The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 36, Number 7 September 2011



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Image above: Heike Williams (right) demonstrates the use of sticky boards to mentors volunteering their expertise for the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program as Judy Scher takes notes. The field day was held in early August and the program's launch is scheduled for November at the fall conference.

OSBA Membership Form 19

DELBERT "DEL" WEBER: A REMEMBRANCE

David Kerr

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The name may not ring any bells as to who this fellow was in the beekeeping industry. He called himself a *hobbyist*. He said that the most colonies he ever had was about fifty. You may know him as the man who owned Pacific Wax Works in Newberg, Oregon.

Del was born in Newberg on August 11, 1928. He was introduced to bees at the age of fourteen when he went to work for Kellie and John Burt who ran about 2,000 colonies in Newberg. Every spring, they "Demaried twice a year" for swarm control. I asked Del what that was, and he said, "We took all the capped brood and put it above a queen excluder and brought all the empty comb down, and when we were done we started all over again."

Down through the years, Del always had a hive on a scale and recorded the weight gain and loss. In those days, he made a 150-pound average, but the average price for honey was \$0.07 a pound. During the war years, wax was over \$1.50 a pound.

Del was an avid archer and invented a machine that put feathers on arrow shafts. He became a contractor as a way to make a living.

Once when he was in Portland to get some foundation from Ruhl Bee Supply, he got into a conversation with Bill about the cost of foundation. Del said, "I will just have to make my own." Bill Ruhl said, "You can't make foundation." You never told Del he couldn't do something. He did his research and eight months later was putting the machines together with rolls he made himself, rolls that embossed beautiful foundation. Del bought a steam boiler from Bob Goram in Washington and started rendering wax. There was a real demand for wired foundation, so Del made a machine that did crimped wire foundation. His wife Alice would lay the sheets on the wire at the correct spacing. When she started complaining that the machine was running too fast and she couldn't get the sheets on the wire fast enough, Del made a machine that put the sheets on the wire—at the correct spacing at any speed. He called that machine *Alice II*.

They were putting out over a thousand pounds of foundation a day. Del Weber of Pacific Wax Works was known throughout the beekeeping industry to put out the best foundation in the world; it was stated so in wax books being published, also.

Del made machines that cut hive boxes that fit "correctly." Then came his frame machines.

He built and lived on his own private airport. He built his own airplanes and rebuilt other people's crashed planes.

Continued on page 7

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We asked for summer here in Hermiston, and it is officially here. We have not hit 100 degrees, but have had plenty of days with 90+ degrees to work with. Even though our crew is complaining about the heat, the bees are thrilled that summer is finally here. They have pulled out of their quick-strip and spring-weather slump and are making some honey—they are *looking good*.

I want to thank some special Oregon beekeepers who have passed their experiences with Mite Away Quick Strips™ along to me so that I can communicate our concerns to the group at NOD Apiary Products. Charlie and Nancy Mock had incredible records to justify my concerns, as did Karen Finley and Harry Vanderpool. I also received information from many others, and their experiences were documented so well that it made my information much more meaningful. We are working to find out why there are frequently difficulties using the strips in Oregon and whether or not the terrible spring weather had something to do with our results.

Last weekend I attended the Mentor's Field Day, part of the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program,



Carolyn Breece shows one of the many kinds of beehives at Michael Burgett's lab to Master Beekeeper mentors during the recent field day in Corvallis. (See image on page 1, also.)

in Corvallis. Heike Williams was the lead for this event, and she worked very hard to make sure that "no rock was left unturned." We have an amazing Master Beekeeper Committee under the direction of Carolyn Breece, so a huge thank you to all involved for giving so much to make this event a success. Our purpose was to work with the mentors (all volunteers) so that the information we teach is unified and all beekeeping options are made available to potential Master Beekeeper apprentice-level applicants. A huge thank you also to all of the mentors who took time to attend the field day and to Dr. Michael Burgett for attending and allowing us to have our day at his beautiful facility at Oregon State University. We are very fortunate to have Dr. Lynn Royce, Dr. Dewey Caron, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, and Dr. Michael Burgett all involved with the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program in their spare time!

page 1, also.) Before we know it, fall will be here. Plans are being finalized for the upcoming conference in Seaside, and Paul Andersen is making final arrangements with speakers. There are three fun-filled days planned for you at the Seaside Convention Center, so get your calendar marked for this event. The dates are November 17, 18, and 19. We all look forward to a great conference, where our only purpose for the weekend is to "talk bees."

I hope things are well in your bee yards and you take a little time to enjoy the buzz.

Jan

HOUSE BILL 2947

Ian Lohman

Here is a quick update for what is happening concerning the standards of identity, quality, and labeling for honey. The Food Safety Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture drafted proposed rules for the standards of identity for honey and invited interested parties to participate in a committee to review the draft on August 16. Paul Andersen, Fred VanNatta, and I attended the committee meeting for OSBA and were allowed to

make suggested changes. We also had support from George Hansen from Foothills Honey Company and Nancy Gentry from Florida (Florida was the first to draft these standards). We discussed several laws that go back to 1944 but were not enforced, and several will be amended to reflect current information. Changes suggested at the committee meeting have been made, and there will be a public forum for interested parties to voice their opinions; if there are no changes, the rules will become law. We will be informed about hearings and will continue to post updates on the website and in *The Bee Line*.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Canby, Oregon & August 15, 2011

Attendees: Bob Allen, Paul Andersen, Carolyn Breece, Bill Edwards, Marjie Ehry, Terry Fullan, Bev Koch, Paul Kowash, Jan Lohman, Rosanna Mattingly, Nancy McFarlane, and Chuck Sowers.

President Jan Lohman called the OSBA board meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

Minutes

The Minutes of the April Executive Board Meeting, as printed in *The Bee Line*, were read by Carolyn Breece, secretary. Bob Allen motioned to accept the minutes as read, and Paul Kowash seconded the motion.

