1 ½ dozen cookies.

(Recipe taken from Betty Crocker Cookie Book.)

Classified

For Sale: 64 brand new, 6 ¼ “ frames with plastic, beeswax-coated foundation; 32 are black and 32 are white. These are “Superframe models from Brushy Mountain Bee Farm, with made-in-America plastic foundation. Will sell entire lot only, 64 frames for \$1.75 each. Contact Ron or Lisa Giles at 512-581-9140, or e-mail to gilesron@aol.com.

Bees

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