

THE BEE LINE



The Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 23, Number 1

January/February, 1998

Homer Park, Pioneer Bee Breeder

by Diane Varner

When Homer Park was ten years old, he came across a swarm of bees in a bee tree. He got a gunny sack and captured the swarm, but the buzzing from that bag of bees scared his horse. Thinking fast, he put cotton in the horse's ears so the buzzing couldn't be heard. Homer Park has been working with bees in northern California ever since that day more than seventy years ago.

While that first hive didn't make it through the winter, Homer's interest didn't fade. He had an enthusiastic ag teacher in high school, and he learned how to build hives and collect swarms. Shortly after Homer graduated he had about 300 hives. When he later met the girl of his dreams, he sold 150 hives so they could afford to marry. Except for that first year of marriage, bees and honey have been a way of life for Homer and Lois Park. In 1941 they took their bees to the mountains and extracted honey in a screened-in area. In 1948 they built their dream house in Palo Cedro (just east of Redding), where they still live today.

By 1947-48, Homer realized there was a strong need for good queens, and he was instrumental in developing the world famous Park Italian strain. These queens are still noted for their production of brood, disease resistance, honey production and gentleness.

As the business grew, the Parks hired employees and built up their bees. In the '50's and '60's, they shipped packages of bees north to Canada. They owned and operated apiaries of more than 4,000 hives in Dawson Creek, BC and Brooks, Alberta. Homer became a member and later a director of the Alberta Honey Co-op, the only US citizen to be allowed membership.



Many beekeepers got started in the industry because of Homer Park's influence, including several family members. Homer's brother Jack became a beekeeper, and Homer's daughters and son Steve are active in the business today. Daughter Glenda Wooten and her husband, Shannon, own Wooten Golden Queens in Palo Cedro. Glenda is past President of the California State Beekeepers Association, a position her father held in 1961. Both Homer and Lois have been named Honorary Beekeeper of the Year by the CSBA, an award honoring members for their outstanding work in the beekeeping industry. Nowadays Homer and Lois stay active and still produce queens and honey each year.

Wooten Golden Queens continues the Park legacy. They produce about 25,000 queens annually, as well as about 2,000 nuc bodies and

(cont. on page 7)

Oregon State Beekeepers Association

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association and is published ten times a year. Subscriptions are included with OSBA membership.

To join the OSBA, complete the membership application in this issue and send with payment to: Phyllis Shoemake, 1874 Winchester NW, Salem, OR 97304

Editorial Offices: Send news, announcements, letters, comments and advertising to:

Diane Varner, Editor
PO Box 123 Yamhill, OR 97148-0123
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Advertising Rates

Business Ads, per issue:

Business card size	\$ 7.50
Quarter page	20.00
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Copy, art and payment must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Contact the editor for any special requirements and mechanical information.

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President's Notes: Position Changes Announced

by Torey Johnson

I have appointed Diane Varner as Editor of *The Bee Line*. Selection was made by judging the quality of a sample newsletter she prepared, and the plans she has for upcoming issues. She has shown willingness to do whatever it takes to surpass the standards I personally would like to see. Diane is very easy to talk to so if you have questions, please give her a call. You can reach her at 503-662-4559.

Ron Bennett decided not to continue his work on the OSBA Web Page. I have appointed Peggy Gray as Web Page Editor. Peggy is also easy to talk to so give her a call if you have questions. Her telephone number is 503-761-0996. Her e-mail address is T1831@AOL.com. Peggy expects to be online sometime in January.

If you have any questions about these position changes, please give me a call. My daytime number is 503-256-4231 and my evening number is 503-771-3942.

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Research Survey Results

Results are in on the Research Proposal survey that was included in the November/December 1997 issue of *The Bee Line*. The proposal to fund a \$1,000 portion of research being done by Dr. Lynn Royce of the OSU Extension Service was approved.

The dollars will come from the General Fund portion of the budget.

The number of ballots returned indicated high interest in research to help control the tracheal mite. Thanks to all who participated!

Tracheal Mite Report

by Torey Johnson

A beekeeper in the Portland Metro area recently sent me a copy of a lab test report for tracheal mites. The report was dated November 13, 1997 and reported an **80% infestation**.