Treasurer's Report

Paul Kowash reports that many OSBA members have been kept on the membership list for a longer time than usual after their membership expired, but they will soon be removed from the list. Please renew your membership to continue being part of this important organization. He also notes that conference registrations are beginning to trickle in. Please register soon for this exciting event. Paul Andersen motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report, and Bob Allen seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

The Bee Line

Rosanna Mattingly suggests that we recognize new and renewing members in *The Bee Line*. She also suggests that we send a welcome packet to new members and include the OSBA directory. The board agreed to these suggestions. The Honey Queen will attend the Oregon State Fair this year, and Marjie Ehry will send her recipes to *The Bee Line* for publication. Rosanna is archiving old copies of *The Bee Line* to make a complete set for OSBA. She has issues that date back to volume 1 in 1977. If you have any newsletters that were sent before this, I am sure Rosanna will be interested! Please let her know.

Website

Herb Brasington has resigned as the OSBA Webmaster. Thank you, Herb, for your service! And thank you to Thom Trusewicz for returning as Webkeeper with assistance from Harry Vanderpool.

Regional Representative Reports

Columbia Basin: Bill Edwards is pleased to announce that John Kraus has started up a new bee club in White Salmon, Washington, which is right across the Columbia River from the town of Hood River. The club will include members from both Oregon and Washington, and they plan to join OSBA soon.

North Coast: Terry Fullan reports that beekeepers are preparing to extract honey at this time. Bob Allen is helping folks acquire bees. Things are going well on the North Coast.

Portland Metro: Bev Koch has received some swarm calls and reports that the Zenger Farm bee group has been picking up a lot of swarms.

Regional Association Reports

Linn-Benton: Carolyn Breece announced the formation of the new Linn-Benton Beekeepers Association. The club started in spring and is already up to about 70 members. This new club also plans to join OSBA.

Portland Metro: Nancy McFarlane reports that 50–55 people are attending Portland Metro association meetings, with 62 people at their largest meeting. They have many new beekeepers and a good representation of veteran beekeepers that can help the newbees! They have a new librarian, new treasurer, and new vice president. The club has implemented new term limits for officer positions. Each officer will have a maximum of three years in their position. They have developed a new tracking system for expenses, and are finalizing their membership list, which will be included in a welcome packet for new members. The membership list will highlight members who offer services to beekeepers. The Portland Metro Bee Day was a great success despite that dependable rain. Nancy estimates 125–135 attendees, many of whom registered on site.

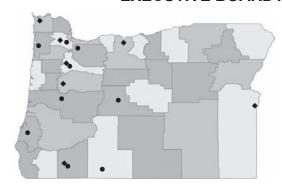
Tillamook County: Bob Allen reports that he is pulling honey at this time, but not much.

Matching Funds

Remember that OSBA will match a donation from a regional association at a maximum of \$500 for research at Oregon State University. Thank you to those who

Continued on page 14

Oregon State Beekeepers Association EXECUTIVE BOARD AND ASSOCIATION RESOURCES



OSBA OFFICERS

President: Jan Lohman

77225 Colonel Jordan Rd, Hermiston OR 97838

541.567.3209; 541.980.0304 (cell)

vazzafarms@yahoo.com

Vice President: Paul Andersen

19255 SW Prospect St, Aloha OR 97007

503.649.5089; 503.332.5410 (cell) paulande@easystreet.net

Secretary: Carolyn Breece

743 NW 18th St, Corvallis OR 97330 541.207.3668; 541.224.2859 (cell) carolyn breece@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Paul Kowash

5959 SW Taylors Ferry Rd, Portland OR 97219

503.452.2664; 503.367.5242 (cell)

paulkowash@aol.com

Past President: Chuck Sowers 26730 S Hwy 170, Canby OR 97013 503.266.1740; sowers@canby.com

* OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

North Coast: Terry Fullan

39450 Northfork Rd, Nehalem 97131 503.368.7160; tfullan@nehalemtel.net

South Coast: Open

Columbia Basin: Bill Edwards

5040 Lost Lake Rd, Hood River 97031

541.354.2223

Eastern Oregon: Jordan Dimock 2635 Mitchell Butte Rd, Nyssa 97913

541.372.2726

Portland Metro: Bev Koch

20495 S Geiger Rd, Oregon City 97045 503.655.7447; johnbev@aracnet.com

Southern Oregon: Floyd Pawlowski 415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; 541.482.4797 fmpawlowski@ashlandwireless.net

North Willamette Valley: Harry Vanderpool 7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem; 503.399.3675

shallotman@yahoo.com

South Willamette Valley: Jason Rowan 80881 Turkey Run Rd, Creswell 97426 541.942.6479; beetanical@q.com

OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Tuesday 63211 Service Rd, Suite 130, Bend

President: Dennis Gallagher; 541.389.4776 For information, please contact John Connelly

johncobka@gmail.com

Coos County Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December) Ohlsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Point

President: Shigeo Oku; 541.396.4016
Vice President: John Gardner; 541.572.3847
Secretary: Bobbi Gardner; 541.572.3847
Treasurer: Jane Oku; 541.396.4016

jane_oku@hotmail.com

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday (except Nov/Dec) OSU Extension, 3328 Vandenberg Rd, Klamath Falls

President: Tom Chester; 541.850.8384

klamathbeekeepers@gmail.com

Vice President: Jim Smith; 541.892.5888 Secretary: Donna Schmerbach; 541.891.3066

Treasurer: Ed Geise; 541.892.6016

Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene **President:** Judy Scher; 541.344.2114

judy scher@catdreams.com

Vice President: Rita Ostrofsky; 541.685.2875 Secretary: Barbara Bajec; 541.767.9086 Treasurer: Nancy Ograin; 541.935.7065

woodrt@pacinfo.com

Website: www.lcbaor.org

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Clackamas Comm College, Clairmont Hall, Room 118, Oregon City **President:** Nancy McFarlane; 503.260.3930

nancymariemcfarlane@yahoo.com

Vice President: John Keeley; 503.632.3682

keelev81@bctonline.com

Secretary: Bernard Newland; 503.656.6621

berternew@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Rex McIntire; 503.720.7958

remcintire_5@msn.com

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday, Southern Oregon Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point **President:** John Jacob; 541.582.BEES

john@oldsolenterprises.com Vice President: Floyd Pawlowski

415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; 541.482.4797

Secretary: Michele Bashaw; hapistitch@earthlink.net **Treasurer:** Ron Padgett; Padgett25@frontiernet.net

