The Bee Line

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Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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Oregon Master Beekeeper Program
A Joint Venture of OSBA and the Oregon State University Extension Service
info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org

Image above: Fairs and Exhibits Chair Bonnie King displays our banner outside the Floral Building in Salem, where volunteer beekeepers greeted hundreds of visitors each day of the 2021 Oregon State Fair (see page 5). Additional photos of the 2021 Oregon State Fair along with Honey Show winners are at: orsba.org/events/2021-oregon-state-fair.

A (Very) Brief Fall Conference Preview!

In 2021, we find ourselves in another year of "firsts"—for the fall conference, this is our first *hybrid*. Very fine, enthusiastic presenters will share their learning and experience, add to our understanding of the honey bee and colony management, and enrich our own experience of all things *bee*. Traditional on-site activities will add to the fun of being together. Whether attending in person in Florence or joining in online, we look forward to seeing you!

Jennifer Berry

Samuel Ramsey

Presenters **Jennifer Berry**, University of Georgia, and **Samuel Ramsey**, USDA Beltsville, both of whom are joining us via Zoom this year, will contribute to our understanding of current research regarding welcome management options for *Varroa destructor*. In addition, Samuel Ramsey will update us on his research on a mite that poses a serious treat to *Apis mellifera* in Asia, *Tropilaelaps mercedesae*.

Ramesh Sagili

Steve Sheppard

Ramesh Sagili, Oregon State University, will also address Varroa and provide updates on nutrition, impacts of wildfires, and other aspects of his research program. **Steve Sheppard**, Washington State University, will tell the story of the re-introduction of Caucasian honey bees to the US.

Juliana Rangel

Ellen Topitzhofer

Queens too will have their day. **Juliana Rangel,** Texas A&M, will take on factors that affect the quality of queens and drones, and **Ellen Topitzhofer**, Oregon State University, will add to our understanding of overwintering queen banks. We will have additional opportunities to ask questions during a panel on queen rearing moderated by **Andony Melathopoulos** (page 7) with **Todd Balsiger**, **Karen Finley, Matt Hansen, and Paul Stromberg**.

Todd Balsiger

Karen Finley

Matt Hansen

Paul Stromberg

Amy Bartow

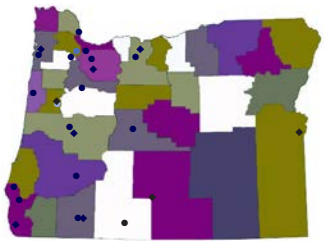
Priya Chakrabarti Basu

Emily Carlson

Among those who will add to our understanding of honey bee nutrition are **Amy Bartow**, NRCS Corvallis, and **Jennifer Berry**, University of Georgia (above), who will provide resources for plantings and acknowledge the value of what we often call *weeds,* respectively. We will get further into weeds of another kind with **Priya Chakrabarti Basu**, Mississippi State University, and **Emily Carlson**, Oregon

Continued on page 7

OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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South Willamette Valley
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• 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: Noah Clipp—541.254.4052; noahtitus@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 Farrier—rfarrierfarms@gmail.com
Website: wvbahive.org

Message from the President

By the time this message is published, we will be just a few short weeks away from our Centennial Fall Conference, and with any luck we will still be meeting in person. A respite on the Oregon coast out of the oppressive smoky air of the inland valleys sounds divine at this moment. Please register for either live-stream or in-person attendance as soon as you can. It will really help with planning. Either way that you choose to attend, we have a Centennial to celebrate and funds to raise for the Honey Bee Lab. Not many organizations have made it to the 100 mark. This speaks to our long history of great volunteers and our strong community. We couldn't do it without you. Together we can get through these trying times and lay the foundation for another 100 successful years by supporting research and each other.

Our next 100 years will begin in about three months, and it looks like we will be facing one of the greatest challenges to our occupation that we have seen in at least a century. Not to beleaguer the point regarding drought and water resources, but there are some massive changes coming. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act begins implementation, in earnest, in 2022. If you or your growers in California do not know what the SGMA is, please educate them and yourselves as soon as possible. The best estimates I can find right now are suggesting that the SGMA will ultimately result in 500,000 to 1,000,000 acres of farmland being fallowed. Here are a couple resources that you can use:

aquaoso.com/resources/sgma-california/#uncertainty-new-norm

www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/feb/27/california-groundwater-sgma-law-what-does-it-mean

"How could this be possible?" you may be wondering. Water is the key driver of California's 50 billion dollar annual agricultural economy. For most beekeepers, it is the participation in this economy that pays the largest chunk of our bills. We are coming off a year where many irrigation districts received 50 percent or less of their contracted surface water allotment as a result of drought-induced water scarcity. This has been an ongoing problem in many parts of California, and to overcome the uncertainty of unreliable surface water allotments for ever-increasing acres of almonds most growers have been drilling more and deeper wells to get at the ever-diminishing supply of groundwater in deep aquifers. This grower mitigation strategy is all about to come to a grinding and possibly not-so-gradual halt.

