WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATI0N

WCABA JULY 2024 NEWSLETTER

www.wcaba.org

Meeting: 4th TUESDAY, July 23, 2024 @ 7PM
Georgetown Library Hewlett Room (2nd floor)

2024 Club Officers:

PRESIDENT: Shannon Montez
president@wcaba.org

VICE PRESIDENT:
Nancy Kunschik
vicepresident@wcaba.org

MEMBERSHIP: Shirley Doggett
membership@wcaba.org

PROGRAM: Linda Russell
program@wcaba.org

NEWSLETTER: Jimmie Oakley
newsletter@wcaba.org

SECRETARY: Phil Ainslie
secretary@wcaba.org

TREASURER: Barbi Rose
treasurer@wcaba.org

HISTORIAN: Matt Ludlum
historian@wcaba.org

PAST PRESIDENT: Phil Ainslie
pastpresident@wcaba.org

LIBRARIAN: Chris Huck
librarian@wcaba.org

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR:
Jimmie Oakley
scholarship@wcaba.org

QUEEN CHAIR:
(vacent)

WEB ADMINISTRATOR:
Rachel Glass
webmaster@wcaba.org

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:
Ken Browning

DIRECTOR AT LARGE:
Ann Bierschenk

PROGRAM:

Juliana Rangel – To Be Announced

Dr. Juliana Rangel

Juliana Rangel Born in Colombia, South America, Juliana obtained a B.S. in Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution in 2014 from the University of California, San Diego. In 2010 she obtained a Ph. D. in Neurobiology and Behavior from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. She was an NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow from 2010 to 2013 at North Carolina State University. In January 2013, Juliana became Assistant Professor of Apiculture in the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M University (TAMU) in College Station, TX. She was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2018 and has been promoted to the rank of Professor effective in September 2023. Her research program focuses on the biological and environmental factors that affect the reproductive quality of honey bees, the behavioral ecology and population genetics of feral honey bee colonies, and the quality and diversity of honey bee nutrition in a changing landscape. She is an active member of the Texas Beekeepers Association and has been invited to speak at dozens of scientific conferences and beekeeping association meetings across the USA and internationally. She teaches the courses *Honey Bee Biology, Introduction to Beekeeping,* and *Professional Grant and Contract Writing*. In 2021 she received the James I. Hambleton Memorial Award, which was established by the Eastern Apicultural Society of North America to recognize research excellence in apiculture. She also received the 2020 John G. Thomas Award for Meritorious Service from the Texas Beekeepers Association for her contributions to the apiculture industry in the state. She received the 2019 Dean's award for Excellence in Diversity and the 2016 Dean's award for Excellence in Early Career Research from TAMU's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. She also received the 2018 Outstanding Achievement in Mentoring award from the Entomology Graduate Student Association. She was 2014 President and 2013 Vice-President of the American Association of Professional Apiculturists

ZOOM Notes:

We would certainly enjoy your presence at the next meeting on June. 23rd (***fourth*** Tuesday), but if you can't, then tune in to broadcast virtually via "Zoom".

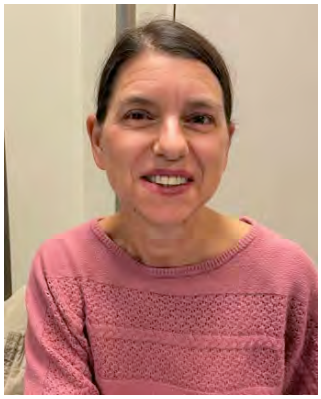
If you are planning to join from an iPhone or iPad, be sure to download this application first: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zoom-cloud-meetings/id546505307

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=aHRiRjc3bS9kYXJGS2g5THVpOEx2UT09

The Endless Hunt for the Queen…

a note from your President



Shannon Montez - President

I have to confess that I'm terrible at finding queens. I've learned over the years to just look signs of a queen. If I see plenty of larva then I have to assume that everything is good and well in the hive. Unfortunately, once summer hits, I have moments where I'm sure it's the summer dearth and the queen is slowing down to where I second guess myself. It's always that conversation of "give it a few more weeks". Often my intuition is good but sometimes I'm just plain wrong. When I installed my queens in the spring, I was sure that one hive was queenless. While I was able to find most queens, two of my hives seemed queen less. I was sure I was doing everything right, but low and behold when I went to check for the queen I'd installed, she was nowhere to be found, but I did find the original queen. On the second queenless hive, it seemed like the hive was not going to make it. In an effort to try to save the hive, I combined that hive with a healthy hive, installed the new queen, and added newspaper to separate the combined hives. Surprisingly a week later, I discovered the hive I thought was dying did have a queen. Beekeeping is a mystery sometimes and the bees keep me guessing.

