



# The Bee Line

Volume 47  
Number 1  
January–February 2022

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

## The Beaver Approach to Melittology— and the forthcoming bee license plate

Andony Melathopoulos



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**Image above:** Herman Scullen (1887–1981), OSU Apiculturalist from the 1930s to 1953. He loved not only honey bees, but a whole range of insects.

This is not the best title I have had for an OSBA article. It's clunky. But over the next few hundred words, I will show you how the way we do melittology (i.e., study of bees) at Oregon State University is unique, and how this approach is going to be featured on a forthcoming license plate featuring Oregon bees.

Oregon State University has built an impressive set of programs around bees over the last decade. Of course, the cornerstone of OSU's programs for beekeepers is the Apiculture Research and Extension program headed by Dr. Ramesh Sagili. But it has grown over recent years to include my Pollinator Health Extension program, Gail Langellotto's Garden Ecology lab (which has been developing solid plant recommendations for gardeners and landscapers), Jim Rivers' Forest Ecology Lab (working on how wildfires and forest management influence the plants bees depend on), and Sandy DeBano's lab in Hermiston working on the practices and wild bee communities. If you look through that list you will see it is full of some pretty diverse science, but it's unified in its focus on how you can practically manage land to ensure bees stay healthy. I am going to make the case that what binds us all together is something that has been going on for some time at OSU.

The practical study of bees and immersion in bee natural history is a theme that runs deep at OSU. Take Herman Scullen. Scullen was from Junction City. He was a commercial beekeeper in Corvallis in the 1920s and started his career at OSU teaching returning vets how to keep bees. After doing graduate work in Iowa, he returned to OSU to become the state's apiculturalist. He was an active member of the OSBA executive until the 1950s. Throughout this time and till his retirement in 1953 he was an avid surveyor of native bees and wasps and did serious taxonomic studies of cercerine wasps in the Western Hemisphere. His immense collections lay the foundation of the Oregon State arthropod insect collection; it's hard to go through that collection without bumping into a critter Scullen collected.

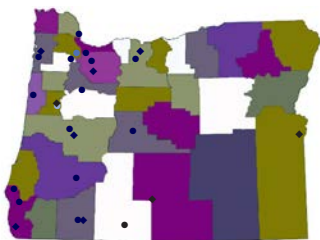
Scullen's successor, Bill Stephen, was a fellow Canadian (from Manitoba). His initial work began on orchard fruit pollination, and his monograph on pear pollination is still the go-to reading on this subject. Bill was also on the forefront of developing the alfalfa leafcutter bee and alkali bee for seed production as well as working out the contributions of bumble bees to clover seed and cranberry pollination. At the same time, like Scullen, he was an insect nerd, providing important contributions to the taxonomy of many bee taxa, including the cellophane bees (he provided a revision of the genus *Colletes* for America north of Mexico).



Bill Stephen (1927–2016). Stephen is holding alfalfa leafcutter bee cocoons, which he helped domesticate along with the alkali bee. Similar to Scullen, Stephen also had a love for some of the odder and more exotic bees that make Oregon their home.

Continued on page 3

## 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

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Barbara Derkacht—503.631.3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com

#### Treasurer

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#### Past President

Harry Vanderpool—503.399.3675; shallotman@yahoo.com

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Open

#### South Coast

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#### Eastern Oregon

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#### Portland Metro

Tom Cinquini—503.547.5386; tomcinquini@gmail.com

#### South Central Oregon

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#### Southwestern Oregon

Eric McEwen—541.415.5171; beetruehoneybees@gmail.com

#### North Willamette Valley

Jeremy Mitchell—503.580.1464; info@flyingbeeranch.net

#### South Willamette Valley

Tim Wydronek—541.740.4127; timwydronek@comcast.net

### ● AFFILIATED REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

#### Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 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 6:00 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: Pat Wackford—pwacky@charter.net  
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  
Pres: Paul Stromberg—president@portlandmetrobeekeepers.org  
Website: portlandmetrobeekeepers.org

#### Portland Urban Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, first Wednesday, via Zoom  
President: Ian Horvath—ianhorvath@gmail.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—dbradleyork@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

**Melittology**—Continued from page 1

We are practical people who love the science of bees. For this reason, the Department of Horticulture is taking the lead to develop a bee license plate for Oregon that will feature honey bees and native bees. The funds from the plate will initially

fund technical positions in the Apiculture and Pollinator Health programs. More to come on this in the new year, but we hope the plate will raise the visibility of bees to Oregonians and help continue the practical and problem-solving work being done at Oregon State University.

## Message from the President

Greetings, fellow beekeepers.

I hope the New Year finds you and your bees well. As I enter into my 25th year in the ongoing journey of beekeeping, I find myself reflecting on both how much and how little has changed over the last quarter century in modern beekeeping. We still face the usual challenges of mites, loss of forage, pesticides, and every imaginable weather extreme. Every point in time has its unique crisis and opportunities, even if the root challenges are persistent over time. One thing is clear, the old saying that “Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result is the definition of insanity (or stupidity)” definitely applies to our industry and organization. What can we do differently? What should we do differently?

One thing that we can do differently is to cast a broader net in our honey bee research fundraising efforts. Anybody who eats food is a stakeholder in pollinator health and will benefit from honey bee research. Luckily for us, this effort is already underway with our gofundme campaign at: [gofund.me/of667099](https://gofund.me/of667099). GloryBee’s “Save the Bee” initiative has generously agreed to match the first \$100,000.00 that we can raise in this campaign. This is a tremendous opportunity to make a substantial impact at the Honey Bee Lab so that the important research can be done to help protect the backbone of our food production system. Food never goes out of style, so please share the link far and wide in your social networks. Our goal is to include but reach beyond the beekeeping community. Those of you who have bakers, brewers, food producers, chefs, and general foodies in your social networks are particularly well positioned to reach a great target demographic. Consider sharing the link with pictures of bees pollinating popular and valuable crops. The more clear we make the connection between honey bees and plates the better. The message is simple: We eat well when pollinators thrive so please support the research that helps us keep our bees healthy and alive. I would wager within our ranks that we probably have several adept social media meme makers out there. If you come up with something clever, please share with the group.

