Annual OSBA Picnic Returns This Month!
This year we revive our long-time summer picnic tradition when we gather at Willamette Mission State Park, Lake B Shelter. Please join us. We look forward to meeting you there!

WHO?
OSBA Members and Families!

WHAT?
Beekeepers, Bee Talk, and More!

Potluck Picnic
Picnic Tables under Shelter and Trees
Coffee, Hot Water for Tea
Running Water, Electrical Power
Horseshoes, Volleyball
Door Prizes and Fun!

Bring—Food and Drink
Tableware/Utensils
$5 for Parking Fee or Oregon State Parks Pass
Optional: Folding Chairs, Tablecloths

Park Regulations
Pets on Leash (less than 6 feet)
Alcoholic Beverages in Moderation
Smoking inside Vehicles
Leave No Trace . . .

WHERE?
Willamette Mission State Park
Lake B Shelter
10991 Wheatland Rd NE
Gervais OR 97026

WHEN?
August 14, 2021
Site Available Sun Up to Sun Down
We’ll eat Lunch around noon with Drawing for Door Prizes at 1:30 PM!

~

Park Information: stateparks.oregon.gov/index.cfm?do=park.profile&parkId=99

OSBA Potluck Picnic

Exit 263 from I-5 (N or S)
From Brooklake Rd NE, turn right on Wheatland; after 2.4 miles, turn left into park.

See you there!
OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OSBA OFFICERS

President
John Jacob—541.582.2337; oldsolbees@gmail.com

Vice President
Joe Maresh—503.703.5060; joemaresh@bctonline.com

Secretary
Karen Finley—541.753.4120; osba.secretary@gmail.com

Treasurer
Joe Hansen—503.824.2265; osba.treasurer@gmail.com

Past President
Harry Vanderpool—503.399.3675; shallotman@yahoo.com

OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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Kathy Cope—541.264.9222; beachwalkinlady@hotmail.com

South Coast
Mureen Walker—541.425.0535; mureen.walker.111@gmail.com

Columbia Basin
Bill Edwards—541.354.2223

Eastern Oregon
Jordan Dimock—541.372.2726

Portland Metro
Tom Cinquini—503.547.5386; tomcinquini@gmail.com

South Central Oregon
Christy VanRooyen—541.885.0959; vanrooyen.christy@gmail.com

Southwestern Oregon
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North Willamette Valley
Steven Coffman—503.838.2981

South Willamette Valley
Tim Wydronek—541.740.4127; timwydronek@comcast.net

AFFILIATED REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 7:00–8:30 PM, fourth Tuesday, virtually
President: Allen Engle—aengle@bendbroadband.com
Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

Columbia County Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, first Thursday, Deer Island
President: Linda Zahl—503.799.7073
Facebook Page: ColumbiaCountyOregonBeekeepers

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers
Meets 6:15 PM, third Wednesday, Hood River
President: Jerry Frazier—jerry1.frazier@gmail.com
Website: gorgebeekeepers.org

Douglas County Bees
Meets 7:00 PM, first Wednesday, Roseburg
President: Robert Baune—541.863.9414
Website: www.douglascountybees.org

Klamath Basin Beekeepers
Meets 9:00 AM, third/fourth Saturday, Klamath Falls
President: Lorena Corzatt—541.892.8402
Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers
Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Eugene
President: Brian McGinley—56magoo@gmail.com
Website: www.lcbaor.org

Linn Benton Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday, Corvallis
President: Everett Kaser—everett@lbba.us
Website: www.lbba.us

Oregon Central Coast Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, fourth Wednesday, Newport
President: Stu Willason—swill29w@gmail.com
Website: www.ccbaor.org

Oregon Prison Beekeepers
Program Manager: Chad.E.Naugle@doc.state.or.us

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, third Tuesday, Gold Beach
President: Jesse Fletcher—beekeeperscoastal@gmail.com

Portland Metro Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, virtually
President: Doug Sieckmann—503.854.5417
Website: portlandmetrobeekeepers.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, first Wednesday, via Zoom
President: Cheryl Wright—cwright80@hotmail.com
Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM, first Monday, Central Point
President: Risa Halpin—rhalpin906@gmail.com
Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook Beekeepers
Meets 1:00 PM, second Saturday, Tillamook
President: Brad York—dbradleyyork@gmail.com
Website: www.tillamookbeekeepers.org

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, last Tuesday, virtually
President: Debby Garman—tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com
Website: tvbabees.org

Willamette Valley Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Salem
President: Richard Furrer—rfurrerfarms@gmail.com
Website: wvbahive.org
Greetings, fellow beekeepers.

