

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA SEPTEMBER, 2010 NEWSLETTER

WWW.WCABA.ORG

(for meeting directions, see website)

DATE: Tuesday, September 28, 2010
TIME: 7:00 PM-Honey Tasting & Judging, 8:00 PM-Cooking Demonstration
PLACE: First United Methodist Church Georgetown (basement)
PROGRAM: National Honey Month Celebration: Tasting, Judging, & Cooking
HOSTS: Janet Church, Chris & Shirley Doggett, Rutherford Family

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Judging by how the club extracting equipment has been used this month, many of you have harvested your honey crop, and reports of honey extracted have been encouraging. We anticipate many of you will bring a small jar of honey for the honey tasting contest as well as a two-pound jar for the honey judging and perhaps a one-pound jar for the TBA judging when you come to our meeting on the 28th of this month.



Our WCABA Honey Queen, Rebekah Jones, will present a cooking-with-honey demonstration Tuesday evening. This will give her the opportunity to practice her talk as she prepares the recipe that she will demonstrate at the State Fair, and we'll be the lucky "guinea pigs"; perhaps we'll even get to taste it. Rebekah gave her talk to the Round Rock Garden Club this past Monday and Jimmie said she did an excellent presentation. Good for you, Rebekah!

Jimmie Oakley has written a very good description of all the "Upcoming Events at WCABA (2010)", a compilation of all the activities available to our members through the rest of this year; I shall attach and send it to all our email members. We'll also print off a few extra copies for those of you who get your newsletter through the mail but you'll need to ask for a copy. Below are excerpts that you'll want to know about this month.

Honey Tasting—Three votes are allowed to each taster to be marked physically by each sample jar of honey according to their preference. The winner is determined by the highest total marks by each sample jar of honey. The taster can cast a vote (mark) for three different samples or all their votes for one sample or any combination thereof. A



blue, red, or white ribbon is given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place based on the votes each entry received. The Tasters Choice contest is mainly to allow the membership to get a taste of the many types and flavors of honey produced in this area. This is a fun activity.

Honey Judging—Members submitting a 2 pound jar of honey from their current crop will have it judged by a committee against a set of judging standards for taste, color, clarity, absence of bubbles and wax, etc. A blue, red, or white ribbon will be awarded to each entry. Last year, all entries received blue ribbons, denoting very high quality of all entries. This honey is then sent to the State Fair of Texas in Dallas to be displayed in the TBA Honey Booth during the Fair and is then donated to Happy Hills Children's Home.



Texas State Fair – Dallas (Sept. 24-Oct. 17) At the State Fair, the Texas Beekeepers Association sets up their prize-winning Honey Booth in the TDA Food and Fiber Building to give opportunity for beekeepers from around the state to show off their finest products. This booth is manned by beekeeper volunteers who enhance the visitors' understanding of the fascinating world of the honey bee queen and her retinue of workers as they go about their daily routines in the observation hive. Interested beekeepers are encouraged to sign up to do a tour of duty (5 hours) at the Fair in return for free admission and parking to the grounds. If interested, check with Jimmie Oakley.

Other events of interest in coming months are the Wesley Fest (Nov. 6-7), the TBA Convention (Nov. 11-14), the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost scholarship recipients reports, and the election of WCABA officers for 2011 at the November meeting. More details about these events will be in the October newsletter.

We are happy to welcome five new members to WCABA: Mike Tenbrook, Volente; Mark Miks, Austin; Jeff Callin, Temple; Allen Cooper, Austin; and George Mailloux, Austin. We trust they will enjoy our programs and find them helpful as they explore the fascinating hobby of beekeeping.

The door prize donors at the last meeting were Chris Doggett, Wilbur Brinkmeyer, Amanda Rutherford, and Frank and Barbara Hunt. Lucky winners were Dean Hamilton, Daniel Eacrett, Lisa Schroder, and Luke Schroder.

