

# WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA May 2024 NEWSLETTER

[www.wcaba.org](http://www.wcaba.org)

Meeting: **4th TUESDAY, May 28, 2024 @ 7PM**  
Georgetown Library Hewlett Room (2nd floor)

## 2024 Club Officers:

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**QUEEN CHAIR:**  
(vacant)

**WEB ADMINISTRATOR:**  
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**DIRECTOR AT LARGE:**  
Ken Browning

**DIRECTOR AT LARGE:**  
Ann Bierschenk

## PROGRAM:

### **Interactive Beekeeping Mixer**

Host: **Sean O'Neil**

This month we are shaking things up and trying something new with an event format designed to engage, educate, and connect our members in a new way. Instead of our usual lecture format, we're hosting a mixer where members will be assigned to small groups that rotate and re-mix every 15 minutes. This interactive setting will cover a range of fascinating beekeeping topics, each facilitated by experienced beekeepers who will guide discussions and ensure a lively exchange of ideas. Whether you're a seasoned apiarist or just starting out, this is a fantastic opportunity to share your knowledge, ask questions, and learn from others in a more personal and interactive setting.

Please join us for this chance to expand your beekeeping horizons and build stronger connections within our community. The mixer format not only promises to be informative but also fun and engaging, fostering a collaborative environment where everyone's voice can be heard. It's the perfect occasion to bring your enthusiasm, curiosity, and beekeeping insights. Come ready to dive into stimulating conversations, meet fellow beekeepers, and gain fresh perspectives on our beloved craft. We look forward to seeing you there and making this event a buzzing success!

#### Potential Topics:

*Hive Management - Bee Health & Disease. - Seasonal Beekeeping Practice – Honey Harvesting and Processing – Honey Bee Nutrition – Bee Behavior and Communication – Beekeeping Equipment and Innovation – Beekeeping Community and Education – maybe more.*

#### ZOOM Notes:

We would certainly enjoy your presence at the next meeting on May. 28rd (**fourth** Tuesday), but if you can't, then tune in to broadcast virtually via "Zoom".

If you are planning to join from an iPhone or iPad, be sure to download this application first: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zoom-cloud-meetings/id546505307>

We look forward to seeing you there Tuesday night @ 7PM!  
GT Library - Hewlett Rm– 402 W 8th Street Georgetown 78626

Topic: **WCABA Member Meeting (and Beekeeping 101)**

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82475068933?pwd=aHRiRjc3bS9kYXJGS2g5THVpOEEx2UT09>



Sean O'Neil

# Giving Back...

## a note from your President

**Over** the last few years, we have continued to see our bank account increase in value. This is due to the oversight of our board and very little overhead for our club. Our biggest fundraiser throughout the year is our bee procurement program where we sell Nucs and queens. In addition, we have been blessed with many new members. When our club first began, we were lucky to keep a balance of \$200. Yes inflation has happened since then but over the last few years, our bank account balance has continued to grow. With that in mind, last year we formalized a plan to give back to the beekeeping community. We had decided on donating 20% of the proceeds from our Nuc sales, but as Jimmie so eloquently stated, “Our money is just sitting in the bank doing nothing”.



*Shannon Montez - President*

Our biggest expense is our scholarship program and is money well spent. While some of our scholarship kiddo’s may not go on to become professional beekeepers, we’ve helped plant the seed of responsible beekeeping. We don’t have any large upcoming expenses and with that in mind, our board made an executive decision to donate a higher amount of funds than what we had previously established. Last year, I had the pleasure of handing a check to each of the organizations that we donated to. Each organization should promote beekeeping or the preservation of bees and the organizations we’ve chosen this year all exemplify this.

This is a breakdown of what we decided to donate this year:

Organization	Amount	Purpose
Nevin Weaver Endowment	\$2000	Fund Undergrad Research at A&M Honey Bee Lab
Georgetown Library	\$500	They have continued to support our organization with our club meeting space beyond our expectation.
Brookwood in Georgetown	\$1000	They sell honey from their hives that our members sponsor. The funds go straight back into organization and help defray costs
4-H	\$100	Yearly donation for 4-H Essay Contest support

While the list of organizations may expand, this is a great start in promoting beekeeping. I want to thank all the board members who helped with this. I have to admit that this is my favorite part of being on the board. Our board has been great stewards of our clubs’ funds. We have continued to grow and hopefully are providing what our members need. If you know of an organization who is deserving and could benefit, please reach out.

