

Happy New Year! January 2016



President's Message

Happy New Year everyone!

We had a great close-out to the end of the year with a wonderful OBA holiday celebration in December. Abundant thanks to Bob Smith for all his time and expertise to judge the many honey samples submitted in our first club honey judging competition. Many, many thanks to David Bruun for organizing the evening's festivities and activities. Patrice Donovan made all the fresh table decorations that lent a festive and beautiful air to the room and also cooked one of the club's hams. Many thanks to Patrice and to Pam Binder who cooked the club turkey. Kathy Miles set up the refreshment table for the party and there aren't enough words to thank Kathy for all her efforts throughout the year to make sure we have refreshments for all our meetings. Club members contributed a diverse array of savory and sweet dishes to share and the gift exchange brought lots of laughs and much fun. David presented the Hive of the Year contest winners to the group and Bob Smith announced the honey contest winners. We've included the Hive of the Year winner information in this newsletter.

Our January meeting will feature an educational program with Rusty Burlew. Rusty is a beekeeper and director of the Native Bee Conservancy. Her presentation aims to widen the beekeeper's knowledge of native and wild bees by comparing and contrasting their biology and lifestyles to the honey bee. By starting with something you know—the honey bee—you can rapidly expand your knowledge of all the others. What they share and what they don't may surprise you.

Your officer's are already planning a fantastic year of speaker programming, working on package bee ordering and other club activities. If you haven't yet paid your dues, please take a moment to connect with Duane McBride, our OBA membership chair at our next meeting. Your dues are the means by which we pay for our meeting room rental, our speaker programming and other club activities. Have an idea you'd like to share or a speaker you think would be a great fit for a meeting? Please let us know.

And, it's not too early to start thinking about the spring beekeeping "season". Come early to sit in on our beginning beekeeping class that runs from 6-7:00 pm on meeting night. The club is a fabulous resource for an abundance of information to get your bees off to a great start in 2016.

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday!

Laurie

Secretary's Report

Olympia Beekeepers Association Meeting

November 9, 2015

Welcome to new members!

Laurie asked for correction to the October 2015 minutes. None were offered and they were accepted as written.

Treasurer's report from Andrea

Checking has 2,016.27

Saving has 4,463.57

The report was accepted as written.

Old Business

David Bruun discussed the upcoming Christmas party. The plan is to run things mostly the same as the previous year. There will be a gift exchange of \$10.00-15.00. There will also be a pot luck. Pam Binder will be cooking the turkey. Patrice Donovan volunteered to cook the ham.

There was additional discussion regarding how the gift exchange should be run. Some members wanted to retain the gift exchange as it was.

Hive of the Year entries will be accepted. Entry forms are still available.

There are 10 entries for the honey judging so far. Criteria for the judging will be posted to the club web site.

New Business

Glenn Buschmann thanked the club for posting information for the Natural Pollinators group on our web site. Future meetings will be held at Traditions Café on the 4th Monday of every month starting in January.

An officers meeting will be held next week. Our next regular meeting will be in January.

There will be a long range Thurston County Planning Commission Division meeting regarding beekeeping in urban growth areas. Members are encouraged to go to the web site and look up material and the agenda. The meeting will be November 18th. Anyone can attend and make their opinions known.

The Black Hills Audubon Bumble Bee presentation will be December 10th at 7:00 p.m., location at 8th and Washington St. in Olympia. Everyone is invited to attend. Washington Fish and Wildlife also has a new app for i-phones for wild Bee Gardens.

Chair reports

Jim Rieck encouraged new members to seek him out to find a mentor!

Duane McBride reminded members that it is "time to pay your dues!"

Bob Smith Presented Paul Longwell with his Journeyman Certificate. Congratulations Paul!

Program

Mike Radford from Northwest Bee Supply on using Oxalic Acid and filling bee packages

Hive of the Year Quotes and Pictures

Thomas Mani

I do not weigh individual boxes, but I keep track on how many boxes I put on individual hives. BUT, I can throw in my average value per hive; I harvested 1850 lbs with 24 contributing hives (of which 10 were first year hives!), yielding an average harvest of 76.67 lbs per hive. Best performer this year was Hive #20 from which I harvested 5 supers which probably amounts to 140 to 160 lbs (the last super was only medium weight measured with my back...)

