



The Bee Line

2008—Issue 4

April 2008

2008 Club Officers

President: Ernie Buda

(916) 354-9801

Vice President: David Ogden

(916) 687-6977

Secretary: Ron Melliush

(916) 743-2703

Treasurer: Dennis Larson

(916) 481-4011

Other Committee Contacts:

Donations: Nancy Stewart

Hospitality: Mil Sutter

Library: Ernie Buda

Mentors: George Bleekman

Newsletter: Georgianna Pfof

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Mission: To promote interest in, and awareness of, the vital importance of the honeybee and beekeeping to agriculture, commerce, and the public at large.

www.sacbeekeepers.org

Mentors' Tips for the Month

Well into swarming season now, so continue to be on the lookout for queen cells in the frames as you check through your hives. If any are found, remove and make up a queenless nuc with frames of brood and young bees from the hive, with the queen cell in the nuc. This will give you a chance to try to raise a new queen in the nuc, and at the same time, will free up some space and remove some bees to help prevent swarming of your main hive. - Ron Parsons



Classes & Meetings & More!

Sat., April 12— SABA Natural Beekeeping class, from 8—5 with instructor Serge Labesque, a beekeeper in Sonoma County and frequent bee course instructor there. Cost \$35 (\$30 SABA members); location TBD. To register, contact Ernie Buda at (916) 354-9801.

Sat. April 12— Natural Beekeeping: Getting Started, Swarms, Hives, Comb Building” class taught by David Basile at Rudolph Steiner College, Fair Oaks, 9—5. Call (916) 961-8727 for more info .

Tues. April 15— SABA Meeting, 7:30. Ettamarie Peterson, a farmer & beekeeper in Sonoma County, will speak about **bees in California history**, especially in the Sacramento and S.F. areas in the mid-1800's. Did you know the first European honeybees came into California in 1853? Come learn much more!

April 15-17—Instrumental Insemination & Bee Breeding Workshop designed for commercial beekeepers & researchers, at UCD Bee Lab, \$400. Call 530-754-9390 for more info.

Apr. 29-May 1—Adv. Workshop on Instrumental Insemination Technique, at UCD Bee Lab, \$400. Call 530-754-9390.

Sat. May 3— Intermediate Beekeeping Class, hosted by SABA and taught by Dr. Eric Mussen, UCD's Co-op Extension Apiculturist, at the Sac. County Co-op Ag Extension auditorium, 4145 Branch Center Road (1 block west of Bradshaw at Keifer Blvd.) from 8 to 5 with a break for lunch. The **cost** is \$35

per person (\$30 for SABA members). **To register**, call Sacramento Beekeeping Supply ASAP at (916) 451-2337 (Tues-Sat 10-5:30) or email info@sacramentobeekeeping.com. Bring a bee veil if you can! **And members: we need someone to bring one or two colonies of bees.** Call Bob Sugar ASAP at 916-408-2244 if you can help!

Tues., May 20 - SABA Meeting. Program ideas? Call VP David Ogden.

May—TBA- Sacramento County Fair. Watch for more info and plan to help out in the bee booth!

Sat. May 29—Beginning Beekeeping class by Randy Oliver, 9-4, hosted by the S.F. Beekeepers' Assn. Call (415) 826-1250 for more info or check www.sfbee.org

Sat., Jun. 21—"Natural Beekeeping: Honey, Wax, Summer Issues" class from 9—5 at Steiner College, Fair Oaks. Call (916) 961-8727 for more info or to register.

Wed. June 18 or 25, July 9, 16 or 23 or in Aug—McClatchy Library, on 22nd St., is looking for a beekeeper to present a **45-minute program** at 6:30 p.m. for approx. 20 school-age children (and several parents) as part of their summer "Catch the Reading Bug" program. *Can you help?* Please call Nancy Stewart at (916) 451-2337 or Katey Sarrade (librarian) at 277-2177, -2178.

SABA's **regular meetings** are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., at the Belle Cooledge Community Center, 5699 South Land Park Drive (on the southeast corner of Fruitridge Road and South Land Park Dr) in Sacramento. All are welcome!

President's Corner

For two months in a row we have had great attendance at the meetings. There have been many new faces. This dynamic presents a great challenge to SABA leadership and current members to provide structure and programs that meet the needs and keep the interest of all members. So to everyone, please help keep the leadership on our toes. Give us your feedback and suggestions. Call us or use the new SABA email address info@sacbeekeepers.org

Thanks—and see you at the next meeting!

- Ernie Buda, President

P.S. Clarification: A member brought to my attention an error in the last *Bee Line*. SABA is not, as stated, a charitable organization, but we are a non-profit corporation per the laws of the State of California. As everyone's tax circumstances are different, you should consult your tax professional about what donations or SABA-related expenses may be tax-deductible.



