

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA SEPTEMBER, 2011 NEWSLETTER

www.wcaba.org

(for meeting directions, see website)

DATE: Tuesday, August 27, 2011
TIME: 7:00 PM-Beekeeping 101; 7:30 PM-Program
PLACE: First United Methodist Church Georgetown (basement)
PROGRAM: Honey Tasting, Honey Judging
HOSTS: Harold Kind, Victoria Honeycutt, Rebecca & Gary Wende

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The club's extracting equipment has been very inactive this summer. I'm sure the hot, dry weather is to blame. The bees have not had much nectar-producing plants to forage, hence no honey. We trust you have kept water and feed available for your bees. Jimmie has been feeding our bees a 1 ½ to 1 sugar syrup solution plus putting supplement patties on their top frames. He has harvested a small amount of honey. Clint Walker said recently that this is the hardest summer he has seen since 1996.

The topic for Beekeeping 101 will be on Fall Management of your Hives, according to Chris Doggett. Following a harsh spring and summer, the autumn season is critical to preparing your bees to survive the winter and hopefully be ready to brood up for Spring.

If you have harvested some honey, we hope you will bring a small jar of your honey to the meeting Tuesday night for the honey-tasting contest. Also, if possible bring a two-pound jar of your honey to be judged and then sent to the State Fair in Dallas to be displayed in the TBA Honey Booth. After the Fair, the honey is given to the Happy Hills Children's Home. If you need a queenline jar, you can get one from either Jimmie or me.

The Honey Tasting – Honey Judging program is an annual event that WCABA holds during the National Honey Month, usually in September, to give our members and scholarship recipients an opportunity to highlight the beauty and goodness of their current honey crop. For the honey tasting, members bring a small jar (such as a baby food jar) to the meeting, each jar is given a number (no name identification on the jar), and the club members are invited to use provided toothpicks to taste each sample 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 ribbon is given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places based on the votes each entry received. This is a Taster's Choice contest for fun and a chance to sample other flavors of honey.

For the Honey Judging, each entry is judged according a set of judging standards of numeric value based on taste, color, clarity, absence of bubbles and wax, etc. that would

meet the high standard necessary to win, place, or show if being judged for prizes. Instead, WCABA awards ribbons (Blue, Red, or White) based on the total points each entry receives. It is not uncommon for all WCABA entries to receive Blue ribbons. Your label should be neatly displayed on your entry and you will be pleased to see it on display if you attend the State Fair.

Other upcoming events that we hope you will keep in mind and perhaps will want to participate in are the Texas State Fair in Dallas (Sept. 30-Oct. 23), Wesley Fest in Georgetown (Nov. 5-6), TBA Convention in Corpus Christi (Nov. 3-6). Notice that the Wesley Fest and the TBA Convention have a date conflict; we will need our members to step up to help with Wesley Fest, our scholarship fund raising activity, as several of our very active members must attend the TBA convention. More detailed information will be in the October newsletter.

The Honey Booth in the TDA Food and Fiber Building is manned all day, every day during the Fair by beekeeper volunteers who promote the wholesome and healthy product on display in the booth. They also use the “observation hive” to enhance the visitors’ understanding of the fascinating honeybee queen and her thousands of worker bees. We have had several of our members volunteer in past years and they reported having a very enjoyable experience during the 5 hours they worked, and in return had free admission and parking to the fair grounds. If you are interested, there is signup information as well as detailed instructions and map in the current TBA Journal (edited by our own Chris Doggett). Ask to see a copy at the registration table.

Chris Doggett is asking for volunteers to be the club’s librarian and someone to be the refreshment coordinator. Perhaps we need co-coordinators to help with dispensing snacks and drinks??? Please consider helping with these club activities; talk with Chris about what is involved if you think you can help.

We welcome our new members to WCABA: Bob and Judy Bradley, Georgetown; Carl Knutson, Austin; Don Parsons, Georgetown; and John Ward, Austin. We trust our members will help them feel welcome and will be ready to share their beekeeping information and experiences with them.

Door prizes for our August meeting were donated by Chris and Shirley Doggett, Elizabeth Exley, Dean Hamilton, and Ethan Wende. Lucky prize winners were Nancy Thomas, Mark Blackburn, Daniel Olszewski, Henry Chidgey, Raul Vergara, Mark Ney, Mark Franklin, Daniel Eacrett, Gary Wende, Abigail Oakley, and Elizabeth Oakley. Members and visitors are urged to register; 101 people signed in last month. Did you?

Did you see Omar Gallaga’s interesting article about WCABA member McCartney Taylor in the August 12th Austin American Statesman? Besides giving some interesting insights regarding his beekeeping and life, it introduces his book, Swarm Traps and Bait Hives, and his videos (such as “Want to be a beekeeper?”) that can be found on his website learningbeekeeping.com, or on youtube.com/OutofaBlueSky.

A Thank You note from our former WCABA secretary, Sara Reeves says, “Dear friends of WCABA, Thank you so much for the cards and emails expressing your concern, thoughts, and prayers during the trying times of losing my father and Jim’s surgery. We are looking forward to being able to attend the monthly meetings again. Sincerely, Jim and Sara Reeves.” We hope Jim’s recuperation has gone well and he will soon be feeling great and enjoying renewed strength and vigor and we’ll be seeing you again soon.