The test required a random sample of fifty bees. From that sampling, forty bees were found to be infested. Twenty-eight had bilateral (both sides) infestation, with more than thirty mites found in each bee.

Are you still in shock after reading the 80% infestation rate? Did you catch the recent date? How about location? George Hansen warned people that tracheal mites would be high this year and this seems to support him. With the addition of high Varroa counts in the valley, look out. All locations that I worked at this year, from Tygh Valley to Gates to Portland, showed infestation.

What can we do to help at this time of year? Here's a brief list:

1. Stress bees as little as possible.
2. Make sure medications go in at the proper time. **DO NOT** delay on this.
3. Keep hives as dry as possible.
4. Get involved. If you need help, get it. If you can help, do.

Book Review: "Honey Bees and Beekeeping, a Year in the Life of an Apiary"

By Susan Miller

Before my husband and I owned hives, we read books. But as every beekeeper knows, the best way to learn beekeeping is to put on a suit and work bees. That's exactly what the author of "Honey Bees and Beekeeping, a Year in the Life of an Apiary" did. Those attending the Northwest Corner Beekeepers Conference recognize the name of Dr. Keith Delaplane, the young man from the University of Georgia who has been keeping bees since he was 13 years old.

Dr. Delaplane's book is a companion text to the video series by the same name. Both are helpful to have, and are designed to be used together or separately. Their focus is to take a beginner through a one year period of beekeeping and develop good, hands-on knowledge. But even seasoned hobbyists will find them both useful for review. Explanations and descriptions are concise and user-friendly, making them handy as a reference tool.

Chapters in the book include a history of beekeeping, getting ready, installing package bees and swarms, spring management for new colonies, harvesting and selling honey, management in late summer and autumn, management in winter, spring management for overwintered colonies, diseases/pests and parasites of honey bees, and queen and package bee production. There is also a reference list of beekeeping publications.

The Second Edition of the book was released in 1996 and includes updated references to current issues, such as Varroa mites. This book and video deserves shelf space in a beekeeper's library. Look for it at most beekeeping supply stores.

OSBA Bylaws

It has been some time since the OSBA Bylaws have been published in *The Bee Line*. Our Association has grown and new members may not have had the opportunity to review the Bylaws. In order to fulfill Article I, Section 1 which provides "Upon acceptance of the membership fee, he or she is entitled to receive a copy of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association's Constitution and Bylaws", the Bylaws are printed below. The Constitution was printed in the November/December 1997 issue.

BYLAWS

Revised and amended December, 1993

Article I - Membership

Section 1. Membership. All applications for membership of whatever class must be made to the Secretary or authorized representative and must be accompanied by the annual dues. Upon acceptance of the membership fee, he or she is entitled to receive a copy of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association's Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. Fees and Dues.

(A) Paid members. Paid members shall pay annual dues of \$15. Any member wishing to donate funds toward the general fund or a specific program may do so. Such funds shall be earmarked and spent only for the benefit of the program so specified at the time of the donation.

(B) Honorary Life Members. Honorary life members shall freely participate in all activities of the State Association and shall pay no dues or fees, except if an honorary life member wishes to join more than one Branch Association, he shall pay the dues of the additional Branch(es).

(C) Bee Line Subscribers. Bee Line subscribers shall pay a subscription fee of \$15 per year for ten issues of the association's publication. For bookkeeping purposes, the same dollar amount of each paid membership shall be set aside as subscription and thereby support the printing and distribution of the publication.

(D) Branch Associations. One dollar (\$1) of the dues collected for membership in Oregon State Beekeepers Association may be retained by the Branch Association. If the member resides where there is no Branch Association, the State Association shall retain the one dollar.

(E) Dues. Dues may be paid at any time and are current for twelve (12) months. Any dues not paid within one month after they are due are delinquent and membership is cancelled.

Article II - Duties of Officers

Section 1. President. The President shall be the directing head and Chief Executive Officer and shall preside at all meetings. He shall act as Chairman of the Executive Committee, appoint all committees not otherwise provided for, fill all vacancies in office taking place between elections, and call all special meetings of the executive committee and of the general membership when requested to do so as provided by the Constitution. He shall be responsible for seeing that all officers, elected or appointed, perform their respective duties and take the initiative in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the organization and its membership.