After three years of writing these messages I have come to the realization that it is a real challenge, at least for me, to write something that is timely and relevant a month into the future. In today’s fast-moving, volatile times, it certainly seems like anything can happen in the short span of a month or even just a single 21-day brood cycle of the worker bee. That said, even with all the rapidly changing dynamics of drought, extreme heat, raging infernos, and the pandemic, I find myself with the urge to revisit subjects addressed in previous messages. Many of the challenges we face as beekeepers tend to be persistent and have the potential to grow worse over time.

On a positive note, we have made encouraging progress on many of our issues. An example of this is the recent breakthrough in mRNA technology to control Varroa. On the other hand, we may be facing some strong headwinds with our macro business model. I would wager that even in a world without Varroa some of these issues may pose a dramatic paradigm shift for commercial beekeepers. Let’s consider pollination services since there are so many forces at work here and it is central to our business model.

It is well known that most commercial beekeepers generate about 70 percent to 80 percent of their income by providing pollination services, and almond pollination is absolutely the most important cash-flow generator by an order of magnitude. At this point in time, many issues are coming to a head simultaneously, and enough bees to do the job is not one of them. As of January 1, overall managed colony count was up 8 percent and an annual increase in colony numbers has been the trend for the last 3 years (downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/files/rn301137d/nc5819380/t148g6070/hcny0820.pdf). It is quite possible that in the foreseeable future almond pollination could move from being the bedrock that is keeping our trade alive to something we may not be able to rely on at all.

“How could this be?” you may ask.

Currently we have a perfect storm brewing that is composed of climate change, water shortage issues, and technological advancements with robotic bees. Water is life, especially when you are farming in a desert with ever-increasing water demands and continually decreasing water supply. While researching this subject, I learned a new term . . . megadrought. A megadrought can be loosely defined as a hydrological event that is on par with the worst dry spells over the last millennium. Growth rates of trees over the past millennia provide a 1,200-year record of hydrological patterns for the California region. A close examination of these tree rings reveals a growth pattern that shows many droughts that have lasted from 20 to 100 years (www.kqed.org/science/1962273/megadrought-conditions-not-seen-for-400-years-have-returned-to-the-west-scientists-say). The bottom line is that we grow almonds in a historically dry region that is getting even hotter and drier every year. This year we have witnessed extreme temperature records fall throughout the West, deadly wildfires in every direction, and many almond growers have had to abort their crops in an effort to reduce enough water stress on the trees just to keep them alive for a wetter year that may not come in time. The wisdom of ever-increasing acres of almond plantings is highly questionable.

Clearly we do not have enough water to support the current acreage under cultivation. Notably, this is not even taking into account the water for future increases in other crops required to support the growing worldwide demand for food and electricity. We use a lot of water to make electricity.

At the time of this writing, current projections are that Lake Oroville Dam may have to shut down for the first time in history, because there will not be enough water to keep generating electricity, sometime in August. At peak production this dam produces enough electricity to power 800,000 homes. This takes a lot of water considering the following: “. . . Hill took the study one step further and calculated how many gallons of water are required to burn one 60-watt incandescent light bulb for 12 hours a day, over the course of one year. She found that the bulb would consume between 3,000 and 6,000 gallons of water, depending on how water-efficient the power plant that supplies the electricity is” (www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080417173953.htm). That is an astounding amount of water usage per watt. It is a little ironic how much almond growers have been getting lambasted in the media for the one gallon of water per nut figure that has been getting bandied about. Given all the advancements in renewables such as solar, agrivoltaics, wind, tidal, and power storage, it makes some sense to me to use more of our water for crops and less for watts.

Adding to our list of challenges, robotic almond pollination field trials have now been successful in Israel and are now currently planned in Australia and California for next season (http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/184284/robotic-pollination-trials-to-start-in-aus). I know I have covered this topic before; however, I urge you to continue watching this space. It won’t be long before we are competing against fleets of self-driving trucks loaded with robo bees, all in the face...
Danielle, Event Planner

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of a growing water crisis. The ripple effects will be massive, especially for crops pollinated cheaply after almonds, because migratory operations will stop coming to California if it doesn’t pencil well. Crops after almonds are only cheap to pollinate because of an abundant supply of large splittable colonies early in the season. There may be a window where those pollination prices possibly increase; however, if they can figure out robo bees for almonds, it is not too far of a stretch to envision seeing this technology in other crops. Can our industry survive this transition? At the end of the day, it will probably all boil down to brute force economics, which means we will need to be able to do the job cheaper and better. I can only hope that robot honey tastes as terrible as it sounds. Keep in mind that there has recently been a patent granted for “synthetic honey” (patents.google.com/patent/US17264A/en). Our trade organizations will need to be very proactive on this front.

On a lighter note, I look forward to seeing you all at our August 14 picnic at Willamette Mission State Park and at the Fall Conference in Florence. We are all incredibly excited to celebrate our centennial together, in person. We will be working to offer online attendance this year for those who cannot make it in person and as a hedge in case of some new Covid variant that the vaccines don’t cover. Also, please stay tuned for updates on our fundraiser. We are making slow but steady incremental progress, and it won’t be long before we will need everybody’s help spreading the word.

