

The Bee Line

2007—Issue 10

November 2007

2007 Club Officers

- President: Bob Rollins
(916) 965-3875
- Vice President: David Ogden
(916) 687-6977
- Secretary: Ron Melliush
(916) 743-2703
- Treasurer: Richard Cuny
(916) 971-1752
- Other Committee Contacts:
- Finance: Dennis Larson
- Hospitality: Mil Sutter
- Mentors: George Bleekman
- Newsletter & Library:
Georgianna Pfost
- Donations: Nancy Stewart

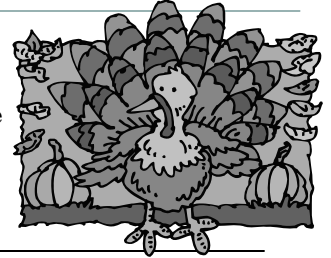
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Mission: *To promote interest in, and awareness of, the vital importance of the honeybee and beekeeping to agriculture, commerce, and the public at large.*

Tips for the Month

Check your bees for honey and pollen stores to ensure they have enough for the winter months. If food appears inadequate, you can supplement with sugar syrup (2 parts sugar to 1 part water) and pollen substitutes.



Winter Activities

Tues., Nov. 13—Thurs., Nov. 15—118th Annual **California State Beekeeping Conference**, at Harrah's Lake Tahoe. For info, contact Patricia Johnson at castatebeekeepers@hotmail.com or (209) 667-4590.

Tues., Nov. 20—SABA Meeting. Our speaker will be **Sue Cobey**, research associate and new manager of the Harry H. Laidlaw, Jr. Honey Bee Research Facility at UC Davis. Over the last 30 years, Cobey has become a world leader in bee fertility research, and she will continue the New World Carniolan breeding program, founded in 1981, to enhance commercial stock. The program will also continue to offer specialized beekeeping short courses to provide beekeepers with the tools for stock improvement.

Tues., Dec. 18 - SABA Meeting and Holiday Potluck and Gadget Night, and Election of 2008 officers. Bring along a dish to share and a favorite beekeeping gadget.

Jan. _?_ - Installation dinner. Date and location TBD. Watch for more info.

SABA's **regular meetings** are held the third Tuesday of each month (except July and August) 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) in Sacramento. All are welcome!

Jan. 8—12, 2008 - 1st National Beekeeping Conference—at Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento. For schedule and registration info. go to www.abfnet.org or www.americanhoneyproducers.org or

call (912)427-4233.

This conference encompasses the 2008 conventions of the American Beekeeping Federation, American Honey Producers Association, American Association of Professional Apiculturists, the American Bee Research Conference, National Honey Packers & Dealers Association, and Apiary Inspectors of America! There will be presentations and activities by many nationally known experts in beekeeping (e.g., Danny Weaver, of the Texas Weaver Apiaries, the 2008 President who speaks nationally on radio and TV.) Some planned topics and activities include: up-to-date info on Colony Collapse Disorder, the politics of beekeeping, community classes for children on bees, the largest US Beekeeping trade show ever, interactive workshops, and a honey and beeswax show.

Volunteer Opportunities: ABF has asked our local club for assistance, and will pay us to **stuff bags** with conference materials for attendees (some 700+). We will plan a "stuffing party" when the time is closer but **please contact Nancy Stewart ASAP** (info@sacramentobeekeeping.com or (916) 451-2337) if you may be available to help.

Also, Kim Lehman, of Bee Lady Programs, is looking for Sacramento area locales to hold **educational classes** (probably 2 hours) for children during the conference. She needs volunteers for parts of her program, such as an observation hive, honey tasting, making beeswax candles, cooking with honey, bee body parts puzzle, bee biology, pollination games, products of the hive, bee puppets, bee experiments, and a resource center. Kim has most of the materials, but needs help guiding the activities and would welcome additional educational materials. So again, please contact Nancy ASAP if you would be interested in helping or have contacts to publicize these classes.

October Minutes & Program Notes



The meeting of the Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association was called to order by President Robert L. Rollins at 7:30 p.m. on October 16, 2007, at the Belle Cooledge Community Center.

