

# WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

## WCABA JANUARY, 2009 NEWSLETTER

[WWW.WCABA.ORG](http://WWW.WCABA.ORG)

(for meeting directions see website)

DATE: Tuesday, January 27, 2009  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.—Beekeeping 101; 8:00--Program  
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301W. Bagdad, (Cafeteria Dining Room), R. Rock  
PROGRAM: Bees & Queens, A New Time, A new Direction – Jimmie Oakley  
HOST: **Susan Gibson, Juanita Duel, Veda Caps**

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### NEWSLETTER

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I hope you have had a wonderful holiday season and that one of your New Years resolutions was to attend as many WCABA beekeeping meetings as possible, to participate in the programs and learn as much about this fascinating hobby/occupation as possible.

Our program this month will be an extended discussion of the changes we have seen in the supply of bees and queens, the various options open to WCABA as a club, the different vendors available, and the need for quick action to secure a place in the shrinking bee and queen market. Jimmie Oakley will open the discussion, with input for the Executive Committee and club members. Order forms will be available for those ready to make a decision as we build our club purchase order over the next two meetings. Come with questions and we will seek answers.

Also, as a special addition to the program, Julia & Jessica Martin will be presenting their beekeeping scholarship report to the club members that they didn't get to give in November. We hear it will be entertaining, come see.

If you know of a boy or girl who is very interested in learning about bees and beekeeping, now is the time to encourage him/her to apply for the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial scholarship. As many of you know, this scholarship consists of not only the bees but the brood box and frames to hive them in and the basic equipment necessary to work them. Since bees and the supplies will be more costly this year and our fund raiser was less successful last November, the committee to choose the recipients will want to be sure the applicants are truly interested and will be dedicated to learning beekeeping. The applicant and his/her parent need to write their paragraphs expressing their honest feelings about this beekeeping endeavor and turn them in by **March 1st.**(that is 10 days earlier). Applications may be obtained by checking our website [[www.wcaba.org](http://www.wcaba.org)] or by contacting Jimmie Oakley at 512/388-3630 or [jimmieoakley@att.net](mailto:jimmieoakley@att.net).

Have you checked your hive(s) for winter kill? This has been a difficult year for our bees. Not only have they been weakened by varroa mites and small hive beetles but the extreme drought in this area has left them with little or no forage to help them. By this time, their stores of honey may be almost depleted. Be sure you are checking to see if they need sugar syrup (2 to 1 ratio) to prevent starvation.

Also, now is the time to be planning for this year's additions/replacements to your bee yard. Do you need to purchase more package bees? Do you need to replace your old queen (s)? We expect to have some up-to-date information for WCABA members at our meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> regarding our new source for buying bees as well as prices. Of course, you do not have to buy through the club but hopefully, we can offer some discount plus the convenience of picking up your bees at a closer pickup point (the Bost farm in Georgetown) as well as an instructional hour as Jimmie Oakley walks new beekeepers through the process of hiving a package of bees and helping them get off to a good start.

An upcoming event that I would like to recommend to all our WCABA members is the Winter Delegates Meeting on February 21 at the Saltlick BBQ Restaurant in ROUND ROCK next to the Dell Diamond on State Hwy 79. (How could it be any more convenient for our members?) They have an online menu starting at \$6.95 or you can order a meal about 11:30 a.m. with a drink, tax, and tip for approximately \$10.00. Why attend? You can learn more about TBA, how they have and are working to get the research bee lab going at Texas A & M (remember the hat that was passed around at our meetings so you could contribute to it?), and what our TBA leaders are doing to benefit all of us beekeepers.



The current TBA Journal (which each TBA member receives bi-monthly) lists the memberships as of November 4, 2008. WCABA members who were listed are Frank Hunt, Frank Morgan, Clyde Anderson, Mary Bost, Kay Oakley, Jimmie Oakley, Randy Oakley, Beth Walker, Clint Walker and new member Bryan Pruett. Let me urge you to consider joining TBA, attending its delegates meeting and the Summer Clinic and especially the TBA Convention each November. Jimmie Oakley is TBA treasurer and will be glad to give you more information and take your \$20.00 dues.

We thank those of you who signed the Host Sheet at our November meeting. We have hosts for January, February, March and September. Please check your calendar and decide which month you can bring the goodies, then sign up when the sheet is passed around again this month. Let's complete the list!

We had a record number of members pay their dues for 2009 at the November meeting as noted in the special December newsletter. Four new members joined as well as 20 renewing members. Since then, we have received dues from Travis and Maureen Lane, San Angelo; Jeann and Olaf Schmidt, Georgetown, and Britton Schlinke, Austin. Also, we appreciate Shannon and Janey Cloe sending me their changed email address.

My sincere apologies to those members who donated door prizes in November: I've misplaced (lost) my list. However, the lucky winners were Wayne Baker, Paul Exley, Cindy Jones, Michael Neu, Paul Jones, David Heussner, Kay Oakley and Joshua Oakley.

A personal note: I want to thank Jimmie Oakley for the generous accolade accorded me in the December newsletter. I have enjoyed writing the newsletter; it's a challenge, it keeps me on my toes, and it's one of the few things I am still able to actively participate in doing. I'm sure there are others who can do a more professional job than I do, but please don't "put me out to pasture" just yet. (Mary Bost)

This has been a difficult year for anyone connected with agriculture, especially in the Central Texas area where we are experiencing extreme drought conditions. This is especially true for the beekeepers whose bees depend on nectar for their sustenance and storage of honey. Jimmie and I have had about a 40% death loss in our hives, even though he has been diligent in feeding and caring for them.

The Colony Collapse Disorder is still considered the primary culprit in the heavy bee loss, but what is causing it is still being debated and researched. I noticed an article in the November '08 *American Bee Journal*, written by Rachel Neiman, which had some interesting and hopeful insights. CCD, which is characterized by the "mysterious and inexplicable loss of worker bees in managed honey bee colonies" was first noticed in the winter of 06/07 when beekeepers began reporting 30 to 90 percent loss of their hives. This loss is occurring in the U.S., Italy, Spain, Greece, the UK and other European countries.

One virus, called the Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV) causes "honey bees to suffer from shivering wings, followed by paralysis and death outside the hive". "If you look how the disease spreads, it's very reminiscent of flu. Flu also starts in the fall and hits hard in the winter; the same is true of this bee virus. It's very contagious like a flu," explains Nitzan Paldi. A company, Beeologics, has its scientists working on what they hope will be a solution, called Remebee, which is "delivered to the colony via regular feeding processes".

"While it's primary focus is Remebee and solving the current CCD crisis, Beeologics' wider focus is developing a full line of products for bee health, starting with RemebeePro, a multi-viral agent; and RemebeePlus, a feeding supplement based on natural ingredients," states Neiman. I shall have this article at the meeting and it will be available for you to read more in depth.

### ACORN SQUASH

|                       |               |                 |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 3 medium acorn squash | ¼ cup butter  | ¼ tsp. cinnamon |
| ½ tsp. salt           | ¼ tsp. ginger | 1/3 cup honey   |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut squash in half and clean. Place open side down in ½ inch of hot water, bake ½ hour. Pour off water; turn right side up. Place honey, butter, and seasoning mixture in each. Return to oven and bake another ½ hour.

**Shiryl Donahoo, '87 Texas Honey Queen**

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