Stay cool, stay safe, and enjoy your bees.  

John Jacob

The 2021 Oregon State Fair begins August 27! The OSBA will make a strong showing again this year in the Creative Living Building, continuing our annual tradition of over 50 years.

“The Great Pollinator” is the theme for our booth. Featuring the #1 job of the honey bee as well as other important pollinators, this will be a great opportunity to educate thousands of people. There’s no better way to grow future beekeepers than intriguing them with the amazing job honey bees accomplish every day. We welcome your suggestions and input, so please share your ideas and resources.

Unfortunately, there has been no announcement from the fair regarding our honey show, so it is canceled. However, we are thrilled to announce that the OSBA will have a special competition for the fair: Carved Beeswax Competition.

Your beeswax submission is to be carved or molded and at least 3 pounds. From rustic to the most intricate designs, we hope to see many participants enter their artful pieces, which will be displayed in our booth. Take this chance to show your stuff! The winner will receive a $50 prize (from proceeds of the honey show auctions at our annual conferences). Entries should be delivered to our booth in the Creative Living Building on August 25.

Volunteers are needed to staff the booth, set up and tear down, and supply nucs for the observation hive. Booth shifts are 10 AM–2 PM, 2 PM–6 PM, & 6 PM–10 PM (11 PM on Friday/Saturday). Volunteers receive free fair admission and parking.

Please put the 2021 Oregon State Fair on your calendar. There’s nothing like being a part of this wonderful event. You’ll make memories and friends to last a lifetime. We need you. Grab a partner and join us!

If you can help or would like more information, please email me at: bonjking@hotmail.com.

Bonnie King, Chair, OSBA Fairs and Exhibits

OSBA Fall Conference: Save the Date!

The OSBA Fall Conference will be held October 22–24 at the Florence Events Center in Florence. We hope to stream the event live for those who may be unable to attend in person. Our speakers will include Juliana Rangel, Samuel Ramsey, Jennifer Berry, Ramesh Sagili, Ellen Topitzhofer, and George Hansen. Additional planning includes workshop, benefit auction, luncheons, and banquet.

Joe Maresh, OSBA Vice President

Note: Information and updates will be posted at orsba.org/2021-fall-conference as soon as they become available.
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President John called the all-Zoom meeting to order at 4 PM.

Attendants were John Jacob, Rebecca Fain, Debby Garman, Joe Maresh, Joe Hansen, Karen Finley, Brad York, Christy VanRooyen, Jan Lohman, Charles Vanden Heuvel, Mike Rodia, Risa Halpin, Cheryl Wright, Marjie Ehry, Kathy Cope, Stewart Willason, and Rosanna Mattingly.

Minutes
We voted to accept the minutes from the last (April 29) meeting as printed in *The Bee Line’s* June 2020 issue.

Treasurer’s Report
Joe Hansen delivered the treasurer’s report. The OSBA is keeping neutral on revenue/expenses. Dues, membership, affiliation fees, and donations make up our 15,400 income for the year to date. Our primary ongoing expense is the monthly stipend paid to Rosanna Mattingly. This stipend, accounting, newsletter, Quickbooks, Zoom subscriptions are very close to income, so we are running even. We are in good shape, considering the lower net but positive income on 2020 conference. Charlie motioned to accept, Rebecca seconded; we all voted to approve the treasurer’s report.

The main order of business was to decide whether or not to hold the fall conference in person, and we did. It’s official, the fall conference will take place October 22–24 at Florence, Oregon. Joe Maresh has some of the speakers lined up (Sam Ramsey, Jennifer Berry) and will now proceed with finalizing the program, contact with the facility, and details surrounding catering and a/v. He thinks he will have this accomplished by the first week of August. There is always a chance that the state will disallow the physical conference. The conference will probably be recorded or live streamed for people who sign up but cannot attend due to conflict or Covid-related issues. We discussed how to ascertain vaccination/Covid risk/people’s comfort/stay out of the news. We’ll encourage people who are feeling ill or high risk or not vaccinated to stay home and attend remotely. Live streaming will be the same registration cost as live attendance.

If the whole thing falls through due to state mandates (remote possibility), we are assuming the conference venue deposit will be credited ahead for the next year. Any down payment for catering is pretty last minute, and we will adjust if registrations are down or costs look too high.

Fall Conference
Our estimated break even on financing the conference is about 250 attendees. Catering is the place to save money if we need to. Rebecca advised Joe to ask Florence about construction around the facility and any potential impacts on parking, etc. Joe said there is a particular need for help with the tech end of the conference, before, during, and after. The 2021 100th anniversary conference committee will include Joe Maresh, Joe Hansen, Jan Lohman, John Jacob, Rebecca Fain, Rosanna Mattingly, and Linda Zahl. Joe said he’d like to be contacted by others interested in putting together the conference.