Prior to the SGMA, if a farmer owned the land, they essentially owned all the water they could pump from underneath it. The SGMA will essentially make this no longer the case. The act will require metering of all groundwater usage and impose strictly regulated usage allotments. If the 2022 surface water doesn't come through the canal system due to another dry winter, it will take about 3 acres worth of the groundwater allotment to properly grow one acre of mature bearing almond trees. At this point not every well is metered, but that day is coming faster than most people realize. Growers in the know are already modifying their planting strategies, although it seems many are operating completely unaware.

It is all too easy to rush to a quick judgment about "big brother" stepping in and over-regulating, but this is a very complex issue involving all facets of society. In addition to the agricultural ramifications, there are several huge issues that the SGMA hopes to address, all revolving around long-term water and infrastructure sustainability. One consideration is the fact that some of California's aquifers have been so depleted that many residential wells have gone dry or have become contaminated by saltwater intrusion. There are vast communities in California with undrinkable or no tap water due to over-pumping of groundwater. To complicate matters, once an aquifer has become severely depleted, there is a phenomenon that occurs called *subsidence*. This means that an aquifer becomes so depleted that the ground above it begins to sink. Subsidence occurs where there is substantial groundwater pumping and oil and gas drilling occurred. When subsidence occurs, it puts roads, canals, bridges, and pretty much all infrastructure at risk. These represent trillions of dollars of public goods that hard-working taxpayers must shoulder the burden of fixing. Half of all measured subsidence in the United States has occurred in California, and the numbers are staggering. Some areas have sunk as much as 29 feet! This land will be forever flood prone. For a quick read on the subsidence issue, check out the link: www.watereducation.org/aquapedia/land-subsidence.

These are very complex issues with no easy solutions. California is the produce basket to the world and by most estimates feeding the world at current production rates will be a real challenge by 2050, if not sooner. One thing is certainly clear, we can only do this with enough bees and water. Drought beekeeping is both a science and an art that has a clear negative impact on our bottom line. If we begin to lose almond contracts due to water shortages, a paradigm shift will be in order. I am not sure what the new model will look like, but clearly it is time to sharpen our pencils and develop some backup plans.

A new century beckons and, as scary as some of the issues that we face are, I feel lucky to be a part of such a crafty and resourceful group known as the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. Our business models may change; our love for bees never does. I look forward to facing these challenges together and seeing as many of you as possible in Florence. If we end up not being able to meet in person for reasons beyond our control, please stay tuned for updates. We learned a lot last year and can improve upon our successes; however, we are really looking forward to seeing everyone in Florence.

John Jacob

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Creating a Buzz at the Oregon State Fair

Bonnie King

The 2021 Oregon State Fair (August 27 through September 7) went really well, especially considering the short notice and ongoing COVID risk.

Though we didn't learn there would be a fair until late June and the handbook was not released for weeks after that, our booth came together without a hitch and the "Honey and Products from the Hive" competition went forward after all. Perhaps fewer than a typical year, there was a strong showing of entries by Oregon beekeepers.

"The Great Pollinator" was the theme of our State Fair booth this year, featuring displays from the Bee Atlas Group and Oregon Bee Project. They were very intriguing, especially the intact bumble bee nest, encouraging discussions about pollination and the benefits as well as differences between honey bees and other bees, and so much more.

Observation hive coordinator, Jeremy Mitchell, was featured on KOIN TV News the first morning of the fair. He and his wife, Delsey, were "live" in our booth @6:30 AM with news personality Kohr Harlan. The Mitchells did a wonderful job representing the OSBA and giving the on-air talent a little much-needed education about honey bees and Oregon beekeeping.

Shonnard's Garden Center, from Corvallis, generously supplied beautiful bee-loving plants that brought a lot of color and some nice aromas to the booth. Lists of plants that attract honey bees were some of the most popular handouts.

For the first time, our booth was located in the Floral Building, just next to Columbia Hall where we've been for many years. Because of this, it was vitally important to get our banner on the outside of the building to let people know where we were. If we are in the same place next year, we will work to get more signage outside on all sides of the building.

Behind the Scenes: Steven Brigger, David Martinez, and Christian King.

