

# The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association

Volume 33, Number 6

July 2008



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**Image above:** Virginia Webb (left) in the vendors' room at the 2007 OSBA Conference where she holds a recently purchased copy of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. A long-time beekeeper, an award-winning honey producer, and a honey show judge, Virginia presented on both Blue-Ribbon Honey and Marketing at the conference. The outline and notes she used for her Marketing presentation are reprinted here and suggest the kinds of things beekeepers might take into account in marketing honey and alternative products from the hive. In addition, they might be used to spark new ideas and strategies for marketing materials gleaned from the beehive.

## MARKETING PRODUCTS FROM THE BEEHIVE

### Overview Notes

*Jan Lohman*

Virginia Webb's 2007 Conference presentation on Marketing was delightful and very informative. One of her suggestions was to have an outdoor Self-Service Honey Stand. She has lost very little product from the stand over the past eight years. It has become a great selling tool.

Virginia also talked about the importance of container sizes and styles. A small hexagon jar will sell for more per pound than the same honey in a plain jar. *Labeling* is another issue. The top 2/3rds of the label is for promotion; the bottom 1/3rd designates weight (both ounces and grams) and *PACKAGED By* information. Among the many resources for selling honey is The National Honey Board, which has brochures, recipes, hang tags, and a marketing kit.

To find local markets, Virginia suggested visiting independent grocery stores, local hardware stores, fruit stands, gift stores, health food stores, restaurants, and bakeries. She is a great supporter of the Internet and uses it for many of her honey sales. You need an easy-access Web site and to set up a good way to mail packages to make it work, but millions of people a day visit the Web, and e-Bay and Amazon.com are also becoming honey sales sites.

### Presentation Notes: Suggestions and Reminders for Marketing Honey and Alternative Products from the Hive

*Virginia Webb*

#### Marketing Honey

##### *Getting Started with a Marketing Plan*

- ❖ Who are you going to sell to?
- ❖ Bulk Sales, Wholesale, Retail, and Internet

##### *Selecting Your Containers and Labels*

- ❖ Standard Honey Jars
- ❖ Honey Bears

*Continued on page 6*

### **The Bee Line**

*The Bee Line* is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association. The newsletter is published ten times a year, and subscriptions are included with membership in OSBA.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as corrections, letters, comments, photographs and stories (old and new), interviews, and requests for advertising to: Editor, *The Bee Line*, 4803 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 157, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: [thebeeline@comcast.net](mailto:thebeeline@comcast.net).

#### **Advertising Costs Per Issue**

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Quarter page      \$25.00  
Half page          \$50.00  
Full page          \$100.00

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Please submit all copy by the 10th of the month prior to publication. The next issue will be August 2008. Contact the Editor with questions.

Thank you! Honey Bee  
Immunity to Infection

### **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Aren't bees amazing? That is the same way I started a previous note to all of you. I'll get to the new reasons I have for saying how amazing they are, but first a few other ideas.

Days like today remind me why I often refer to my bee business as my trucking company. I am writing this on the coldest June day I can remember. Of course, I am so old I don't remember much. I fueled up the truck and drove out of Canby at four this morning to move around some bees in the Forest Grove area. It said forty-five degrees on the thermometer with the wind blowing hard enough to send your hat sailing across the field. The bees were not thinking of flying after the first two moves, so I loaded the next group and took them to Corvallis. I came back by the house, fueled up the truck and then on to Forest Grove again. The thermometer said fifty-four now, but it seemed colder than when I started this morning. I picked up a load from three small groups and returned to Canby and unloaded. It was ten-thirty and the odometer said I had driven just over four hundred miles. I don't want to even think of the cost with diesel going up every day.

Many days the past two months I have talked to beekeepers who tell me they aren't working with their bees that day. They cite depression caused by the weather. It is easy to picture them curled up on the couch sucking their thumb. With all the work to be done, I have had that feeling many times this spring. Being tired, I can live with. It means I have done something. But I don't like it when I am wet and cold and know that the bees can't do their jobs of pollinating and making honey.