Regional Reps and Association Presidents’ Reports
Christy VanRooyen (South Central Oregon) said the Klamath Basin beekeepers will hold their first in-person workshop since Covid. The group will talk over some hives about hive nutrition; they are working on building mentoring relationships with a number of new beekeepers. Lots of swarming.

Risa Halpin said that Southern Oregon’s first in-person meeting is coming up. Southern Oregon is very dry, currently there is a heavy honey flow, all are worried about fire season.

Charlie Vanden Heuval said the Columbia Gorge beekeepers are still meeting by Zoom, extension office still closed, and attendance is down on the all-Zoom format. Charlie noted that even first-year nucs and packages swarmed this year.

Linda Zahl said that Columbia County Oregon beekeepers had a year with the most swarming ever, there was no rain and cold during maple bloom. The association is going strong, new members joining weekly. They got a grant with the school district to do a 2-week pollinator camp for kids August 2–August 13, and they would love helpers! She offered her place to stay over. Linda sent a copy of a form she designed to Rosanna and Joe for review. Its purpose is to be used by associations and OSBA to ask if speakers are willing to have their talks recorded, shared, and replayed, and what limits they want on it.

Cheryl Wright said Portland Urban beekeepers will have meetings on Zoom until the end of year, except for their big honey tasting event in December. The PUB bee school is working well, with about 80 students enrolled on Zoom. They offer a rolling admission which allows students to sign up at any time and catch up on talks they have missed. They operate an association apiary at Green Anchors, near Cathedral Park. They have a lot of new beekeepers in the association and at the meetings. Cheryl also noted a year of a lot of swarms, that lots of nucs and packages swarmed, and that there is a lot of activity on swarm site.

Debby Garman said Tualatin Valley beekeepers have a great board. They are happy about an updated swarm call system.
Olivarez Honey Bees, supports innovation and industry leaders who play key roles in beekeeping and sustainability of the industry. Albert Robertson is that leader, inventing the Saskatraz™ Queen Breeding Program in Saskatchewan Canada. OHB is partnering with Albert at our California location to produce Saskatraz™ Hybrid Queens. The Saskatraz™ Program was established with diverse genetics to enrich sustainable economic traits such as:

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with text alerts/rolling messages and mapping. The TVBA benefits a lot by the Intel people in the association. The TVBA website has a matching service for people seeking bee yards/hosting beekeepers. They have regular meetings on Zoom. The association honey house is opening July 16, with some much relaxed Covid rules. People are eager! A team of mentors has been helping people. Dr Caron’s overwintering survey showed that TVBA has had great results from their focus on addressing mite monitoring and treatment. She attributes their success to Steve Gomes’s initiative, making and delivering mite test kits, and the group’s continued attention to education about the importance of mite control.

Kathy Cope said the North Coast has had a year of good forage, great weather for beekeeping, and little rain.

Stu Willason of the Central Coast said beekeepers have good weather and all is green. Their recent first post-Covid in-person meeting focused on hive products, making soaps, lotions, and candles. They are holding revolving meetings at member’s houses, which they are excited about and enjoying. They usually meet at the still-closed Newport Library. The group is currently about 12–14 in size.

Brad York said Tillamook beekeepers have been meeting in person since May, their meetings are usually hive inspections. The area has had many swarms, early honey before blackberry flow, and now blackberries are in full bloom. The Tillamook County Fair will take place as normal, and the association will have participation all 4 days.

Residential Beekeeping

Mike Rodia updated us on his liaison efforts to protect beekeeping in local municipalities. The Klamath Falls situation was reviewed. A beekeeper who has about a dozen hives on his Klamath Falls lot has gotten tangled up with his neighbor, who filed a complaint with the city, and was cited. Mike discovered that there is an unclear city building code, and is now working/advising the city to write one by submitting some samples. Christy VanRooyen said the Klamath Basin association is concerned about a policy result that is detrimental to the beekeepers in the area. Mike found out from a new beekeeper in Stanfield, Oregon, that that town has a code that allows bees in winter months only.

Newsletter/Website

Mike Rodia sent his collection of paperwork and files for Rosanna to try to make available on website as a reference when addressing city/county code/beekeeper issues. She is unable to put the copyrighted material on the website, but found links to city/county codes that she has added. She thanks people for contributing to the newsletter and for honoring the newsletter deadline. And she solicits more articles and news from the membership. The August issue needs a picnic announcement, conference news, and more about fundraising efforts submitted by July 10. Rosanna said most new OSBA members now are asking to be on the swarm call list. She reminds the membership that there are 4 free ads on the website as a benefit of membership. She set up an OSBA MailChimp account and nonmembers are signing up, so there is a way that info can be sent out to a broader group than membership on fairly short notice.