V.P. David Ogden introduced our very informative and interesting **program** speaker: Russ Lewis, a commercial beekeeper in Wilton, CA. He keeps up to 900 hives, so he is "commercial" but still keeps his day job. Russ noted that you must be handy if you want to economically keep a large number of hives. If you have to call a mechanic every time a hydraulic arm or a fork lift or a truck breaks down, you'll eat up your profits in no time. Russ believes our best defense against colony collapse is to stay on top of good feeding and proper medication of the bees.

A short **business meeting** followed. The Minutes for the September meeting were approved, and Treasurer Richard Cuny reported on expenses and the club's fund balance. The main discussion item was the SABA website. The membership is eager to see it up and fully running. Reports are expected in November from several members, including Dennis Larson and Bob Rollins, regarding several web designers and their fees and so forth. The meeting adjourned at about 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Ron Melliush*, Secretary

Attention! Club Notices

- SABA's spring **beekeeping classes** are being scheduled for March 2008. The likely dates for the beginning classes are March 1 and 8 (two separate one-day classes). Mark your calendars, and watch for details!
- Want to help support SABA's mission and activities? Nominations for 2008 club **officers** are now being accepted, as are **volunteers** for any of the various club committees (e.g., publicity, education, fairs, refreshments, library, etc.) Please contact current President Bob Rollins (r-l-r@pacbell.net or (916) 965-3875) if you can share a few hours for the beekeeping cause.
- Do you have any bee books, videos or other educational materials you no longer use or need? Consider donating them to the **club library** so others can enjoy and learn from them, too. Please contact the current librarian Georgianna Pfof (dugongs@sbcglobal.net or (916) 457-3113).



Fun Facts about Mead

Excerpted from November 2007 *The Diablo Bee*, newsletter of the Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association.

Mead is the planet's oldest fermented beverage with a history dating back over eight thousand years. And mead is truly a global drink. It independently developed in such diverse cultures as Egyptian, Celtic, Indian and Scandinavian. ... In the colder, non-grape producing regions, they knew no other wine than mead. ... Mead is the national beverage of Ethiopia, and there it is called T'ej.

Like grape wine, the kind and quality of honey used will affect the taste of the final product. Honey can be mixed with different juices to recreate traditional styles. Grapes and honey make a pyment of clarre Cider and honey combine for a cyser. When other fruits, such as raspberries or cranberries are added it is known as a melomel.

In Medieval times, it was customary for a newly married couple to be given enough mead to drink a glass every night for the first month (or moon cycle) of their marriage. If the wife became pregnant and bore a son, the mead maker was congratulated and held in great esteem for his potent nectar. This is the origin of the term honey-moon.

Mead is currently produced by over two dozen North American wineries. The American Homebrewers Association has a national competition for Meadmaker of the Year. The American Mead Association publishes a quarterly journal on mead that includes research, recipes, history and information on where and how to buy commercial meads.

[Editor's note: Locally you can find mead from northern California makers at the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op and Corti Brothers. Try some with your Thanksgiving dinner!]

Bees in the News—UCD's Lab



Excerpts from “Plight of the Honeybees” by Pat Bailey in the Fall 2007 issue of UC Davis Magazine.

“With honey hives suffering mysterious die-offs, UC Davis is revitalizing its bee research program, the oldest of its kind in the nation. Susan Cobey, an accomplished bee breeder and geneticist... joined the 65-year old program as manager of the Harry Laidlaw, Jr. Honey Bee Research Facility and began offering specialized classes this spring to help bee breeders improve the hardiness of their stock. In addition, a new faculty member specializing in pollination research was expected to join the entomology department this fall. The campus plans to renovate the Laidlaw facility and is building a \$1 million endowment fund ... to support graduate students and research in honeybee genetics and pollination biology. ...

“UC Davis was once a powerhouse in bee biology research, but the program was decimated during the 1990s by retirements and budget cuts. Cobey, most recently at Ohio State University, worked during the late 1970s and early 1980s in UC Davis’ bee biology lab, where the late Professor Harry Laidlaw inspired her career choice. A leading expert in instrumental insemination of bees and practical bee breeding, Cobey will be restoring the facility’s colonies, which dwindled from 250 to just 30. She will collaborate with Cooperative Extension apiculturist Eric Mussen, who has anchored the bee biology program’s research and industry education efforts during the lean years.”

