September 2014

OLYMPIA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

NEWS AND INTEREST FROM THE SEP 8, 2014 MEETING

Secretary and Treasurer Report, President's Message, Up-coming Program

President's Message

Hi all,

I am thrilled to announce that the Seattle City Council voted unanimously on September 22 to pass a resolution that prohibits neonicotinoid-containing pesticide use on city properties. This is a significant step forward for the city of Seattle and for pollinators. Abundant thanks to Councilmember Mike O'Brien, who headed this effort. He and his team wrote a very comprehensive, forward-thinking and thorough resolution that I hope becomes a model for other cities to follow. If you'd like to read the resolution, click here: http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/meetingrecords/2014/fullcouncil20140922_9.pdf

That said, we continue to meet at the county level with our commissioner, Sandra Romero, on planning and policy for Thurston County and are making great progress. We will be meeting again prior to our club meeting on the 13th and I will provide an update then.

Our day with Michael Bush is fast-approaching. Don't forget to register at the next meeting, or before. We will need several folks to help the day of the program so if you are able to offer assistance for the morning or afternoon, please let me know. We'll need two people to check registrants in before the program begins, as well as folks to help with lunch, to monitor throughout the day and to help with refreshments. All the information was sent in previous emails and is on the website. This is a fantastic opportunity to spend the day with a knowledgeable, down-to-earth beekeeper loaded with useful information to help us become better beekeepers. For those interested in getting started in beekeeping, it's a not-to-be-missed experience that will provide a wonderful foundation on which to build and prepare for having bees. I hope to see many of you there. All the Washington state beekeeping associations have been sent a notice and

invitation to attend.

Also, we are honored to be tabling and presenting a program at the WET Science Center in Olympia on November 9th. If you have interest in helping with this event, including setting up some activities for the kids, please email me at LMPCarl@gmail.com. We need to be there at 11:00 to set up and will conclude at 4:00. Your valuable time is much appreciated in assisting the club to further its mission by educating the public and getting kids and their families excited about bees.

Franclyn Heinecke has been focusing on the issue of forage for bees and is our featured speaker at the next meeting On October 13th. She is sure to bring perspective and insight into this critical topic for bees and beekeepers.

Happy Autumn,

Laurie

Treasury

Checking account Balance	$1000.00
Savings Account Balance	$6461.51
Cash on hand	$50.00
Last meetings Raffle proceeds:	$35.00

Secretary's Report

Olympia Beekeepers Association Meeting

September 8, 2014

Call to order
Members were reminded that dues are due tonight!

Old Business
The minutes and Treasurer's Report from July and August were moved and accepted.

Registration for the Michael Bush presentation is coming soon. The event will include lunch and a reduced rate for Olympia Beekeeper Association members. We will be notifying other beekeeping associations of the event as well.

New business
Today's sign-in includes interest in a class on queen rearing by Sue Cobey possibly happening in the spring.

This Wednesday Mark Emrich and Laurie Pyne will again meet with Sandra Romero regarding Thurston County.

OBA has been invited to present at the WET Science center from 12 to 4 p.m. on November 8th. The presentation will include a PowerPoint presentation and tables. Anyone interested in helping needs to commit to at least 4 hours.

Chair reports
Bert Lewis reported on the varroa mite count taken at the club apiary. Hive Aristotle had no mites present and Hive Sue Cobey had a total of five. Another mite count will be taken in a couple of months. October's presentation in the apiary will be on preparing for winter. Jim is still looking for requests and suggestions for presentations from members.
Dana Smith reported that the website was down. He has spent two and a half weeks trying to sort out the problem and will continue to work towards a resolution.

Time to pay your dues! Dana was (and is) collecting $25.00 per member for the next years' dues.

Mark Emrich reported on a meeting the past Friday with the Thurston County Planning Commission. There was a 20 minute lecture and 25 minutes of questions and answers. He was pleased to notice that the quality of questions has improved significantly. Bees and their forage are being included more often in new projects.

Mark will soon be talking to more planning commissions around the state.

The state board is still working on insurance for individual clubs, Mark is still educating the board on this much needed service.

Mark will also be running for the President of the Washington State Beekeepers Association again in October.

Renzy Davenport passed out one certificate for Apprentice Beekeepers

New Members introduced were Wayne Fowler, Megan Ashe and Emily Stanislaw.

Membership Comments wrapped up the meeting.

Harold Nydigger at 360-455-4033 has generously offered new beekeepers the use of his extractor and honey room to extract and bottle their honey.

Trisha Shaw, an OBA member and Washington Farm Bureau member encouraged the membership to join the Washington Farm Bureau. She cited several benefits including lobbying, healthcare programs, hotel discounts and more. An associate level membership is fifteen dollars a year.

Paul West gave away a bundle of plastic frames.