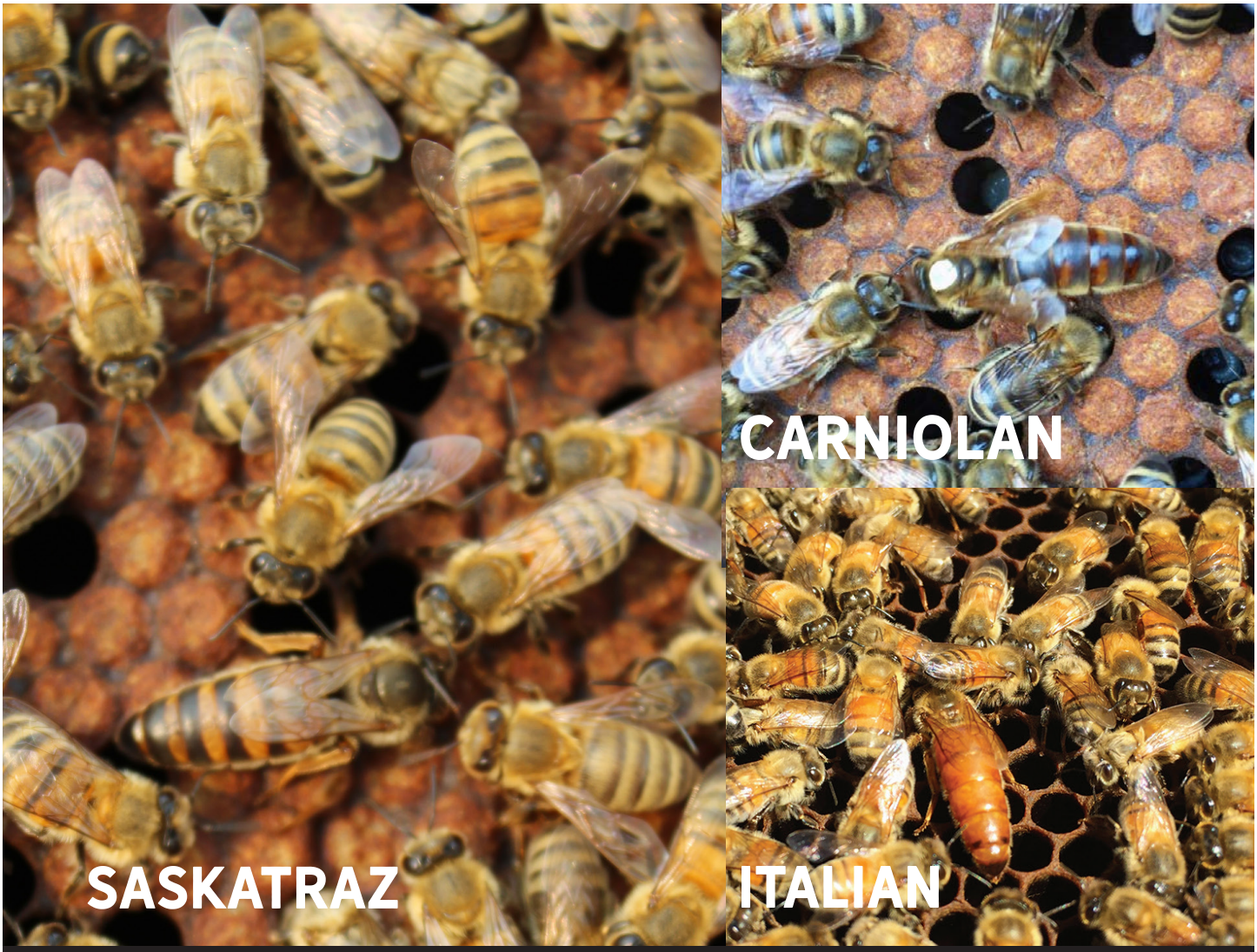
Set up began 3 days before the fair. Volunteers Steven Brigger and David Martinez came through for both set up and tear down, along with my son, Christian King.

The booth was nice and spacious, allowing us to have many displays and to give our visitors plenty of room for "social distancing." Kathy Cope from the Central Coast supplied posters for the booth that she has used as learning tools in school presentations, and many people took photos of the information. Marjie Ehry brought antique honey bee-related glassware and a chronology of rare old smokers, thus creating a real buzz among collectors of all ages. Speaking of "all ages". . . young and old alike were thrilled to receive a honey stick filled with raw, local Oregon honey when they visited our booth, compliments of Glenn Peters, of Nature's Kick Original Honeystix, headquartered in Salem, Oregon. It was a wonderful way to break the ice with visitors and help them remember how sweet our booth was!