Thomas Mani

This is a hive (together with the tree hive that you see in one of the pictures) that I call "swarm generator". Nothing is given or taken, let live or die. My focus is that they survive on their own and produce a swarm every year because the hollow space is not big. In doing so the genetics get more and more local and more and more able to survive.

Gail and Stephanie Booth

The middle box was painted by Mia, the top box was painted by Brianna.

Hive Name - going to ask the girls and get back to you.

Hive Location - our home yard at Pleasant Glade.

Intro Date - Late summer 2014 or Spring 2015 (swarm). We can't remember but probably this spring. Yield to date - unknown, but we did get honey off it this year

Ernie Schmidt

After about 2 years of research, study and experimental construction attempts I decided to go all out and make an historically authentic beekeeping skep. I used local growing Canary Straw Grass, some of which was over 6 feet high. It made excellent material for the coils of the basket. The outside of skeps was usually covered with cow manure and

allowed to dry. In my research I discovered an old recipe for a skep covering that was used in the wet and rainy areas of old Europe, similar to our climate. It was called "Claom." It consists of 40% fresh cow manure, 40% clay, and 20% wood ash. I actually dug up and processed the clay from my backyard. I applied the Claom on the skep, it set up and dried hard as a board. The actual amount of time it took me to make the skep was around 8 to 10 hours. Probably even more than that if I would have kept accurate time records. Very labor intense project. But hey - it's about the bees.

Ernie Schmidt

The Bamboo Grove Hive is a homemade Warre Hive started in April of 2009 with a Carniolan queen package. That June the package colony swarmed. At the time I was devastated but have since realized that it may be the direct reason this colony has lived this long. The colony was now headed by a natural born and bred regional queen. The Summer of 2009 the hive was moved across the street next to my neighbor's Bamboo grove. Because of my "more projects than time" this hive slipped through the cracks of management from that time to the present. It has remained unopened since 2009. If you look closely at the picture you can see the bees actually chewed their own new entrance between box 2 and 3. It became their only entrance, they abandoned the main entrance it is around the other side of the hive at the bottom. I fondly refer to it as my "Feral Hive". I'm pretty sure it was swarmed every year and I was able to catch 3 swarms since 2009. Every new queen was a natural born and bred regional queen. Here again I believe is a direct reason for the longevity of the hive. Two of the swarm caught colonies from this hive are still living. In closing - The Bamboo Grove Hive has lived continuously, untreated and unopened for over 6 years.



Bee a Good Neighbor!

With the White House Pollinator Protection Strategies prioritizing more habitat for bees, many people are starting beehives in urban landscapes, schools, rooftops and other environments that the general public is not accustomed to seeing hives. A five-minute chat before you move a hive to your backyard can go a long way toward avoiding misunderstandings, defining comfort-levels between neighbors and your bees, and establishing a good rapport as an ambassador for pollinators.

Some basic tips: if neighbors are close, place tall potted plants or trash receptacles in front of the bee hive entrances so bees have to fly out and up over walkways and yards and play-spaces. Point hive entrances away from populated areas.

Remember that bees need a gallon of water a day during summer. Before your bees establish your neighbor's pool as their preferred source of water, train them to use a watering source closer to your home. Have at the ready a moving screen in case a neighbor is mowing a lawn or there is an unplanned party in the vicinity.

Document the health of your hive on a timely basis. Establish a schedule so that you can check your bees when your neighbors will be gone.

Many neighbors have been stung by yellow-jackets and assume your honey bees are the same as yellow jackets. Try not to be frustrated by this fear. Point out the differences (and the benefits of honey bees), but do not be surprised if it will take some time for your neighbors to understand that not all stinging insects are the same.

As Wendell Berry says, "Love the neighbor you have, not the one you wish you had."

[from Kentucky Beekeepers Association]