

The Bee Line

2008—Issue 5

May 2008

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Hospitality: Mil Sutter
Library: Ernie Buda
Mentors: George Bleekman
Newsletter: Georgianna Pfost

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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

These spring months are critical to successful honey production in the coming months. The honey flow is "on". If you haven't reversed your deep hives, do it now to reduce swarm potential and allow better distribution of brood as well as to stimulate growth. ... On a warm, windless day, locate your queen and view her laying pattern. Marking her is easy and will pay off when you need to find her later. This year's color is red. If you're not too concerned about a great honey harvest, now is a good time to split hives and produce your own queens. The procedure is not complicated and may be rewarding as well as saving the cost of a purchased queen. ... *Continued on page 3*

Upcoming Activities

Sat., May 3—SABA's Intermediate Beekeeping Class taught by Dr. Eric Mussen of UCD 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 today!

Tues., May 20 - SABA Meeting. Program TBD. (Note: To receive program updates and last-minute club news, be sure to send your email to us for the club e-list at dugongs@sbcglobal.net)

May 22—26—Sacramento County Fair., at Cal Expo, Building C, 9—8 Th/Fr, 10—10 Sat, 10—7 Sun.. *Volunteers are needed* to staff a SABA booth and share the joys of bees with many children and adults. Call Howard Mann to schedule a timeslot at (916) 812-9855 and more details on how to be cleared to serve per Megan's Law.

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 www.sfbec.org

Sat., Jun. 12—Natural Beekeeping class with Serge Labesque at Sac. County Ag Building (see 5/3). \$35 (\$30 SABA members). Call or email Ernie to sign up 2211budae@peoplepc.com

Tues., Jun. 17- SABA Meeting. Program ideas? Call VP David Ogden.

Sat., Jun. 21—"Natural Beekeeping: Honey, Wax, Summer Issues" class from 9—5 at Steiner College, Fair Oaks. \$95. 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.

Sat., July 12—time TBD. Tour of UCD Bee Lab and SABA picnic lunch following.

Aug. 15- Sep 1—State Fair—Watch for details on how to volunteer for the state beekeepers booth. It's fun and you'll get free admission and parking for the day(s) served

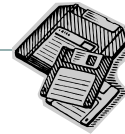
SABA's **regular meetings** are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., at the Belle Cooledge Community Center, 5699 South Land Park Drive (on the southeast corner of Fruitridge Road and South Land Park Dr) in Sacramento. All are welcome!

Other regional bee club meetings:

Nevada County—1st Mon. of each month at 7 p.m., Veterans Memorial Building, 255 S. Auburn St., Grass Valley

Alameda—2nd Tues. (monthly?) at 7:30 p.m., Rotary Nature Center, 600 Bellevue Ave., Oakland.

... *Continued on page 3*



April Minutes and Program Notes

The Meeting of the Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association was called to order by President Ernie Buda at 7:30 p.m. on April 15, 2008, at the Belle Cooledge Community Center. Ernie welcomed visitors and new members: Dean Stapleton and Richard Soriano of Acampo, who are just starting with bees; Sandra Sherwood of Tahoe Park who started last year and is looking for some help; and Teresa Conolly who will get her bees on Saturday.

The Program VP Dave Ogden introduced our program speaker, Ettamarie Peterson of Peterson's Farm in Sonoma County. She gave an interesting presentation about the history of beekeeping in California, and shared her bee photography with us. In 1853 Christopher Shelton brought the first European honeybees to California, to Commodore Stockton's ranch in San Jose (where the airport is now.) Shelton got 13 hives in Panama and one was left by the time he reached San Francisco. These were European black bees; the Italian were not yet prevalent in the United States. The first significant apiary promoters were John & William Harbison, headquartered in Sutterville (the same area as where our meetings are held.) They produced comb honey, and also patented their own hive system to compete with the Langstroth hive.

As another part of her hobby, Ettamarie takes photos of bees and nectar sources for all times of the year. She shared her list of Sonoma County bee beneficial plants (most of which would likely grow well here in Sacramento area, too); some highlights: Redbud tree--great for early spring. Bees love it. White bottle brush--blooms in winter. California buckeye--poisonous to bees! Button Brush--a very heavy nectar plant. Visit her website at PetersonsFarm.com.