OSU Foundation Funds

Jan Lohman reported that the OSU Foundation-managed funds are all growing, due to the strength of the stock market. They are (current use/endowment): Northwest Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension, and Education ($2,099.11/$108,106.00), OSU Apiculture Endowment Fund ($4,253.31/$80,670.02), Herman A. Scullen Memorial Entomology Fund ($5,109.70/$78,850.91).

Oregon State Fair

Marjie Ehry and her daughter Bonnie King have a great booth planned for OSBA outreach at the state fair and need...
volunteers in all kinds of slots. The state fair runs from August 27 to September 6. Volunteers get in free! Booth set up will occur a few days in advance. The booth’s theme is Pollination. We discussed the value of soliciting involvement of master beekeepers, bee atlas people, and mason bee lovers to talk about other pollinators. These groups could help staff the booth and answer questions, and bring materials for the booth. Kathy Cope offered Bonnie information she uses at her coast county fair that covers other pollinators.

Summer Picnic
We decided to hold a come one, come all picnic to be held at Willamette Mission State Park August 14. It will be a sort of casual potluck, which makes planning and any compliance with health department/Covid rules simpler. People should be urged to bring their own serviceware/silverware and avoid the trash of plastic forks.

Question of the Month
I have seen warnings that my cell phone’s radiation causes Colony Collapse Disorder. How can I avoid this?

There is no credible evidence that cell phone radiation causes colony collapse disorder (CCD) or colony declines. Colony Collapse Disorder was a phenomenon that was reported in 2006, 2007, and 2008 in honey bee colonies across the United States and other parts of the world. The symptoms reported for CCD included the disappearance of majority of the worker bees in a colony leaving behind the queen, ample honey stores, and few young bees. Since 2009, the reports of CCD have declined drastically and are rare, but significant colony losses (averaging 30 percent each year) continue to be reported that are attributed to multiple factors (Varroa mites, viruses, poor nutrition, poor queen quality, pesticide exposure, etc.).

One unproven theory that was prevalent during 2006–2007 was that the cell phone radiation was responsible for bee declines, as cell radiation may interfere with navigation of bees. This theory was debunked, as honey bees use sun compass and landmarks for navigation/orientation, and cell phones cannot interfere with their orientation/navigation. Currently, there is no evidence that cell phone radiation affects bee health.

Ramesh Sagili

New Beekeeper in Tillamook
Tillamook beekeeper, Cody Waldron, took a five-frame nuc to four bee-packed deeps and three supers. We would say “so far,” but it’s as tall as his 6-foot stature. That’s quite a feat for anyone, but Cody is 15 and new to beekeeping. As of two days ago, he had 16 double-sided frames of capped brood! He read that one gets more honey from one strong hive than from three or four splits. Thus, his decision to keep growing it. Cody is a very quiet, soft-spoken person with lots of great ideas. He decided to put a queen excluder UNDER his brood boxes so that the queen couldn’t swarm. It worked. He also puts nine frames in a ten-frame box. The bees love the extra space, and it makes working the hive so much easier. Now, of course, a second queen excluder keeps her out of the one deep and two supers filled with honey. He does plan on splitting the hive when the blackberry flow is over. Cody is quite a thinker. To protect his three newest hives from bears, he decided to put them in an old cattle trailer he had on the property. He’s also decided if the Asian Giant Hornets make it to Tillamook he’ll put a metal mouse guard with the small holes on the hives so the giants can’t get in.

The Tillamook Beekeepers Association is very proud of our youngest new member.

Claire Moody

Centennial Fundraising
Rebecca Fain said she thinks the group needs to adjust the timing, if not the target, of the centennial fundraising campaign for the OSU Honey Bee Lab. Currently we have commitments of $110,000. Rebecca contacted the associations and others and asked for information, ideas about how to reach some bigger potential donors. Many crowdsourcing campaigns have been unsuccessful in the last year, with numbers and amounts of donations down. Rebecca has put together a mock-up of a crowd campaign, and this can be launched in July. Some of the agriculture donors she had identified may be being approached at the same time by OSU’s fundraisers. Finally, hats and t-shirts with new centennial logo order needs attention in July and August. John has followed up on t-shirts printing by exploring 3 suppliers for fulfillment that specialize in fundraisers.

Karen Finley, OSBA Secretary
Keeping Bees in August
Matt Allen

Every month is a busy month for a beekeeper, but August is particularly important. The weather is hot and dry, maybe with the occasional thunderstorm. It feels like the peak of summer, but this critical month is when we need to start thinking towards winter. It’s time to strip the rest of your honey crop. Will they be heavy enough for winter, or will you need to feed? Are there enough bees in the hive? Will the queen be viable until next spring? And probably most important for this month is, Are your mite levels under control?