Tillamook County Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Tuesday, Art Space

Hwy 101 & 5th St, Bay City

President: Bob Allen; 503.322.3819

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, last Wednesday

OSU Ext, #1400, 18640 SW Walker Rd, Beaverton

President: Kevin Beckman; 503.539.5996

kevin_beckman2@msn.com

Vice President: Herb Brasington; 503.701.4180

herb@hwbsystems.com

Secretary-Treasurer: Jerry Maasdam 503.648.7906; jmaasdam@mac.com

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa Community College, Building 34, Room A, Salem

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:** Patricia Swenson; pkswenson@gmail.com

COMMITTEES

Agriculture Liaison: Harry Vanderpool; 503.399.3675

Fairs and Exhibits: Marjie Ehry; 503.434.1894

NW Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension and Education: Kenny Williams: E41,456,3631

sion, and Education: Kenny Williams; 541.456.2631

Nominations: Chuck Sowers; 503.266.1740 **Public Relations**: Paul Andersen; 503.332.5410

HONEY BEE RESEARCH

Dr. Dewey Caron 302.353.9914 (April–October) carond@hort.oregonstate.edu

Dr. Lynn Royce

541.929.5337; mitebee@peak.org

Dr. Ramesh Sagili

541.737.5460; sagilir@hort.oregonstate.edu

REGIONAL NEWS

Regional Representatives Portland Metro

Swarms calls have quieted, and I got a couple concerning bees "in the wall" and how to get them out—or "trap them out." For those who like deconstruction jobs, there's work to do. Seems like there's still some moisture in the ground to keep those blackberries growing. Yellow jacket traps are set, though they don't seem to be a big problem, yet. Looking to August.

—Bev Koch

South Willamette Valley

Well, time is slipping onward. I hope to never again see a spring/summer like the one this year. Here in the south valley, the honey flow never seemed to materialize for the most part. In our operation, and others I have spoken with concur, surplus honey was hit and miss. It seems that the yards where you thought you could count on honey produced only the minimum, and others acted like nothing was amiss. A local guy called me up and asked, "Do you have honey for sale? My bees didn't produce this year." I had to reply that I don't know. It feels like every week down here brings a new adventure.

On the flip side, the sun is now out. The bees put a lot of honey away prematurely due to the cold weather, which is good and bad: good because they have lots of feed for the winter, bad because the brood nest is plugged and there are fewer cells to fill with eggs for overwintering bees. Penny royal is in bloom and giving a nice nectar for the bees to forage as the summer slowly comes to an end. I know, when did summer ever start, right?

Can you believe it's almost treatment time? For all who are concerned, figure out what you are using for mite control and educate yourselves on what's out there. We have had poor results with the Quick Strips, finding brood and queen loss in our test hives, so bee informed. Sample and treat if need be, but get on it—don't wait too long.

Remember a shortage of honey means higher prices per pound, so try and value your honey accordingly. Have fun and remember that *next* year is right around the bend.

—Jason Rowan

Regional Associations Tillamook County Beekeepers

Our August 9 beekeeper meeting was well attended. Our core group continues to grow and provides members a friendly roundtable discussion on beekeeping. This month, we covered honey harvesting, use of fume boards, and plans for treatments. Everyone enjoyed a video on a bee removal using a bee vac and successfully rehiving the bees. Jim Fanjoy brought local honey for a tasting. North Coast beekeepers are keenly aware of the proximity of this year's fall conference and expressed strong interest in attending in November.—*Terry Fullary*

KEEPING BEES IN SEPTEMBER

Todd Balsiger

September beekeeping activities are a continuation of what we started in August: nest consolidation, pest and disease control, feeding, and winter preparation.

- ❖ Colonies should be in winter configuration—too much space is a liability now.
- ❖ Check colonies to make sure they are queenright. They can be requeened with a nuc.

- ❖ Make sure colonies have sufficient stores to overwinter. They should be noticeably heavy when lifting one side up. If not, feed for weight—heavy sucrose syrup, 60 percent sugar by weight. Make sure that at least the last feeding contains Fumidil-B for *Nosema apis* and *Nosema ceranae* control. This should be in late September or early October. The idea is for the bees not to consume this medicated syrup immediately, but to store it instead. Feed two gallons.
- Finish treatment for bacterial brood and Varroa. Test again for Varroa to ensure efficacy of treatment. Always be on the lookout for American foulbrood.
- ❖ Ensure that lids are water tight and that hives have an upper ventilation hole. Dry bees can endure cold and survive; cold and wet bees from leaky lids and/or condensation may not.
- ❖ Add entrance reducers/mouse guards.
- Try to have winter yards that are protected from low-lying pockets of cold air, protected from winds, and exposed to the sun. Face hive entrances toward the sun and away from the prevailing wind. Tilt hives so that water drains away from entrances.
- Try to prevent robbing. Avoid keeping hives open too long.



- Protect extracted supers from wax moth.
- ❖ Lastly, once the hive is set for winter, don't keep popping the lid off... When the temperatures go down and the bees become inactive, they may not re-glue lids down adequately. If in doubt, secure lids with rope or a heavy object.

From: September 2010 Bee Line.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH



Question

The American Bee Journal electronic newsletter ABJ Extra had an item on an Africanized bee attack in Modesto, California. Eric Mussen, UC Davis Extension Apiculturist, thought the bees that stung a 70-year-old man over sixty times after one of the dogs he was walking disturbed a nest of bees along a popular city trail were an "isolated case." Mussen speculated the bees might have been moved into the Modesto area with almond pollination bees. I pollinate bees in the Modesto area. Should I be concerned about picking up Africanized bee genetic material and my Oregon apiaries becoming Africanized?