*Shannon*

# Honeybee Research Pearls

Compiled by Phil Ainslie

## Manuka honey is a trendy sweetener, but are you getting what you pay for?

Manuka honey is a trendy sweetener prized for its healing properties. The honey, made mainly in New Zealand, has been called everything from a "secret sauce" to "liquid gold from Mother Nature" by doctors. Research studies indicate manuka honey has up to nine times the germ-killing power of regular honey.

The Unique Manuka Factor Honey Association (UMFHA) reports a staggering threefold increase in manuka honey exports to the United States in 2017, compared to the previous year. This surge in demand is not without its consequences, as a pound of manuka honey can now cost consumers anywhere from \$60 to \$100, a price tag that is over ten times higher than that of supermarket clover honey.

In the U.S., the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves manuka honey for use in wound dressings. The FDA does not recognize manuka's therapeutic benefit as a food, but that hasn't stopped some consumers from using it as an alternative to regular honey for their families.

A closer look at five manuka honey brands

"GMA" took a closer look at the manuka honey sold in the U.S., buying the same five brands in New York, Los Angeles, Houston, and Miami—for 20 jars. According to Gawenis, just two of the five brands tested contained the levels of methylglyoxal (MGO) expected in manuka honey. The two brands that passed were Trader Joe's and Manuka Health.

Manuka Health is a licensed manuka honey producer and a member of the UMFHA, representing 100 companies, or about 70 percent of New Zealand's manuka honey producers.

It's crucial to note that only licensed producers and exporters are authorized to carry the UMFHA trademark, as confirmed by UMFHA spokesman John Rawcliffe. This trademark serves as a guarantee of the honey's authenticity and quality. Furthermore, UMFHA members commit to regular audits to ensure the purity and quality of their manuka honey, providing consumers with peace of mind.

*From Good Morning America, 11/2019*



*Phil Ainslie - Secretary*

## When male bees don't get lucky

Bees are among the most important pollinators on earth. They pollinate not only plants with beautiful flowers but also many crops. An international research team, including the Julius-Maximilians-University (JMU) Würzburg, conducted a study that found pesticides are probably a significant factor in bee reproduction. The research team wanted to find out what factors might contribute to the bee population's decline. It focused on the early stages of the insects' reproduction. Horned mason bees (*Osmia cornuta*) were exposed to a low-toxicity, non-lethal dose of the fungicide fenbuconazole. Fungicides are used to fight fungi and spores as crop protection agents.



As a result, male bees exposed to the fungicide were more likely to be rejected by females. "We also found that the pesticide-exposed males vibrate their thoracic muscle less and had a different odor composition than the un-exposed males," Boff said. He concludes: "The decline in bee populations in agricultural landscapes could, therefore, be explained by the effect of pesticides on insect mating behavior."

The following steps include conducting further experiments on mating behavior, as the researchers want to find out whether different classes of pesticides also affect the mating decisions of other wild bee species. They also recommend bee monitoring programs to compare reproductive outcomes of wild bees in areas with pesticide exposure and ecological regions.

*University of Würzburg, April 25, 2022*

*Phil*

# Practical Experiences in the Bee Yard

**JUNE** is the month that all your hard work in the beeyard pays off. Historically, in my area of the Ark-La-Tex, the Chinese Tallow will begin to produce nectar about the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May and continue for three or four weeks. Have you any idea of how to tell when the Tallow blossom will provide nectar for the bees? What I have seen for several years is the yellow flower spike will slowly begin to bend over, much like the curling of your index finger from the pointing position. The spikes may be six or more inches long. In my area, if we have a four-inch blossom, we are happy.



*Stanford Brantley*

Generally, the major nectar flow is completed by the last week of June. There may be some later blooming wildflowers on Sumac or Horsemint. If you are lucky enough to have a grove of Mimosa trees in the area, bees can collect nectar late June – early July. Honey is considered finished when the bees apply a white cap over the stored honey. Extended periods of continuous rain or saturating humidity can slow the honey drying process and delay capping.

