

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA MARCH, 2009 NEWSLETTER

WWW.WCABA.ORG

(for meeting directions see website)

DATE: Tuesday, March 24, 2009
TIME: 7:00 P.M.—Beekeeping 101; 8:00--Program
PLACE: Allen Baca Senior Ctr, 301W. Bagdad, (Cafeteria Dining Room), Round Rock
PROGRAM: Achievement Awards, Scholarship Awards, TBA Honey Queen
HOSTS: **Cindy Jones, Carmen Heussner, Gary Bible**

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What a wonderful meeting we had last month! **David Kohn** led the **Beekeeping 101** discussion with much interesting information and question responses, then Randy Oakley gave an excellent presentation on Spring nutrition and treatment of bees. Plus we had a record setting crowd in attendance: 83 people signed the registration sheet!



The March meeting should be equally as good. In Beekeeping 101 David Kohn will be focusing on where to place a hive and what to do with a nuc and how to hive a package of bees when you get yours. Then Jimmie Oakley will be presenting the 2008 scholarship recipients with their achievement awards as well as introducing the 2009 scholarship winners. With all this, **Miss Nicole Pettibon**, the **TBA '09 Honey Queen**, will assist in the presentations and also give a brief report on her activities as honey queen. We have several eligible girls in our membership who would make good honey queens, and we hope they will make a special effort to be present, meet Nicole, learn what a help a honey queen is to the beekeeping industry, and perhaps be inspired to become a WCABA Honey Queen.

And that's not all! After the presentations, our members are asked to assist the novice beekeepers in assembling their hives and frames prior to their taking them home to be painted and



made ready to receive their bees on April 18 (the expected date to receive the WCABA-ordered nucs. There are a number of new beekeepers who have joined our club recently, so we know this will be a very helpful meeting for them. And they will appreciate the assistance of experienced beekeepers.

In spite of the increased cost of obtaining bees and queens this year, Elizabeth Exley reports that 9 nucs and 23 packages of bees were ordered through her, and Mary Bost says 52 nucs and 40 queens were ordered through WCABA. It will be an exciting time when all these bees arrive to be placed in their new hives. Let's hope for some good rains to bring on lots of flowers filled with nectar for these voracious little insects.

Elizabeth Exley also asked me to mention that any of our new members who would like to join the yahoo group who exchange questions and responses regarding bees can contact her at lizexley@msn.com for more information.

Welcome to our new members: the Oliver Family, Calli, Bruce, and Patti of Georgetown; Alicia Johnson, Georgetown; Wes Aiken, Horseshoe Bay; Wayne Lundgren, Elgin; Teresa and Andrew Schwertner, Jarrell; and Bill Lancaster, Lago Vista. Visitors were Paula Schaefer, Round Rock and Gene Schaefer, Cisco; Ron Pope; Bob and Hamilton Pope; Tommy, Tyler, Jared, Amanda, and Matt Rutherford, Marble Falls; Johnny Whooper; and Mark and Bailey Franklin. We hope our visitors will come back and perhaps join WCABA.

Members who renewed their membership last month were Beth Walker, Rogers; Rory and Tasha Heisch, Belton; Pat, Janice, and Noah Hartley, Lampasas; Doug Branch, Austin; Randy and Amy Oakley Family; Manor; Christophe Vain, Georgetown; Ana Lerma, Manor; Cindy and Paul Jones, Spicewood; Aisha Kessler, Austin; Richard Red, Georgetown; Wayne and Suzanne Ericson, Hutto; McCartney Taylor, Austin; Stephen Gardipee, Belton; and Russell Tutor Family, Burnet. Members who have mailed in their dues since the meeting are John O'Banion, Georgetown; Buddy and Cherie Miller, Marble Falls; Shay Nicholson, Moody; Shannon and Janey Cloe, Troy; Alma Konze, Taylor; and Sharon Hulings, Coupland.

Jennifer Martin did a good job of recruiting hosts for most of the rest of the year but we still need one host for October and two hosts in November. If you haven't volunteered, please raise your hand and let Jenn sign you up for one of these three slots. Also, a goodly number of you signed the Swarm Retrieval list but if you haven't signed it and you're interested in trying to capture swarms, sign the sheet at this meeting so your name and number can be given callers in your area this Spring. I'll begin getting calls soon, I'm sure.