Section 2. Vice President. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall assume the responsibilities ordinarily falling upon the President. In the absence of both officers, the members may elect a Chairman to serve for the time being. It shall be the duty of the Vice President to serve as Program Chairman of the Association.

Section 3. Secretary/Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the Secretary/Treasurer to record all minutes of the annual and special meetings of the general membership. He shall keep his financial records in good condition showing all amounts received and disbursed by him, from whom received, to whom and for what paid. He shall perform such other duties as would naturally be assigned to that office.

Section 4. Regional Directors. Regional Directors shall serve on the Executive Committee.

The seven Regional Directors shall be elected from different areas of the State and will be expected to be aware of the problems facing beekeeping in those areas and be responsible for bringing these problems to the attention of the Executive Committee and the members.

Article III-Duties of Committees

Section 1. Honey Sales Promotion. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the initiative in all movements to better honey marketing conditions for Oregon beekeeping products.

Section 2. Organization and Branches. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the initiative in any line of activity which will increase the membership and interest in the State and branch organizations.

Section 3. Fairs and Exhibitions. It shall be the duty of this committee to cooperate with the Oregon State Fair Board in developing the bee and honey exhibit at the Oregon State Fair, and to cooperate with local and district fair managers in developing larger and better honey exhibits in their respective fairs.

Section 4. Research and Education. It shall be the duty of this committee to (a) take the initiative in securing financial support for research and education work in beekeeping in Oregon, (b) cooperate with Oregon State University, the Oregon Experiment Station and United State Department of Agriculture in developing a practical program of research and education as it relates to beekeeping in Oregon.

Section 5. Nectar and Pollen Flora. It shall be the duty of this committee to cooperate with Oregon State University, the Oregon Experiment Station, Roadside Council, Soil Conservation Service, State and County Highway Departments, Forest Service and other groups to further the introduction of nectar and pollen plants wherever possible.

Section 6. Pollination. It shall be the duty of this committee to (a) further the use of bees for pollinating horticultural and field crops, (b) educate growers to the needs of bees for pollination, (c) cooperate with members and growers in placing bees for pollination through advertising and any other means, (d) pro-rate advertising and operational costs of this department on a per colony basis for bees rented as a result of this advertising.

Section 7. Public Relations. It shall be the duty of this committee to secure news items and photographs for publication at all beekeeping functions, to work with officers and committees on proper exposure of apiculture to the public, whatever and however possible, whether by newspapers, radio, television or other news media.

Section 8. Laws and Regulations. It shall be the duty of this committee to (a) keep abreast of all legislation pertaining to and/or affecting beekeeping in Oregon and to help keep the Association informed, and (b) carry through legislation when the Association deems necessary.

Section 9. Youth Organization. It shall be the duty of this committee to (a) encourage and promote beekeeping and beekeeping projects among youth groups and organizations, (b) recommend and supervise awards and achievement programs for young people interested in beekeeping.

Section 10. Honey Queen. It shall be the duty of this committee to (a) follow the guidelines of the Executive Committee to solicit candidates for and to select the Oregon Honey Queen, (b) schedule and promote activities for the Queen, (c) raise funds sufficient to support the costs of the Oregon Honey Queen program, and (d) account for all monies to the Secretary/Treasurer.

Article IV-Amendments

These Bylaws may be altered or amended only at an annual convention by a three-fourths vote of the total membership present at the meeting, provided notice of the proposed changes have been sent to all members at least one month (30 days) prior to said meeting.

Regional Conference Financial Report

The Fall Conference in Hood River last year was successful financially, according to a report prepared by Secretary/Treasurer Phyllis Shoemake.

Income from registration, meals, the auction, research contributions and miscellaneous items totalled \$13,888.03. Expenses, including speaker costs (travel, meals, lodging), printing, research funds and the hospitality suite totalled \$8,833.80. The net profit was \$5,054.23.

The Friday evening banquet drew 122 people, and the Saturday OSU luncheon drew 120 people.

Thanks to all who worked hard behind the scenes to make the Conference successful.

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Bee Musings

by Diane Varner

Welcome to the editor's column. This is about the only place in *The Bee Line* where I can express my opinion. I'll try to keep everything else in this newsletter just that: **news**.