August is the month to harvest the remainder of your honey. In many locations, even earlier. By mid-August, most marketable honey flows have tapered off. Pull your supers and start to focus on fall. Buckwheat is a notable exception. Be aware that, if you decide to go after this potential honey crop, it may be difficult to get your mite levels under control in a timely manner. Make sure you have a plan in place. More on that later.

Queens availability will also begin to taper off at this point in the year. It is important to realize that new queens will not be available again until next spring. Are your queens laying a strong pattern? Do they have a good retinue? If the colony is weak or spotty, now is a good time to requeen. Requeening now, in concert with timely feeding, allows enough time and resources for a weak colony to turn around and build up before winter. If your queens are failing now, they will be failing in a month and failing in the spring. Failing queens are a major cause of colony loss in the spring. Replace her while you still can. It is generally easier to find queens in August than in September, and definitely easier to find queens in August than in March.

How big are your colonies? If a colony is not solidly filling a box and a half with bees, it will require some additional attention. What is the brood pattern like? If spotty or drone-y, it may need requeening. A steady diet of supplemental protein and sugar syrup may work to build up some small colonies, provided strong queens and healthy brood. Otherwise, it is a good idea to start combining weaker colonies to get them ready for winter. Be sure to ask yourself why a colony may be small before combining. Combining sick colonies with healthy ones may be detrimental to your operation (AFB!!).

There are many opinions regarding supplemental feeding in the fall. At the minimum, it is a good idea to heft your hives to get a feel for weight. If it feels moderate or light, feed. If it hurts your fingers to heft, it might not need feeding. It’s a good idea to look at those extra heavy hives. They could be queenless or weak. Regardless of weight, you might consider supplemental syrup and/or pollen feeding in order to stimulate brood rearing and help carry brood rearing later into the fall. This can help ensure a large healthy young population headed into winter.

Lastly, and probably most importantly for August, is the ever-present issue of Varroa. August is a critical month for Varroa management. Take an alcohol wash sample. August brood will become the bees that raise your winter bees. If you have not read Randy Oliver’s series on Fat Bees, you should. If you have, great. Re-read it. This series does a great job of explaining exactly why you need to have your mite levels down in August and keep them down through the remainder of the brood-rearing season. You can find the article here: scientificbeekeeping.com/fat-bees-part-1. There are 4 parts. Boiling it down, *Fat* winter bees have increased vitellogenin in fat bodies to help carry them through winter and give them the energy and nutrition to commence brood rearing in the early spring. The amount of vitellogenin corresponds directly to how well fed they are as larvae, which corresponds to a large healthy population of nurse bees. The health of these nurse bees depends on having low parasite levels when they were developing. That is why August is so critical. August brood raises the brood that raises winter bees.

A side note: We now know that Varroa feeds not on hemolymph, but directly on fat body tissue (Ramsey et al. 2019). In addition to being critical for winter, the fat body, with vitellogenin, much like our liver, also provides some important detoxification function in bees.

Formic Acid, Thymol, and Amitraz are all reasonable treatments this time of year. Make sure you READ AND UNDERSTAND the label before applying. Each material and formulation of each material has its own requirements for maximum efficacy and beekeeper safety. THE LABEL IS THE LAW! After you treat, take another mite sample to gauge the efficacy of your treatment. For a detailed look at available management tools and monitoring techniques, check out this PDF from the Honey Bee Health Coalition: honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/HBHC-Guide_Varroa-Interactive-PDF. I have noticed a real challenge is not only getting Varroa mite levels low but also keeping them low through the remainder of the fall. Be vigilant and continue treatments as necessary.

Keep in mind, when shopping for feed and treatments, supply houses are backed up this year and may take longer than expected. Plan ahead.

Enjoy the honey harvest. Smile at those big healthy bees.
Happy Beekeeping!
BEEKEEPER EVENTS

2021

Oregon Coast Honey Lovers Festival. Yachats Commons. Please note that this event has been Canceled.


August 14: OSBA Annual Picnic Returns! See page 1.


October 22–24: OSBA 2021 Fall Conference, when we plan again to meet in Florence. Updates: oarsba.org/2021-fall-conference.

Regional News

Regional Representative

North Coast
The weather continues to be close to perfect on the coast with temperatures in the 60s, a combination of sun and cloud cover and even some sprinkles of rain at night. Our blackberry honey flow is well underway. The exuberance of spring flowers has died down a bit, but summer blooms are taking their place, particularly the long-blooming shrubs. And we made it through the Fourth of July without any major wildfires cropping up. This is the time for thinking about honey extraction and mite control. The Tillamook association will be meeting at Claire’s hanger to cover these subjects as well as prepare for their upcoming county fair. Central Coast won’t have a booth this year at the fair since there was so much uncertainty as to whether or not the fair was happening this year. They will be celebrating this beekeeping year with their annual barbecue. It will be a great chance for the beekeepers to get together in person again.