Following the program and break, the **Business Meeting** began at 8:40 p.m. John Foster had a question about a **swarm** he hived about 3 weeks ago. The bees are drawing comb and there is some larva, but he hasn't been able to see the queen. Should he be worried? Swarms take the old queen with them, so it's always possible a swarm colony has a failing queen but if you have brood and in a good pattern, you've probably got a good queen. Actually seeing the queen is fun, but overrated. As long as you have larva, or especially eggs, you know she is there and laying. The **minutes** for February and March were approved. Moved: Howard Mann, 2nd: Russel Dalske. The following **members** were recognized for their work over the past month: Bob Sugar on the bee classes, Brenda Perry at Ag Day at the Capitol, Ron & Debbie Melluish at the Elk Grove EggStravaganza, Joseph Watkins for the Miwok Park event in Elk Grove, and donating honey for the EggStravaganza, Ron Parsons for the Fairytale Town event, and Russel Dalske for the Wings of Spring at the Zoo.

Old business: Our **PA system** has been used twice to good advantage, and came in under budget at \$712. 27 people attended the Natural Beekeeping class on April 12th. Don't forget to pay your 2008 dues! Howard Mann will prepare a draft of a flyer about SABA's various beekeeping **classes**--more of a brochure really, that describes in some detail what is covered and who might want to take the class.

New business: We will soon lose our great **newsletter** editor, Georgianna Pfost. The December issue will be her last. We will need a new editor for the newsletter for next year. Thanks so much to Georgianna for all her hard work and great newsletters over the years! Motion carried to spend \$121.70 for boxes to carry our **library**, color code labels and a 2 wheel dolly. Moved George Bleekman; 2nd Howard Mann. Motion approved to spend \$250 to add new books to the SABA library, particularly those titles recommended by Randy Oliver at his beginning classes. Moved Howard Mann, 2nd Russel Dalske. Speaking of the library--we need a new librarian! Even if you have no beekeeping experience, you could learn a great deal and be of great service to the club in this position. Howard Mann needs volunteers for the **Sacramento County Fair**: May 22-26. Shifts will be in 4 or 4½ hour blocks, Thursday/Friday 9-8, Saturday/Sunday 10-10, and Monday 10-7. All SABA representatives need to be screened under Megan's Law, so please volunteer early! Ron Parsons will help with one **observation hive**; we need one more please.

Dates for **fall classes** discussed. Howard Mann, Bob Sugar and Dennis Larson will work with Ernie to get dates and places set. We have nifty SABA **business cards** now. They list the meeting time and place, as well as website and bee store mailing address. Pick some up to give to friends and potential beekeepers! George Bleekman noted that we are so busy doing community events, school presentations, and so forth, that we should have more than one of our yellow **SABA banners**, kept at strategic locations (so you don't have to drive at four bucks a gallon from North Highlands to Elk Grove to hand off the only banner between meetings! [Been there; drove that.] He will make a case at the next meeting to authorize the purchase of two more banners. There were 26 members and guests present.

Respectfully submitted, *Ron Melluish*, Secretary

2008 Membership list. The current SABA phone and email list is included in members' newsletters. Please check your listing, and if you have any corrections or additions, email the editor at dugongs@sbeglobal.net Thanks!

President's Corner

WOW what a great group of volunteers SABA enjoys! Quietly, without any fanfare, five public education programs have been presented this spring. Ron Melliush set up a SABA information booth at an Easter festival put on in Elk Grove. **Joseph Watkins** put together the SABA booth at an Elk Grove Parks creek clean up day. **Ron Parsons** took the program to William Land Park Fairy Tale Town the day after Joseph did his program. **Russell Dalske** set up and staffed the educational booth at William Land park Zoo Day, not once, but twice. How fortunate SABA is to have such generous individuals willing to share their knowledge and give of their time. Thank you so much! More is yet to come, **Howard Mann** is preparing for the Sacramento County Fair (May 22-26) and **George Bleekman** is getting ready for the Gold Country Fair in Auburn (Sep. 4-7). These two events require additional folks to take turns staffing the booth. I encourage new members to help out, you do not have to be "an expert" and it's quite a lot of fun.

New item: As SABA president I was pleased to receive a call from Gary gentleman in Elk Grove. Gary wanted someone to know how impressed he was with one of our members who responded to a call for a swarm. Gary had great praise for the skill, diligence and patience of **Patrick Cassidy**. Patrick took the time to explain everything he was doing and spent several hours making sure he collected the maximum number of bees. Thank you Patrick!