Attendance was better than expected and hundreds of people came through our booth every day. Luckily, I didn't hear any really difficult stories of dealing with non-mask-wearing folks. We did squeak by with volunteers, though many shifts were run by just one person and a few people handled 2 or 3 shifts. (Special thank yous to Steve Gomes, David Martinez, Mike Rodia & Nick Van Calcar.) One of the most asked questions this year was, "Do you have a Murder Hornet?"—to which the answer was, "Unfortunately, no." Murder hornets were a popular subject and gave us opportunities to share even more about the benefits of honey bees. The information most asked about was "how to become a beekeeper." The handout listing association meetings went home with many a future beekeeper, possibly looking for veteran beekeeper mentors.

The Portland Metro Beekeepers Association was able to fill all the shifts for an entire day, a tradition for their group and others, but it was a challenge for most to take a whole day under the circumstances. Some volunteers had to cancel and many wrote to let me know they would do it next year if the risk is less. Joe Hansen brought 2 nucs for the observation hive, which were changed out on a regular basis throughout the fair. Finding the elusive "Queen with the white dot" was the number one activity for most visitors. As is always the case, the bees were the star of our booth, and the whole building for that matter. Dozens of times, fairgoers told us, "The fair wouldn't be the same without seeing the bees!" And, "We'll be back next year!"

I really appreciate all of our amazing volunteers for being such great ambassadors for the future of beekeeping. You are part of an OSBA tradition of over 50 years. Thank you!



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Keeping Bees in October

Harry Vanderpool

After a very long, hot, dry, smoky, sweaty summer season, light is appearing at the end of the tunnel for 2021. Hold up; there are still things to do, as there always is in beekeeping.

One of the most disappointing things in early spring is hives full of dead bees due to starvation. These hives are often the largest, most impressive populations in fall and winter that simply ran out of honey stores. And, of course, they died *right* before you needed them most. October usually gives us a chance to assure adequate honey stores before the big cool down.

We have found it very beneficial to take time in early October and tilt (not lift) every single top box and assess weight. This also gives us a last peek and an opportunity to remove any residual treatment materials. We place a square of painter's tape on hives with a number from 0 to 5.

Zero means, *honey bound*, do not feed; 5 means that the hive will need multiple shots of syrup, etc. This does take time, but saves money and places focus on target.

Another disappointment we try to avoid is small clusters. Every year in early spring there is talk of combining hives in order to improve frame count. We prefer to make combines in the fall. Combines in spring often struggle and continue to shrink in our experience. Fall combines often give an appearance of getting back on track. These may need feeding as their time to profile the brood nest is short.

While Varroa control strategies should be mostly complete at this time, we all know that there is variation in *Everything*. Regardless of mite sampling, there will always be outliers with elevated mite populations. Addressing this, we have adopted the practice of conducting an oxalic vapor treatment on all hives before leaving each location for each visit.

Mice are looking for a nice warm home as temps cool down. We make extra effort to assure that mouse guards are in place early. Comb area chewed away this year will result in drone comb area next year. Varroa would just love to see that! Don't let it happen.

Lumber prices have skyrocketed this year. Taking extra steps to protect your hives and equipment as well as the bees is smart money. We like to have our hives covered with felt (not tar paper) prior to November in order to reduce moisture on and in hives. Freezing and thawing in unprotected hives can rapidly accelerate the decomposition of pine components especially.

Speaking of equipment, when is the last time you packed or changed the wheel bearings on your trailers? How about your truck's transfer case fluid? Differential oil? Forklift maintenance?

Whew! How can anyone keep up with everything?

I like to carefully review the maintenance schedules for each piece of equipment, make lists, and get everything in top form in fall and winter. Otherwise, we will not have much time for "break down maintenance" during the next busy season. It's beekeeping; never a moment to spare. Have a GREAT off season!

Fall Conference—*Continued from page 1*

State University, who—along with **Juliana Rangel** (page 1)—will be adding pesticide concerns to the mix.

Marjie Ehry

George Hansen

Andony Melathopoulos

And there are other worlds yet to explore. We and our questions will be invited into that of honey show judging with **Marjie Ehry**, Happy Bee; into that of Project Apis m. research with **George Hansen**, Foothills Honey Company; and into that of Oregon's approximately 600 native bees with **Andony Melathopoulos**, Oregon State University. Indeed!

Dewey Caron

Workshops Our preconference events include two workshops on Friday, one in the morning with **George Hansen** (above) engaging us hands-on in techniques involved in encaustic painting and the other in the afternoon with **Dewey Caron** focusing on beekeeping nitty gritty for those of us who are just getting started or reviewing the basics.