What other things can we consider doing differently as beekeepers? One may be to get on board with the adoption of the rapidly improving electric vehicle and fuel cell technology. There are many established and startup companies currently doing real world field testing of driverless, electric semi trucks. Imagine being able to take a nap or being able to home office all the way to your almond pollination contracts.

Imagine what driverless trucks could do to solve our supply chain issues and the shortage of big rig drivers. Tesla and Volvo are currently testing both driverless electric semis and forklifts. Here are a couple interesting links exploring this technology: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=muLQwKIH\\_mg&list=RDCMUcnOsWpR8W72Mww-d-D4Shng&start\\_radio=1&ab\\_channel=ElectricFuture](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muLQwKIH_mg&list=RDCMUcnOsWpR8W72Mww-d-D4Shng&start_radio=1&ab_channel=ElectricFuture) and [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Gc1zz5bl8I&ab\\_channel=VolvoTrucks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Gc1zz5bl8I&ab_channel=VolvoTrucks). There are a host of other companies working towards supplying daily driver-scale electric work trucks also. The exciting potential here is that the transportation industry that we rely on to make a living could dramatically reduce its carbon footprint and contribution to extreme weather events like floods, fires, and just all around dirty air. I do suspect that we beekeepers may be some of the last to adopt this technology due to vehicle range anxiety resulting from the often very rural nature of our apiary locations and lack of charging infrastructure. Is there a solution for this?

Maybe there is a way we could use beehives to produce electricity to charge a vehicle whenever



US Patent No. 11,146,211 B1. Portable solar beehives could open up some possibilities.

and where we need to? I have been playing with a horizontal solar beehive design that could allow one to essentially have a portable charging station in strategically placed apiaries so one could charge vehicles while working bees, even way out in the boonies. Could this work? Maybe, but we won’t know until we try. Also in the vein of doing things differently, the very nature of how we make our business plans may have to evolve. Commercial beekeeping is a very labor intensive industry, and like most businesses right now, we feel the labor shortage. Simply put, it is getting harder and harder to find affordable quality help. “How bad is it?” you may be wondering. At the time this is being written, the most recent statistics I could suggest an unemployment rate of about 4.2 percent. If every one of those unemployed took a job we would still not be able to fill every job opening because there are only 0.7 potential workers per opening: [www.epi.org/indicators/jolts](https://www.epi.org/indicators/jolts). This means that even if one is willing and able to pay more to fill labor positions, one





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may just be out of luck. There are just not enough workers in the US economy and there is no guarantee that we will be able to find help where and when we need it. I do not know of a single commercial beekeeping operation that is not struggling with this issue right now. My only hope is that the allure of learning an ancient and indispensable trade like beekeeping will be irresistible enough to field a nice slate of candidates for 2022.

On a more positive note, the La Niña weather pattern seems to be delivering for us, with up to 8 feet of snow in the Sierras this early December evening. I would gladly accept bee

shipping delays in exchange for full reservoirs.

The year 2022 appears to be off to a good start with precipitation and improved honey prices. It is nice to have a sense of optimism to fill these long winter nights as we ponder what we can do differently, and what we can do better. Wishing you all the best of luck in any changes that may decide to implement in your apiaries this year.

Bee well, Bee kind, and try something new in 2022.

*John Jacob*

## OSBA Executive Committee Meeting (partial)

October 22, 2021, at 3 PM ❖ Florence Events Center ❖ Florence, Oregon

**In attendance:** Karen Finley, John Jacob, Eric McEwen, Mike Rodia, Tom Cinquini, Mike France, Joe Hansen, Joe Maresh, Becca Fain, Steve Gomes, Rick Olson, Mureen Walker, Noah Clipp; Via Zoom—Harry Vanderpool, Brad York, Linda Zahl, Ramesh Sagili, Brian McGinley, Jan Lohman, Rosanna Mattingly, Barbara Derkacht, Charlie Vanden Heuvel

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes from the last quarterly meeting were approved as printed in *The Bee Line*.

**Treasurer's Report:** Joe Hansen presented the treasurer's report. He expects the fall conference to generate a very modest profit. From last year's donation auction, direct personal donations, and retained balances, the OSBA Research Fund has grown. Joe recommended that the executive committee again retain some balance in the fund to carry over to 2022. Karen/Becca motioned/executive committee voted unanimously to accept the treasurer's report.

**OSU Honey Bee Lab Report:** Dr. Ramesh Sagili gave an update of his year at the OSU Honey Bee Lab. Most research went on despite COVID-19 restrictions. His work is ongoing with his and Priya Chakrabarti Basu's nutrition study. He added a pilot study of EFB incidence in blueberry pollination. He has 2 new graduate students. One is Mustafa Bozkus, who is involved with the oxalic acid vaporization study and investigating/mitigating EFB prevalence during blueberry pollination. The other is Max Simon, who is working on the pollen nutritional composition database (USDA). Priya, the lab's post doc for the last several years, has moved on to an assistant professorship at Mississippi State. She was hard to lose, but they will continue to collaborate on the current grant on bee nutrition. Dr. Sagili says he spends a lot of time writing grants and they are very competitive. The Honey Bee Lab greatly appreciates OSBA's support.