Which brings me to those amazing bees again. We have been feeding many colonies off and on since we came back from California. Most beekeepers I have talked with are feeding also. I had a friend check on some hives that are about fifty miles from our place. I am sure there wasn't more than two days nice enough for the bees to fly since we had put on one honey super and placed them in the berry field. I just wanted him to see how near they were to starving so we could come over and feed, if needed. What a surprise. He called and said, "Better get some more supers over here." All hives had honey in the supers and many were plugged out. Or, as he said, "Not a single cell left for honey in most of the supers." How did they get that honey? I didn't feel like working. I didn't see how they could work. But the amazing little girls just went out and did it.

—Chuck

## OREGON STATE WILL ASK LEGISLATURE FOR EMERGENCY BEE MONEY

*Ethan Lindsey*

Bend, OR June 10, 2008 9:08 a.m.

Oregon State University will ask the state for a quarter-of-a-million dollars this year to look into a troubling increase in honey bee deaths.

Mysterious bee deaths are a major industry concern around the world right now—researchers have yet to pinpoint the cause.

In the past few months, Pacific Northwest beekeepers have reported several mass bee deaths on farms.

According to the federal government, Oregon's honey bees are worth 450-(m)illion-dollars to blueberry, cherry, and pear farmers.

Stella Coakley is an associate dean at the Oregon State College of Agricultural Sciences.

Stella Coakley: "This effectively popped up this spring, as having reached a crisis stage. I mean, we had an issue before, but no one in the Pacific Northwest really thought they had good evidence of what is known nationally as colony collapse disorder."

The emergency funding request was approved by the state board of higher education last week.

This week, the university expects to forward that request on to the state legislature's emergency budget committee.

If the state approves the \$250,000 request, it will pay for 2 full-time positions assigned to researching bee deaths.

The university hopes to receive political support from industry groups to establish the bee research center as a permanent lab, whether or not the state approves the emergency funding request.

**Note:** Reprinted with permission from Oregon Public Broadcasting.

### FOR DONATIONS TO THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION AND EDUCATION

- Make your check out to: **OSU FOUNDATION**
- On the memo line, write: **NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND**
- Mail your donation to: Oregon State University Foundation  
850 SW 35th St Corvallis OR 97333-4015

Direct any questions for the Foundation to their Director for Development for the College of Agricultural Sciences, Todd Bastian, at (541) 737-8724.

**IMPORTANT:** Making your check out only as described above ensures that your donation is correctly applied to the Apiculture Endowment and not to any other program.

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## OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION RESOURCES

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### OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

**Columbia Basin:** Deb Morgan  
3800 Benson Rd, The Dalles; (541) 298-5719

**Eastern Oregon:** Jordan Dimock  
2635 Mitchell Butte Rd, Nyssa; (541) 372-2726

**Metropolitan Area:** Open

**North Coast/Webmaster:** Thom Trusewicz  
90041 Logan Rd, Astoria  
(503) 325-7966; ccbee@intergate.com

**South Coast:** Open

**Southern Oregon:** Open

**Willamette Valley:** Harry Vanderpool  
7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem; (503) 399-3675  
shallotman@yahoo.com

### OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



#### Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 pm, third Tuesday, Bend  
Deschutes Public Library, Hutch Rm  
**President:** Dennis Gallagher  
(541) 389-4776

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Glenda Galaba  
(541) 383-1775; galaba@msn.com

#### Coos County Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 pm, third Saturday (except Dec)  
Olsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Pt  
**President:** Shigeo Oku; (541) 396-4016  
**Vice Pres:** John Gardner; (541) 572-3847  
**Secretary:** Marsha Long; (541) 290-8847  
**Treasurer:** Jane Oku; (541) 396-4016  
jane\_oku@hotmail.com

#### Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, third Tuesday, Eugene  
EWEB Meeting Rooms, 500 E 4th Ave  
**President:** Paul Gordon; (541) 510-8420  
rpaulg@gmail.com  
**Vice President:** Judy Scher  
judy\_scher@catdreams.com

**Treasurer:** Nancy Ograin  
(541) 935-7065; woodrt@pacinfo.com  
**Newsletter Editor:** Jonathan Loftin; (541) 736-1870  
lcbnewslettereditor@hotmail.com  
**Web site:** www.lcbaor.org

#### Portland-Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7 pm, second Thursday, Oregon City  
Hous Auth Clackamas Bldg, 13930 S Gain  
**President:** Kerry Haskins  
(503) 632-8448; kh251@aol.com  
**Vice President:** Jim Mellis; (503) 631-4622  
**Secretary:** Paul Hardzinski; (503) 631-3927  
**Treasurer:** Barbara Derkacht  
(503) 631-3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com

#### Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, first Monday, Central Pt  
So Or Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd  
**President:** John Jacob  
(541) 582-BEES; john@oldsolenterprises.com  
**Vice President:** Floyd Pawlowski  
415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Julian Lewis  
(541) 535-5817; lewis\_adams\_00@yahoo.com  
**Web site:** www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org

#### Tillamook County Beekeepers

Meets 7 pm, first Thursday, Tillamook  
Forestry Building, 5005 Third St  
**President:** Bob Allen; (503) 322-3819  
**Vice President:** Terry Fullan  
(503) 368-7160; tfullan@nehalemtnet.net

#### Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, last Friday, Beaverton  
OSU Ext, #1400, 18640 SW Walker Rd  
**President:** Andrew Schwab  
(503) 537-0506; pyr4ausi@verizon.net  
**Vice President:** Herb Brasington  
herb@hwbsystems.com  
**Co-Secretaries:** Jerry Maasdam; jmaasdam@mac.com  
Paul Anderson; paulanderson@tritektsolutions.com  
**Co-Treasurers:** Michael and Brigitte Hendrickson  
hendricm@ece.pdx.edu

#### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, fourth Monday, Salem  
Chemeketa Comm College, Bldg 34, Rm A  
**President:** Richard Farrier; (541) 327-2673  
**Vice President:** Harry Vanderpool  
(503) 399-3675; shallotman@yahoo.com  
**Secretary:** Mike Rodia  
(503) 364-3275; drodia@yahoo.com  
**Treasurer:** Gordon Kroemer  
(503) 538-2307; kroemer2@verizon.net

## REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

### Lane County Beekeepers

With over 80 people attending the May meeting, the group made a call for folks interested in participating in a bee display for the Eugene Public Library and in selling at the Lane County Farmers Market. Since then, seven club members have joined to run a honey booth at the market on Saturdays. In May, Paul Gordon and Ken Ograin reviewed *Pests and Diseases of Adult Bees*. The June meeting topic will be *How I Got Started with Bees*. Eugene's Celebration Parade will be downtown on September 13th. The group is looking into forming a Parade Committee—sans floats and marching bands.

—Adapted from: LCBA June 2008 newsletter

### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Changes at the State Fair, discussed during the May meeting with 30–40 people attending, involve moving the OSBA booth to the FFA building. In addition, sales of honey and/or bee products are allowed, with a vendor fee. The June meeting focused on guidance for maximizing honey production. Most of the suggestions entail extensive frame and honey super manipulations. Checkering, i.e., alternating drawn and undrawn honey frames and/or supers, is a viable option. For now nectar sources are plentiful in the area, with honey locust, marionberries, and boysenberries in full bloom.

—Adapted from: WVBA June 2008 newsletter

**Note:** The Oregon State Fair runs from August 22nd through September 1st this year.

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## KEEPING BEES IN JULY

*Todd Balsiger*

Unless bees are located near a commercial crop or at higher elevations, the summer nectar dearth begins about mid-July (maybe August 1st this year). At this time, we should be thinking about nest consolidation and honey harvest.