A big thank you to the following people who donated door prizes last month: David Kohn, Tom Bunner, Cindy Jones, Elizabeth Exley, Anna Lerma, Jimmie Oakley, Jennifer Martin, and Suzan Gibson. The lucky winners were Patrick Hartley, dozen eggs; Harold Kind, dozen eggs; Carmen Heussner, bear with bee on a swing; Bobby Hepner, bugs and bees candy; Stephy Gommert, Bit o' Honey candy; Mary Bost, Burt's Bees lip balm; Andrew Schwertner, bar soap; Cherie Miller, Anna's homemade bread; Julia Hepner, kitchen holder basket; and Johnny Whooper, kitchen towel.

Since quite a few of our members have ordered either packages of bees or nucs (short for nucleus), I went to Keith Delaplane's book, *First Lessons in Beekeeping*, for suggestions that may be helpful. First, in his discussion about installing packages of bees, he comments that the advantages of package bees are their "relative economy and the fact that they can be shipped almost anywhere as long as they are protected from temperature extremes". (I might add, as long as the postal authorities cooperate in quickly

notifying the recipient. In past years, WCABA members were fortunate in getting package bees from Clint Walker; bees went from his apiary to the dispersal site in a matter of a few hours). The disadvantage is the fact that “package colonies grow slowly because of the 21-day delay between the first eggs and emergence of the first workers,” says Delaplane.

One of the best ways of starting a new hive is installing a nuc, several frames of whole combs complete with bees and brood: “a young, incipient colony that will quickly grow to full size,” comments Delaplane. It will also contain a young queen and with food and brood of all ages, there is little interruption to colony growth. “With a good queen and good forage conditions it is not unusual for nucleus colonies to reach full production strength their first season.” The same condition exists in splitting hives. The beekeeper removes three or four frames of brood from an established strong hive, adds a young queen, and then has two hives. Now all you need to do is place the rest of the frames (with either drawn comb or new foundation) in the hive, place the inner cover and top on the brood box, and place a feeder with sugar syrup (1:1 sugar to water), put a rock or brick on the top to prevent wind blowing it off before the bees can seal it on.

It is important to be ready for your new hive, whether starting with a package or a nuc. Select your apiary site, have your brood box painted and ready on its stand or on concrete blocks, lean the hive slightly forward so that rainwater can run out the entrance, and have your veil, hive tool, smoker, and a syrup feeder full of 1:1 sugar syrup. If installing a package, remove about half the frames and set them against the side of the brood box, put on your veil, spray the bees through the screen with clean water, use your hive tool to pry off the lid, exposing the can of sugar syrup provided by the shipper to feed the bees and use your hive tool to grip the can and lift it out of the package.

The queen in her cage is usually suspended nearby; secure it so it doesn't fall into the package. Remove the queen cage, temporarily replace the lid on the package, shake off the bees adhering to the queen cage, and inspect the queen to be sure she is alive. If the candy has a cap, remove it; if the queen cage is a wooden one, you may want to make a small opening in the candy so the bees can more readily eat it and release their queen in a few hours. Suspend the cage between two center frames with the candy end down, then set the package of bees in the space left when you removed half the frames previously. The bees will gradually leave the package, discover the feeder, and begin drawing out the foundation. Go back in 24 hours to remove the package container and replace the frames, spacing them evenly.

Check to see if the queen has left her cage; if not, go back after 3 days and if she is still in the cage, remove it, holding your finger over the opening, close the hive and then carefully remove the cork end (or whatever opening was used to insert her), again place your finger over the opening and insert that end into the hive entrance. The queen can then simply walk into the hive.

Honey Glazed Baked Ham

1 ham 1 cup honey maraschino cherries

Place ham, fat side up, on a rack in an open pan. Do not add water. Do not cover. Roast in a low oven preheated to 325 degrees. Use the following time allotments according to the size of the ham:

16-18 lbs. – 4 ½ hrs. 12-15 lbs. – 4 hrs. 10 to 12 lbs. – 3 ½ hrs. 8 to 10 lbs – 3 hrs.

Remove rind from ham if it hasn't been done. Score in diamond shapes. Place ¼ of a maraschino cherry in the center of each diamond. Pour 1 cup honey over scored ham. Use more honey if necessary to cover ham uniformly. Bake in hot oven at 400 degrees until well browned. Wendy Riggs – '95 TBA Honey Queen

How Have They Grown? Come and See !



2008 Scholarship Recipients: Julie & Jessica Martin, Caleb Jones, & Joseph Clarkson

**Williamson Co. Area
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