Events & Registration Our experience is further enriched by our traditional Honey Show, Luncheons/Banquet, and Benefit Auction as well as our not-so-traditional online Silent Auction, which will end at 10 PM on October 23. We can begin participating now in preparing entries for the Honey Show and donating items to the auctions. For more information, including guidelines and establishments offering discounted rates in Florence, please see the September 2021 newsletter issue or visit: **orsba.org/2021-fall-conference**. Some events require separate registration. The deadline for posting mail-in registration is Friday, **October 8**. Online registration ends on Friday, **October 22, at 10 AM**. Registration will remain open after that time with access to recorded conference proceedings. Registration on site begins Friday, **October 22, at 5 PM**. Please join us!

Thank you to all, including our Exhibitors, Advertisers, and Break Sponsors, for helping make this possible.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association

2021 Fall Conference Registration Form

October 22, 23 & 24, 2021

Florence Events Center | Florence, Oregon

Please fill out clearly and completely!

Name:_____Date:_____

Additional Family Members Attending:_____

Company:_____

*Mailing Address:_____

City:_____State:_____Zip:_____

Contact Phone:_____*email:_____

Attending in person:_____ Attending online: _____ Undecided _____

*Conference programs will be mailed to online and undecided participants. Should we need to go virtual, they will be mailed to everyone. Email addresses are required for providing online access to conference proceedings, available to registrants until December 31, 2021.

Event			Cost
Friday Night Hospitality Room			Complimentary
Full Conference[1]	Individual - $150 Family - $180		$
Encaustic Painting (Limit: 30)[2]	$20 per Person	Number Attending:_____	$
Beekeeping Basics (Limit: 40)	No Additional Cost	Number Attending:_____	$
Saturday Luncheon	$22 per Person	Number Attending:_____	$
Saturday Banquet	$50 per Person	Number Attending:_____	$
Sunday Luncheon	$22 per Person	Number Attending:_____	$
Note: Please indicate any special dietary needs, including vegetarian: _____			
Research Donation[3]			$
Annual OSBA Dues[4]	$40 per Person	Number:_____	$
TOTAL[5, 6]			$

[1] Attendees qualify for preregistration rate if application form (with registration fee) is postmarked on or before October 8. No refunds after October 8, 2021. Late and on-site registration rates are: Full Conference, $190.00; Full Conference Family, $220.00.

[2] Children attending the workshop must be accompanied by an adult.

[3] The Oregon State Beekeepers Association is classified as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Research donations made out to the OSBA may be deductible; please consult your accountant.

[4] Please include completed membership form(s).

[5] Checks payable to OSBA; mail with completed registration form, postmarked no later than October 8, to: **Oregon State Beekeepers Association, 2021 Fall Conference, PO Box 10, Aurora OR 97002**.

[6] Hotel reservations are not included in these costs. Special rates may be available. See: orsba.org/2021-lodging-and-meals for updates.

Tentative Conference Agenda

Friday, October 22

10:00 AM–NOON **Encaustic Painting Workshop*** (Events Area)
George Hansen, Foothills Honey Company

1–4 PM **Beekeeping Basics** (Auditorium)
Dewey Caron, University of Delaware, Emeritus

3:00 PM **Executive Committee Meeting** (Conference Room)

5–6:00 PM Submit Honey Show Entries (Green Room)

5–7:00 PM **Registration** & Submit Auction Items (Lobby)

Online Silent Auction Ongoing

7:00 PM **Evening Social** (Events Area)

Saturday, October 23

7:00 AM **Registration** (Lobby)

7:45 AM **Welcome & Announcements** (Auditorium)
John Jacob or ***Joe Maresh***, OSBA

8:00 AM **Varroa After the Fat: Current Research Endeavors to Fight the Mite**
Samuel Ramsey, USDA Bee Research Lab, Beltsville, via Zoom

8–9 AM Submit Honey Show Entries (Green Room)

9:00 AM **Wrap Up of Multiple Research Projects Testing the Efficacy of Oxalic Acid for Controlling *Varroa destructor* in Honey Bee Colonies**
Jennifer Berry, University of Georgia, via Zoom

10:00 AM Break (Lobby | Exhibitor Area)

10:30 AM **Bee Research You Can Use: An Update of Project Apis m. Funded Research**
George Hansen, Foothills Honey Company

11:15 AM **Pesticide Risk to Honey Bees: Does the Landscape Make the Poison?**
Emily Carlson, Oregon State University

NOON Break

12:15 PM **Luncheon*** (Events Area)
The Reintroduction of Caucasian Honey Bees to the United States
Steve Sheppard, Washington State University