**Vice President's Report:** Joe Maresh described the difficult task of creating a hybrid Zoom/live conference. He plans to work on and set up a manual and database for future conference organizers to guide people and specify tasks and timing. Uncertainty of pandemic and prospect of a live meeting

added difficulty to his work organizing the conference, affecting the timeliness of hearing back from vendors and invited speakers. The technology associated with putting on the hybrid conference required more staff and more know how; this made the mixed conference more expensive in terms of volunteer time and talent. Charlie Vanden Heuvel of Columbia County has spearheaded the conference's virtual auction. President John commended Joe and his helpers on arranging a great conference.

Joe M recommends the executive committee plan from the outset to make next year's 2022 conference a hybrid Zoom/live affair as well. Steve Gomes recommended marketing the conference better and to a wider group, taking advantage of the recorded sessions and people attending from all over the world.

**Salem/Municipalities:** Harry Vanderpool reported that it was an Oregon ODA employee who found the murder hornet in Washington this summer. Helmuth Rogg retired, the new person in his position is Isaac Stapleton.

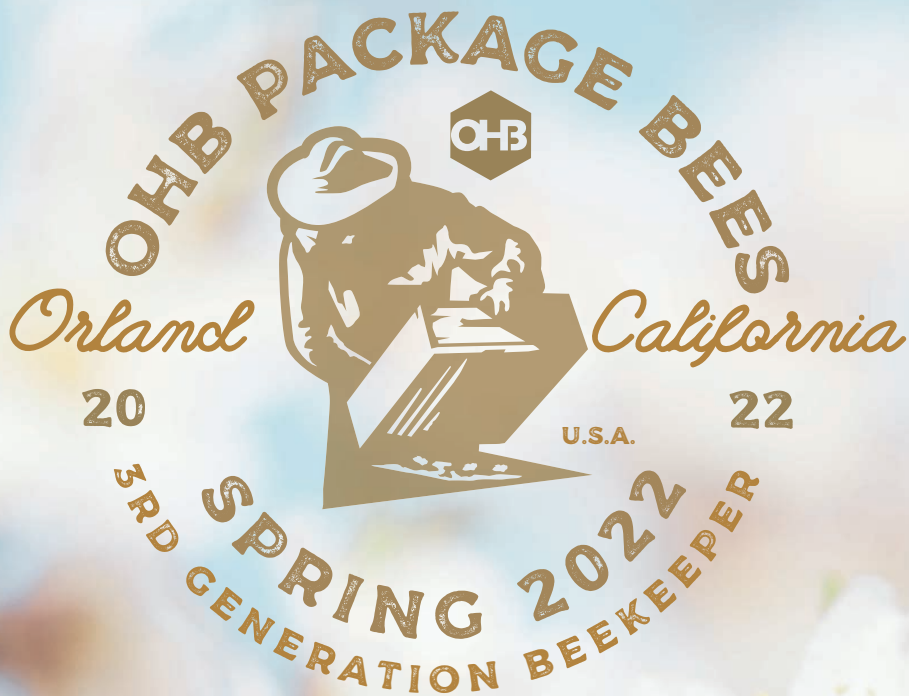
Dr. Mike Rodia detailed the year's activities (and lack of activity) around residential beekeeping rules/regs in city and county codes around Oregon. St Helens code should be imminently adopted, Stanfield is working on presentation to council, City of Klamath Falls asked to defer working on this until after their very difficult drought and fiery year in that area. (Klamath County okays, but city currently disallows keeping bees.)

Mike brought boxes of the residential beekeeping publication and plans to distribute them at the conference. Bee associations should contact Dr. Rodia for more copies.

**Membership/Communications:** Overall membership in OSBA, like many organizations of its ilk, is down. Karen suggested a future work meeting to identify strengths, weaknesses, and plans for the organization. A total of 210 were preregistered for the conference.

Mike Rodia described a model from another organization for having different membership categories. The executive





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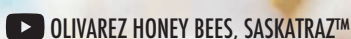
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committee will visit/revisit this next spring; the intention is to cast a wider net to potential members, including businesses and organizations that aren't beekeepers themselves, but who want to support communications, research, and advocacy. Rosanna suggested adding a discounted student membership. She said there are many nonrenewing members, and she plans a late-December reminder mailing. Several members of the group (Karen, Steve, Brad, Linda) pointed to the utility of OSBA spending the \$ to set up a Wild Apricot system for membership/communication. It has been very useful for the associations. This might run \$750 a year. The system generates reminders automatically and would allow our communications people to apply their time and talent to other projects. Rosanna thanks the people who contribute to the newsletter and reminds people to send in events in advance for both the newsletter and posting on the website. She is going to make a spreadsheet for the affiliated associations so they can more easily see what is needed by the state organization.

**Fundraising Campaign:** Becca Fain reported that the online Go Fund Me fundraising campaign is now live at: [gofund.me/of667099](https://gofund.me/of667099). The generous 100k donation from GloryBee's SAVE the BEE program will be leveraged to incentivize other donations, matching people's gifts. She asked and received approval to offer, buy, and mail thank you gifts and cover expenses such as PayPal fees to donors at various donation levels. Karen motioned, and the executive committee voted to approve that \$2,500 of the General Fund be made available for initial needs associated with the fundraiser. As funds come in, this project will sustain itself financially and the General Fund can be repaid. Brad York said a really nice certificate should be added to the mix of thank yous, something that can be framed mounted on office walls, etc. Steve Gomes reminded the group how being publicly acknowledged is very important, on OSBA website and by OSU Honey Bee Lab. Rosanna said she will put recognition on the OSBA website, etc.

