

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 27, 2017

7:00-8:00: Beekeeping 101 / 201 8:00-9:00: Program

First United Methodist Church Georgetown (MMC bldg.)

Beekeeping 101: Laura Colburn "Early Inspections After Installing a Package or Nuc"

Beekeeping 201: Jim Colbert "NICOT Queen Rearing System"

Program Speaker: Micheal Mathews "Top Bar Hives"

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Tips for Inspecting Your Hive

by Laura Colburn

After installing your package, you're probably excited, and maybe a little anxious, to see what's happening in your hive. In the weeks following your hive setup, you should see evidence of a laying queen: eggs, larva, and capped brood. You should see new comb being drawn on the foundation of your frames. Avoid checking your hive more than every 7-10 days otherwise you'll interrupt the work of the hive and unsettle the bees.



When visiting the bee yard, have a purpose in mind. It's helpful to make a to-do list so you'll have not only the necessary tools at hand, but you'll know what you're looking for. Wait for nice weather, too. Bees get grumpy when you open the hive on a cloudy day that's threatening rain. And high wind can not only disturb the bees, but also dry out the larva exposed to it. A routine inspection can wait for a day of sunshine.

Some things to look for when inspecting your hive include: brood pattern, pollen and honey stores, and attitude of the hive. It's not necessary to look for the queen. As long as you see eggs, you can feel confident you have a queen.

You'll also want to pay attention to how much space they have available. When they have drawn and filled seven out of 10 frames, it's time to add another box. Decide ahead of time if you plan to use a double-deep setup for the hive body and brood chamber, or a deep with a medium on top or even an all-medium setup. It's really a matter of personal choice. Remember, any time you add undrawn foundation, the bees will need to be fed 1:1 syrup to provide the materials to build the comb. Wax is expensive for bees to produce, so don't hold back.

Another thing to be looking for are queen cells. Cells formed towards the middle of the frame are generally supercedure cells and an indication there may be a problem with the queen. Cells formed at the bottom of the frame are swarm cells and an indication they feel crowded. Simply cutting out either supercedure or



swarm cells won't necessarily solve whatever issue your bees are sensing or their instinct to swarm, so ask a mentor or experienced beekeeper for help if you're unsure. If you're positive your queen is still in the hive, you can give yourself some time to address the issue by cutting out the cells.

Enjoy observing your bees, both outside and inside the hive. Watch for activity near the entrance, noticing pollen and possible robbing. When working in the hive, use steady movements to avoid dropping a frame or squishing too many bees. Always have your smoker ready when opening the hive. It's better to have it and not need it than the other way around. When smoking your bees, use light puffs of cool smoke. You should never see flames coming out. Also, avoid leaving honey exposed while your hive is open. Cover honey supers with a towel or hive cover to prevent robbing.



A healthy hive has plenty of bees, plenty of stores, a happy hum, and it smells good.



Recipe: Mercedes Sandoval, Buzzfeed

Honey Granola Yogurt Bark

Ingredients:

3 cups Greek yogurt ¼ cup honey

Toppings:

Granola Honey (to taste)

Instructions:

- 1. Mix yogurt and honey in a bowl.
- Pour mixture into a baking pan lined with parchment paper. Add desired amount of toppings.
- 3. Freeze 6 hours, or overnight, until frozen solid.
- 4. Break yogurt bark into desired number of pieces.
- 5. Serve cold, or store in a closed container in the freezer.
- 6. Enjoy!

Servings: 4-6

Letter from the President - Jim Colbert

It's officially spring. Not because the calendar says it is, but because the Pecan trees say it is. Oak pollen is on the decline and Pecan pollen is starting to show up and Pecan trees are hard to fool. When they think it is spring, it almost always is. By now your overwintered hives should be building up and new packages and NUCs have been installed. Now it's time to start watching the progress to make sure they have plenty of room to grow. A crowded hive is likely to swarm, so keep an eye on them and add a super when they are about 80% full. This is also a good time to find and mark queens that may not already be marked. I have noticed that almost all my queens are laying in the top super, which makes it easier to find them. If honey production is your goal, it won't be long now.



Jim Colbert, WCABA President

Have those honey supers ready because it always amazes me how fast a strong hive can fill one.

On another note, WCABA is introducing about 300 new colonies of bees to the area in the form of packages and NUCs. In this era of CCD, Varroa mites, Neonicotinoids and who knows what else, our honey bee population nationwide is under assault with reported managed colony losses in the 40% range. This small effort by our local club may not solve the problem, but it is something we can do on the local level and as they say "every little bit helps". I don't know how many colonies there are in this area, but adding 300 to the count has got to make a difference.