- ❖ In late summer we crowd the bees. We begin this in earnest in August along with mite treatments, but for now don't leave extra supers on colonies light on

stores. Also, avoid having extra supers on colonies as the nectar flow tapers off as this leads to half-filled frames—an inconvenience at harvest time.

- ❖ As usual, keep an eye out for colony health. Any colony not keeping up with its peers needs to be inspected to make sure it is queen-right and healthy.
- ❖ Requeen any colony with undesirable characteristics such as poor production, European foulbrood (not American foulbrood), poor brood pattern, mean temper, and the like.
- ❖ Queenless hives are a real problem and need to be either requeened with a nuc or retired. Typically, queenless hives have an abundance of pollen stored in multiple frames (no brood to feed). This condition is followed by the development of laying workers. Signs of laying workers are multiple eggs per cell, eggs on the side of cells (opposed to one egg centered on the bottom), and drone brood development in worker cells. If requeening, always place the nuc in the top brood box and to one side (easier to defend). You may want to reverse brood boxes first as there may be fewer bees in the lower box (again, easier to defend). If you retire the hive, shake the bees out and share the frames with other hives—the workers will perceive the eggs as foreign and unwanted, and will eat them. After the drones hatch from the elongated worker cells, the workers will cut the cells back to their regular length.
- ❖ Keep on the lookout for American foulbrood as robbing season is imminent and AFB-infected colonies make easy targets. AFB is highly infectious and early detection is important in its control.
- ❖ Remove and extract supers. Honey removed in late July will have less moisture content than honey extracted in June, so we do not have to be as judicious about making sure that all cells are capped. Moreover, in late season the nectar flow can end, and the bees will be unable to cap the honey cells even though they are ready (sufficiently dehydrated). As a general rule, check the moisture content and ripeness of honey in a given frame by shaking it hard downward and seeing if nectar falls out. If a shower of nectar falls out, then that frame was not ready.
- ❖ Be prepared to do the most important treatments of the year for your hives in early August: treatments for *Varroa* mite and foulbrood, and reducing hives down to winter configuration.

### Marketing—Continued from page 1

- ❖ Mason Jars
- ❖ Decorative and Specialty Jars

Always look at what is new. The American Bee Federation Trade Show is a great place to start.

### Label it HONEY

Every state has different laws, but the general rules include:

- ❖ Product Name
- ❖ Net Weight—in pounds/ounces and grams
- ❖ Produced or Packaged by
- ❖ City and State

In addition, use Enhancer Labels: e.g., Local Honey, Fat Free, Award Winning, Made in the USA, and Raw Honey. Also use Nectar Source Labels, such as Apple Blossom Honey, Black Sage, and Fireweed.

### Resources for Selling Honey

- ❖ National Honey Board
    - Recipes
    - Brochures
    - Hang Tags
    - Marketing Kit
  - ❖ Local, State, and National Beekeepers Clubs
- Also consider other resources, such as the Farm Bureau Honey Bee Advisory Committee and the Oregon Department of Agriculture (free Web site listing).

### Finding Your Honey Market

- ❖ Local Independent Grocers
- ❖ Local Hardware Stores (e.g., Ace Hardware)
- ❖ Independent Fruit and Vegetable Markets
- ❖ Coffee Cafes
- ❖ Farmers Markets
- ❖ Specialty Gift Stores
- ❖ Health Food Stores
- ❖ Local Restaurants

### Other Areas to Consider

- ❖ Become a sponsor of a local theater
- ❖ Donate honey bears or honey angels for each table at a local church breakfast
- ❖ Work with local schools to sell honey bears (or other honey) as a fundraiser
- ❖ If you are in an area to set up a self-service honey stand, do so at your home
- ❖ LOOK AT YOUR COMMUNITY

For example, do you have a large Mexican-American

population in your area? Consider adding a second Enhancer Label in Spanish, or give materials such as the National Honey Board Spanish recipe brochures to your customers.