One of the steps my husband Ray and I took when we started our business was to write a statement of purpose. It seemed silly at the time, since we knew what we were going to be doing, didn't we? But it gave us specific goals and direction. When we joined OSBA I looked for a similar statement of purpose, for after all, we're all busy and can only give time to organizations that help meet our own goals. I found the statement of purpose in the Constitution, and thought I'd share it with you:

"The Oregon State Beekeepers Association is formed to unite the beekeepers of Oregon, men or women, in an effort to secure better beekeeping in the State, and thereby increase the profits and pleasure derived therefrom, and to develop a strong bond of friendship and fellowship among members of the craft."

Now that's a pretty good statement, and confirms something I already suspected: beekeepers are a hard-working, friendly sort of folk who are looking to make beekeeping fun and profitable. The challenges of Varroa and tracheal mites, diseases, honey prices, etc., will test the resolve of all of us in this industry. These are the things that provide strong motivation to me to draft an editorial statement of purpose of my own: *As editor, I will work diligently to bring you well-researched, fair and accurate articles in a timely fashion, and support the goals of the Association.*

I plan to visit all eight of the Regional Branches in the coming year, and to give all areas of the State space in this newsletter. I look forward to meeting you!

(Homer Park, cont. from page 1)

about 500 packages of bees. The busiest time of year is in February, March and April, when the staff of six full-time employees doubles. Queen breeding is a very exact and labor intensive business. The Wootens welcome beekeepers interested in a tour of their Palo Cedro facility.

Varroa mites are the biggest immediate threat to the beekeeping industry, according to Glenda Wooten. The focus of the annual CSBA convention in November was on reports of mite resistance and the lack of alternative treatments. "When Dad was active his biggest problem was American Foulbrood", said Glenda. "Those were the good old days!" Breeders today are working hard to breed for mite resistance. Another challenge is the continued closure of the Canadian border, with a recent bid for re-opening losing by one or two votes.



Homer Park and 1996 American Honey Princess

Park Italian Queens are exported to Europe, New Zealand, Brazil and Argentina. They are also shipped throughout the contiguous United State and Alaska . Homer Park and Wooten Golden Queens are both regular advertisers in *The Bee Line* . For information about visiting Wooten Golden Queens, and possibly visiting with Homer Park as well, contact Glenda or Shannon Wooten at 530-549-3555.

* * * * *

Editor's Note: I will be doing feature stories to help readers get to know the people behind the ads you see in *The Bee Line*, and to learn what other beekeepers are doing. Reader feedback is always appreciated!

A Family Tradition

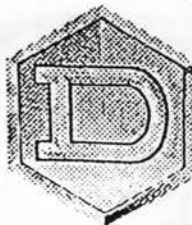
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Queen Bee Production: Some Basic Information

Editor's Note: The article about Homer Park and the production of queen bees made me curious about the process. The following text from Dr. Keith Delaplane's book "Honey Bees and Beekeeping: A Year in the Life of an Apiary", University of Georgia (1996) is used with the author's written permission. Imagine doing this process on a scale of 25,000+ each year!

"Let's review a little bee biology. Eggs take three days to hatch into larvae and any female egg has the potential to become either a worker or a queen, depending on the diet it receives as a larva. But this window of opportunity is very brief. The female must begin her royal jelly diet as a one-day-old larva, preferably within the first twelve hours after hatching from the egg. If this is delayed until even the second day, the resulting queen will be underdeveloped and inferior. In nature, when a colony loses its queen or wants to swarm, workers select several suitable young female larvae and feed them royal jelly. This triggers the development of functional ovaries and other queen-like characteristics. Queen cells are elongated and peanut-shaped. Newly emerged queens are hostile to each other. The first one to emerge often kills her sisters while they are still in their cells. If two emerge at the same time, they may fight to the death. After a few days, a new queen takes her mating flight and mates with about ten or twelve drones. She stores their sperm in her spermatheca and uses them to fertilize her eggs for the rest of her life. These facts form the basis of modern queen rearing methods.

Bee supply catalogs carry equipment for rearing queens. (Author lists supplies, including a grafting tool, cell cups, bars and frame, cell builder colony, mating nucs and drone colonies).