As we move into spring, we still have members who would like a beekeeper to mentor them, so once again, I would urge anyone who has kept bees for a year or more to sign up to become a mentor. It doesn't take much time, you will meet some great people who have similar interests and you will find satisfaction in sharing your ideas and knowledge. I can almost guarantee that you will like it if you try it.

That's it for now. See you at the meeting on Thursday. - Jim

Our Deepest Condolences to the Selvera Family.



We are very sad to announce the loss of Kevin Selvera, the father of one of our newest scholarship recipients, Carter, and uncle of another, Dylan. On the afternoon of April 21, 2017 Kevin Selvera, age 34, was on his way to work and was killed in a tragic car accident. Kevin leaves his wife, Kimberly, and 3 young children, ages 13, 4, and 23 months. He was loved by his family and will be missed by many. Our deepest condolences to the Selvera family and friends during this time of grief.

If you can donate to help with their financial burden during this time, please go to this gofundme campaign set up for his family as they begin to cope with their loss.

https://www.gofundme.com/fund-for-selvera-family



Package, Queen, and Nuc Orders Provide Many Options

by Jimmie Oakley

Another successful Bee Procurement Program has drawn to a close!

"Phew!"

This year the WCABA Bee Procurement Program offered many options when it came to what to order. When the order process closed on February 28 there were 75 packages, 110 queens, and 215 nucs ordered by the members of the club, out largest combines order to date.



70 packages of bees from Navasota at the Bost Farm for delivery.

Jimmie Oakley picked up 70 packages on Thursday, April 13th in Navasota and with assistance by Laura Colburn and Mary Bost distributed all but a couple that day. Scholarship Orientation was also conducted that afternoon at 2 PM for the five scholarship recipients presented at our March meeting participating.



Picked up the nucs, gassing up the truck...Phil & Gary

Phil Anslie, Gary Bible and Jimmie Oakley made the overnight trip to Louisiana to pick up the 215 five-frame nucs and transport them back to the Bost Farm for distribution on Saturday morning April 15th. Assisted by Tina Lim, Daniel and Benjamin Oakley, all but a dozen or so were handed out to the waiting members that day.

As of now only the queens (110 of them) are waiting to be distributed with a scheduled pickup date of Wednesday, April 26th (the day before the next meeting).

Almost 100% of those "must have" pickup vouchers were turned in to the great joy of Jimmie Oakley who had to keep up with the accounting for all the orders.

So far, the report on installation, population strength, and general overall quality of the bees has been good.

We will see how it goes on the queens when they arrive.

Please report any quality issues or concerns to Jimmie Oakley: call or text - 512/507-3009



Scholarship Orientation: Five young men took part in the Scholarship Orientation conducted by Jimmie Oakley.

... to all the volunteers who made this process such a success.



Unloading the nucs at 5AM...yawn!

Benjamin Oakley assisting Mary Alice & Callie Herring with selecting their nucs.



Laura Colburn checking Pickup Vouchers for Package delivery.

Tina Lim checking those Pickup Vouchers, Ugh!



2016 Scholarship Recognition and 2017 Scholarships Awarded

2016 Scholarship recipients recognized at the last meeting and awarded Certificates of Achievement were Laurel Morris, Michael Wheeler, Jordan Heivilin, and Sebastian Urban. Mia Koepp was not present but will receive her certificate too.





The recipients, with help from Texas
Honey Queen, Megan Pettibon,
WCABA Honey Queen, Elise
Gardner, and previous scholarship
winners, assembled the
beekeeping equipment and
received their protective gear.



2017 Scholarship winners announced at the meeting were Sam Bingham, Dylan Roberts, Carter Selvera, Jerald Swain, and Marius Talentino.

New WCABA Ambassador Program

The executive board has approved a new program for young members of our association. It's meant to complement the current WCABA Honey Princess and Honey Queen program. Though this new program, young beekeepers age 13-19 are invited to apply to represent the association to peers, attend area events, and share their knowledge of beekeeping from a young person's point of view. This program is open to both boys and girls who are current members of our association and have one year or more experience with beekeeping, either with his/her own hive or as an apprentice to another association beekeeper. Ambassadors will also be able to attend one beekeeping school per year, excepting the TBA annual convention.

Responsibilities will include: visiting at least six area groups per year, such as gardening groups, youth associations, etc, to present information on the importance of honey bees and to encourage bee friendly practices; promoting the WCABA scholarship program; share knowledge of honey bees with elementary students in the area, visiting at least two schools per school year; dress appropriately when representing the association in an official capacity. Ambassadors will be asked to report their event experiences to the board throughout the year.