Response

Dewey Caron: You do not want to have a colony become Africanized. Colonizing Africanized honey bees are very difficult to manage with extreme defensiveness and an inability to keep them hived. They maintain small colonies, readily nest in stuff we commonly throw away, and swarm frequently; stinging attacks are often the first indication of their presence. Colonies of AHBs are easily transported as has been well documented, and this colony might indeed have been an isolated one. However, because there is no program to look for them in California, it is easy to say, "They are not here." Where such surveying is done (in Texas and Arizona, with their US arrival in the early 1990s, and, most recently, in Florida and Georgia), additional colonies/swarms are quickly detected.

Oregon beekeepers can requeen and continue to maintain European honey bees. If AHBs are accidently introduced, until the area becomes fully colonized and queen rearing and maintenance of European stock becomes too costly and time consuming (as is the case in parts of the southern United States today and through most of Central and South America, except for Chile and southern Argentina), isolated colonies can be killed or requeened. Some areas might experience repeated introductions, such as accidental movement of a colony on a pollination truckload of bees, but the critical mass to colonize and "take over" the gene pool will not occur immediately.

We have undoubtedly had introductions of AHB genetic material into Oregon. Our computer models show both the Medford area and Willamette Valley possess a climate where Africanized bees can survive and multiply, but colonization and changeover from European bee stock will be more prolonged as a result of our longer winter compared to areas now colonized in the southern United States. We can expect and have the ability to handle isolated introductions from the movement of bees for pollination and with package bees.

Colonization of the feral bee population might eventually (but not necessarily) occur over time. For now, we need only deal with the occasional defensive colony. If you find your bees too defensive, wait and inspect them at a later time. If there are repeated defensive responses or if your bees sting outside the apiary without provocation, then either requeen (difficult to do with defensive bees because you need to locate the original queen, kill her, and then introduce a new queen raised from gentle stock) or eliminate the colony and start over.

Del Weber—Continued from page 1

After some years of making bee supplies, a good friend, Milo Chapman, who owned DuraCraft Industry which made dollhouse kits, asked Del if he could make a machine that could make parts for the dollhouses, such as siding and shingles and other things for the kits. Del soon was making the machines that made parts for dollhouse kits in the millions.

He finally sold Pacific Wax Works to Western Bee Supply, which was a subsidiary of Dadant.

Del died July 31, 2011, just short of his 83rd birthday. He will be greatly missed by his family, many friends, and all of the beekeeping industry.

FMCSA WILL NOT REGULATE TRANSPORT

American Farm Bureau Federation

The Transportation Department's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration announced today that it has no intention of proposing new regulations governing the transport of agricultural products.

The agency also released guidance designed to make sure state officials clearly understand exemptions that allow farmers, their employees and their families to accomplish day-to-day work and transport their products to market.

After hearing from concerned farmers earlier this year, FMCSA initiated this review to make sure states don't go overboard in enforcing regulations on agricultural operators, and to ensure consistent access to exemptions for farmers. No regulations will be proposed for any new safety requirements or changes to the rules governing the

transport of agricultural products, farm machinery or farm supplies to or from a farm.

This guidance—which does not impose any new rules on farmers—follows the Federal Register public notice which FMCSA issued on May 31, asking farmers, farm organizations and the public to give input on the agency's long-standing safety rules.

The American Farm Bureau Federation submitted comments to FMCSA, noting that the guidance on agriculture and interstate commerce was based on inaccurate assumptions about agriculture. AFBF urged the agency to rescind its current guidance and replace it with one that accurately reflected the agricultural market chain. This includes treating farmers engaged in crop-share lease agreements the same as those transporting only their own crops.

For more information, see: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/news/news-releases/2011/Transportation-Reinforces-Committment.aspx.

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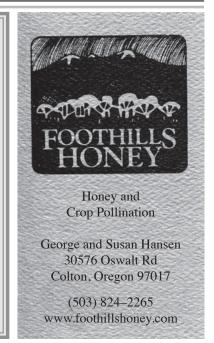
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DONATIONS TO THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION

- Make your check out to: OSU FOUNDATION
- On the memo line, take care to write: THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION
- Mail to: Oregon State University Foundation at 850 SW 35th St, Corvallis OR 97333-4015

If you have any questions regarding details of the fund or how to donate, please contact Kenny Williams, Chair of the OSBA's Endowment Fund, at 541.456.2631.

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



NATIVE BUMBLE BEES FOR POLLINATION

Lynn Royce

Every flower in my garden has bees. They are all shapes and sizes; some are brilliantly colored and others are mostly black. Honey bees are in the mix, too. So many kinds, I wanted to find out more. With the help and encouragement of Dr. Sujaya Rao at Oregon State University, I applied for and received a SBIR grant to raise native bumble bees and pick the best kinds for pollinating Northwest crops. It took two and a half months to get the funds from the federal government, but they are now here and I am scrambling. Summer is almost over, and I need to do the final experiments and tie up loose ends to complete the research.

We want to use native bumble bee species raised here in the Northwest to minimize disease and pest transferal from out of state. We have a great diversity of bees in Oregon and do not want to see this richness jeopardized. In addition, bumble bees coexist well with honey bees. They pollinate many of the same plants, but each also specializes on other plants. They can complement each other as commercial pollinators. A brief summary of the summer's research follows:

Farmers in the United States have largely depended on the European honey bee, *Apis mellifera*, for crop pollination. In recent years, Varroa mites, tracheal mites, Nosema, viruses, and Colony Collapse Disorder have reduced the availability of honey bee colonies. This has created a critical need for additional managed pollinators. Mason bees, leaf cutter bees, and bumble bees are being managed to varying extents. Of these, bumble bees have the best economic potential as pollinators. They are exceptional pollinators for crops such as blueberries that require buzz pollination and for

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crops raised in greenhouses where honey bees are not effective. Of over forty US bumble bee species, only *Bombus impatiens* is commercially available. This species is endemic to the Midwest and the East, and is thus not available to growers in western states (such as Oregon) that do not permit the introduction of nonnative bees due to concerns about pathogens.