1:45 PM **Research Updates from OSU: Varroa, Bee Nutrition, Impacts of Wildfires, and More**
Ramesh Sagili, Oregon State University

2:30 PM **Nutritional Ecology of Honey Bees in a Changing Landscape**
Juliana Rangel, Texas A&M University

3:30 PM Break (Lobby | Exhibitor Area)

4:00 PM **What You Always Wanted to Know About Judging and Marketing Oregon's Wonderful Honeys**
Marjie Ehry, Happy Bee

4:30 PM **General Membership Meeting** (Auditorium)

6:00 PM Social Hour (Events Area)

7:00 PM **Banquet*** (Events Area)
Take a Walk on the Wild Side: Oregon's Weird and Wonderful Native Bees
Andony Melathopoulos, Oregon State University

Benefit Auction to Follow (Events Area)

10:00 PM Online Silent Auction Ends

Sunday, October 24

7:00 AM **Registration** (Lobby)

7:45 AM **Welcome & Announcements** (Auditorium)
John Jacob or ***Joe Maresh***, OSBA

8:00 AM **Weeds for Bees**
Jennifer Berry, University of Georgia, via Zoom

9:00 AM **Strategies for Establishing Season-Long Native Habitat and NRCS Cost-Share Programs**
Amy Bartow, NRCS Corvallis

9:45 AM Break (Lobby | Exhibitor Area)

10:15 AM **Factors that Affect the Reproductive Quality of Queens and Drones**
Juliana Rangel, Texas A&M University

11:15 AM **Multiple-Pronged Approach to Protecting Bee Health**
Priya Chakrabarti Basu, Mississippi State University

NOON Break (Lobby | Exhibitor Area)

12:15 PM **Luncheon*** (Events Area)
Panel: Raising Queens and How They Fit into Beekeeper Operations
Andony Melathopoulos, Oregon State University, Moderator, with ***Todd Balsiger***, ***Karen Finley***, ***Matt Hansen***, and ***Paul Stromberg***

1:20 PM Honey Auction (Events Area)

1:45 PM **Overwintering Queen Banks in Oregon**
Ellen Topitzhofer, Oregon State University

2:30 PM Break (Lobby | Exhibitor Area)

2:45 PM **Fight the Mite Thailand Edition: Understanding the Mysterious Tropilaelaps Mite**
Samuel Ramsey, USDA Bee Research Lab, Beltsville, via Zoom

3:45 PM **Final Comments & Adjourn**
John Jacob or ***Joe Maresh***, OSBA

*Added cost in addition to Registration. Children must be accompanied by an adult for Encaustic Painting Workshop.

Shonnards
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BEEKEEPER EVENTS

2021

October 22–24: OSBA 2021 Fall Conference. Florence, Oregon, and Online. *Information and updates*: orsba.org/2021-fall-conference. *Registration*: Pages 8–9.

November 16–18: California State Beekeepers Association Convention 2021. *Information*: www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/annual-convention.

2022

August 26–September 5: Oregon State Fair. Salem.

October 1–2: Washington State Beekeepers Association JamborBEE Conference. Othello, Washington.

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REGIONAL NEWS

Regional Representative

North Coast

The coast continues to enjoy beautiful weather. Dry, warm days are punctuated occasionally by cool, foggy weather, often the result of high temperatures over in the valley. Summer flowers are being replaced by asters and goldenrod, and it's time for beekeepers to start checking their hives for signs of winter preparation.

I spent four hours in the OSBA booth at the Oregon State Fair this year. I admit that I found the experience a little daunting. I haven't been around that many people for over two years and it was a little strange. But the booth was as enjoyable as ever. This year OSBA expanded their messaging to include pollination and native pollinators rather than just concentrating on honey bees. Honey bees were still the primary draw (particularly the bees in the observation hive!), but quite a few people were fascinated by the display cases showing bees ranging from ones so small as to barely be seen to the giant queen bumble bees. These displays opened up conversations about the differences between bees that form colonies and the solitary bees, including their pollinating habits. More than one person left vowing to spend more time out in the gardens just watching what was actually flying around rather than taking it all for granted. Kudos to the folks who managed to put this all together! I really hope we are in a different place next year with this virus and that people will be able to volunteer at the booth without misgiving. It's truly a good experience whether you are a long-time beekeeper or just starting. *Kathy Cope*