The association will provide a polo and dress shirt embroidered with the WCABA logo. A parent or guardian of ambassadors under the age of 18 must also agree to attend events and act as chaperone or appoint a chaperone with a written statement. Some expenses will be covered, up to \$1000 annually for mileage, meals, and event entry.

Those interested in applying to be an ambassador should provide a brief history of their beekeeping experience, why they would like to be an ambassador, and how they plan to represent the association.

Ambassadors will be selected by the executive board.

Applications or questions about the program may be sent to Jim Colbert or Laura Colburn.

by Laura Colburn

Educational programs, such as the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship and mentor program, the WCABA Honey Queen program, the New WCABA Ambassador Program, the 4-H Beekeeping essay contest, and the Texas Master Beekeeper Program, are invaluable educational resources for our youth, who are the future of beekeeping.



New **Members** and Membership Renewals

Welcome to our new members:

Justin Marks, Georgetown; Lori Kajimura, Cedar Park; and Brian McCluskey, Hutto.

Renewing members are: Elizabeth Exley,

Georgetown; Elmer Goertz, Pflugerville; Barbara Lusinger, Austin; James Maduzia, Georgetown; Kenneth Miller, Elgin; and Gary Reilly, Georgetown.

OMG - I Have 10,000 Bees!



Thursday, April 13th was bee package pick up day, at the Bost Farm, for new and seasoned beekeepers who ordered packages and also orientation for our five deserving scholarship recipients, Sam Bingham, Dylan Roberts, Carter Selvera, Jerald Swain, and Marius Talentino.

> The week started off a little rough and unsure because of all the rain mother nature decided we needed...and we did need it, however, bees are not at their friendliest during bad weather and can get down-right mean! Because of the bad weather we were delayed by a day, but package pick up day was so beautiful, it was totally

worth the wait.

I arrived at Bost Farm around 1:00 to help with package pick-up, and also to observe our five scholarship recipients picking up their very first package of bees. Orientation started at 2:00 PM and it was so much fun

seeing the excited faces (and maybe some nervous faces!) as the recipients get ready to receive their first package of bees. Marius, Gerald, Sam, Dylan, and Carter all came to Bost Farm with their hives and gear so Jimmie could give them a 101 lesson on installing their bees.

First things first...always light your smoker so that after you suit up and get everything you need for your hive...if the smoker is still going then you know it was lit properly. Once you have your smoker lit and your gear on...then you are ready to install your package.



WARNING:

Make sure you have everything you need because once you start the install you have to be ready to move forward with getting the bees in their hive.

So...you're looking at your box of bees and thinking... how am I going to do this? I know it can be a little intimidating but just know your bees will be happy when they have a home and gueen to take care of.



Jimmie Oakley demonstrating package installation to the scholarship recipients at the Bost Farm.

Jimmie showed the group how to use the hive tool and pry open the lid. Once that is done, spray the bees with sugar water and bump the package on the ground to dislodge the bees so they all fall to the bottom. That is when you will remove the can of sugar water and remove the queen. Once you get your queen into the hive you can spray the box with sugar water again, bump it on the ground, remove whatever you have covering the hole, and shake them into your hive. Bees will be flying everywhere but don't worry...they have been with their queen and know her scent so by later that night they will have all gone into their hive to settle in.

Keep in mind that since this is a new package they have no food to survive so it is very important to use a

Boardman feeder or in-hive feeder to keep them fed with 1:1 sugar water. With a new hive it is probably best to use a Boardman feeder so you don't have to disturb the hive to see if the bees need more food.

After you have installed your package make sure you wait at least a week before checking on it to make sure they have time to accept the queen. Checking on her too early or too often could result in the bees rejecting her and leaving your hive without a queen which could cause the bees to build supersedure cells or to swarm.



Good luck
to all the recipients
with their new packages!
We look forward to
kearing your stories
at the end of the year.





Spring Honey Princess Appearances

by Elise Gardner (WCABA Honey Queen & Apprentice Master Beekeeper)

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and Texas State Capitol tours with Texas Honey Queen, Megan Pettibon and Jimmie and Kay Oakley.

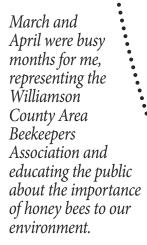


















Girl Scouts of Central Texas Intro to Beekeeping Presentation



WCABA Honey Queen, Elise Gardner, has started a bee blog. Check it out at: www.BusyBeeChic.com







Announcements & Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars with these important dates so you don't miss out on anything! Consider getting involved by volunteering!