Honey can be extracted after it is capped. Toward the end of the season, bees become lax in finishing their capping job. They will not normally cap a cell unless it is full (“full” by bee standards). This uncapped nectar is probably dry enough to extract and will be below the standard 18.5% moisture content. If you are unsure, try a simple field moisture content test. Hold a frame of honey with the top bar down. Give the frame a quick downward jerk. If nectar rains out of the frame, the moisture content is too high. This is usually referred to as “green honey” and should be returned to the hive for the bees to evaporate the excess moisture.

When collecting your frames for extraction, think about how you plan to remove the bees from the frames. If the super is ready for harvest, there are usually very few bees in it. There is nothing for them to do except patrol the capped cells and keep the small hive beetle in check. If half or more of the frames are not capped, the bees will usually have their heads in the cells eating the honey. These bees are difficult to remove from the super.

My favorite technique is to blow the bees off the frames with a gas or electric leaf blower. It is quick, effective, and requires only one trip to the beeyard. Stand the super on its short side and blow from the bottom bars toward the top bars to quickly remove the bees. Be sure to position the super and blow the bees into an area where you are not going to be walking later. Bees blown out of the super, even those on the ground, will recover and return to the hive.

Just a reminder, a full medium-depth frame of capped honey will yield about three pounds of extracted honey.

You can run into all kinds of adventures and situations when responding to calls about bees and swarms.

One of my most interesting came from the local West Fraser OSB plant not far from my house. It seems the crane operators were in the habit of leaving their hard hat on the grillwork platform leading up to the crane cab and the bees thought it looked like a good home. The safety officer outfitted me as required by their policy and escorted me to the swarm site. All I saw on arrival was a green hard hat laying on the platform but was given instructions to “pick it up carefully!” I gently lifted the hard hat and found inside the nicest, tightly clustered swarm you could ever want to see. I had carried one of the plastic Pro-Nuc boxes with me to the platform. I gently turned the hard hat sideways and placed it in the Nuc box. We left the Nuc box on the platform so the rest of the bees could join the swarm. At dusk, I returned to retrieve the box. The Nuc has now been successfully relocated to the Marshall Beekeepers club apiary.



*Hard Hat Swarm Hive*

*Stanford*

# WCABA Delivers!

by Gary Bible - WCABA Bee Procurement Coordinator

This year's Nuc & Queen procurement and delivery process was the most successful we have seen. All portions of the operation went smoothly and with very few "issues."

The Jennings Load Team, truck, and nucs returned to Bost Farm at 4:15 am Saturday, April 20th. There was a 9-person Unloading Team waiting. All nucs were screened, unloaded, and situated in the yard by 6:40 am. At that time, club members were already arriving to pick up nucs/queens.

Most club members arrived prepared with a pickup truck, bee suit, Pickup Voucher, and willing hands to load and secure their nuc(s). Our Nuc Loading Team consisted of 6 to 7 volunteers. Most stayed all day to help. What an incredible team! Altogether, we had 20+ club volunteers at Bost Farm during the day. Wow and thanks!

Jimmie and I made the trip to Bee Weaver (Navasota) Friday morning when the Jennings Load Team left. We picked up 125 queens at 11:30 that morning. The queens were in good condition and were stored at the Bible residence that Friday evening. Of the 125 queens, one died during the process. We received quick replacement from Bee Weaver.

The nuc and queen delivery process went from 7 am to 3 pm at the Bost Farm with few problems. Again, our club volunteers were superb!

I received a few "issue" calls from mostly new keepers unable to find the nuc queen. Jimmie has overseen most of these issues, plus a few members wanted to purchase the extra nucs.

I say again, this was the easiest procurement and delivery year I have seen in my fourth year of bee procurement.



Louisiana Drive Team: Chuck Saxon, Logan Peters, & John Hibbard, make a necessary refueling stop



Guys at Jennings staging area ready to load



All loaded up and, ready to go!