We were sorry to hear that a few of our members lost hives from the high water that caused a lot of damage to homes and other property of people living near overflowing streams or creeks caused by the heavy rains from Tropical Storm Hermine. That's always a hard lesson to be learned, and an unexpected consequence to otherwise lovely locations. All of us need to be aware that a heavy rain may cause water to enter bee hives located too near the ground; it is better to place your hives on a pallet or bricks or concrete blocks. Hives should be tipped forward slightly in order for any water accumulation on the bottom board of the hive to drain away quickly.

As we enter the Fall season, we need to be sure our bees have sufficient food to keep the winter bees strong. If there isn't enough honey, feed the hive with 2:1 ratio of sugar water. A protein patty in each hive will replace a dearth of available pollen. If your hive is not strong, use a half patty and then in two

weeks, replace it with the other half patty—Small Hive beetles like it, too, and will foul it up. Watch for the SHB; if there are more than just a few, consider using cooking oil in a trap to drown them. If you have spacers in your brood box, remove them: SHB will hide under them, making it difficult for bees to chase them. Be sure you have checked for Varroa mites. If they are too numerous, dust your frames with powdered sugar.

Fall is a good time to consider making splits. If your hive (s) is strong and you would like to increase your hive numbers, order a new queen and when she arrives, take 3 or 4 frames of brood from the established hive to put in the new hive. Check carefully for the queen. If at all possible, find her and put her in the new hive. Include a couple frames that have some honey and bee bread (pollen). Move them away from the established hive. Now wait a day or two for the established hive to realize they are queenless, then insert the new queen in her cage as you do when you start a package of bees. Get ready to feed, feed, feed; both hives will need to be stimulated.

The September 2010 issue of *Bee Culture* has a very informative article, written by Connie Krochmal, entitled “Bee Plant References and Sources of Information.” A couple websites she lists that you may want to check out are (www.melissagarden.com) – The Plants for Honeybees has an extensive list. Located in Healdsburg, California, the Melissa Garden has been designated a honey bee sanctuary, and (www.livingscape.com/beeplants.htm)Portland Bee Center at Livingscape, located in Oregon, has a list of perennials for bees.

Krochmal lists and discusses several bee plant books but one that has been outstanding since its publication in 1920 and was revised in 1976 is *American Honey Plants* by Frank C. Pellett. It arranges the bee plants by common name and gives details on each plant’s distribution, cultivation, and value to bees.

A bee guide, *Texas Honey Plants*, by C.E. Sanborn and others, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 102, lists plants by family and indicates where the plants are found, the bloom time, and bee value. (<http://hdl.handle.net/1969.1/3440>).

If you subscribe to *Bee Culture*, you will find more sources than those listed above; if you don’t have access to this informative bee magazine, ask to look at my copy when you come to the meeting Tuesday evening. If you don’t subscribe to either *Bee Culture* or *American Bee Journal*, two very good bee magazines, you may want to consider subscribing to one or both. You’ll find a wealth of good information in them every month, and having some good bee articles to read during the long winter evenings is a very worthwhile activity. Jimmie Oakley will print off subscription blanks from the *TBA Journal* and leave them with Sherry at the registration table. Since WCABA is a member of TBA, our members are entitled to a very good discount by using one of these blanks.

Winter vegetables are beginning to come in to Farmers Markets in this area, so you might like to try the following recipe. I found it in Juliette Elkton’s *The Honey Cookbook*.

Baked Squash and Sausages

2 medium-size acorn squash 8 sausage links 4 Tbs. honey
Wash squash and cut in half lengthwise. Remove seeds. To each half add 1 tablespoon of honey and 2
pork sausage links. Bake at 400 degrees F. until squash is tender and sausages brown. Serves 4.

Carrots Glazed in Honey

8 small carrots 2 or 3 Tbsp. butter ½ cup honey

Boil whole carrots until tender but still firm. Use a small enough amount of water so that it boils
entirely away. Add butter and honey to cooked, dry carrots and simmer slowly until carrots are glazed and
brown, turning once or twice. Serves 4

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