May **4-7**

Texas
Pollinator
PowWow

in Nacogdoches, TX

Beekeeping

Jim Colbert will discuss raising queens using the NICOT, queen rearing system, a system that does not require grafting to raise the queen.

Also: procurement of supplies; use of the equipment; recommended procedure; time table.

June 10



Summer Clinic

University of Texas, Arlington
Don't miss it!

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{August} \\ 18-20 \end{array}$

5th Annual Central Texas Tour de Hives



Swarm List

Contact Jim Colbert 512-863-7183

If you would like to be on the list to collect swarms, provide your name, phone number, and the areas you would be able to serve.

Also indicate if you are willing to retrieve swarms that have nested in places difficult to reach ("cut-outs").

September 23

Brazos Valley Bee School

in Bryan, TX

williamson
ounty
rea
eekeepers
ssociation

Like Us On facebook

to Stay Connected

By Laura Colburn

If you're not following WCABA on Facebook, you're missing out on loads of events and information, like the Queen Rearing Workshop at the A&M Honey Bee Lab or the Bee Informed Partnership program that's tracking Varroa sampling across four states.

Like our page to get all the latest: https://www.facebook.com/ Williamson-County-Area-Beekeepers-Association-167001426778381/ Sept. 29 - Oct. 22

State Fair of Texas

If you can help out by volunteering, please contact John Talbert: (214) 532-9241 John@sabinecreekhoney.com

Honey Queens in the honey booth in October



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Support TBAs
"Real Texas Honey"
Program

Support your local Beekeeper visite RealTexasHoney.com

to register and for more information



"Thank You!" Refreshment Hosts: Leigh Ann Brunson, Jill Douglass, Janine Hall, and Sherry Smith.

BOOK NOOK by Barbi Rose

Check out the new books in the library.

- 1. Balanced Beekeeping I: Building a Top Bar Hive by Philip Chandler. The Barefoot Beekeeper guides us through building a top bar hive from scratch.

 2. Balanced Beekeeping II:
- Managing the Top Bar Hive by Philip Chandler. A wealth of wisdom for top bar beekeepers.
- 3. **Top-Bar Beekeeping: Organic Practices for Honeybee Health** by Les Crowder and Heather Harrell. Don't miss the diagrams that demonstrate techniques specific to top bar hives.
- 4. **Splits and Varroa by William Hesbach.** Learn how splits can be used to successfully control Varroa mites.
- 5. **The Hive and the Honey Bee** by Lorenzo Langstroth. One of the first books about modern bee management.
- 6. **Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey** by Brother Adam. Read about the methods used by Brother Adam, the creator of the Buckfast Bee strain.

Lance Wilson recommended several resources during his presentation at the February meeting.
All are available in the library.

- 1. Fat Bees Skinny Bees by Doug Somerville. A highly recommended overview of bee nutrition, including when to feed, what to feed, how to feed, and why.
- 2. **Walt Wright articles** from American Bee Journal and Bee Culture magazine. This is a collection of Walt's articles on Checkerboarding as a means for swarm control.
- 3. **Honeybee Democracy** by Thomas Seeley. The amazing story of house hunting, democratic debate, and effective decision-making among the honeybees.
- 4. *Increase Essentials* by Lawrence John Connor. Use nucs to solve problems in the beeyard.
 - ** Let us know if you have a book or DVD suggestion for the library **



WCABA MEETING MINUTES

March 23, 2017

1. **Opening the Meeting:** President Jim Colbert opened the meeting.

2. President's Announcements:

 A \$100 donation was made by a WCABA member, who wished to remain anonymous, to be used for the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship Program.
 Members are grateful for this thoughtful donation.

3. Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship:

Jimmie Oakley introduced Megan Pettibon, the Texas Honey Queen, and Elise Gardner, the WCABA Honey Queen.

Megan Pettibon awarded Certificates of Completion to last year's Scholarship winners Laurel Morris and Michael Wheeler.

Elise Gardner awarded Certificates of Completion to last year's Scholarship winners Jordan Heivilin and Sebastian Urban.

Mia Koepp was not present but will receive her Certificate.

Jimmie Oakley introduced this year's five recipients of the Ed Wolfe-Robert Bost Memorial Scholarship winners:

Sam Bingham Jerald Swain

Dylan Roberts Marius Talentino Carter Selvera

After the announcement, the new Scholarship winners moved to an adjoining room to begin assembling their hive equipment for the exciting year ahead of them.