Regional Associations

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers
To say we incurred a heat wave should be no surprise to the majority of the members. Hood River and The Dalles held record temperatures in June reaching highs of 116ºF. Humans with AC may have had some relief, but the girls suffered in the boxes. Of interest, hives visualized externally had minimal bearding and little “fanning” at the entrance. Of some concern is that the poor moisture offered this past spring coupled with extreme heat may have set the stage for increased starvation in coming months. The primary source of nectar in our region comes from the blackberries, but the berry offerings are meager, spotty. Another concern, as typical, is the ability to mitigate the colonies’ mite loads. In years past, treatment temperature periods offered some opportunities, yet this past July frustrated Gorge beekeepers’ efforts to access the meager window dropping below 95ºF. Time will tell if the lack of moisture, extreme heat, and/or Varroa infestation combine or singularly increase an improved winter loss in our colonies. July’s meeting centered around “Honey Bee Communication” – the antennae’s sensor array, pheromones, and tactile receptors in colony business.

Jerry Frazier

Klamath Basin Beekeepers
The Klamath Basin Beekeepers Association had our first in-person meeting since the start of the pandemic on June 26th. It was wonderful to gather with our favorite beeks for a workshop on hive inspection and performing mite tests. We invited the experienced beekeepers of the group to lead the workshop and paired them up with newbies so that everyone had an important role to play as teachers and learners. It was a gorgeous morning at Mountain Valley Gardens, a local nursery where our association has established an apiary to facilitate pollination services and host community educational events. It was great to be back together again!

With the new recommendations about social gatherings in the state, KBBA will return to in-person meetings on the 4th Saturday of each month at 9 AM at the Klamath Basin Research and Extension Center: 6941 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls OR 97603. Our next meeting on July 24 will be focused on honey extraction and the procedures for borrowing and returning association extraction equipment. We hope to see you there.

In other news, our association recently held elections and confirmed new officers on the board. The board wishes to extend heartfelt gratitude to Paul Davitt for his years of exceptional service as KBBA president. As part of our educational outreach, KBBA will be at the Klamath County Fair (August 5–8) to share honey and teach people about the valuable role bees play in our community.

Christy VanRooyen

Oregon Central Coast Beekeepers
We had our first in-person association meeting in over a year last month in one our member’s huge Ag building. It sure was nice to see everyone again, and to see everyone without the aid of a computer monitor. It almost felt normal again. It was a hands-on meeting where we all got a chance to make honey soap. Becca Fain, our past president, brought soap-making materials and instructed us on how to create our own molded honey soap. It was sort of like a modified chemistry class from the old
school days. It was not only fun but also we all took home several fresh bars of soap. Jim Parrish, an association board member, demonstrated how to make wax candles. Hopefully, our regular meeting facility at the Newport Library will open before the summer is over.

So far it has been a great year for bees along the coast. Colonies built up quickly in the warm spring, and honey production has been excellent. Many members have reported great honey production and are in the process of taking off honey supers. However, the blackberry blossoms are fading, and we have seen a lot of hornet and wasp activity. Sure signs that we are entering the heart of the dry summer season. We have also seen more than usual bear activity in the foothills along the coast. Thus, it looks like both bees and beekeepers will be becoming more defensive as the summer wears on.

Stu Willason

PORTLAND METRO BEEKEEPERS

Even though the State of Oregon officially “reopened” from the 15-month COVID-19 pandemic, the Portland Metro Beekeepers Association continues to hold monthly virtual meetings. Our local meeting location (Gladstone Senior Center) has not reopened yet, so we continue via Zoom. Our July meeting focused on extractions. Videos of extractions were shown, with PMBA association VP Paul Stromberg, association members Jeff Bonadurer, David Martinez, and Kerry Haskins each showcasing different methods of uncapping, extraction, and filtering of honey frames. From a simple “hot knife” and capping scratcher to an automated uncapping machine, a 4-frame transverse manually cranked extractor to a 20-frame motorized radial extractor, members were shown a full spectrum of extraction options. Thanks to Paul, Jeff, David, and Kerry for each demonstrating their extraction processes.

We held a “trifecta sale” in mid-July selling bulk sugar, Starr Farms queens, and Formic Pro treatments at cost to members. It was a busy afternoon, and hopefully more convenient to have all occur on the same day and location. Several association members have opened their yards and apiaries for hive tours and inspections. Tours of three members’ apiaries were given in July. Thanks to PMBA President Doug Sieckmann and association members David Martinez and Dave Schwartz for hosting these tours.

Our annual PMBA picnic is a “go” for this year. It will be held August 14th at Max Patterson Park in Gladstone, from noon to 4 pm. The PMBA will provide grilled meats. Bring your own chair(s), a potluck dish of salad, side dish, beverages or dessert, and join us for the festivities. There will also be ample prizes offered for giveaway.