“Feeding Basics” by Roy Hendrickson is a very helpful article in the September issue of American Bee Journal magazine. If you are not already feeding your bees, you probably will need to do so throughout the winter months. The author states, “Feeding should commence whenever the need arises. In extreme southern climates syrup feeding can occur throughout most of the year.”

There are several different methods of feeding bees. Hendrickson prefers the top feeding method: feeding through the center hole in the inner cover with a quart jar or a plastic gallon jar that has small holes punched in the lid. He suggests using a tack hammer to tap a 4 or 6d nail just hard enough to drive the point partially through the metal lid. Make 12 to 15 such holes in a circular pattern. When inverted, the feeder should rest on 2 small strips of wood that elevate the lid about a quarter of an inch to allow the bees access to the feeding holes. To protect the feeder and the bees from inclement weather, an empty super or hive body should surround the feeder.

In general, there are two basic mixtures of sugar syrup to feed bees: thin syrup consisting of equal parts sugar and water, and thick syrup using a two to one ratio of sugar to water. The thin syrup is used in the spring and summer feed to stimulate early season brood rearing and to maintain its strength through periods of nectar dearth. The heavier syrup is used to augment the winter food supply, to prevent overwinter or early spring starvation.

The author gives a chart showing pounds of sugar to comparable container of water. He uses 10 pounds of sugar or other larger quantities; however, sugar from the grocery store comes in 4# packages so I have converted his chart accordingly.

1 : 1 Mixture - - - 8 lbs. sugar 8 lbs. (1 gallon) water

2 : 1 Mixture - - - 8 lbs. sugar 4 lbs. (2 quarts) water

(Note: Jimmie Oakley is currently using a 1.5 mixture—8 lbs. sugar to 3 quarts water as he feels our bees need more sustenance than the thin syrup but not yet needing a mixture suitable for winter months.)

Butternut Squash Chicken Strips

1 small butternut squash, roasted	½ Tbs. kosher salt
1 large egg	½ tsp. cayenne
1 Tbs. local honey	¼ tsp. cinnamon
4 chicken breasts, sliced in strips	Olive oil to lightly coat baking sheet & squash
1 cup panko bread crumbs and 1 cup regular bread crumbs	

To roast squash, cut butternut squash in half and scoop out the middle. Coat all sides with olive oil and lay squash face down on a cooking sheet. Bake at 350 F until you can poke a fork into the skin of squash. Leave oven at 350 F for the chicken strips. Let the squash cool, then scoop the inside into a food processor. Crack egg into the food processor. Add honey, blend until it is smooth. Pour mixture into a shallow dish.

Combine panko, bread crumbs, salt, cayenne, and cinnamon in a shallow bowl. Mix with a fork until all ingredients are blended.

Cut chicken breasts into long, thin strips. Roll all strips in squash mixture first, then into bread crumbs until they are completely coated. Transfer coated tenders to a baking sheet lightly coated with olive oil. Bake in oven at 350 F for about 15 to 20 minutes or until tenders are golden outside and cooked through, flipping strips once to cook evenly. (Chicken tenders may be cooked in electric skillet with a few tablespoons of oil.)

August Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2011

Ice Cream Social

1. **Beekeeping 101 Class – Chris Doggett**

"Honeybee Pests and Diseases"

- Common Pests and Diseases
- Please go to Randy Oliver's website: www.ScientificBeekeeping.com for more information on pests and diseases, and the best methods to help control them. He is a fellow beekeeper and biologist.

2. **Business Meeting – Gary Bible and Jimmie Oakley**

a.) **Treasurer's Report** – \$2,476.19 for balance

b.) **Meeting Attendance Report** – 119

c.) **Introduce Guests** – 3

d.) **Equipment Needs/Sales**

- A member currently has a sale ad on the WCABA Yahoo group.
- Club members can put Equipment Needs/Sales Ad in the WCABA Yahoo group and also in the monthly newsletter at no cost.

e.) **Date for Next WCABA Meeting** – Tuesday, September 27, 2011

f.) **Door Prizes** – 11 door prizes awarded to attendance

g.) **Other Business**

- WCABA President entertains a proposal to approve having minutes in the monthly newsletter. Motion was spoken twice and vote was in favor.
- September is National Honey Month. Please bring a 2 pound Queenline glass jar of honey if you want it judged by WCABA for it to be judged at the Texas State Fair; or you can just bring a baby jar of your honey for the honey tasting enjoyed by WCABA members.

h.) **Miscellaneous**

- If any of our board members approach you to help serve – please join the board to help serve our club this next year.
- Extra bee magazines are available for members to take home and enjoy.
- **Swarm Traps and Bait Hives** is a new book written by WCABA member, McCartney Taylor, and the price is \$18.00. He has also donated a copy to the club library that you can rent and read for free.
- Pollen supplement is available for sale, but not tonight.
- Give your email address to Sherry Youngblood to help save postage on the Monthly News Letter.

3. **Special Guest Speaker**

Gerald Cole, owner and operator of Organic Care Farms. Please visit his website: www.OrganicCareFarms.com for more information.

4. **Adjourn**



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