**ONE HUGE, GOAL-CENTERED EVENT ACCOMPLISHED FOR OUR CLUB MEMBERS!  
WELL DONE EVERYONE! IF YOU WERE A CLUB VOLUNTEER AT THE BOST FARM...  
WE APPRECIATE YOU!**



Finally, back at the Bost Farm at 4:15 AM Saturday morning. Phil Ainslie on the Ground Crew begins to unload



Drive Team: Chuck Saxon, John Hibbard & Logan Peters Celebrates Successful Run

# Ground Crew and Delivery Team at Work at Bost Farm



*Ground Crew unloads trailer under flood lights*



*Each nuc must be precisely screened to avoid bee escape or loss*



*300+ nucs on the ground by 6:40 AM, ready for pick up, Great Job!*



*Nuc pick up started early and was brisk most all morning*



*Vehicles came in all shapes & sized, but all were served...*



*...under the watchful eye of Gary Bible , Procurement Coordinator*

# Dr. Sammy Comes to Belton

by Linda Russell – Program Chair

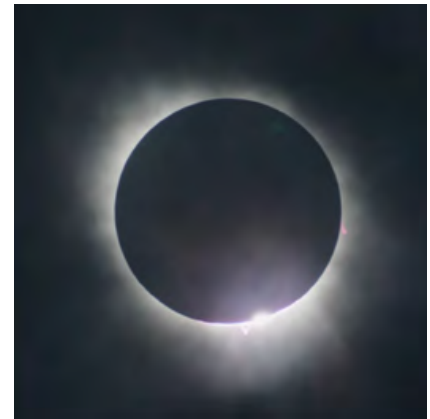
World renowned Entomologist, **Samuel Ramsey, PhD** chose Belton as the ideal place to perform honey bee research during the April 8 solar eclipse.

How did this all come about? He looked up where to go for the best view of the eclipse, contacted Nan Helmke, President of the Bell-Coryell Beekeepers Association (also a member of WCABA) and Nan recommended WCABA member, Susan and Louis Robison's property.

Susan said, "Dr. Ramsey arrived the day before the eclipse and looked at every bug he could get his hands on." He went through her hives and said they look healthy.

Before, during and after the eclipse he observed bee behavior. The YouTube video 'We Studied Bees in an Eclipse... This is what happened can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9mpbcrhEV8>



*April 8th Total Solar Eclipse*

During his doctoral research, **Dr. Ramsey's discovered that the parasite *Varroa destructor*** feeds on the honey bee fat bodies rather than the hemolymph. This was groundbreaking research.

Dr. Ramsey received his B.S. in entomology from Cornell University and his Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Maryland College Park. He completed his post-doctoral training at the USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory.

Dr. Ramsey is currently an Assistant Professor at the BioFrontiers Institute at the University of Colorado Boulder in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. His research focuses on emerging symbioses and their impact on pollinator health, particularly in relation to bees. He has traveled to Thailand to study an even more serious threat to the US honey bees, the *Tropilaelaps* mite.

## *Observing the Effect of the Total Solar Eclipse on the Bees*



*Dr. Ramsey and Erika Thompson set up experiment to observe effects of solar eclipse on the bees*



*Bee yard during the eclipse*

# Beware of the Witches' Hair

by Ann Bierschenk

A couple of years ago I noticed some weird bright orange tangled up stringy stuff wrapped around the wildflowers in one of our pastures that the cows are not allowed on. It looked so strange that I was afraid to touch it. So I took a photo of it and decided to email the photo to the Williamson County Extension Agent, Gary Pastushok. The email simply said, "What's this and how do I get rid of it?" Gary responded, "You have an invasive species called Dodder, see info below. Once it gets going it will be impossible to control this parasite."



Ann Bierschenk - Dir. @ Large

Thus began the battle to contain and eradicate an invasive species called "Dodder." One of its nicknames is witches' hair, which is very appropriate if you were to see it in real life. According to a write up '**Dodder's a parasitic vine that gets its nourishment by stealing it from other plants. Dodder is an annual vine and is listed as a noxious weed on the official, federal list of noxious/invasive species.**' Its hair like tentacles grow about 6 inches a day and curl around stems, flowers and leaves. Dodder in your pasture or garden would be the equivalent of wax moths in a bee hive.