Nationwide concerns about bumble bee declines have led scientists to petition the USDA to ban movement of *B. impatiens* to the entire West Coast. An urgent need for commercial production of West Coast bumble bee species exists. In western Oregon, several native bumble bee species are thriving, but timing, numbers, and consistency are not manageable with wild bumble bees. Bumble bee species endemic to the western United States have been successfully raised in captivity for research purposes, but tactics need to be developed for effective and economical commercial production.

The objectives of the research are: (1) development of techniques for breaking diapause and enhancing nest initiation by queens, and growth and development of colonies; (2) comparison of pathogen load in wild and captive-reared bumble bees; and (3) evaluation of tactics for overwintering queens. The research focuses on three West Coast species, B. vosnesenskii, B. mixtus, and B. nevadensis, and is being conducted by MiteBee Farm, Inc., and Oregon State University. MiteBee Farm, Inc., a woman-owned small business currently engaged in honey bee queen production, is diversifying its operations with the addition of bumble bee rearing. An OSU research associate with experience in rearing bumble bees is providing assistance in achieving project objectives. The techniques and products developed during this project will greatly enhance commercialization of West Coast bumble bee species for producers of a large diversity of fruit and vegetable crops. The project is aligned with USDA AFRI priority of Global Food Security and Hunger as new technologies will be developed that will enhance production of foods for humans and livestock. It will provide valuable data for addressing the petition submitted to USDA related to restriction of movement of B. impatiens to the West for reducing risks associated with pathogen movement. If alternative West Coast bumble bee species are available commercially for pollination, the ban, if implemented, will not result in negative economic impacts on West Coast producers of bee-pollinated crops.

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. SAGILI!

Rosanna Mattingly

I met with Ramesh on one of the first sunny days in the valley this year, the first of July. It was also the first day of his appointment as Assistant Professor at Oregon State University, which I learned when another faculty person, Jeff Miller, happened into the coffee room where we sat and congratulated him. As Ramesh reminded me at the start of our visit, many already know his story. He has worked with beekeepers all over the state and Eric Mortenson's fine article, published a year ago in *The Oregonian*, is posted on the lab's website: honeybeelab.oregonstate.edu. I did not manage to avoid repetition then (nor do I here). Even so, in

that open, unassuming, patient way of his, Ramesh offered even more time than I had planned that day to answer my questions as our conversation continued, and as we took more than one unhurried detour—for example, to talk about Thomas Friedman's *The World Is Flat* and to consider his family in India, where he would soon be joining his wife Suma, nine-year-old Sai, and five-year-old Srikar in a visit.

Ramesh had found his way to this particular coffee room near

his lab in the ALS Building by way of somewhat similar family visits to see his grandparents in southern India. They raised sunflowers, which he sometimes helped pollinate by "touching them with cloth." About eighth or ninth grade, he began to wonder why there were not enough bees to do this. Although the answers now sought differ from the singular indiscriminant use of pesticides then responsible, it's a question he's still asking.

Sunflowers are reflected, too, in Ramesh's decision to study agriculture for BS and MS degrees, particularly in his focus on honey bee pollination of sunflowers as one of three projects he did in completing the MS. That project in particular further strengthened his interest in honey bees. His studies included plant pathology, plant breeding, soil and crop science, and agriculture economics, as well as entomology. As he

explains, India cannot afford specialization; the studies were "general" to ensure that he had the background to "be of use to the farmer." Yet, this kind of broad foundation adds to the capacity for understanding and the perspective needed to work with systems as complex as those involving colonies of honey bees today. In addition, his work with "the farmer" for several years after he completed the MS degree in India, i.e., the attitude of being "of use," translates readily to what many of us have already experienced as his work with "the beekeeper."

Ramesh's education was broadened early on as a result of his father's triennial moves as an officer with the air force that settled his family in five different states in India. As a result, of the many languages spoken in India, he speaks three—plus Hindi and English.

Although Ramesh and Suma speak Telugu at home, Suma has quickly learned to speak "Oregonian"—evidenced by his comment of her recent note of discomfort when temperatures began to rise into the 80s!

Ramesh had an extended layover at Texas A&M on his way to the coffee room that day. He wanted to specialize and applied to the program there at the recommendation of friends because of the university's large entomology department.

Although education is valued highly in India, where scholarship is intense and children learn the alphabet at age 3, the United States still has most of the world's top universities and the facilities needed to do specialized research. Young people compete and leave India for this reason, though most who enter schools here engage in studies involving computer software. Ramesh estimates that he is among only one or two percent who enter fields related to agriculture.

Arriving at Texas A&M in the fall of 2002, he completed his PhD dissertation, *Evaluation of physiological and pheromonal factors regulating honey bee*, Apis mellifera *L. (Hymenoptera: Apidae) foraging and colony growth*, in May 2007. Then, two years into five years of funding for postdoctoral work, he interviewed for the short-term appointment that



Dr. Ramesh Sagili stands near the open door of his office on July 1, 2011. His desk (to the left) is filled with plans for research and the results of ongoing studies to add to understanding and guide practice in *keeping* honey bees.





Clearly focused on the future and the work at hand, Ramesh holds respect for the past. He has a photo on the file cabinet adjacent to his desk of himself with the late Norman Borlaug, the agronomist whose discoveries led to the Green Revolution and for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The wall opposite his desk holds a hive tool given to him by Dr. Tanya Pankiw, lest he forget his days at Texas A&M. She advised him to make sure of concern here for honey bees during his first interview and gracefully held a door open on his leaving should he want to return.

ended the day before we met. Before the interview for that appointment, his major professor, Dr. Tanya Pankiw, encouraged him to make sure of the intention, sincerity, and passion of people here for the honey bee—even as people here were doing the same of him.