**Foundation Report:** Jan reported the balances of three OSU Foundation managed funds. She also announced that she and Carolyn Breece at OSU applied for a specialty crop grant. The OSBA will be the recipient, receiving and handling funds/reporting, and contracting an instructor for beekeeping classes to be given in Spanish. Carolyn is seeking an instructor; please contact her if you are interested or know someone who is knowledgeable about beekeeping and a fluent Spanish speaker.

**Research Fund:** The board decided to hold back \$3000 in the Research Fund to carry over to the future, and to allocate funds to OSU Honey Bee Lab, Project Apis m., the Oregon Bee Project, and Washington State University.

The Board adjourned, with the next meeting tentatively scheduled for January 15 at 4 PM. Probably by Zoom; Karen offered her meeting space in Alpine if it is live.

## General Membership Meeting (partial)

October 23, 2021, at 4:30 PM ❖ Florence Events Center

Jan Lohman reported the balances for the OSU Foundation-managed research fund accounts, as of September 30, 2021:

Northwest Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension, Education—Current Use: \$2965.54; Endowment: \$113,337.39

OSU Apiculture Endowment Fund—Current Use: \$4253.31; Endowment: \$80,670.02

Herman A. Scullen Memorial Fellowship Fund—Current Use: \$5109.70; Endowment: \$78,850.91

**New Officers/Regional Representative:** President John Jacob and VP Joe Maresh will remain serving the executive committee! Harry Vanderpool will still serve as the wise former president. Nominations were solicited for replacing Karen Finley as secretary and Joe Hansen as treasurer. Barbara Derkacht was nominated and elected as the new secretary, and Becca Fain was nominated and elected as the new treasurer.

Regional representatives were nominated and elected by the membership as follows:

South Coast: Mureen Walker  
Columbia Basin: Bill Edwards  
Eastern Oregon: Jordan Dimock  
Portland Metro: Tom Cinquini  
South Central Oregon: Christy VanRooyen  
Southwestern Oregon: Eric McEwen  
North Willamette Valley: Jeremy Mitchell  
South Willamette Valley: Tim Wydronek  
North Coast: Open

### Regional Representative and Association Reports

Eric McEwen said Southern Oregon beekeepers had an interesting and not easy year. It was the driest ever, early blooming. Spring flows on the madrone went for almost 6 weeks. Much of the area dried up after the vetch flow. Many folks didn't harvest honey for the first time in 20 years. People needed to feed more and earlier. This was labor intensive and expensive. Most of the folks he canvassed were pretty happy and successful combating the mites. Someone made honey only by moving bees over to Klamath area, where drought resulted in unharvested alfalfa blooming for bees.

Mureen Walker reported that the South Coast beekeepers are not a techy group, and since the pandemic arose they haven't had much communication. No feral swarms of bees were seen this year, unlike other years, due to dry conditions. They had a blackberry flow, but still required earlier feeding.

Paul Stromberg described the activities of the Portland Metro beekeepers. They collectively order nucs, and collectively order sugar (this year: 10 tons!). Group is interested in developing skills at the association level for queen rearing. They participated

*Continued on page 16*

# TREAT DURING THE SPRING SEASON FOR 45% HIGHER HONEY YIELDS\*

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## Keeping Bees in January–February

Todd Balsiger

I hope you put the hammer to Varroa and struck while the iron was hot—specifically that you took advantage of the treatment window to reduce Varroa numbers significantly during the broodless period. I think it is very important to start the year off with low Varroa mite loads—the lower the better. Randy Oliver suggests only one mite in a sample of 300 bees in the spring. That's a very low infestation rate, equivalent to 100 mites per 30,000 bees.

If you run Randy's Varroa growth projection model in Excel, you can understand the importance of starting the year off with low numbers. Using his default settings along with no treatments, if you start January 1 with 100 mites, then you can expect that hive to crash by mid-October. When starting with 500 mites, you can now expect that hive to crash by August 1.

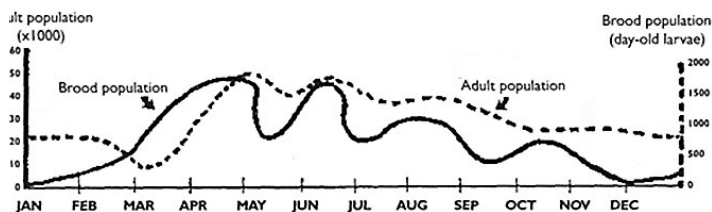
It's also much easier to manage Varroa throughout the year if you start at low levels. I can suggest three treatment options at this time of year: Apivar, HopGuard, and oxalic acid.

**Apivar®** (amitraz-impregnated strips): Many commercial beekeepers use this product at this time of year (particularly down in the almonds). Typically, they don't treat again until June or July. I am told this product works best in late winter and spring. This treatment takes a total of 8 weeks for maximum efficacy, but most mites drop within the first 3 weeks.

**HopGuard®**: You can use this all season; it's organically approved. It is very effective in late fall and winter with no brood in the hive.

**Oxalic acid**: Vapor or dribble when broodless. It has an 80–95 percent efficacy at this time.

Oregon has been getting warmer. New record highs are recorded regularly now, including this past November. Our hives were not broodless after this past Thanksgiving. Below is a temperate seasonal graph which shows approximate adult bee and brood populations throughout the year.



**From:** [bee-health.extension.org/seasonality-of-brood-and-adult-populations-basic-bee-biology-for-beekeepers](http://bee-health.extension.org/seasonality-of-brood-and-adult-populations-basic-bee-biology-for-beekeepers).