Dodder; its hairy like tentacles

It was first spotted and identified in 2001 in the Galveston-Houston area near Hobby Airport. Since then it has traveled to other areas in the South – besides Texas, it has also been spotted in Florida and South Carolina. It comes from Asia; and somehow, somehow, like everyone else in the world, decided to move to Texas and found my pasture of 'victim wildflowers' to suck the life out of.



Witch's Hair(Dodder) taking over a pasture

Sadly, now that I have been dealing with this parasite and am aware of what it looks like, I have noticed it along the roadsides in Williamson County. Specifically, this year, I have seen it along the toll road, the roadside of FM 3405, RM 1869 and Highway 29 in Liberty Hill.

When my husband saw the recommended list of possible chemicals that can be used to get rid of the dodder (he's a chemist), he said they were nasty and the only one he would permit me to use was Round-up. But, when my mentor, Jimmie Oakley, learned that I was going to be spraying Round-up down the hill from my bee hives he strongly suggested not to do it. So, I have been pulling it up and bagging it so it can be Al Clawson's problem; and then I have been also using a torch with MAP Gas to burn it up. Surprisingly, the torch has brought me a lot of satisfaction.

If you see this stuff on your land, I say get rid of it immediately!

Ann

For more information, here are the websites Gary sent me:

<https://www.centraltexasgardener.org/resource/invasive-dodder/#:~:text=Dodder's%20a%20parasitic%20vine%20that,list%20of%20noxious%2Finvasive%20species>

[https://www.texasinvasives.org/plant\\_database/detail.php?symbol=CUJA](https://www.texasinvasives.org/plant_database/detail.php?symbol=CUJA)



# Scholarship Girls Inspect Hives at the Bost Farm

by Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

The 2024 Scholarship Recipients were selected, and they successfully setup at the Bost Farm after receiving their 5-frame nucleus of honey bees from the club's shipment from Louisiana on April 20, 2024.

With boxes assembled, and painted, the young ladies gathered on Tuesday afternoon April 30<sup>th</sup> to inspect the colony for the first time. Before leaving the last time after setup, they fed each colony a gallon of syrup to get the bees started on drawing out foundation in the expanding brood nest so the queen would have a place to lay eggs.

The next step would be to add a second brood chamber to accommodate the growing bee population and provide additional comb building for pollen, nectar storage and more brood rearing. This was partially done on first inspection as Riley's hive was deemed ready for the second box. On the next inspection on May 14<sup>th</sup> Alys' hive was ready and received the second box along with two gallons of sugar syrup for both to continue the colony buildup. Getting the bees into a second brood box is the first goal of the program.

It was encouraging to see both hives coming along nicely. The session concluded with a review of basic principles and best practices in the bee yard from program mentor, Randy Oakley. More to come.



*Alys and Riley first inspection of their hives*



*Alys' hive not ready for additional box yet*



*Riley's hive strong enough to add a box*



*2nd inspection Riley feeding 2 gallons of syrup*



*It's determined Alys' hive ready for more space*



*Alys adds a second box to her hive*

# More Pictures from 2024 Scholarship Bee Yard



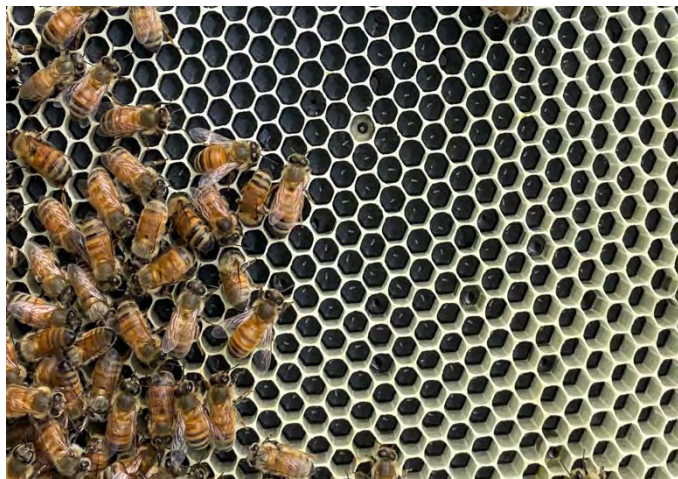
Riley gets the smoker started. Every inspection starts off with smoke. Not too exciting, unless you don't have it. JO



Adeline (8), Atticus (9), and Gideon Bice (4) with help from Mom (Lauren) get suited up for the trip to the bee yard.