March Minutes and Program Notes

The Meeting of the Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association was called to order by President Ernie Buda at 7:36 p.m. on March 18, 2008, at the Belle Coolegge Community Center. We welcomed visitors and new or returning members: Martha Maldonado of Penryn, Bruce Wain; Stephen Engle of Sacramento who kept bees in the 80's and early 90's and wants to get back into it, and put his new hive on a live blog online; Todd Gack who is interested in organic farming and want to start with bees (he came with Chris Nielson who was new last month); Aubrey "Tex" Wynn who did some beekeeping in Texas in the early 90's and started again recently; Brenda Terry of Citrus Heights in her 2nd year with 3 hives; Rex Parsons of Sacramento who is new to beekeeping; and Larry Porter of the Wilton area who has one hive and wants to start more. Good to see Stan Umlauf, a long-time member since '81, but lives in Bay Point and can't often attend meetings.

The Program VP David Ogden introduced our program speaker, Dr. Norman Gary of U.C. Davis and known in Hollywood as the "bee wrangler" and that's what he spoke about tonight. Dr. Gary uses two methods to train or get bees to do what the director wants: a complex, proprietary formula of bee pheromones, and food rewards. He explained why more actors and others on the set don't get stung: his actor bees are not with a colony, so they already have little inclination to sting and are somewhat docile because there is no hive to protect, plus the pheromones also render them docile. Dr. Gary shared many clips from his film work. His favorite bee movie is "Fried Green Tomatoes" (watch it again and see the great bee work). His wrangling career wanes as computer generated cinema gets more advanced and better at depicting bees and so the directors need him and real bees less. The program ended at 8:38 p.m.

Refreshments and an opportunity to chat with the speaker were offered and the **Business Meeting** began at 8:57 p.m. **Questions** were posed about what tasks should be done this time of year. Bob Sugar recommended ordering your bees or queen ASAP as there appears to be a short supply this year. Many keepers believe in requeening every year; others do it every two years. He reminded us that a failing queen is a prominent cause of swarming. Have enough stores of food for the bees in case they can't fly, and pollen, too, if they are low on it in the hive. If your brood is concentrated in the upper super, you may want to rotate supers putting the less filled ones on top. Beekeeping **classes** are going great; the first basic class was jam packed with 39 students, and there is a waiting list for the second class, still some openings for the Natural Class on April 12 and the Intermediate Class on May 3. The SABA **website** is up at sacbeekeepers.org

Treasurer's Report by Dennis Larson: Balance \$7,454.79. SABA received a \$1,000 donation for our work stuffing bags for the National Beekeeping Conference in January. About 50 paid members have joined or renewed so far this year. Please send/bring your \$15 dues if you haven't already. A discussion was had regarding the purchase of a **public address system** with at least one clip on mike and one hand held, for use at classes, presentations, and even regular meetings or the State Fair if appropriate. The Executive Board recommended authorizing up to \$800 for such a purchase. Motion carried to approve such expenditure. Moved: Stan Umlauf, 2nd Bob Sugar. Research has already been done, and Past President Bob Rollins and Ernie will shop and make the final purchase so it is available for the Beginning Class on Saturday March 22. (Anyone with any interest or expertise was asked to help as well.) A motion carried to reimburse Ken Lee up to \$230 for website expenses. Moved: Bob Sugar, 2nd Mil Sutter. George Bleekman always does a great job organizing SABA representation at the Gold Country Fair in Auburn. A motion carried to reimburse him up to \$125 for Fair expenses as well as some mentoring program postage. Moved: Ron Melluish; 2nd Bob Sugar. President Buda noted three upcoming opportunities to carry out our public education mission: 1) a clean up day at Miwok Park in Elk Grove which Joseph Watkins will coordinate; ... *continued on page 3*

Bees in the News



Bees continue to make the news on a regular basis, and here are a few recent local items.

“Decline of bees piques interest,” by Edgar Sanchez, [The Sacramento Bee](#), Feb. 28, 2008.

Mitch Carnie’s fifth graders at Sutterville Elementary students have been studying bees and CCD as a project for a statewide environmental contest, sparked by one student’s fascination with a colony that took up residence in his backyard. The students even wrote a song about CCD [which they performed at the opening of the National Bee Conference in January] as a soundtrack for a bee cartoon they made. See www.sacbee.com/links to view the film and hear the song.

“Honey, almond industries to vote,” by Michael Doyle, [The Sacramento Bee](#), Mar. 4, 2008.

The face of the National Honey Board may change significantly following the industry elections set for early April. The current board is largely comprised producers (7 of 12 members), but only 3 of 10 members on the potential new board would be producers with the rest being processors, packers and importers. Meanwhile the almond board is focused on setting different standards for different markets.

“Bee Bandits Sting Valley Orchards,” by Garance Burke, [The Sacramento Bee](#), Mar. 10, 2008.