Because of the narrowing window for when hives are truly broodless, I've begun to do multiple late fall and winter treatments with oxalic vapor with no apparent deleterious effects (1/2 teaspoon per two deep brood boxes). In general, I apply oxalic vapor 3x about a month apart.

I monitor the mite drop 3 days after a vaporization on about 10

percent of my hives. My decision to treat again is based on mite fall. A high mite drop from a few of my hives will dictate another treatment for all of my hives. My first application this year was in early November. My highest drop was 500, followed by 200, a handful in the 100 range, the balance well below 100. Some hardly any.

You may be wondering, can we calculate an infestation rate after a treatment like oxalic vapor from mite fall? I think we can. This is how I did it for the hive that dropped 500 mites. Let's estimate that the adult bee population in November was around 30,000 and that about 20 percent of the mites were in capped brood (I got these estimates from Ramesh Sagili and Randy Oliver concurred). Let's also assume that oxalic vapor killed 85 percent of the phoretic mites (this is a guess). Here's my math: Phoretic mites ( $1.15 \times 500$ ) = 575. Total number of mites including those in brood ( $575 \times 1.20$ ) = 690. This equals a 2.3 percent infestation rate ( $690/30,000$ ). Not good. Fortunately for me, this hive was an outlier. Incidentally, when I treated this hive again in early December, its drop was only 86, which using the same math above represents less than 1 mite in 300 bees (anything above 90 would be greater than 1 mite/300 bees).

There may be flaws in my logic or in my estimates, but I think it is mostly right and it gives me an idea of what is acceptable and a way of checking infestation rates in the dead of winter. I will resume using Dawn Ultra (1 tablespoon per gallon of water) and Randy's sampling cups when the weather improves.

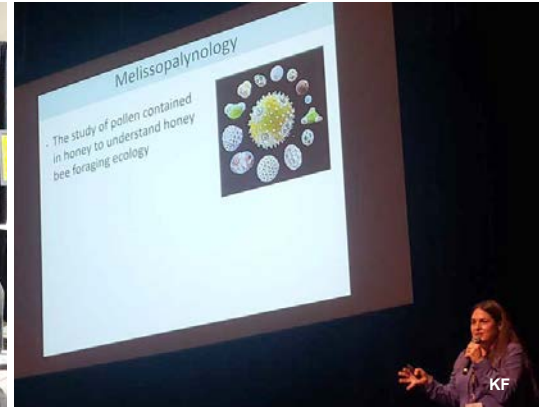
Okay, enough about mites. What else do we need to worry about in January and February? Starvation. Heft hives for weight. Provide emergency feed like Baker's fondant (expensive, hard to find), hard candy boards (laborious to make), or even granulated sugar over the cluster on newspaper or adjacent to the cluster in division board feeders (easy to do, no guarantee of success). Maybe you have some frames of capped honey? Place them on either side of the cluster. I see that Dadant offers winter patties that contain sugar, material called Artificial Pollen 23 (AP23®), and Honey-B-Healthy—ingredients are listed on the package. I suspect they work well. Don't feed sugar water yet, not until the bees start flying—maybe by late February.

The following is Randy Oliver's recipe for healthy hives:

1. Keep young, vigorous queens (he suggests replacing queens older than 18 months).
2. Provide good nutrition.
3. Control Varroa all year (we covered parts of this).
4. Minimize toxins in the hive (maybe stop using amitraz as it is not going to work eventually and we need to know how to get by without it).
5. Be proactive rather than reactive.



# OSBA's 2021 Fall Conference







**Thank you** to all attending in person and online, all presenting, all exhibiting and advertising, all donating items to and bidding on items in the benefit and silent auctions (you raised \$22,200 for research), all working behind tables and behind the scenes in planning, registering,

sorting, tracking, managing—and all who are not named. The Oregon State Beekeepers Association is able to do this only because of you. **Photos** (page 10 and above): Mureen Walker (MW), Karen Finley (KF), and Pam Leavitt (PL).

## GloryBee’s SAVE the BEE Support for the OSU Honey Bee Lab

*Lynne Fessenden*



GloryBee’s SAVE the BEE Initiative stepped up with a \$15,000 match to the OSBA auction, which was met with gusto by enthusiastic supporters and participants.

Yet, the auction match is only a portion of SAVE the BEE’s annual contribution to the lab, which has averaged \$88,000 per year for the past five years. Since 2014, SAVE the BEE has donated \$572,406 to OSU’s honey bee research. And GloryBee has committed \$100,000 in matching funds to OSBA’s centennial fundraising campaign. **Note:** More about the initiative: [glorybee.com/savethebee](http://glorybee.com/savethebee).



## The 2021 Fall Conference Honey Show

*Dewey Caron*

The Honey Show was light on entries. There were six entries of 3 bottles each for extracted honey judging and one entry of cookies. The extracted entries were sorted into 3 color classifications. The first place, blue-ribbon entry of light extracted honey was a fireweed entered by Jeremy Mitchell, Flying Bee Ranch, Salem. There were four amber extracted honey entries. First place went to Eric Walls, identified as sugar water honey by Eric but was likely blackberry. David Matis, Dallas, garnered second for a blackberry/wild flower honey. Third place went to M. Nathan Pritchard. A fourth entry scored lower due to incompletely filled jars. Dark extracted honey had a single entry from Ada McClory, who identified it as knotweed. It was full bodied like many dark honey sources. Andony auctioned off the show entries following the Sunday luncheon.

The one Cookies entry was from Kristi Walls, who shared her entry of Honey and Peanut Butter Shortbread on a first-come, first-served basis. Her recipe is posted at: [orsba.org/general](http://orsba.org/general).

Grand prize, with 98 total points, went to the amber honey entry of Eric Walls.