Plenty of observers of the bee yard inspection



A closer look at the frame reveals "eggs". We have a Queen.



All learning is not in the bee yard. Sometimes there has to be lecture (ugh!) Alys and Riley review the slide program by Randy Oakley of basic concepts to reinforce what is learned from their hands on experience with the bees.



JO

# 2023 Scholarship Girls Artificially Swarm Hives

by Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

The 2023 Scholarship Recipients, having accomplished the vertical split and established a new queen in the top box of their three story colony by the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, the ladies are ready to take the final step in swarm control and colony increase by setting the two colonies apart. The top box (colony) will be dropped straight down in the original hive location, but the parent colony will be moves either to the right or to the left into a new location. This has the effect of (artificially) swarming the colony, causing it to lose the field force and gain much needed extra space. This relieves the natural swarming instinct of the parent colony.

On the other hand it allows the newly established colony to pick up the much needed field force of the parent colony and enjoy the power of foragers to feed and strengthen the new hive. The new queen will soon supply many new bees to bring in more nectar and build fresh new honey comb. This also give the scholarship recipient another colony to own and manage as result of being in the program.

Managing the parent colony for honey production and building the nuc colony into a full grown hive is the definition of sustainability. Good show ladies!



*Darla & Caiya Ward and Justine & Scott Peterson listen to Randy Oakley cover the basics of the plan to artificial swarming the hives*



*Caiya & Darla turn and reposition top nuc box in the swarming procedure*



*With parent and nuc hive side by side check and feed both before adding super*



*Feeding nuc hive 2-gals 1x1 syrup to stimulate drawing out super's foundation*



*Cayia & Darla Ward successfully set up nuc hive next to parent hive (what was 1 now = 2)*

# Artificial Swarming of Scholarship Hives (cont.)



*With Scott looking on, Justine feeds her nuc hive*



*Justine adds second box to her nuc hive*



*Procedure complete, Justine closes hive*



*Team Peterson (Scott & Justine) stands next to divided hives, mission accomplished*



*Annabella Su works on her nuc hive in preparation to artificially swarming*



*Completing her task by adding a super, Annabelle closes her hive*



*Crystal & Annabelle pose for pic beside their divided hives*



*Graduation - Everybody together one more time, with PIZZA*

# Heritage Garden becomes Workshop/Teaching Yard

by Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

The last several years the bee yard at the Heritage Garden on Old Hutto Road in SE Georgetown has been used as the location for the Wolf-Bost Scholarship recipients to keep and work their hives. Because of some concerns and the need for weed abatement by the city the hives were moved from the Garden and did not get moved back.

As the new gardening season got underway there arose a clamor from the garden community to have their pollinators back. So, with the arrival of the 2024 nucs from Louisiana it was decided to repurpose the facility to accommodate a teaching yard for workshop and mentoring of new (and old) members.

The club donated a couple of nucs and with several more from the Bost Farm a half dozen hives were moved in to provide pollination for the gardeners and offer the opportunity to add a teaching element to the WCABA club offerings.

It is hoped that the fourth Saturday of each month (or then Saturday following the monthly meeting) can be designated as an open teaching session for any and all who might want to gather at the Heritage Garden to observe, discuss, and even participate in bee keeping activities. This would be a good chance to review and take stock of where you might be in your beekeeping journey and compare your hive with the hives at the Garden.

Jimmie Oakley will schedule and oversee the session that will be free to all attendees. Please be mindful to dress appropriately for the activity, long sleeve top with collar, long pants or the equivalent, close toed shoes, with socks and a head covering for your hair, or wear your own bee suit. All of it should be in light colors to be less noticeable and threatening in the eye of the bees.

We will always exercise as much caution and safety as possible, but everyone attending is reminded that bees are stinging insects and there is always that possibility. Otherwise, weather permitting, y'all come!