I recently had two hives that were either queenless or did have a queen but she just didn't seem to be doing what she needed to keep the hive healthy. What I thought would be a quick fix last Friday turned out to be everything I hadn't planned. The mulch I normally use for my smoker was damp and wouldn't stay lit. When it did light, I couldn't get it to cool down, and in my quest for a cooler smoker, I ended up smothering the fire right before checking the last hive. Needless to say, the bees were mad because of the rainy weather and mad because someone was messing with their hive. I ended up getting stung and couldn't get the queen replaced quick enough.

As a beekeeper you're going to find that nothing is ever perfect in your hive and if things could go wrong, it will (*Murphy's Law*). Make sure that you are checking your hive weekly and if you're like me and can't find your queen, look for signs of the queen. If you've been feeding your bees, you'll find they've probably quit taking the sugar syrup.

If you're a new beekeeper, make sure to come to our meetings so that you can keep learning about beekeeping. Once summer hits, it can be harder to know whether your hive is queenright or if there's something that needs to be fixed. We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday.

Shannon

Honeybee Research Pearls

Compiled by Phil Ainslie

Bees use antennae to decode hive mates' dances in the dark

Phil Ainslie - Secretary

Scientists have discovered how honeybees can decipher dances by their hive mates that relay directions to food.

The findings reveal how, in the hive's complete darkness, each bee uses its antennae to help interpret the information communicated through the dances. Gaining greater insights into how bees communicate could help scientists better understand the effects of habitat loss and pesticide use on the insects' ability to find food.

The researchers observed that bees alter the position of their antennae, which are touched repeatedly by the dancer as it waggles by, based on the angle of their body relative to the dancer.

The team realized that the bees could decode dances from any angle, or even from constantly changing positions, by combining signals picked up by their antennae with their own sense of gravity. However, this requires the bee to add the two angles detected from its sensory systems accurately.

March 25, 2024, University of Edinburgh

Where did western honeybees come from? New research finds the sweet spot

For decades, scientists have hotly debated the origin of the western honeybee. Research has discovered that these popular honey-producing bees most likely originated in Asia.

The western honeybee (Apis mellifera) expanded independently into Africa and Europe, creating seven geographically and genetically distinct evolutionary lineages traceable back to Western Asia.

The research team sequenced 251 genomes from 18 subspecies in the honeybee's native range and used this data to reconstruct the honeybee's origin and pattern of dispersal. The team found that the genetic data strongly supported an Asian origin—likely Western Asia.

December 3, 2021, York University

Interactions between bee gut microbiotas and pesticides

A major review has provided the first field-wide summary of how pesticide exposure affects social bee gut microbiotas and what pesticide-induced disturbances mean for bee hosts.

"These bees have highly specialized gut microbiotas that benefit the bee hosts, such as protection from pathogens and parasites," explained first author Michelle Hotchkiss, a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Science at the University of Ottawa. "If pesticides disturb these microbial communities, then there's a possibility those benefits will be lost, and bees will experience a decline in health and performance, which may impact bee colony growth and pollination services."

The researchers also found that the scientific community currently has a limited understanding of how these common changes in microbial abundance affect bee hosts, which is a major gap in this field.

This review made Hotchkiss and her colleagues realize that more research is required.

"Social bees have gut microbiotas that contribute to their health, just like we (humans) do.

February 2, 2022, University of Ottawa

First Time for Everything…

by Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

As I looked at pictures of this year's scholarship girls, I was struck by the fact that each year this program has continued it is always this way. Every one of the participants is faced with many "first times". It is a journey of discovery, enlightenment, and I hope joy in what they find out by engaging in something new and unknown.

With the month of July comes the end of the local honey flow and the first opportunity and reason to extract, and for these ladies another FIRST.

So, it was July 2nd and the 2024 scholarship recipients, Alys Bice and Riley Casey, were in the bee yard at the Bost Farm pulling honey for the first time. Excitement was running high as the anticipation of a good crop could be seen in the full frames of capped honey in the first-year hives.