As honey show judge, I followed the guidelines I prepared for training of honey judges (see Judging Honey on the Oregon Master Beekeeper website). Thanks to Karen Finley for stewarding the show and to Elaine Timm for help with refractometer and polariscope readings of the extracted entries.

## OSBA Centennial Fundraiser

As Lynne references on this page, OSBA launched a centennial fundraiser for the OSU Honey Bee Lab during the 2021 Fall Conference. Further, GloryBee is matching donations up to \$100,000 for the first contributions in additional support. The link for donations is: [gofund.me/0f667099](https://gofund.me/0f667099).

We thank GloryBee and all who are making this happen and ask that you please do share the link!



Centennial t-shirts and sweatshirts remain available at: [www.bonfire.com/osba-centennial-t-shirts](http://www.bonfire.com/osba-centennial-t-shirts).



## Executive Committee Changes

A huge thank you to Karen Finley and Joe Hansen, outgoing secretary and treasurer, respectively, and to Steve Coffman, outgoing regional representative for South Willamette Valley; their time and work have helped sustain and further OSBA's mission throughout these past years. We send a hearty welcome to incoming Secretary Barbara Derkacht, Treasurer Becca Fain, and South Willamette Valley Rep Jeremy Mitchell as we enter 2022!



Barbara Derkacht

Becca Fain

Jeremy Mitchell

Barbara's life was sailing smoothly along until one fateful day when a friend expressed great interest in becoming a beekeeper. Her son perked right up. With help from some generous souls, she got into bees; later she and the friend, Sheryl Hall, formed Pure Heaven Honey. Barbara has taught junior high (6 years) and high school (3 years), and spent 16 years teaching at Clackamas Community College. She continues her bee education to this day!

Becca and her husband, Rick Olson, began their love affair with bees in 2008 when they attended a beginning beekeeper class held by the Lane County beekeepers. They continued to pursue the hobby and build experience, have 31 hives today, and are exploring queen rearing. In 2014 Becca was one of the founding members of Oregon Central Coast beekeepers and has served as secretary, newsletter editor, and president.

Jeremy is the owner at Flying Bee Ranch, a beekeeping supply store and honey tasting room in Salem. His passion for honey bees began in the spring of 2013 when he enrolled in the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program. He caught the buzz and quickly grew his apiary of just 2 hives to over 400 hives. After several years of pollinating commercially, Jeremy has now refocused his time to other areas of his business with his partner, Delsey Maus.

For additional information: [orsba.org/osba-executive-committee](http://orsba.org/osba-executive-committee).

## BEEKEEPER EVENTS

— 2022 —

January 5–8: American Beekeeping Federation Conference & Tradeshow. South Point Hotel Casino and Spa. Las Vegas, Nevada. *Information:* [www.abfnet.org/mpage/2022\\_Conference](http://www.abfnet.org/mpage/2022_Conference).

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

It's been very rainy on the coast, keeping both bees and beekeepers inside their respective domiciles much of the time. But I'm not complaining! Not after an extremely dry spring and early summer made a replay of the previous year's forest fires a real possibility. I spent a lot of time worrying about friends living up in the hills and what I would do if I had to evacuate quickly and none of the cats were anywhere to be found.

It's a quieter time for many beekeepers, a time for commercial beekeepers to start gearing up for the exodus into the almonds and smaller beekeepers to be checking on their equipment in hopeful preparation for possible splits or new packages coming in. Moisture quilts need to be checked regularly here and feeding started to make up for the lack of nectar needed to sustain hives starting to wake up again. But it's a good time to take advantage of a little free time and catch up on those articles and videos you've been meaning to read and watch.

Apropos of that, I'd like to give a shout out to the websites of both the Central Coast and the Tillamook beekeepers associations. The Central Coast website includes videos, bee related news articles, pollination information including excellent bee-friendly plant resources, and copies of all of the association newsletters. These newsletters not only have information regarding local happenings but also many interesting and unusual articles of interest to beekeepers. The Tillamook website also includes many videos and articles as well as some excellent resources in its members-only forums. I'm very grateful to these behind-the-scenes folks who are much more computer savvy than I am and have made so much information available to me, literally at my fingertips. *Kathy Cope*

### Regional Associations

#### Central Oregon

Wow, it's been another year. Another trip around the sun. It's been such a warm autumn that the bees seem to be flying almost half the days during November and December. They don't seem to be bringing in pollen and nothing is blooming, so we're not sure what's coming in. They are spending quite a bit of time at the water though.

We've had several folks who're free feeding pollen, and they are taking quite a bit.

Here in Central Oregon, we were able to conduct a beginner's bee school via Zoom for about 60 students over three evenings. Not quite as satisfying as in person, talking with folks and letting them handle the tools and woodenware, but it helped our newest beekeepers out. For next year, we are looking into doing the beginner bee school as a hybrid class (both in person and via Zoom), probably all in one day.

We had several wonderful outside speakers this year. Experts usually need to travel over the mountains from the Willamette Valley to speak to us, which makes for a long and tiring trip for them. As our meetings were Zoomed, it was much easier (from



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the physical point of view) for them to see us (thank you to OSU and a California author). We'll have to see how that works out next year. Although all of our association meetings were virtual, we were able to conduct several activities in person. These were outside, masked, and pretty much distanced. We had a great field day at an apiary in Sisters demonstrating several skills/activities to our members. We also had a charming picnic outside on the patio of our normal meeting spot in Bend—with several homemade honey-containing dishes. Finally, in December we had a great outdoor demonstration of OA winter treatments in a local apiary (thank you, COARC). Assuming we can get the technology together, we are hoping to start having our meetings in a hybrid fashion next year (masked inside or via Zoom). Also a full-blown, day-long field day next summer.