The first session gathered on the Saturday after our last bee meeting (April 27<sup>th</sup>) and was well attended by a group (13 in all) of very interested beekeepers. We opened and inspected the four nucs that were earlier installed there. We looked for eggs, larva, and brood in the hives and checked for resources (honey and pollen) and even found two of the queens and marked them with a green dot, the right color for 2024.

As I mentioned in a follow up email to attendees the growth of a hive in four weeks can be impressive. We will be looking and checking again and hoping to be impressed. Come and see!



2023 Scholarship Recipients at the Heritage Garden bee yard



Landmark Water Storage Tank



Jimmie Oakley discusses what will be covered in the session



Smoker lit, ready to go into the hives

# Workshop/Teaching Yard Session



*It is important to demonstrate proper technique in checking the hive*



*Lookie there what we found, the Queen, let's get her marked*



*Other hands on now, Great Opportunity*



*Looks good to me...*



*Put it back together, close it up!*



*Last but not least...GROUP PHOTO ! All smiles, everybody had a good time.*

# Brookwood in Georgetown (BiG)

*is Asking local beekeepers (that's YOU) to open their Heart and their Hives. Accepting donations of medium supers (or frames) of Local Honey to fill Honey Containers to be sold in the BiG Gift Shop in support of Citizen Programs*



*Frames of Sweet Honey extracted by BiG Citizens and Bottled in house in those elegant hexagon shaped jars are a great Fund Raiser that you make possible through your generous donations.  
Thank you, thank you!*



Please contact **Linda Russell** for information about donating and getting equipment returned: [program@wcaba.org](mailto:program@wcaba.org)



# TBA SUMMER CLINIC 2024

Beekeeping education for  
any level of beekeeper

📅 Saturday, June 15th, 2024

📍 ALLEN, TX

🕒 8 am to 5 pm

Join us early for the  
Friday Night Meet 'n Greet

\$110 for TBA members  
\$135 for non-members

Register now at :

[Texasbeekeepers.org](https://Texasbeekeepers.org)

TEXAS EXTENSION SPECIALIST



**Garrett Slater, PhD**

Apiculture Extension Specialist at  
Texas A&M University

Garrett has 12 years of beekeeping experience, including 8 years working for a large commercial beekeeper in North Dakota. Garrett Slater obtained a BS and MS in Biology from North Dakota State University in 2014. He then worked as a scientist and technician with the Bee Informed Partnership at the University of Minnesota for two years, directly supporting 30 commercial beekeepers in North Dakota and Texas. In 2022, he obtained his PhD from Purdue University. He was then a USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Fellow from 2022-2024 at the Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Lab at Baton Rouge, LA.

In 2024, he became an Assistant Professor at Texas A&M University as the state's Apiculture Extension Specialist. Garrett's current research focuses on developing cheap genomic tools to help beekeepers select bees for natural defenses towards Varroa, pathogens, and other diseases. Additionally, Garrett will provide extension support to beekeepers across the state. He has also a long history of communication and involvement with beekeepers via webinars and presentations, specialized courses, and articles. The topics of these communications ranged broadly, including genetics, breeding, reproductive biology and practical areas of interest (e.g., integrated pest management, queen production, disease management).





# TBA SUMMER CLINIC



# RAFFLE

All proceeds fund beekeeping education in Texas.

## Three Great Prizes!

**Optimize Your Beekeeping**  
With a **HiveIQ** Insulated Beehive  
& Pure-Bred Russian Honey Bees

Provided by:  
**Oakley**  
Family Apiaries



Includes - HiveIQ Kit + Pure-Bred Russian Nuc + Russian Honey Bees Book

**Beekeeper's Complete Setup**  
Provided by:  
**Dadant**



Includes - Complete Beehive + Elzner Nuc + Ventilated Bee Suit, Smoker & Tools

**Show Me The Honey!**  
Provided by:  
**Sabine Creek Honey Farm**  
Lubbock, TX



Includes -  
4 Frame Extractor + Uncapping Tub & Uncapper + Bottling Bucket & Strainer