Having now completed a second round of interviews, Ramesh's seamless transition on July 1 marks an opportunity to establish a program at Oregon State with a focus on understanding the role of nutrition in the health of the colony. It enables him to engage in long-term research, to ask the kinds of questions that take time to answer. Through such research, he will also contribute to the scientific literature with peer-reviewed publications defining his program. He is setting up a base for the effort—has found some furnishings for his office and is making decisions about equipment that will add to the functionality of his lab—including an incubator, preferably with a window to avoid unnecessary openings.

With the exceptional (for want of a better word) help of his assistant Carolyn Breece, as well as beekeepers throughout the state, Ramesh continues to write grants and hopes soon to work with a graduate student. He is moving forward on studies in progress, including those related to the health of honey bees in Oregon for which he has baseline information collected from surveys and the 400-plus sample kits that beekeepers have returned to him for Nosema, tracheal mite, Varroa mite, and hypopharyngeal gland analyses. He is also looking into the efficacy of Fumidil (for example, its potential for degradation related to time, temperature, and exposure to sunlight) and treatments based on essential oils in treating Nosema; the correlations he has found between nutrition based on pollen from diverse sources

and honey bee immunity to pests and diseases (i.e., survival); the use of brood pheromone—for example, in increasing pollination of crops that are relatively difficult to pollinate; the condition of colonies moved into various crops, beginning in California almonds, for indications that might provide a signal before a colony is "in trouble".... The list goes on, yet this sampling of Ramesh's interests suggests that the foundation of a program focused on honey bee nutrition, together with studies that have practical application for beekeepers, is in place. Ramesh continues to organize, prioritize, and coordinate the research, and will let us know of his findings as the studies progress—as in the past. He has been working with Michael Burgett and Dewey Caron in updating extension publications on pollination and the like. In addition, he will continue his work with the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program that he initiated soon after he landed here.

Ramesh wants beekeepers to know how fortunate he feels for all the support he has received. He is thankful as well for the cooperation of beekeepers in using their working colonies. He says no one has denied his request to go into a hive, though he knows how much the colony means to the beekeeper. He also understands that, when issues or potential problems show up, some beekeepers might be somewhat reluctant to "let on." Yet, he asks that beekeepers please let him know, just as those who have had difficulties with the Quick Strips have done. In fact, as I walked into the building that morning, Ramesh had just returned from visiting colonies in a preliminary experiment he had set up with the strips to determine the amount of queen loss and brood loss, frame to frame, based on strip position, age of queen, and so forth. He will keep such investigations in low profile whenever a situation may warrant, yet believes in the importance of doing research in a timely way that can benefit and be a learning experience for all. Further, he was able to set up the experiment with the strips "on



After time in the coffee room, Ramesh invited me to his lab. Once there, he opened a drawer to show me some of the samples he's received from beekeepers around the state. The samples provide information that is essential for learning how honey bees are doing here as well as guiding future research.



This intentionally blurred photo of Ramesh's office space reflects work in progress on his "first day." The white board is covered, the dual computer monitors exhibit diligent organization of file on top of file, post-it notes pepper available surfaces, and additional papers on the desk await his return from our meeting.

the spot" not only because beekeepers informed him of potential issues but also because the contributions they have made afford him the flexibility to do so. On learning about the strips, for example, he did not have to find a funding source, write a grant, wait for the funding cycle, and on and on. He is thankful for this, too, and invites ongoing open communication.

Ramesh says that he enjoys every part of his work with bees. They are complex and fascinating, and we still have so much to learn about them. He conveys amazement and excitement at recent discoveries about their communication, for example, as described in Thomas Seeley's *Honeybee Democracy*. We can only wonder at what surprises may yet lie ahead. His enthusiasm is palpable, except—he did admit that the bees in Texas "could be annoying." He is enjoying not having to wear two pairs of pants just to work them.

Clearly ambitious and motivated, an eldest of three, all of whom are remarkably successful, Ramesh has a heart full of care for honey bees and their keepers. He has contributed and continues to add his own intention, sincerity, and passion for the honey bee to what he found in Oregon during his first interview. Although my hearing isn't quite as good as it used to be, what I think I heard Jeff Miller say when he came into the coffee room that morning and congratulated Ramesh was, "Let's do 'em proud."

I did hear Ramesh's response, though—it was without missing a beat: "We will."

Of that, no doubt.

Congratulations, Dr. Sagili. I know I speak the same words as have many others in saying how very good it is to know you are extending your stay.

VARROA MITE SAMPLING

Dewey M. Caron

Varroa mites are generally considered the most significant pest of honey bees. The mites were first reported in the United States in Florida in 1987, apparently as an accidental introduction on illegally imported queens. The mites subsequently spread very rapidly throughout the US bee population, with initial extensive mite-related bee losses showing up in the early 1990s.

Adult Varroa mites are relatively large (for mites) and visible without magnification. The flattened reddish-brown mites are external parasites and found on adult workers between the overlapping abdominal sternites, at the bases of wings, or between the head and thorax feeding on the bee's hemolymph (blood). Adult bees can be infested with Varroa by a process



called "close transfer" in which mites move from one bee to another both in the field and in the hive. Within the hive, the majority of the adult mites infest pupae. Adult female mites (males are not parasitic and do not exist outside of a pupal cell) enter drone (preferred) or worker cells just prior to the capping stage and then reproduce offspring within the capped cells.

Symptoms of Varroa mite infestation in a colony may include "restless" behavior, brood neglect that results in "spotty" brood patterns, discarded pupae at the hive entrance, and malformed, discolored workers and drones. In colonies with severe mite infestations, workers with deformed wings often can be seen on the combs and crawling from the hive entrance. Losses due to Varroa mite are difficult to separate from other or concurrent winter mortality factors.