Herald beekeeper Roscoe Hall described his loss of 180 colonies to theft a few weeks prior and law enforcement officials noted that with the dearth of bees and the increasing pollination fees (up to \$200 per hive in some areas this year) more hive thefts have been occurring both in California, as well as Florida and Montana. Commercial beekeepers are often now branding both hive boxes and combs with id numbers, and/or using microchips in the hives to help track them.

Plants for Bees

What’s blooming in your area this month? What plants have you found provide the best nectar and pollen sources for your bees? Drop an email and let us know for the next newsletter. (Ettamarie Peterson will be bringing her bee plant list to share at the April meeting, too.)

As of the end of March, members around the area report that strawberries, cherries and pears are still in bloom, as are vetch and pineapple quince, as well as many bulbs (some of which attract bees) and still some camellias (some of which are a source of pollen). Apples and lavender are starting to bloom, along with boysenberries (and raspberries and blackberries will also blossom soon), and oranges are starting to bud (at least in Sacramento).



Eat ice cream and save bees!

Attention ice cream lovers: You can now support your bees while eating ice cream. Attendees at one of the dinners at the recent conference in Sacramento got to sample Haagen Dazs’ limited edition “Vanilla Honey Bee” ice cream, and Randy Kehoe sent along the link to the ice cream maker’s special website which not only tells about their campaign to support bee research (including that at UCD) but provides quite a bit of general educational material on honeybees, too. Take a look, and have fun “building a bee” to email to your friends. <http://helphoneybees.com>

Thank you to members and bees

A big thank you goes out from the club to Bob Sugar for organizing SABA’s well-attended spring classes, and from Bob Sugar to Ernie Buda and Ron Parsons for bringing colonies of bees to the first two classes. And many thanks to Ron and Debbie Melliush for staffing a booth and Joseph Watkins providing honey for sampling at the Elk Grove “Egg-stravaganza” on March 22. The booth was busy the entire four hours and the demonstration hive was a huge hit with the children (and their parents). We received a very favorable write up (with photos) by the Elk Grove Citizen.

March Minutes ... continued from page 2

2) Ag Day at the Capitol on March 25 where California State Beekeepers will provide materials and talk to legislators and ask for our support in bringing an observation hive. (Brenda Terry, Richard Cuny and Jeanlaurie Ainsworth volunteered to help out); 3) the Cosumnes Community Services District asked for SABA representation at their Spring Egg-Stravaganza on March 22 in Elk Grove Park. Ron and Debbie Melliush will run the booth; Joseph Watkins will donate local honey for the kids and parents to sample. Thanks to all for helping. At 9:32 Bob Sugar moved to adjourn; 2nd Dennis Larson; motion carried and meeting adjourned. There were 35 members and guests present.

Respectfully submitted, *Ron Melliush*, Secretary

Honey Recipe of the Month

Strawberry Smoothie

1 pint fresh strawberries, stemmed and sliced (or 2 c. frozen, slightly thawed)
1 c. milk
1/2 c. honey
1 c. crushed ice

1 c. (8 oz) plain or vanilla yogurt
1 tsp. vanilla extract



In a blender or food processor container combine all ingredients and process until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings. (Note: You can substitute or mix in other berries or fruits such as peaches or bananas.)

Reprinted from the 2007 Pennsylvania Honey Queen's "Honey Recipes" pamphlet.

Bee Classifieds

WANTED: Hives placed on two properties in Wilton. One person wants bees to pollinate a large veg & flower garden on 5 acres, and the other wants to get into beekeeping so wants to get used to having them around on his 20-acre property. If anyone is interested, call Ernie Buda at (916) 354-9801 or email info@sacbeekeepers.org and he will connect you with the interested parties.

FOR SALE: 2 pipe stands (1 for one hive, 1 for two hives), tables for extractor and uncapping tank, 4 lbs foundation wax for small supers; 10 new frames for large super; 3 bee escape boards; 2 wire embedders; 2 new hive tools; 2 small supers; and 1 new and 1 used smoker. Call Oakley Gack for more info and prices at (916) 489-0340.

ALWAYS WANTED: Your contributions of bee-related news articles, experiences, travel, questions, trivia, recipes, book reviews and favorite websites for future newsletters. Email them to the editor at dugongs@sbcglobal.net or mail to 3517 57th St., Sacramento, 95820. Thanks!

GO TREELESS FOR EARTH DAY: Help SABA save paper and postage by subscribing to the e-mailed newsletter (just contact the editor, subject line "Treeless").

SACRAMENTO AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

c/o Sacramento Beekeeping Supplies
2110 X Street, Sacramento, CA 95818

Website: www.sacbeekeepers.org
E-mail: info@sacbeekeepers.org

Address Correction Requested

—The Bee Line—
April 2008



Next Meeting

Tues., Apr. 15 @ 7:30