Prize  
Package  
# 1  
Value:  
\$1020

Raffle Tickets  
**\$10 each**  
or  
**6 for \$50**

Tickets sold and drawn only  
at

Texas Beekeepers Asso.  
Summer Clinic

Allen, Texas  
Saturday June 15th, 2024  
**MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN**

Prize  
Package  
# 2  
Value:  
\$875

Prize  
Package  
# 3  
Value:  
\$600

Register for Clinic:  
**TEXASBEEKEEPERS.ORG**

# Membership Report: Shirley Doggett

May 2024



## Renewing Members

Andrea Davis	Georgetown
John English	Georgetown
Charles Fowler	Hutto
John Hibbard	Liberty Hill
Edward Pinkelman	Georgetown
Jack Ward	Georgetown

**\*New members-** please remember that Texas Beekeepers Association still gives one-year free membership to those people that are new to beekeeping. Let me know if you are interested in this.

Best Wishes

*Shirley*

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Dues \$20.00 per year - individual or \$25.00 - family membership

New Member / Renewing Member

(circle one)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)

To save postage cost may we send your Newsletter via e-mail? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Instructions: print, fill out, and bring to club meeting , or mail with check to:

Mrs. Shirley Doggett - Membership - 400 C. R. 440 - Thrall, TX 76578

# WCABA Exec Board Minutes, March 21, 2024

Phil Ainslie - Secretary

Attending: Phil Ainslie, Shannon Montez, Ann Bierschenk, Gary Bible, Ken Browning, Shirley Doggett, Jimmie Oakley, Barbie Rose, Sean O'Neal, Jerry Kunschik, Matt Ludlum, Linda Russell, Nancy Kunschik

- Minutes from January 2024 accepted and approved.
- 2024 Honey Nuc and Queen procurement report by Gary Bible:
  - o Gary reported 312 nucs and 117 queens have been ordered so far.
  - o The cargo insurance has been purchased.
  - o Several members have volunteered to help.
  - o The pick-up claim and directions are ready to mail out when all the orders are in.
  - o Gary will remind Wes that we need the required health permit.
  - o Gary will also confirm the procurement for the 4/19/24 loading.
  - o Jimmy will have the screening ready.
  - o Members are encouraged to pick up their bees by noon. If they cannot, they must make arrangements before Saturday.
- Membership report by Shirley Doggett: 183 paid-up members.
- Treasurer's report by Barbie Rose: Barbie went over the balance sheet. The club is in good financial standing.
- Matt Ludlum reported that 12 people attended on Zoom, and there were Zoom problems at the last meeting.
- Program report by Linda Russell:
  - o Phil Ainslie will do 101. Phil's topic will be Bee Nuc Pickup and Installation.
  - o Randy Oakley will do 201, and his topic will be Splits.
  - o April 2024 will include Phil Ainslie 101, and his topic will be First Inspections. The 201 topic and speaker will be announced later.
- Scholarship report by Jimmie Oakley:
  - o We received six applications, and Randy Oakley has scheduled interviews.
  - o Randy requested that two recipients receive the scholarship. This will help reduce the logistics of scheduling around the recipient's activities.
  - o Jimmie proposed a regular live education program for members on a Saturday, perhaps once or twice a month.
- Website proposal by Sean O'Neal:
  - o Place the Master Beekeeper program and study guide on the website.
  - o The Wix program needs to work better on cell phones. Sean wants to update the website to current standards and give it a facelift.
  - o Set up the site for credit card payments on membership and bee purchases. Shannon mentioned that this may have to wait until we get our tax-exempt status.
  - o Sean proposed using a platform other than Wix.
  - o Sean hopes to have a basic workup by the next board meeting.
  - o In addition, he proposed developing a more efficient membership application and payment validation process.
- Refreshments:
  - o Raffle proposal. A raffle was proposed for Matt's refreshment fund. Donated items include a smoker, veils, gloves, and a helmet.
  - o Matt proposed resuming the refreshment donation. How will this be reported when we get the 501c3?
  - o Barbi thinks the maximum yearly income for a 501c3 is a gross of \$50,000.
  - o Getting the 501c3 is a long process.
- Recent presentations: Phil Ainslie gave a presentation at the Meridian School in Round Rock.