The extent of symptoms varies with the degree of infestation. The only reliable way to determine if colonies are infested is to sample the entire colony, the adults and/or brood for the presence of mites. Fall sampling provides an action threshold—if mite sampling exceeds the threshold, then additional fall mite-control measures should be considered—if the colony exceeds 2,000–3,000 mites. There is some debate as to whether certain viruses also need

to be present for clinical damage to occur and the extent to which they may cause heavier losses. It is recommended to census the whole colony or sample adult bees to get an estimate of the mite population to develop a threshold number. Sampling of brood (using a cappings scratcher) is not a very reliable means for providing a threshold.

A screened sticky board monitors mite population levels within the hive and provides the most reliable threshold number to use in decisions on further mite control. Sticky boards can be purchased ready-to-use from bee-supply dealers or made from adhesive covered poster board, a thin metal sheet (or similar hardened material) lightly covered with aerosol cooking spray, Vaseline, or adhesive material such as Tanglefoot*. The board is placed with a #8-mesh hardware cloth slightly elevated over the top of the sticky surface.

Screened sticky boards are placed beneath the colony (some screened bottom boards include a sampling board groove). As mites are dislodged during the bees' grooming process, they will fall through the screen cover and adhere to the sticky surface. The screen prevents the bees from walking on the sticky surface while entrapping the mites. The sticky board should be placed in the hive for minimum of 24 hours, and then removed and carefully examined for mites (hand-held magnifiers are useful for seeing and counting mites). The Northwest August threshold number (determined from studies at Washington State University) is 23 mites

per 24 hours. Smaller colonies or colonies with problems may need adjustment to a lower number. Sticky boards may also be used with a miticide treatment, but are of less value in threshold determination because mite fall will be many times heavier by an unknown factor.

An adult bee sample is a popular alternative to the use of sticky boards. There is a collecting jar available for purchase, but it is easy to make your own from a wide-mouth mason jar by replacing the solid lid with #8-mesh hardware cloth. Brush or drop approximately 300 worker bees from one or more frames near the middle of

the hive into the collecting jar by moving it downward and dislodging adults so they fall into the open jar. Practice this procedure beforehand, initially killing the bees with soapy water to count them so you arrive at a reliable estimate of 300 bees; then mark the proper "fill" level of your collection jar for subsequent sampling. The "practice" collections can also be used to get a threshold number. Dislodge mites from adult bodies with addition of a heaping tablespoon of powdered sugar through the mesh screen of the collection jar.

Roll/shake the jar from side to side to distribute the sugar over all of the bees. Wait a few minutes (ideally the humidity will increase within the jar, but avoid killing the adults in the sun), and roll/shake the jar again. Pour the sugar and dislodged mites through the mesh screen onto a white surface. Count the mites. Alternatively, empty mites onto cheesecloth then sift the sugar through the cloth, leaving the mites on the cloth surface. Fall threshold is 10 mites, but adjust the number downward for smaller colonies or those where you see indications of mite or virus damage. Then return the bees to the colony where their hive mates will groom them clean because the sugar stimulates the bees' grooming behavior. Alternatives of soapy water and alcohol washes will kill bees—separate mites from bees by pouring the liquid through a mesh screen; then catch the mites in a coffee filter.

A powdered sugar sampling tutorial is at: www. extension.umn.edu/Honeybees/components/pdfs/posters/ VarroaMites_155.pdf.



Board Meeting Minutes—Continued from page 3

have already made donations. We will recognize donors in *The Bee Line*.

2011 OSBA Conference

Paul Andersen passed out a press release and draft schedule of speakers for the upcoming conference in Seaside, Oregon. Marjie Ehry will coordinate the honey show, and Terry Fullan offered to help with coordinating the registration table. Bill Edwards will coordinate rides for speakers to and from the Portland airport. If you can help with registration or with rides to/from Portland, please contact Terry (503.368.7160) or Bill (541.354.2223) as soon as possible. It is a rare opportunity to ride in a car with such bee celebrities as Randy Oliver, Sue Cobey, and Debbie Delaney!

Endowment Funds at OSU

Having two endowment funds at Oregon State University is confusing. Jan Lohman and others are working with OSU to try and merge the two funds; however, OSU is struggling with the language. Whereas OSBA wants the funds to go specifically for honey bees, OSU wants more flexibility in the way they may be used. Discussion is continuing on this topic. Meanwhile, Jan proposed that the committee for the Northwest Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension, and Education include Kenny Williams (Chair), George Hansen, and Jan Lohman, and that the president of OSBA always be a member of this committee. Paul Andersen motioned to accept this proposal, and Bob Allen seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

Master Beekeeper Program

Carolyn Breece reported on recent milestones in the development of the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program. We had a conference for classroom instructors in April and a field day for field mentors this month. Over thirty people attended each event. Our instructors and mentors are a sharp and energetic bunch, and we are grateful for their service. We are eager to launch the program in November. Best of all, we now have a little extra money to enhance the program! Oregon State Beekeepers Association was recently awarded a \$75,500 grant to fund the Master Beekeeper Program and to collaborate with OSU in pollination experiments. We are excited to use the money for workshops, a Master Beekeeper website and

other program enhancements, and work with OSU on new and ongoing pollination experiments.

Mite Away Quick Strips

Jan Lohman reports that she and other commercial beekeepers wrote a letter to NOD Apiaries to state their concerns about the new Mite Away Quick Strips. Many beekeepers have reported excessive brood kill and queen failure. NOD Apiaries is looking into these concerns.

2011 Oregon State Fair

Oregon State Beekeepers Association has had a booth at the Oregon State Fair for seventy years, with the exception of 2010. Marjie Ehry, Chair of Fairs and Exhibits, is working with those involved in planning the fair. She passed around a sign-up sheet for folks to work the booth this year. Chuck and Jeanne Sowers are hosting the Honey Queen. The Honey Queen will make an appearance at the fair and do some cooking demonstrations, using honey of course! Marjie proposed that OSBA cover the expenses of food for the cooking demonstrations, transportation costs for the queen, and other booth expenses. Bob Allen motioned to approve up to \$300 to cover these Oregon State Fair expenses, and Bev Koch seconded the motion.