Also, SABA will be presenting a second Natural Beekeeping class instructed by Serge Labesque. The class will be on Saturday June 14, 2008, at the Sacramento County Ag building located in the County Center off Bradshaw Road at Keifer Blvd. Minimum attendance will be 13, maximum 25 and the final day to sign up will be June 8. The fee is the normal \$35 with SABA members only \$30. I would recommend that you sign up early; in surveying the potential interest I estimate we are not to far off meeting the minimum before the announcement is even out. I will be coordinating the class so please email interest or questions to me at 2211budae@peoplepc.com. -Ernie Buda, President

Bee Travels

In March and some of April of this year, I traveled to Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. I purchased honey products in both Australia and Tasmania only to lose these to the New Zealand Agriculture inspectors when entering NZ. Between the inspectors and their sniffing beagle dogs nothing in the way of food (including honey, plant products, wood products, etc.) are allowed to enter NZ. Even sealed raw honey in jars was confiscated. The country is concerned because they depend upon a strong agricultural export business with kiwi fruit and honey products worth millions to the bottom line. But while there I was able to spend about one and a half hours at the Comvita honey and honey product plant/research facility in Paengaroa. Body creams, lotions, soaps, wound care honey, antioxidants, toothpaste, propolis tincture and throat spray, along with scores of other products featuring the prized Manuka honey. The Manuka plant, (*Leptospernum scoparium*) native to NZ is a small tree that produces a nectar rich in antibacterial properties not found in other honey sources. Comvita has marketed this product to the world as Unique Manuka Factor honey and grades it as UMF Manuka Honey #15, #20, #25, #30+, each number processing a higher degree of effectiveness. I came home with several of the products (and photos) and will share them with the club at a future meeting. -George Bleekman



Tips of the Month... continued from first page

Serge Labesque, the "natural beekeeper" has a method that if followed will likely be successful. His procedure requires a strong primary hive with a few frames of brood and honey you could donate to a queen producing nuc If you are catching swarms be certain to feed sugar water (50/50) until the colony no longer "takes it." The queen in your swarm may be more than a year or two old, so if she isn't laying a good pattern of brood, consider either replacing her OR use the Labesque method of producing your own queen. The downside is that it takes approximately 5 weeks to obtain a queen who by that time should have mated and begun to lay eggs. And finally, Be PROACTIVE. Have frames with foundation and hives ready when they are needed by the bees. -George Bleekman

Other Regional Bee Club Meetings ... continued from first page

Delta—1st Tues. of each month. Call (209) 667-0830 for time and location.

Marin—1st Tues. Oct—June at 7:30 p.m., Draper Farms, 11 Sacramento Ave., San Anselmo

Mount Diablo—2nd Thurs. (except Nov & Dec) at 7:30 p.m., Heather Farm Garden Center in Walnut Creek

San Francisco—2nd Wed. each month at 7:30 p.m., Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way

Sonoma—2nd Mon. of each month at 7 p.m., Sonoma County 4-H Center, 6445 Commerce Blvd., Rohnert Park

Honey Recipe of the Month

Honey Herb Sauce

1/4 c. honey
2 T onion, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

1/4 c. butter or margarine
1/2 tsp thyme, crushed



Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Cook 2 minutes. Toss with vegetables such as peas, spinach, broccoli, zucchini or green beans. Serve over couscous as a vegetarian entrée or alone as a side dish.
Reprinted from Ettamarie Peterson's recipe collection at www.petersonsfarm.com

Bee Classifieds

WANTED: Help removing a hive from a rotting oak tree limb by a home. Call Randall at (916) 631-9035.

WANTED: Hives placed on two properties in Wilton for pollinating gardens and learning about bees. If anyone is interested, call Ernie Buda at (916) 354-9801 or email info@sacbeekeepers.org

FOR SALE: Baby geese (Gray barnyard, Pilgrim, Toulouse, and crosses). \$10 each. Call Bob at (916) 408-2244.

ALWAYS NEEDED: Your contributions of bee-related news articles, experiences, travel, questions, trivia, ads, 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!

HELP WANTED: Club needs a new librarian starting soon, and new newsletter editor starting January or sooner. These are both great ways to learn about beekeeping and help the club at same time. Email 2211budae@peoplepc.com for more info on the library, or dugongs@sbcglobal.net for more info on the newsletter.

GO TREELESS: 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—
May 2008



Next Meeting

Tues., May 20 @ 7:30