- ❖ Offer to speak at area civic clubs
- Make this *not* a sales pitch, but an informational talk about the importance of beekeeping to your community and agriculture as a whole. And take several varieties of honey for members to sample.

### Economic Comparisons

Wildflower Honey—Wholesale versus Retail

- ❖ 55-gallon drum (average 600 pounds): \$1.25 per pound = \$750
- ❖ 55 gallons @ \$28 per gallon = \$1,540
- ❖ 110 ½ gallons @ \$15 per ½ gallon = \$1,650
- ❖ 600 pounds = 440 pints @ \$5 per pint = \$2,200
- ❖ 440 pints Internet Retail @ \$8.00 per pint = \$3,520

This does not take into consideration the costs of containers and additional time.

### World Wide Web

With 200,000,000 Potential Customers A DAY:

- ❖ National Honey Board's Honey Locator
- It works. I have customers who tell me they found me on the Honey Locator.
- ❖ e-Bay

Over 10 million users a day. Low cost, low maintenance, but it demands attention. Watch the additional fees. They can add up quickly. And don't forget the PayPal fees. These need to be considered in pricing.

- ❖ Amazon
- Mainly people know this site for selling books, but it is gaining in popularity in the sale of other items. Beware of lots of unsolicited e-mails after listing or buying. Again, watch the additional fees.

- ❖ YouTube.com: The new wave in honey marketing
  - ❖ State-sponsored Internet site
- Check with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.
- ❖ An individual Web site

Take care to manage your Web site. Blogs are very popular, and directory searchers love new and changing information. Some considerations:

- Do you set up your own Web site or find a Webmaster to do it for you?
- Informational site only?
- Selling a product?
- Need a shopping cart?

For shipping issues, do you want to use USPS, UPS, or another means?

In addition, take time to consider some potential problems early on—for example, beekeepers can get lots of special requests from other beekeepers or students wanting favors to complete a project.

### Marketing Alternative Hive Products

We tend to greatly overlook markets for materials from the beehive and lose money when we don't utilize the entire range of products available. Over 1/3rd of profits can be added in Alternative Products.

#### *Variety Honey*

For example, Fireweed, Black Locust, Blueberry, and Star Thistle. For this, USE ENHANCER LABELS!

#### *Decorative Containers*

Shop Trade Shows. You will typically use smaller quantities of honey and get your highest price for honey in decorative containers.

#### *Comb Honey—Blocks or Chunk Honey*

- ❖ Need additional supers
- ❖ Buy foundation for Comb Honey
- ❖ Extra Time and Care to cut comb
- ❖ HIGHER PRICES FOR YOUR HONEY

#### *Honey Sticks/HoneyStix*

Buy, make your own, or send in your honey for processing into Honey Sticks (5-gallon minimum).

#### *Honey Infusions*

Make sure that you add the additional ingredients to the LABEL.

- ❖ Honey and Nuts
- ❖ Honey and Spices
- ❖ Honey and Fruit (e.g., dried apricots)
- ❖ Honey Mustard
- ❖ Honey Salad Dressings

#### *Spa Honey*

Increase in markets for using honey in skin and body care items. Resources are available from the National Honey Board.