OSBA Officers

Jan Lohman (president), Paul Andersen (vice president), Paul Kowash (treasurer), and Carolyn Breece (secretary) have all agreed to serve one more year as OSBA officers.

Standard of Honey

A meeting regarding a standard and language within House Bill 2947, which requires the Oregon Department of Agriculture to adopt rules establishing standards of identity and quality and labeling requirements for honey sold in Oregon, will be held in Salem on August 16, 2011. George Hansen, Fred VanNatta, Paul Andersen, and Jan Lohman will attend the meeting to ensure that when consumers are purchasing a product labeled *honey*, that they get just that. Thank you to all those who have contributed to the work on this important bill.

Paul Andersen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm, and Paul Kowash seconded the motion. See you in November at the OSBA Conference!

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Breece

NATIVE BEES

The USDA Forest Service, along with Pollinator Partnership (www.pollinator. org), has produced *Bee Basics: An Introduction to our Native Bees* to educate the public and encourage people to help protect these essential insects. This 40-page booklet primarily focuses on bees native to North America, of which there are 4,000 species.

To learn more about native bees, read or download *Bee Basics* on the Forest Service website at: www.fs.usda. gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/ stelprdb5306468.pdf.

HONEY GRANOLA



12 cups old fashioned oats 1 1/2 cups coconut 1 1/2 cups chopped nuts 3/4 cup honey 3/4 cup canola oil 3 teaspoon cinnamon 1/4 cup raw wheat germ 1 cup dried fruit

1/4 cup flax seeds

Mix everything together except the wheat germ, dried fruit, and flax seed. Bake at 310 degrees for 40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. The last 10 minutes, add the wheat germ. When the oats are golden brown, remove from the oven and add the dried fruit and flax seed.

I use the dried, unsweetened, large shredded type of coconut. Although I usually use raw almonds for the chopped nuts, I have used walnuts, pine nuts, and ground flax seeds. For fruit, I have used raisins, dried blueberries, dried cherries, and dried cranberries—or a mixture of each. I adapted this recipe from a booklet called *The Quaker Oats Wholegrain Cookbook*. It is not overly sweet and very forgiving; just about any nut, seed, or dried fruit can be added.

From: Roberta Cranswick

2011 Oregon State Beekeepers Conference

Seaside Convention Center in Seaside, Oregon November 17, 18, and 19







Join us at the beautiful Oregon Coast!



To register, see form on page 16. For more information, go to: www.orsba.org.

№ 2011 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



- Complimentary reception Friday evening, followed by a showing of "Vanishing of the Bees"
- Presentations on current research, nutrition, safety, and products, with speakers to include:

Dewey Caron
Sue Cobey
Deborah Delaney
Pat Heitkam
Randy Oliver
Mike Rodia
Ramesh Sagili
Steve Sheppard
Judy Wu

- An entomology lab that will analyze samples and demonstrate how they are used in research
- ❖ An alternate bee school on Friday
- Alternate presentations on natural beekeeping and sustainable methods on Saturday
- ❖ A honey show

If you can help with registration, please contact Terry Fullan at 503.368.7160.

If you can provide a lift for presenters to or from PDX, please contact Bill Edwards at 541.354.2223.

See page 16 for Registration Form.

For additional information, visit: www.orsba.org.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association 2011 Fall Conference

November 17, 18, and 19, 2011 ← Seaside Civic and Convention Center 415 First Ave, Seaside OR 97138

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Friday Evening Banquet: \$35 per person	Number attending:	_ \$
Annual OSBA Dues: \$25 per person (Please complete Membership Form for each member	Number:	_ \$
TOTAL Cost		\$
Exhibitor Fee: \$40 per table	Number of tables:	_
TOTAL Cost plus Exhibitor Fee		\$

Make check payable to OSBA and mail with this completed registration form, postmarked no later than November 7, to:

Paul Kowash, 5959 SW Taylors Ferry Rd, Portland OR 97219

Note: Hotel reservations are not included in these costs. Special rates are available at the Best Western Ocean View Resort (800.234.8439) and the Inn at Seaside (800.699.5070). Be sure to ask for the *Beekeepers Fall Conference* special room rate when you make your reservation.

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¹ The Friday luncheon is limited to the first 150 registrants. Those who do not attend the luncheon and all who attend the conference on Saturday will have time to explore Seaside and its many attractions as well as enjoy lunch at area restaurants.

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The **Oregon State Beekeepers Association** is a nonprofit organization representing and supporting all who have an interest in honey bees and beekeeping. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. Membership includes the ongoing work of the organization on behalf of the honey bee and beekeeping, a vote in OSBA elections, discounts on publications, and an annual subscription to *The Bee Line*. For new memberships and renewals, please send check made payable to *OSBA* with this completed form to:

Paul Kowash, 5959 SW Taylors Ferry Rd, Portland OR 97219 New Renewing Additional name(s) for added memberships at the same address: Mailing address: _____ City/State/Zip: Telephone number: _____ email address: _____ **Contact information:** The OSBA respects the privacy of members. Please check if you do not want your contact information included in a membership directory sent to OSBA members only: Do not include contact information Please also check if you want to share only a portion of your contact information: Share only mailing address _____ phone number(s) _____ email address _____ Local group, if member: **Membership:** \$25 per person (\$34 per person outside the US) **Voluntary contribution(s):** General Fund Research Fund Total amount enclosed:

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Note: For new memberships and to renew, see form on page 19.

The colony of bees at the White House has produced 225.5 pounds of honey beyond its needs this year.

May colonies everywhere be so strong!

The Bee Line

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. Annual subscriptions to the newsletter are included with membership in OSBA.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as your corrections, comments, questions, photographs and stories (both from "old" times and "new"), interviews, recipes, and points of view to: Rosanna Mattingly, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; email: osba.newsletter@gmail.com.

The next issue to be printed will be the October 2011 issue. The deadline for submitting copy is September 10.

Thank you!

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