Steve Sheppard, chair of Washington State University Entomology Department spoke on the interim report on neonicotinoid studies**.** There have been 147 samples total taken from around the state. 61 samples were taken in 2013. None had neonicotinoid levels above 5 parts per billion. Steve quoted a study by Yang on the effect of neonicotinoids stating that bees did not return to the hive when foraging, delayed development of brood and lower numbers of bees surviving to adulthood.

Program

Steve Sheppard presented on fall re-queening and rearing,; “softer” varroa controls. Most significantly, leave your queen in the mating nuc for a least a month for a stronger queen.

Beekeeping Workshop

with Michael Bush, Author of "The Practical Beekeeper"

Saturday - Oct 25

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Farm Bureau Building
975 Carpenter Rd NW, Olympia

Preregistration Required

Registration Fees

- $40
- Includes lunch

Mail To

Olympia BeeKeepers
PO Box 732
Olympia Wa 98507

More Information

email LMPCarl@gmail.com

Space is Limited
Register Early

www.olympiabeekeepers.org

$60 gets a beekeeper started and seeds future beekeepers in Kenya.

> *I join the journey to discover more of brown gold as solution to vulnerable groups and environmental conservation in motherland KISII.* Samwel A. Maina, Kisii, Kenya

Just as a honeybee colony swarms to replicate itself and perpetuate the colony, beekeepers in Washington State and Kisii, Kenya have the chance to share beekeeping knowledge and expand sustainable beekeeping practices in East Africa.

Former Lewis County beekeeper Wilma Sofranko now lives in Kenya, and has founded the nonprofit KiReeCo, the Kisii Rural Education and Empowerment Coalition. KiReeCo teaches organic farming practices with a goal of alleviating poverty. An important part of the farming practice is sustainable beekeeping using Langstroth hives and having the farmers go through an intensive beekeeping training course.

Four members of the Lewis County Beekeepers Association -- Dave Gaston, Gary Stelzner, Thad Stelzner and Susanne Weil -- will travel to Kenya later this year to teach beekeeping to Kenyan farmers associated with KiReeCo. Those four Lewis County beekeepers are paying all of their own expenses to travel and stay in Kenya. Lewis County Beekeepers recently voted overwhelmingly to support this effort as a sanctioned club activity.

Last year, after getting the WSBA apprentice beekeeper training materials, 57 beekeepers finished the training in Kenya and began selling honey. Now, more than 500 others in the region want to keep bees. Money they raise from selling honey helps these subsistence farmers afford school for their children.

A revolving "Pay it Forward" fund is used to support this work. A $60 donation to KiReeCo makes a full hive box for one beekeeping family. Other Kenyans build the boxes, benefitting even more families in the area. About 8 to 10 months after installing their hive, beekeepers there can expect to have their first harvest, with 3 to 4 more harvests available through the year. With the first harvest, the beekeeper pays for their hive. The initial $60 donation is reinvested to build a hive box for another trained beekeeping farmer. KiReeCo extracts, markets and sells the honey for the farmer, responding to a strong demand for Kisii honey in the region and throughout Kenya.

Members of the KiReeCo U.S. Advisory Board are: Robin Gardner, Eatonville, WA; Joanie Falconer, Portland, OR; Debbie Lehman, Norwich, CN; and Fran Scott, Melbourne, FL. Other projects under KiReeCo include a seed bank, organic garden, mushroom house, water system, health clinic and community library.

For more details and if you wish to make a Paypal contribution, visit www.kireeco.wordpress.com or email kireeco@gmail.com

Are Bees Back Up on Their Knees?

IN 2006, beekeepers in Pennsylvania's apple country noticed the first sign of many bad things to come. Once thriving beehives were suddenly empty, devoid of nearly all worker bees, but with an apparently healthy, if lonely, queen remaining in place. Over a period of just three months, tens of thousands of honeybees were totally gone. Multiply this across millions of beehives in millions of apiaries in the more than 22 states that were soon affected, and suddenly we faced a huge, tragic mystery. Up to 24 percent of American apiaries were experiencing colony collapse disorder (C.C.D.). Despite the new name for this phenomenon, C.C.D. is not an isolated or unprecedented event. Unexplained mass bee die-offs have occurred throughout recorded history, including some as far back as the years 950, 992 and 1443, when Ireland's beekeepers noted remarkably high mortality events. Reports from the Cache Valley in Utah in 1903 described thousands of dead hives; around the same time, the Isle of Wight in England faced a near total loss of honeybees.

I became a beekeeper in 2005. When C.C.D. started, I was studying how social animals like honeybees resisted disease. We still don't really know why C.C.D. was happening, but it looks as if we are turning the corner: Scientists I've spoken to in both academia and government have strong reason to believe that C.C.D. is essentially over. This finding is based on data from the past three years — or perhaps, more accurately, the lack thereof. There have been no conclusively documented cases of C.C.D. in the strict sense. Perhaps C.C.D. will one day seem like yet another blip on the millennium-plus timeline of unexplained bee die-offs. Luckily, the dauntless efforts of beekeepers have brought bee populations back each time.