Regional Associations

Central Oregon Beekeepers

October. Traditionally the month to celebrate the finish of harvest. In Central Oregon there's a pretty stark and obvious difference between the "haves" and the "have nots," with respect to water at least. Don't know about other areas of the state, but with the dramatically low reservoir levels, warm weather, and lack of rain from June to September, many of those with low seniority water rights frequently look more like a dust bowl picture, while some with more seniority rights look downright lush. We are all pushing for a generous snowpack for the next several years. On a less financially serious impact note, some of our hobbyists have had to move colonies from traditional forage crops to newer ones with more water. One interesting note was that some of the natural forage (rabbit brush in particular) seemed to have an excellent bloom and seemed to be an outstanding source. Some of us always spend time through September covering our delicate veggies each cold night in hopes of getting even a couple more items ripened given shorter days and colder nights. (Kind of like Don Quixote and his windmills.) October is when most of us either forget one night, or we have a really hard frost. It's kind of cathartic really.

We were excited to hear that several Central Oregon members helped with the OSBA booth at the Oregon State Fair. Central Oregon, like much of Oregon, had another smoky summer. I'm looking forward to hearing from others at the OSBA Fall Conference what the actual impacts to beekeeping were. We are hearing lots of anecdotal reports (more defensive, less productive, less overall activity, lower brood production). It may be that this is the new norm, so it would be great to work to mitigate smoke-caused problems. With the new limitations and Covid numbers, we've decided to temporarily return to online meetings. In September we had a field day instead of an in-person meeting, and we're examining other opportunities. Hopefully we'll return to in person soon.

Hope to see you all at the OSBA conference this year, and best wishes making it through the winter successfully. *Allen Engle*

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

Weather! If it ain't raining it is shining! Our typical spring weather vacillates between moisture in the form of rain coupled with cold temperatures to intermittent period of no rain and above sixty-degree days. BUT 2021 failed to fall into line of normalcy. Our spring lacked the needed moisture, but was great for the bees as they were able to forage. Then onto the nectar flow (blackberries in the western Columbia Gorge region), which was not a bumper crop. Advancing forward to October, we find Mt Adams and Hood to be devoid of any snow. In fact, Mt Hood's glacier is disappearing. This of course translates to a dismal dearth period for our girls. Those beekeepers prone to offering sugar syrup are finding the colonies ravishing the liquid faster than it can be supplied. The Varroa mite counts have been high this season requiring repeated treatments back to back. All that said, no losses have been witnessed thus far. What will this season bring to winter survival? Only time will tell. In the distant past, CGBA held its meetings at the Hood River Extension Service. Like all associations throughout Oregon, that has not been allowed. We continue to offer Zoom meetings, but long for the day of meeting in person. The three hives housed at the Extension Service continue to be maintained by association personnel. Some teaching opportunities have occurred to maintain the health of the hives. *Jerry Frazier*

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

Earlier this year, the two remaining Journeyman-level students at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution installed a swarm in a top bar hive built by the EOCI Carpenter's Shop. Early this week, we conducted our first inspection. The top bar hive differs from the regular (Langstroth) type of bee hive that most beekeepers use and you are all probably familiar with. Frames are arranged horizontally only instead of vertically; the bees don't have foundation to build their comb and anchor the wax instead to the wooden bar at the top of

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the hive. The hive appears to be in good shape.

While we won't get any honey from this hive this year, the *foundation* is hopefully in place for next year. We located some honey stores (below, left) and the queen (right), and we hope they're able to survive the winter.

Both students have now completed the Journeyman level—a three-year project—and are submitted for certification through the Washington State Beekeepers Association. *Raymond Peters*

Portland Metro Beekeepers

The monthly PMBA meetings continue to be virtual, as we continue to abide by the guidelines set by the state and local jurisdictions. The exception to that was our annual picnic held in August at George Patterson Park in Gladstone. Approximately 50 association members enjoyed sunny skies, bbq, potluck items, raffle prizes, and music. We were blessed with moderate temperatures and shade provided by trees to keep us cool. As they say, a good time was had by all!

The main presenter at our September meeting was George Hansen of Foothills Honey Company. George is also a Board member of Project Apis m., an organization dedicated to funding and directing research to enhance the health and vitality of honey bee colonies while improving crop production. George shared with the attendees one of the research projects being conducted by Project Apis m.: Efforts to better understand and breed for honey bees that express Varroa Sensitive Hygiene (VSH). The VSH honey bees are better at identifying capped brood with Varroa inside the capped cell. These bees uncap and remove the Varroa-infected pupae and discard them. This activity interrupts the Varroa breeding cycle and reduces the amount of Varroa in the colony. Research is being conducted in Hilo, Hawaii, and other locations in the continental US. Understanding and breeding for VSH will help all beekeepers to reduce the use of chemical treatments that are costly, time consuming, and have sublethal effects on bees. We look forward to results of this research that will help all of us who must deal with Varroa control in our colonies.