Randy scribes as Alys and Riley open the hives to pull honey for extracting

It was a simple process to identify what frames were to be taken, brush the bees off, and adjourn to the Bost Honey House to start processing the honey.

I believe everyone that extracts honey for the first time ought to have the joy of "cranking" it out the old fashion way, like making homemade ice cream or learning to drive on a stick shift farm truck.

There were some learning moments in the bee yard as Randy Oakley, the mentor, emphasized again to observe the "Lesson of the Bee Tree" in what they were doing and comparing to what nature was telling them. There is always time to learn.

Riley finds a full frame of honey to extract

With the setup of the basic extracting equipment in the honey house, everyone got to work uncapping, scratching, scraping, loading, cranking, unloading, draining, pouring, straining, and finally bottling for the FIRST time.

We all have done it, we all have seen it, the joy and delight of the first time opening the honey gate and seeing the sweet golden flow of that first reward. Touch, taste, enjoy! And to think, we did that (with a lot of help from the bees). It's a sweet, sticky mess, but how we love it? We can all be thankful for these youngsters (and the not so young ones) that exhibit the enthusiasm that comes with extracting honey, many for the FIRST time.

It's a special blessing of being a beekeeper.

Jimmie

Honey has been pulled and Randy conducts a little review of what was found and what we have learned while spectators watch and wait

First Time for Everything (cont.)

Riley uses the long knife to cut away cappings

Alys follows suit uncapping her own frame

Kristen Casey (mom) tries her hand at it too

Next Riley extracts honey from her frame

Alys turns the frame to extract second side

Alys is all smiles as the golden liquid flows

Riley bottles her first pound

Alys takes her turn next

Extracting complete, sweet results: Jason & Alys Bice, Riley Casey, cousin Amelia, sister Aubrey, Kristen & Brian Casey. All Smiles!

Second Year Scholarship Recipient Follows the Process

by Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

The 2023 Scholarship Recipients should all be on their own now since they completed the final requirement of the program in April when they made the parent hive split and performed the article swarm of their hive. This was to be the time and opportunity to move their two colonies (parent and split) home to their own bee yard. But since the colonies were at the Bost Farm and on a strong Indian Blanket (Gaillardia) honey flow, and the Horse Mint (Monarda) was starting to bloom, I suggested the girls leave the hives where they were to take advantage of the location. They did, and all the hives brought in a surplus of honey that can now be extracted. Cayia and Darla Ward were the first to do that on July 10, 2024 (see pictures below). The rest of the class of 2023 are planning to follow suite on July 27th. Because the recipient's hives are still close, I get to see their progress and am glad to report on them to you. More to follow. *Jimmie*

Caiya has beautiful honey frame to extract

Using long knife, she removes the cappings,

Darla looks on as Caiya scratches frames

Caiya is happy to be using electric extractor

Darla sees to draining the extractor

Caiya's brother Cohen helps unload the extractor

Second Year Recipient Follows Process (cont.)

Cohen pours up honey to be strained

Caiya and Darla gets the last of the honey

Caiya attends to the necessary bottling of honey

Caiya Ward sits pretty, satisfied with the successful extracting and the amount of beautiful honey her bees produced ~ 72#

Klingemann Kids Get to Extract with Mom

Jimmie Oakley - Editor

When Michelle Klingemann, a new member from Round Rock, asked about extracting some honey and then ask if she could bring her two teenage kids along, I said, “sure”.

What a bonding experience it can be for a family to get all hot and sticky together in pursuit of their first taste of their own honey. I contend this is how memories are made, one frame at a time.

Michelle, along with 15-year-old Quinn and 14-year-old Carter, showed up at the Bost Farm on June the 28th at 1 o’clock with a tub of frames and a hope that we could turn them into HONEY.

Newbees are so much fun because they are eager learners and enthusiastically do what you ask (well almost always).

We set up the three-frame hand crank equipment in the side room where the equipment is stored and got to work. Two hours later we were done, and the honey was in the bucket. The proof is in the pudding, or in this case in the pictures. See for yourself. Good times and good memories. Thanks kids! *Jimmie*

Honey in hand, Carter, Michelle, and Quinn

To get the honey out the caps have to come off

Carter learns the same lesson

Michelle shows that anyone can do this

Carter says Crank, Crank, to spin the frames

Now turn the frame and do it again

Quinn says we need to drain the extractor

Klingemann Kids Extract (cont.)