While this is undoubtedly good news, we cannot let it blind us to a hard truth. Bees are still dying; it's just that we're finding the dead bodies now, whereas with C.C.D., they were vanishing. Bees are still threatened by at least three major enemies: diseases, chemicals (pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, etc.) and habitat loss.

C.C.D. changed my own career trajectory as I moved away from basic science into applied research, assisting other beekeepers by bringing bee science to the public. Specialists have been talking among themselves about the waning of C.C.D., but have not articulated this to the community at large.

C.C.D. created momentum for the greater cause of bee health, of acknowledging the importance of pollinators. We cannot lose this momentum now. Honeybees pollinate more than 100 fruit and vegetable crops that we rely on for food. According to the entomologist Nicholas W. Calderone at Cornell, bees contribute more than $15 billion annually to the economy in the United States alone, and that number soars past $100 billion globally.

And yet we are still losing 30 percent of bees annually in the United States. While this figure is startling, these losses differ from C.C.D.

because they appear to have stabilized to a relatively predictable level. The danger to bees no longer seems to be increasing.

Like those of most beekeepers, my own honeybee hive losses typically happen in winter. As spring turns to summer, my beekeeping team identifies the largest hives and then splits them into two or more to make up for winter's losses. As for the farmers who need these bees for pollination, the high annual loss rates have forced them to increasingly rely on migratory beekeeping operations, renting bees instead of owning them, which increases the cost of their growing operations. These higher fees, naturally, are passed on to the consumer. The constant churn of moving rented beehives can't be good for the bees either.

The reliance of farmers on migratory beekeeping operations has increased exponentially since their inception around the 1950s. Most honeybee hives today live on flatbed trucks rather than in permanent apiaries. Our future of living with bees has got to be smarter than this.

To make our pollination practices efficient once again, we need to pay attention to the data. Just last year, Jeffery S. Pettis of the United States Department of Agriculture and his colleagues published data indicating that honeybees appeared to be getting credit from farmers for work that other bee species were actually doing. We continue to get crops of blueberries, cranberries, cucumbers, watermelons and pumpkins, but honeybee hives in those fields are not filled with pollen from those crops.

If honeybees aren't pollinating them, then what is? The answer most likely lies with the lesser-known 20,000 or so related species of bee. These other bee species could be affected by factors that caused C.C.D. or other honeybee diseases; we just don't know. We need more research into these other pollinator species in order to make our agricultural system more efficient, increase crop yields, reduce food costs for the consumer, and get those honeybees off flatbed trucks.

Behavioral economics can help us find solutions to the agricultural efficiency challenge by creating financial incentives for bee-friendly farming practices. Outdated monoculture farming subsidies like those that go to corn growers should be diverted to farmers and growers who are planting a diversity of crops, including wildflowers. Federal tax incentives should go to farmers, beekeepers and everyday citizens who opt for permanent pollinator sources.

Bees are not the only ones that would benefit from these policy changes; many farmers would see an increase in sustainability and profitability. It's a Band-Aid solution, but it can work.

The future of bees — all bees, not just honeybees — remains obscure. But it isn't just government policy that needs to change. To make the natural world after C.C.D. a better place, we all need to start doing things differently.

By NOAH WILSON-RICH SEPT. 24, 2014
WSJ

Invitation: To All who attend the OBA meetings:
Please consider presenting a short (about 5 minute) show-and-tell topic at the April OBA meeting. For example, you may:
* review a piece of beekeeping equipment you either constructed or purchased
* recommend a book or video from the club library, or elsewhere
* describe a new twist on an old process for doing something related to bees
* show something you, or someone else, made from a hive product (wax, honey, propolis, royal jelly)
* introduce us to an educational web-resource related to beekeeping
* talk about something else bee-related that our members would find interesting--Bee Creative! Share your Knowledge, Help make our meetings interesting and useful.
Please contact David to get on the agenda (Davidbruun98@hotmail.com)

Reminder: Apprentice Beekeepers Class is growing so arrive early if you want a seat.

Plants, books, seeds, and other artifacts are always appreciated for the meeting raffle.

And, if you have a tasty snack to share, everyone enjoys something sweet.

January:

February:

March:

April:

May:

June:
July: Meeting to be held at Farm Bureau Building, 975 Carpenter Rd. Program by Harvard Robbins.

August: Meeting at Farm Bureau - Program will be on Harvesting and Extraction.

September: Time to renew membership.

October: Weeds and Bees

November: TBA

December:TBA

Monthly Meetings: held the second Monday of each month.

Place: Chinook Middle School, 4301 6th Ave NE, Lacey, WA

Time: 6:00 pm for Beginning Beekeeper's Certification Program, 7:00 pm for the association meeting. Meetings are held in the Cafeteria. Beekeeping class meets in the central hall Science Room.

Agenda: Each meeting is conducted with old and new business, and a program related to beekeeping. Attendees, if they choose, donate a gift for the raffle table. The Treasurer and Membership Chair sell tickets for $1.00 and at the break there is are refreshments available.