“A Day in the Life” at the State Fair Bee Booth

Many of us volunteer for a shift at the State Fair and have done so for many years. I have always enjoyed fulfilling this commitment as it gives me a chance to: 1) serve the community; 2) serve an organization respected by this community; and 3) provide information to many people from all walks of life who are curious, enjoy hearing the knowledge that a beekeeper offers, and readily receive information to increase their understanding of a fascinating insect.

My morning shift begins with a quick glance around the booth. Yes, there is the demonstration hive that always attracts people, the instruction sheet for starting up the booth, the squirt bottles full of water to feed the bees in the demonstration hive, the honey brought by members and friends of SABA, and the hand outs provided by the State beekeeping association. I refill the basket of sticks for the honey tasting, look for water to dampen the cloth to clean up honey spills, read the set-up instructions, put on the apron provided, and then look over the new booth display constructed by the Fair for the 2-1/2 week run through Labor Day. My partner arrives, and we decide who is going to give out honey samples first and who will watch over the demonstration hive (well-secured and positioned on a swivel platform). We take our positions. The honey bottles filled with various honeys are uncapped and ready to be squirted onto the sampling sticks—a very popular treat and another opportunity for us to educate the public on the uses of honey as well as its various flavors.

The opening of the Fair for the day is noted as a group of people begin to enter the building. Immediately the demo hive has caught the eyes of a few fairgoers and the questions begin to come forth. “How many bees are in that glass case? Is there a queen in there? Can they fly out of there? How do the bees make honey? Why is there water in there? Have you ever been stung? Do you wear a hood when you get close to your bee hive? Is it good for the bees to be in there? How do the queens get into the hive? Where do the queens come from? Are we getting killer bees in our area? Have you seen them?” The most frequently asked question during my shift was about the loss of bees in the U.S. or the collapse of bee colonies. People are very concerned as well as interested in why that is happening. At the booth, we always have an audience of curious people and an opportunity to educate the public, and this is a great way to invite people into the world of the honey bee.

It is always interesting to me to find people there who used to keep bees or started to keep bees but lost their way or became frightened of the bees, or those with a relative who once had bees, or those with some type of experience of having bees swarm, or those who were severely stung by bees. Again, the booth provides a great way to educate people and promote the avocation of beekeeping.

The 3 or 4 hours goes by quickly. As the time to end the shift arrives, I wonder if my replacement is here. Maybe I could work a little longer as this has been fun! Well, I need to give others the same opportunity as I have had. My thanks for the opportunity to serve at the booth and to those who organized the schedule for the entire Fair run, brought demonstration hives, worked out the booth design and displays of honey and equipment, brought honey for sampling, and to all the others who volunteered to help in the booth. (I know you had a good time!)

— Dennis A. Larson

Honey Recipe of the Month

Honey Tea Buns



3 c. flour	4 tsp. baking powder	1 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp salt	1 T. butter	1 egg, beaten
2 T. honey	1 tsp. grated orange rind	1 c. milk (or bit more)
Extra milk to glaze	Sugar	Cinnamon

Sift flour, baking powder, salt and ginger into a bowl. Cut butter through until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add egg, honey and orange rind. Add sufficient milk to mix to a smooth, firm dough. On a lightly floured surface roll out dough to 1 inch thickness. Cut into rounds using a 2-inch cutter. Place on a greased oven tray. Brush tops with milk. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake at 400° F for 15 minutes or until pale golden. Makes 15.

From Edmonds Cookery Book, New Zealand. Reprinted from *The Monthly Extractor*, October 2007 issue of the Sonoma County Beekeepers Association newsletter.

Bee Classifieds

FOR SALE: Single-Axel Trailer / Built to haul bee hives / Capacity 28-56. Call Bob Pflieger at (530) 677-2185.

NEEDED FOR CLUB PROGRAMS: power point projectors and DVD projector, for various meetings. If anyone in the club has access to such equipment, please call David Ogden at (916) 687-6977.

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

SABA DUES—If you're reading this but are not yet a member, you can join any time by sending a check for \$15 (made out to SABA) for the calendar year, to SABA, c/o 2110 X Street, Sacramento, CA 95818, Attn: Treasurer.

SACRAMENTO AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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

E-mail (newsletter editor): dugongs@sbcglobal.net

Address Correction Requested

—The Bee Line—
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Next Meeting:

Tues. Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m.