To start, look for colonies that are gentle, productive and disease- and pest-resistant, then earmark the queens from these colonies as your *breeder queens*. It's handy to keep breeder queens in nucs because they're easy to open up when you want to retrieve larvae for grafting.

Next, prepare cell cups and bars. Use melted beeswax to fasten a row of cups on a bar. Some breeders "prime" the cups before grafting into them. To do this, dilute some royal jelly with water and place a tiny droplet of this mixture in each cup. To get royal jelly, draft some larvae "dry", place them in your cell builder for about 24 hours, then discard the larvae and scrape out the royal jelly from each cell.

Retrieve a comb containing recently hatched larvae from your breeder queen colony, brush off the bees (don't shake them off) and bring it indoors. With a grafting tool, pick up a suitable larva from its original cell, and transfer it to a cell cup. The youngest, most suitable larvae are the same size as an egg. When each cup has a larva, insert each bar of cells into your special frame and place the whole assembly in the middle of your cell builder colony.

After ten days in the cell builder, remove the frame of ripe cells. It's important not to delay or else the queens will emerge and start killing each other. Gently cut cells from the cell bars and individually place one ripe cell in each mating nuc. About 12-14 days later, inspect the nucs. If you see developing worker brood, your new queen successfully mated and is now ready to sell or use for requeening. If you cage queens, include about seven workers in the cage to take care of the queen. Mating nucs can be used over and over. Just insert a new cell."

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Basics in Northwest Beekeeping

January and February

- Lift the hives to find any light ones. Give these emergency feed of dry sugar or sugar candy on top of the brood frames.
- By the end of January or *early* February, place two Apistan strips (for Varroa mites) in each brood box (four per colony) between the third and fourth frames from the sides. Mark 56 days on your calendar, so you can remove the strips *before* the honey flow arrives.
- Move stores closer to brood area.
- Continue the repair and/or assembly of next year's equipment.
- Dust all colonies three times at seven day intervals with a 2 Tablespoon portion of Terramycin (TM25) mixed with eight parts powdered sugar. Sprinkle on top of brood frames.
- The following flower bloom and pollen vary from year to year, from weeks 5-12, which stimulates brood rearing and winter break-up: pussy willow, crocus, skunk cabbage, flowering plum, tulip bush, filberts, daffodil, dandelion and Oregon grape.
- When daytime highs are above 55 degrees F., start feeding brood pollen supplement and cane sugar syrup in Doolittle or hivetop feeders.
- Without breaking the winter cluster, remove any entrance reducers and screens and slowly clean bottom board without disturbing the bees. Then lightly spray the boards with a vinegar disinfectant solution of three parts vinegar (Heinz Apple Cider Vinegar) to one part water. Replace the entrance reducers if you've used them, and mouse screens.
- Make up or buy at least six 5-ounce pollen supplement patties per colony, storing in the freezer until needed.
- Check stored frames for wax moth infestation.
- Attend beekeeping meetings in your area, to learn, have fun and share.

Thank you to Portland Beekeeper Association members Stephanie Barnes, David Gage, Rosemary Marshall, Ernie McCormack and Bill Ruhl, for Almanac review and suggestions, 1996. Excerpts from Beekeepers Almanac for Northwest Oregon, Beginner Hobbyist Level.



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Oregon State Fair: " "

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Steve McGuire 541-396-3318
V. President: Doug Soules
541-269-7832

Sec./Treas.: Beverly Berklund
541-759-3301

Klamath County

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President: Ken Crow 541-882-1893
V. President: Chet Hamaker
541-882-2404

Lane County

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1155 Chambers St., Eugene
President: Vern Wilson 541-343-2996
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Portland Area

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City

President: Jim Allison 503-663-1058
V. Pres.: Bill Kruger 503-266-7249
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Southern Oregon

Meets 7:30 pm first Monday
S.O. Research & Extension Center
569 Hanley Rd., Central Point

President: Stan Kee 541-664-3238
V. Pres.: John Campbell 541-664-4867
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Tillamook County

Meets 7 pm first Thursday
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4909 Third Street, Tillamook
President: Bob Allen 541-322-3819
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Tualatin Valley