Quinn say, Bucket is full, time to strain

Carter starts to pour through the strainer

Wow,! It's a full bucket of golden honey

Getting the last drop

from the Bee

to Thee!

Bottling the first pound

The Crew (it's in the bucket) Carter, Quinn, Michelle, Jimmie

Membership Report: Shirley Doggett

July 2024

Shirley Doggett - Membership

New Members: *

Becky and Chris Barajas Round Rock

Renewing Members

Chris Huck 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

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 Board Meeting Minutes, May 16, 2024

Phil Ainslie - Secretary

Attending: Phil Ainslie, Shannon Montez, Jimmie Oakley, Linda Russell, Matt Ludlum, Nancy Kunschik, and Ken Browning.

- The Zoom meeting opened at 7:05.
- The minutes we approved.
- Bee procurement report by Jimmie Oakley: Jimmie reported two nucs were replaced. Another is waiting to see if the queen cell produces. In addition, we may need to replace one queen.
    - Another attempt will be made to contact Evergreen regarding the health report.
- The treasurer's report was tabled until the next meeting.
- Membership report tabled until the next meeting.
- Donations:
- The committee approved the following donations: $500 to the Georgetown Library, $2000 to the Nevin Weaver Endowment, $1000 to Brookwood in Georgetown, and $100 to 4-H. In addition, the board agreed to consider Hive for Heroes after reviewing their needs
- Program report by Linda Russell:
    - The May 2024 program will be a round-robin program of member interaction with experienced beekeepers.
    - June 2024 program will be a presentation on Honey by Becky Barajas
- Website report: Sean O'Neal's report was tabled until the next meeting.
- Matt Ludlum reported that Wix increased the fee significantly without increasing the service. For now, he opted for a more basic package that will suit the club's needs.
- Snacks and Drinks: It was suggested that we have members bring honey snacks with recipes for others to promote the use of honey in recipes.
- Scholarship report by Jimmie Oakley:
    - The 2023 recipients finished their splits. Each has two hives, temporarily remaining at Bost Farm until the wildflowers diminish.
    - Randy Oakley feels the environment at the Bost farm works out better for the recipient's education.
- Jimmie reported that twelve people attended the Saturday live beekeeping program at the Georgetown Heritage Gardens. Reports will be forthcoming in the club newsletter.
- Club public service presentations: Phil Ainslie reported that he has two presentations this month. One at Forbes School and another at the Burnet Library.

Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association
Treasurer's Report - As of July 14, 2024

Profit and Loss

ACCOUNTS	Year to Date
Income	
Program Income - Bee Procurement (2024)	$56,830.00
Program Income - Membership Dues	$3,460.00
Program Income - Scholarship Program	$24.00
Total Income	$60,314.00
Cost of Goods Sold	
Total Cost of Goods Sold	$48,013.20
Gross Profit	$12,300.80
Operating Expenses	
Donations and Gifts	$100.00
Dues	$50.00
Insurance	$1,688.00
Library Resources	$111.77
Meeting Supplies and Refreshments	$61.62
Permits	$257.76
Speaker Fees	$500.00
Travel Expenses	$469.00
Total Operating Expenses	$3,238.15
Net Profit	$9,062.65

Balance Sheet

ACCOUNTS	As of July 14, 2024
Assets	
Total Cash and Bank	$56,735.57
Bee Procurement Downpayment	$0.00
Undeposited Funds	$0.00
Total Assets	$56,735.57
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	$0.00
Assets & Liabilities	$56,735.57
Equity	
Retained Earnings - Prior Years	$47,672.92
Retained Earnings - Current Year	$9,062.65
Total Equity	$56,735.57

Bee Procurement Program - 2024 (in process)

Income	
Program Income - Bee Procurement	$56,830.00
Cost of Goods Sold	
Bees	$48,013.20
Gross Profit	$8,816.80
Expenses	
Permit	$257.76
Travel Expenses	$469.00
Total Expenses	$726.76
Net Profit	$8,090.04

Notes (as of March 21, 2024):

BeeWeaver Purchase 125 Queens - Complete	$4,513.20
Merrimack Purchase 300 Nucs - Complete	$43,500.00

- Merrimack Commitment = $52,500
- Less In-person pick-up discount = $9,000
- Net Merrimack Amount = $43,500