With respect to the bees and production, this year was, again, quite smoky. It was also VERY dry. No rain between May and early September. Given that, the native forage was stressed and the cultivated plants in the agricultural areas were frequently plowed under or dead because of lack of irrigation water. We're quite interested in how that affected both the bees and their honey production. One of the questions we've been hearing is whether the hot dry weather reduced production because of the temperature, or because the forage plants didn't produce as well, or because the bees are spending more time collecting water. We had lots of education with respect to Varroa this year and are excited to see how it affects the losses. Hope you had a great holiday season and have a wonderful new year.

Allen Engle

### Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

The western Oregon region is reliant on rain/snow accumulation for many reasons. The summer in the Columbia Gorge is typically dry and hot. The past spring did not witness significant rain creating a challenge to the ag community.

Our early winter has seen some rainfall but remains in a deficit state thus far in the year. What does this have to do with bees? The hive weights are down with less honey stores. Coupled with this anomaly is continued increased infestation of

Varroa mites. A recent application of oxalic acid dribble to hives throughout the Columbia Gorge region found a mixture of critically small populations, lack of stores in about 50 percent of those treated. On another note, our October 2021 meeting was hybrid with about ten attendees in person. The association typically reengages meetings in February. The year 2022 should find the hybrid format continuing. Hopefully in April as weather improves members will also be able to attend in-hive experiences.

Jerry Frazier

### Lane County Beekeepers

No one can deny that 2021 was a challenging year for bee association activities, and LCBA was no different than other associations in the state. But we managed to carry on with our missions as best as COVID rules would allow. Participation in outreach efforts were constrained or held virtually, with our peak success being a strong presence of association members at the OSBA conference in Florence, Oregon. It was a great event to fraternize with other associations while taking in the latest research and applied science.

Highlights for our association would have to be strong numbers for our 3 beekeeping 101 classes (virtual), membership that is holding steady, good participation in monthly meetings (virtual), and continued financial support of bee research at OSU. We ended 2021 in November by voting in new association leadership and planning for our 2022 Beekeeping 101 classes, which we hope can be held in person.

I'll end this association update with a quirky story because it's fun when honey bees throw something new at you. The call came in late October from a small sawmill operator claiming he had a swarm of bees invading his sawmill. I paid a visit in early November on a day close to 60 degrees. Sure enough, likely over 1000 bees were feverously dabbing at sawdust and freshly




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cut boards, but not a swarm. The bees even appeared to be stashing sawdust in their pollen baskets. Fighting between bees suggested several colonies were taking part in the feast. A local commercial beekeeper was likely the source of these bees. I had no solutions for the sawmill operator other than to wait for colder weather. Still, he enjoyed learning tidbits about honey bees and thanked me for the visit.

*Brian McGinley*

### **Oregon Central Coast Beekeepers**

In November we had our last meeting of 2021 at a member's house. We will have meetings at the Newport Library beginning in January 2022. During this warm fall, members have reported their bees flying and bringing in some pollen and doing cleansing flights. Members report a few colonies have been lost. The association will be holding a "Bee-ginning Beekeepers Course" at Oregon Coast Community College on March 9 from 1 to 4 PM. Volunteer members will be teaching the class.

Wishing all a New Bee Year.

*Pat Wackford*

### **Portland Metro Beekeepers**

The Portland Metro Beekeepers Association held board elections in November 2021 and is gearing up for the upcoming year with enthusiasm and lots of plans for continued education, mentorship, and hands-on experience for all association members.

The new board met in December, wrapping up 2021 business and preparing for a full calendar of activities and educational events in 2022. Aside from regular meetings and events, we are hoping to be able to hold an "in-person" Bee Day in 2022. COVID-19 has prevented us from meeting in 2020 and 2021. Keep your fingers crossed and your masks on. We are also planning for an early queen rearing class(es) to time them for hatching early in the season when purchased queens are not readily available (April/May).

Ah, December! What can be said about winter in the Willamette Valley besides, "It can be WET and COLD." And it has been so far. However, there were some days when the foragers were out and about and even bringing back pollen! Association members were busy checking on their hives for food stores and feeding as needed. It's a good practice to tip your boxes to check for weight and an approximation of stored honey. Light boxes mean your bees are low on food stores and need a periodic boost of sugar or fondant. Don't forget that December is a good time to use OA for treating broodless hives. Whether using dribble or vapor, it is an opportunity to lay Varroa to waste and set your colonies up for a miteless winter and early spring buildup.

Several members are readying their hives in preparation for transporting to California for almond pollination. Whether you are a commercial beekeeper or a hobbyist, this is also a great time to make your plans for the upcoming bee year: How many hives do you plan to have? Are you raising queens, buying them

or making splits this year? Do you have enough woodenware? Any boxes or frames need repair or maintenance? This is the ideal time to get your plans nailed down and your gear all set for the upcoming season. I know I've got some maintenance to do on some hardware and research to be done to prepare for a successful 2022.

Happy Holidays to all!

*Dave Schwartz*

### **Portland Urban Beekeepers**

It's hard to believe another year has passed! Hopefully your bees are healthy and tucked up nicely for the winter. Portland Urban beekeepers are seeing significant changes to our board of directors next year. A number of positions were open to include president and vice president and some folks shifted to different positions. We are very grateful for the work Cheryl Wright put into PUB these past two years as president. She shepherded us through the transition to online and continued to keep our disparate community connected. Mandy Shaw is also moving on—as past president and current treasurer, she has been a strong driver of PUB—bringing wonderful speakers, working with Cheryl to set up our new apiary at Green Anchors, and so many other things behind the scenes. Ian Horvath, a Portland-based beekeeper has agreed to step into the position of president and Jana Patterson will bring board experience to the position of vice president. We look forward to a new year of bee education and community engagement with them at the helm!