- ❖ Lotions
- ❖ Lip Balms
- ❖ Cosmetics

#### *Pollen*

- ❖ Collecting—Spring and Fall
- ❖ You Must Collect Daily
- ❖ Types of traps that work for you
- ❖ Cleaning—Winnowing—Pollen Cleaner (Walter Kelly) Seed Cleaner
- ❖ Dehydrator or Dryer
- ❖ Sell in packages or in pills or caplets

#### *Homemade Mead*

- ❖ Check with state Department of Agriculture to see if you can legally sell
- ❖ Be aware of the law and consequences of selling to a minor

#### *Beeswax*

- ❖ Candles
  - Sizes and source of wax
  - Dipped or Poured?
  - Molded—Types of molds
- ❖ Ornaments—Holiday/Other
- ❖ Beeswax Blocks
  - Sewers—e.g., for cross stitch, quilting
  - Blacksmiths
  - Wood Carpenters
  - Plumbers
  - Athletes—e.g., for skis
  - Musicians—e.g., for reed players

#### *Propolis*

- ❖ Beehive Botanicals
  - ❖ CC Pollen Company
- Price depends on cleaning. The price can range from \$5 to \$12 per pound.

#### *Pollination*

Fruit Trees, Brambles, Melons, Squash, Seeds, Nuts, and others

#### *Finding New and Untapped Markets*

*Bee the Best you can be.  
Take PRIDE in your product.*


**Note:** For additional information about Virginia and an example of her own marketing efforts, visit:  
[www.mtnhoney.com](http://www.mtnhoney.com)

## REMEMBERING STEPHEN TABER III

April 17, 1924–May 22, 2008

Mr. Stephen Taber III, a world-recognized honey bee researcher of Elgin SC, became interested in bees at an early age, using the banks of the Broad River in Columbia as his research yard. He graduated from University High School in 1942 and enlisted in the US Navy as an Aviation Cadet October of the same year. Steve was honorably discharged from the US Navy in September 1945 after the end of World War II. In 1950 he graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison with a BS, specializing in Bee Research under the tutelage of Professor C.L. Farrar. His first position was with the Entomology Research Division of USDA as an assistant to Dr. O. Mackenson in Baton Rouge LA. After 15 years in Baton Rouge, he was transferred to the USDA Bee Research Center in Tucson AZ where, in his words, he was his “own instructor.” After his retirement from USDA, he moved to California and founded *Honey Bee Genetics*. Steve traveled extensively—teaching, lecturing, and researching. He lived in France, where he continued his genetic research with bees for a few years, after which he returned to the Columbia area. Some of his students are leaders in the world of beekeeping research today. His book *Breeding Super Bees* will attest to some of his research and his studies around the world. Articles and research publications written by Steve, and his collaborative efforts with others, have appeared in numerous publications for over 50 years and are still being referenced by honey bee researchers worldwide. The life and legacy of Steve Taber is one that will remain in the hearts of those who knew him.

**Note:** Adapted from material sent by Dr. Marla Spivak, University of Minnesota, to *Bee Culture*, May 29, 2008. Dr. Spivak is one of the many bee scientists who are where they are in part because of Steve’s work.



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**WAYNE COULTAS**

**September 19, 1937–June 12, 2008**

OSBA member Wayne Coultas was born in Sedro-Woolley WA, and moved to Oregon in 1954. He graduated from West Linn High School in 1956, served in the Naval Reserves, and worked as a boilermaker for about 30 years. His outdoor interests included gardening and beekeeping. He is survived by his wife, daughter, two sons, two brothers, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

With condolences to Wayne's family, friends, and colleagues

Adapted from: *The Oregonian*, June 18, 2008.

**COOKED STRAWBERRY JAM WITH HONEY**

- 5 3/4 cups crushed strawberries
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 package pectin
- 6 1/2 cups honey, mild

Combine berries, lemon juice, and pectin. Bring to boil. Add honey. Bring to full rolling boil and cook 4 minutes. Skim and ladle immediately into hot sterilized jars. Leave 1/2 inch at the top, seal. If using paraffin, add 1/8 inch then lid. Store in cool place.

**Note:** From the pamphlet, *favorite HONEY Recipes*. Recipes were created by the late Wilma Ruhl. Copies of the pamphlet with pickle and relish as well as jam and jelly recipes may be found at Ruhl Bee Supply.

**Snow Peak Apiaries**

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