From the time honey supers were removed, association members have been feeding syrup and pollen substitutes to their colonies. The objective for this time of the year is to build colony strength by building reserves of honey and pollen for the colonies to use during fall and into spring. It is also the time when bees hatching in late September and October will be the "fat bees" that will live through the winter and spring and sustain the viability of the colony during this time. It is also time to ensure that mite loads are low as we go into the fall. Treating with formic acid, thymol, or oxalic acid are all usable once honey supers are removed. Good preparation for the upcoming winter and spring will provide a greater likelihood of our hives successfully managing the coming seasons. *Dave Schwartz*

Portland Urban Beekeepers

After this long, dry summer, it's nice to see bees still finding sources of pollen and nectar. While inspecting my hive the other day, I saw a bee packed full with a bright orange pollen; thanks to a mid-summer pruning and consistent watering, I eked out a second bloom on my lavender, which the girls are loving!

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On the other hand, I have another hive that is not doing particularly well. During my last inspection, I went in to add Hopguard 3 and saw mostly spotty brood and random larvae. The bees were incredibly defensive (as are all my hives these days, even the usually sweet ones!), so I buttoned it up quickly. But as I thought on it for the rest of the week, I contemplated my options. I'll go back in this weekend to dig into the bottom box and see how she is laying down there. Maybe I'll reduce to one brood box and continue to feed syrup and pollen. Maybe I'll need to hunt down a new queen. As I write this, I'm also thinking about my bee mentor who has a hive which has killed six queens this season! They are a grumpy bunch, and his options are narrowing quickly. All this to say, it's the joy and frustration of being a beekeeper and these situations highlight how much creativity is required.

Our September meeting featured Dr. Dewey Caron, who spoke about defensive and Africanized bees (and how to tell the difference). While there are parts of Washington and Oregon in which they've been found, we're fortunate to be largely out of their geographical zone (for now!). Enjoy the cooler evenings, and we'll see you at the OSBA conference! *Jessica Anderson*

Tillamook Beekeepers

We are in the middle of a honey flow. The knotweed flow may be even bigger in Tillamook County than the blackberry flow. Yes, it's invasive, but the bees really love it and we are grateful for the huge supply of honey it provides for the bees for winter. So much of our harvesting doesn't happen until October when that's capped.

Our September meeting was by Zoom. It was decided to make the second Saturday of the month at 1:00 PM at the Port of Tillamook Bay Conference our permanent meeting day. From May thru September, we will probably be at apiaries for hands-on meetings. Carolyn Breece, to speak in October, gave us a list of nine things to consider when dealing with queen problems. We spent most of the meeting discussing each of those. It was very informative! There's the normal surge in Varroa happening, so we also watched the Honey Bee Health Coalition's video on formic pro.

On our August meeting day, we had a huge booth during the County Fair, which was very well received and attended. All 1000 tickets for the raffle hive were sold, a great fund raiser. The hive was won by Nonda Zwald, a new beekeeper.

The agenda for the OSBA Fall Conference looks great. Hope to see you there. *Claire Moody*

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

The TVBA board has decided to continue our membership and other meetings online through the end of 2021 due to the Covid Delta surge. We hope to meet again in person beginning in January 2022, if pandemic data support that plan. Our wonderful team of board members continues to diligently improve tools for members, including a brand new revamp of our member forum. The board is doing a great job of internal management and just approved a new Conflict of Interest policy and protocols. Our members made great use of our Honey House facility again this year, and we continue to support them to manage Varroa mites and manage for bee colony seasonal needs.

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We are looking forward to presentations at our upcoming last Tuesday monthly member meetings from Chris Corich on unusual bee houses and staff from the Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District talking about their programs to support pollinator conservation.

We are very much looking forward to the OSBA annual conference celebrating their 100 year anniversary, and preparing to do the work to budget for the next fiscal year and elect our 2022 board and officers. *Debby Garman*

Oregon State Beekeepers Association Membership Form

The **Oregon State Beekeepers Association** is a 501(c)(3) 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. Members 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, swarm call listing, four free online classified ads per year, discounts on publications, and an annual directory and subscription to *The Bee Line*.

*Please send check made payable to OSBA with a **completed form for each individual** to:*

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Conference Guidance Regarding COVID-19

We will follow state & county mandates, including face coverings, and rules of the Florence Events Center during the 2021 Fall Conference. We also will be using the Center's infrared technology to measure temperatures at the door.

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 **November-December** issue, 2021. The deadline for submitting copy is **October 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!

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