Unfortunately, we decided not to have our in-person honey tasting this year. It just feels like the virus hasn't quite settled down enough to have it. Hopefully next year thing will be back to a new normal. Our November speaker was Bill Hesbach, a master beekeeper from Cheshire, Connecticut, who spoke with us about winter insulation. He theorizes insulated hives better mimic the natural conditions found in tree hives and recommends R7-R10 insulation on the top and sides without ventilation. While our conditions here in the Pacific Northwest are certainly different than in Connecticut, the theories and science behind it are very compelling.

*Jessica Anderson*

### **Tillamook Beekeepers**

Tillamook Beekeepers Association made the front page of the *Headlight Herald*, our local newspaper! The reason? Sixteen rather large, bee-friendly trees were purchased, eleven for Tillamook and five for Manzanita. The selection included: lindens (*Tilia cordata* Greenspire), black tupelos (*Nyssa sylvatica*), sourwoods (*Oxydendrum arboreum*), ivory silk tree lilacs (*Syringa reticulata*), snowbell trees (*Styrax japonicus*), and thundercloud flowering plums (*Prunus cerascifera*). To see the trees in bloom and for plant info, go to our website [tillamookbeekeepers.org](http://tillamookbeekeepers.org); Foraging: Flowering Trees.

The November meeting was both in person and by Zoom. Election of officers was held. New officers: Brad York (president), Susie Saindon (vice president Community Affairs),

Yorck Franken (vice president Association Affairs), Jaime Hula (treasurer), and Rose Harrell (secretary).

November is always our honey tasting meeting. The prize for the best honey was a \$25 gift certificate donated by the Tillamook Farm Store. Our youngest beekeeper age 11 won that prize!

Brad gave a summary of all we accomplished in 2021. Claire gave a synopsis of some of the interesting information gleaned from the state bee convention.

The website now has an educational section called Apiary Management. Our weather is so different that the to-do list is specific to Tillamook. Links will be added to enhance the what-to-do with the how-to-do-it.

We had a wonderful surprise. One of the members of our association donated \$1,000 to the association! How delightful is that! We plan to use it for some special project to be determined by the members. One option is a new queen rearing commitment being enthusiastically supported by the association. The December meeting was a Christmas party. Brad did a demo of how to make lip balm. A good time was had by all.

Claire Moody

### Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

A presentation from our local Soil and Water Conservation District sparked great conversation among TVBA leaders about working to improve our Oregon landscapes for increased acreage and diversity in pollinator forage access as well as lessening toxicity from pesticide use. We wonder if other Oregon bee groups might also like to work toward educating our legislators on how important both honey bees and native pollinators are to ensure that the next generations of plant seeds and our own food supply are protected in the challenging years ahead of predicted drought, wildfires, and extreme weather events. If legislators better understand these issues, we think better policies might be passed into law to protect all our essential pollinators. We'd be happy to chat with anyone who also might like to put some time and energy toward that cause. Let us know at: tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com!

Members are re-enrolling for 2022 membership, and we are off to a great start in this new year with our annual Bee School scheduled for the evenings of March 7, 9, and 14, 2022, along with additional hands-on field days for newbies around our mid-April planned nuc delivery. We strive to deliver the best education and support for our members, and our board works to keep a listening ear open so we can continually improve.

In January, we are sad to say goodbye to long-time board member Paul Andersen, who is moving to be close to family in Idaho. Thanks for all the years of service, Paul!

Happy holidays to one and all! Debby Garman

Note: Thanks to Paul Andersen also for his contributions to OSBA as past president and vice president!

Minutes — Continued from page 7 in both state and county fairs.

Linda Zahl said the Columbia County Oregon beekeepers have their meetings on Zoom, and a growing membership. Some rural people without Internet service are wishing for live meetings again. The association used COVID relief money in the area schools to do a 2-week kids' summer pollinator camp. She is happy to share what they learned from doing that.

**State Fair Booth:** Bonnie King recounted the OSBA's success at the Oregon State Fair. They had 11 days with 44 different shifts to fill for staffing the booth and did it! KOIN TV covered Jeremy Mitchell and his Salem-area honey tasting/beekeeping service in an early morning piece. Joe Hansen supplied the bees for the observation hive in the booth, and Jeremy Mitchell coordinated its care.

**American Beekeeping Federation:** Jan Lohman asked and the membership voted to join the American Beekeeping Federation with a state membership at bronze level.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Finley

Note: Because of duplication in the sets of minutes from the Executive Committee and General Membership meetings, I have included partial reports of what was submitted—those that appear in only one of the two and the more extensive report on a given topic that appears in both. Please email osba.newsletter@gmail.com if you need a complete set of minutes from either meeting.

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To renew or join online, please visit: [orsba.org/membership](http://orsba.org/membership).

Renewals and new memberships extend through December 2022.

**Thank you!**





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~ Brad Paisley

### ***The Bee Line***

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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](mailto:osba.newsletter@gmail.com). It's your newsletter—we want to hear from you!

The next issue to be printed will be the **March** issue, **2022**. The deadline for submitting copy is **February 10, 2022**. 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!*

### **Advertising**

#### **Per Issue**

#### **Event Listing**

All events, space permitting (15 words) Free

For a nonprofit group event, an additional 30 words (total of 45) in the listing or an article Free

#### **Advertising**

Business card \$10.00

Quarter page \$25.00

Half page \$50.00

Full page \$100.00

#### **Classified Ad (30 words)**

Members \$3.00

Nonmembers \$5.00