- **4. Beekeeping 101:** Laura Colburn taught a session on "Installing Your Bees".
- **5. Beekeeping 201:** Lance Wilson led a discussion on "Comb Rotation".
 - 6. Members Present: 114
 - **7. Program:** Our Program Director, John Hibbard, introduced the evening's speaker, Katie Ney from McIntire's Garden Center in Georgetown. Ms. Ney discussed the best plants for pollination. She also provided helpful handouts for members.
 - 8. HB-1293 Following our guest speaker,
 Paul Exley spoke briefly about House Bill 1293, which was filed by State Representative Tracy King. The purpose of the Bill is to update
 Chapter 131 of the Texas Agriculture Code as it applies to bees and beekeeping in Texas.
 Chris Doggett later explained there are many discussions coming in the future of the Bill and members need to become active to request revisions they feel are necessary. It will be a group effort for all beekeepers.
 - **9. Date for Next Meeting:** Our next meeting will be on April 27, 2017.

- Ginny Stubblefield, Secretary, WCABA



Paul Exley giving his opinions about House Bill 1293.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Dues \$15.00 per year - individual or family membership

	New Member / Renewing Member	(circle one)	Date:
Name:			Amount: \$
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City/Sta	ite/Zip		
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			(please print)
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	Instructions: print, fill out, and bring Mrs. Shirley Dogg	g to club meeting, or r nett - 400 C. R. 440 - Th	•

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New Gift Shop:

Members with handmade gift shop appropriate products, contact April May to inquire about placing your products in the Gift Shop at Busy Bee Supplies new location. admin@busybeesupplies.com



Busy Bee Supplies' store front in Florence.
They also have a new giftshop right next door.

April May is happy to help you with your bee supply needs.

Spring Checklist

April is the month when the major honey flow will kick into gear. Swarms are more frequent in April and May.

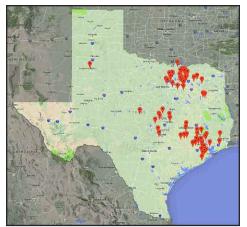
In the Beeyard:

		Work bees on warm, sunny days.
	Ħ	Make new colonies with package bees.
		Make nucs from strong colonies. To make a 5 frame nuc,
		remove 2 frames of brood and bees and I frame of pollen
		and honey from a strong colony. Place this in the middle of
		5 frame nuc box and add two frames of foundation.
		A 10 frame brood box can be substituted for the nuc box.
		Introduce a young queen to the new colony.
		Consider combining weak colonies with strong colonies.
	\Box	Reverse brood boxes.
	Ħ	Add frames of wax foundation or entire supers of wax
		foundation to hives to get new comb drawn. (A general rule

- foundation to hives to get new comb drawn. (A general rule is to add supers of foundation below the queen excluder. Add supers of drawn comb above excluders.)

 Watch honey supers closely and add supers when bees have
 - Watch honey supers closely and add supers when bees have filled 6-8 frames with honey. 3 to 4 supers per hive is generally enough for a season. (Empty supers may be added either above or below full supers).
- Feed your bees keep feeders full of 1:1 syrup for existing hives. For new hives, feed 2:l sugar syrup until all frames are drawn then add another brood box and continue to feed until that box is also full.
- Keep an eye out for swarms.

Support TBAs "Real Texas Honey" Program



Are you on the Honey Locator Map? Register today so consumers can find you and your Real Texas Honey!

With over 70% of the honey in the U.S. being imported, it has become increasingly important for us to support our local honey producers. Consumers are faced with a growing food fraud problem when they grab a bottle of honey off the grocery store shelf, as honey has become the 3rd most common food item to be mislabeled. Some honey that is labeled "local" or "Texas honey" has been found to be falsely labeled and is actually imported from China. This imported honey may be contaminated with heavy

metals and antibiotics, "ultra-purified" (with all its beneficial ingredients filtered out, including pollen), or it may even be fake (a blend of honey and other sweeteners like cheap corn syrup and artificial sweeteners).

In Texas, we consume ~15m lbs. of honey per year, yet we only produce ~8m lbs. This high demand for honey is a golden opportunity for beekeepers and consumers to form a partnership to support real local honey, stop food fraud and imports of inferior products, and create quality standards so consumers can know what product they are getting by being able to trust its labeling and its source. "You get what you pay for" with honey, so spring for REAL local honey, support your neighborhood beekeeper, and take advantage of the myriad of health benefits local honey has to offer!

TBA has launched a "Real Texas Honey" program with the goal of connecting consumers with real local beekeepers. Make sure to visit the website and register. The more participants, the better the program works! Visit *RealTexasHoney.com* for more information.



Randy & Amy Oakley

(254) 307-2337 OakleyBees@gmail.com OakleyFamilyApiaries.com

- Local Honey BeesBeekeeping Advice
- Beekeeping Supplies



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