The entire Pacific Northwest, including the Portland metro area, experienced “crazy hot” weather at the end of June. Many inquiries and ideas were floated on the PMBA Facebook page with concerns for our colonies’ welfare. The end consensus was the bees know better than us how to cool their homes. Ensuring an ample supply of water, removing...
any metal roofing, and potentially providing a means to shade the hive(s) from direct sunlight are methods offered to help the bees.

By early July, the end of blackberry blossom and nectar flow ended. We are entering into dearth in our local area. Honey supers are being removed, and hives are being assessed for overall size; mite counts and treatments are underway for those requiring treatments. With dearth comes robbing and the appearance of our nemesis, the yellowjacket. Healthy hives, entrance reducers, and robbing screens will help our hives continue grow and build up again until the fall. We are all being vigilant with mite sampling and required treatments as we prepare our hives for the remainder of summer and early fall. We all want our hives strong and disease/pest free as fall approaches.

While the major nectar flow in our area has finished, there are still plenty of resources around the yards and farms in our area. I’ve seen stands of Sunflower, Cosmos, Zinnia, Phacelia, Borage, Lavender, and Echinacea. These sources are always appreciated by our hard-working bee friends.

**Portland Urban Beekeepers**

You can imagine my surprise recently, sitting at about 6,500 feet up on the side of Mt. Saint Helens, to turn my head towards a clump of flowers next to me and see a lovely bee buzzing around its blooms. Impressive, I thought, to come all this way up, as there weren’t many options for it up there. Then a few moments later, a hummingbird did some flybys past my head, and I couldn’t fathom why a hummingbird would be so far up, though I was wearing a deep pink t-shirt. But all that seemed reasonable compared to seeing three different pollinators (a wasp which landed on my finger, some kind of bumblebee, and another bee) at the very top of the mountain, 8,360 feet up with only pumice and rock in sight. The bumblebee appeared to float on the drafts the way a bird might do, except that its wings were beating feverishly and it hovered in place for several minutes, almost like it was enjoying it (I know, a bit anthropomorphic). I did some research when I was back at sea and I couldn’t off and honey to sell. The observation hive is always a hit. This year we decided not to mark the queen and to give out stickers that have “I found the queen” on them with a rather accurate picture of a queen.

We’ve started doing our own Tillamook version of “What to do in the Apiary this Month.” With so many new beekeepers, that was a big hit. The educational portion of the meeting was a demo of how to extract honey using a manual extractor. We’re encouraging new members to go ahead and extract a frame or two to enter into the county fair and to simply enjoy as a reward for their first year as a beekeeper. Young Cody Waldron got about a gallon from just two deep frames.

After the meeting we traveled to Rose Harrell’s home to take a close up look at her Layens hive. One person has already ordered two, and others are talking about it as we get too old to lift even an eight-frame hive box.

**Tualatin Valley Beekeepers**

Tualatin Valley beekeepers continue to meet via Zoom for the immediate future, but we are beginning the process to plan an in-person monthly member meeting in September.

Our area had a great swarm year with 58 swarms reported via our new software (thanks, PUB!), and the honey harvest was looking good up to the big heat wave. Members reported taking precautionary measures with protecting hives and/or significant bearding in response to the heat, but no colony losses due to heat were reported.

We had our last successful small group in-person field day on July 31 educating on honey harvest, mite treatment, and colony prep for fall, and are grateful to our mentors and host locations.

**Dave Schwartz**

Nancy Waldbillig is always appreciated by our hard-working bee friends.

**Tillamook Beekeepers**

Another Saturday bee association meeting was held today. We started with a garden tour. The bees’ current favorites are borage, bachelor buttons, veronica, bread seed poppies, and catmint. Our August meeting will be canceled due to the county fair, August 11th through the 14th. We had a plethora of volunteers which will come in handy since our booth space expands every year. As always, we will have a hive to raffle off and honey to sell. The observation hive is always a hit.

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**Claire Moody**

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**Debby Garman**
We celebrate National Honey Bee Day on August 21!

A fun coloring book to find its way into Oregon schools this fall can be shared: foodhero.org/sites/foodhero-prod/files/health-tools/BeeBook_smaller.pdf. For more information and activities, visit: foodhero.org/bees.

**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.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as events, corrections, comments, questions, photographs and stories, interviews, recipes, points of view—and ads/advertising—to: Rosanna Mattingly, _The Bee Line_, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: osba.newsletter@gmail.com. It’s your newsletter—we want to hear from you!

The next issue to be printed will be the **September** issue, 2021. The deadline for submitting copy is **August 10, 2021**. Please let me know if you find difficulties with the deadline so we can work out the space and timing for the material.

_May all be well!_