Meets 7:30 pm first Tuesday
OSU Extension Office, 18640 SW Walker
Rd., Beaverton

President: Chuck Sowers 503-636-3127
V. Pres.: Jim Marshall 503-642-3319
Sec./Treas.: Michal Laux 503-591-8864

Willamette Valley

Meets 7:30 pm fourth Monday
Rm. 112, Building 50

Chemeketa Community College, Salem
President: Walt Nichol 503-585-5705 Doug
V. Pres.: Richard Farrier 541-327-2673
Sec.: Ron Bennett 503-838-2328
Treasurer: Fritz Skirvin 503-581-9372

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	
Jan.	5 Southern Oregon meeting
	6 Tualatin meeting
	8 Tillamook meeting
	8 Portland meeting
	13 Lane meeting
	16 Coos meeting
	26 Willamette Valley meeting
Feb.	2 Southern Oregon meeting
	3 Tualatin meeting
	5 Tillamook meeting
	10 Lane meeting
	12 Portland meeting
	20 Coos meeting
	23 Willamette Valley meeting

Bee Classes Announced

Ruhl Bee Supply announced that they will be offering their Winter Beekeeping class sessions again this year. The classes will be held at Ruhl Bee Supply, 12713-B NE Whitaker Way, Portland, and will be taught by Bill Ruhl and Torey Johnson.

While geared to the beginner, the classes are also a good refresher course for the hobbyist. Cost for three classes, which includes handouts, is \$20.

The first series of classes will be Jan. 27, Jan. 29 and Feb. 3, 1998. The second series of classes, a repeat for those who were unable to attend the earlier sessions, will be Feb. 26, March 3 and March 5. All classes meet from 7 - 9 pm.

To register, contact Ruhl Bee Supply at (503) 256-4231.

Check Your Address Label

In order to stay within our operating budget while providing the best publication possible, expiration dates on mailing labels will be monitored and *The Bee Line* cannot be mailed to memberships 60 days past the date code. As an additional service, a membership and publications form will be printed each month. Note additional savings are available when ordering magazines through OSBA.

RUHL BEE SUPPLY **503-256-4231**
 12713 NE WHITAKER WAY
 PORTLAND, OR 97230



Bees, Beekeeping Supplies, Honey, Beeswax
Also carry Extracting Equipment, new & used!

Membership and Publications

Membership in the Oregon State Beekeepers Association is open to anyone who has an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. OSBA membership is \$15 per person and includes a vote in OSBA elections, listing on the World Wide Web Home Page, discounts on other bee related publications, ten issues of *The Bee Line*, and more. If you are already of member of a local group, your group will receive \$1 from your OSBA dues. Foreign membership is \$23.

Name _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone () _____ Local Group _____

Start your savings now! Get a discount on the following subscriptions through the OSBA:

<i>American Bee Journal</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$13.88	_____ 2 yrs. \$26.25	_____ 3 yrs. \$37.46
<i>Gleanings in Bee Culture</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$12.75	_____ 2 yrs. \$24.75	
<i>The Speedy Bee</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$13.25	_____ 2 yrs. \$25.25	

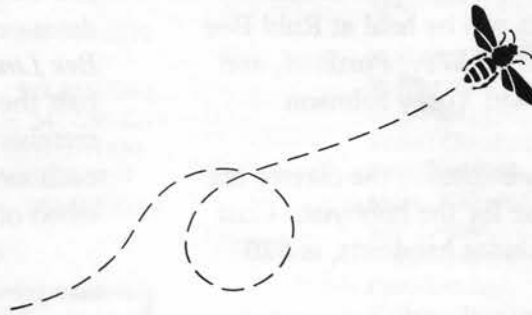
Make checks payable to OSBA and send this form with payment to:

Phyllis Shoemake
 1874 Winchester NW
 Salem, OR 97304

Classified Ads

Classified advertising rates per issue: 30 words, per issue: OSBA members, \$2.00, non-members \$3.00. Copy and payment must be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE. ADS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR, DIANE VARNER, AT P.O. BOX 123, YAMHILL, OR 97148-0123.



The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association
Diane Varner, Editor
P.O. Box 123
Yamhill, OR 97148-0123

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