

The Monthly Extractor



Volume 36, Issue 12 December 2013

Monthly Meeting: Dec. 9th - Gourmet Dinner and Silent Auction- Bring your own place settings, a dish to share and your family. We start at 6 p.m.!

When you arrive check in at the door so the dinner committee knows what category your dish will be judged in. Appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert, and made with honey are the choices.

This is our newsletter that reflects the various techniques, theories and art of sustainable beekeeping.

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From Our President

I can hardly believe that December is around the corner and that this is my last article as President. I'm writing this during thanksgiving and feeling not only thankful for my family but my extended beekeeping community. No matter what, fast or slow, time passes. I am very glad that I took the time to lead this organization this year. Eric Mussen, UC Davis extension Agriculturist said at the California State Beekeepers' conference that we are in a very tumultuous time with the bees but also a very exciting time (see my synopsis of the conference in Christine's blog on the members only). Recently, I received a personal e-mail from a new beekeeper overwhelmed with all the different things ailing the bees asking me if there was hope for the bees. Yes of course there is hope as long as we all actively work for change, that on small and large scale we all become environmental activists. This will take some time, some sacrifice and some of your own resources but there lies the hope. Bees teach us a lot about our environment, they are telling us loud and clear "Fix It!" or watch us dwindle.

I am also very proud, thankful and feel honored of the people who volunteered as board members along with me this year and all the support staff on the periphery, helping me hurdle the massive growing pains of the association and molding it into something that upheld our mission of education while creating community and support. I was going to do tribute to my board and staff at our December 9th Potluck and Silent Auction but then some of you might not be able to make it and I want all of you to know how thankful I am to:

Cheryl Veretto, 2ndVp who simultaneously got all our speakers and coordinated 17 + events in the community from fairs, expositions and special events. We have asked a lot of her this year and she did it all without complaint, gracefully and professionally. Our booths looked splendid and her talent as a designer shined bright. She also did a lot of work on our website, some of it paid, but most of it pro-bono and that says something about a person, a job is not done until it's done especially when it comes to a good cause. And yes Cheryl you should have been first some of the times on the agenda and to hopefully mitigate some of that I am honoring you first. Thank you for being there steadfast, a pillar to the organization, giving steadily far and beyond, being our creative spark. You need 3 basketfuls of thanks this year! We are dividing your job into 3 next year. That shows the enormity of what you have contributed.

Deborah Hammerlee 1stVp who managed membership and all it's intricacies, having to navigate all of the membership through 3 different servers and into a new CiviCRM management program in our members only website. That was a lot of confusion and learning for all of us, but for Deborah who was in charge of the membership and therefore also the lifeline to all of you was determined to learn and make it work. Even though it was not easy, Deborah persevered with a

wonderful tenacity that I cannot but admire and be in awe. Thank you Deborah for hanging in there and for setting us straight when we were not listening. Thank you for the little things you did, bringing seeds or chocolates at the membership table at our meetings making talking to you so inviting, especially to the new members, it was noticed and appreciated. Thank you for the swarm you shared with me after learning I lost all my bees. That really touched me.

Rita Maloney, Treasurer whom without we would still not be able to read a budget. To compare and contrast several pages of numbers baffles everyone but a number of people who only comprise a small percentage in our population. Rita put in all on one page! Percentage of where we were at for every item to show us where we were standing at a glance. A no brainer for Rita but would have been great brain acrobatics for the rest of us without her help. Rita has also been extraordinary helpful at keeping us on the straight and narrow, reminding us of what we are allowed to do and not to do. We are all lay people volunteers and our enthusiasm often surpassed what is legally allowed in the constraints of our non-profit. If Rita did not know the answer she was quick and efficient to do the research, which enabled us to make just as quick and efficient decisions. Rita also reformatted our bi-laws, which were impossible and confusing to read. This talent was a real gift to have on a board and for that I thank you Rita.

Paty Hermsillo-Perkins, Secretary quiet as a mouse but is aware of all the surroundings. Talking notes seem easy but the challenge comes during great discussions and summarizing that into a concise paragraph that encompasses it all while keeping track of all the decisions and motions. Being able to so gracefully stop everyone to read some notes back to make sure it's recorded right made Paty's conscientious efforts keep accurate records. Paty also took notes at the general meeting, which had to make her pay attention 100% from the announcements to writing a synopsis of the speaker. She also helped with the sound system whose unmarked cords have to be plugged in the right receptacles. All this requires a lot of patience and for that I thank you Paty. Paty was also the first person I divided a hive with. We were both shaking in our boots! Actually I wished I had been wearing boots, as I got stung numerous times through my thin socks that I erroneously thought would protect me as long as they were pulled over my pants! Thank you Paty.

Ettamarie Peterson, Board at Large, even though board at large does not have a specific job attached to it, Ettamarie and the newsletter are inseparable. I asked Ettamarie how many years has she nurtured the newsletter and her answer was: "I can't remember...a lot of years". If I were to ask her too how many years has she been part of this group I would get the same answer: "I can't remember...a lot of years". Needless to say it's been YEARS! Ettamarie is one of the longest standing members and therefore carries a lot of its history. We often asked her how and why a decision was made in the past or whether there was a decision made at all during our board meetings. This has been very helpful more than once even when it was attached to a whole long story. Ettamarie is often referred to as the SCBA Queen Bee. She is in essence mother to us all and her big nurturing heart embraces us with the kindness necessary to make us all feel successful whether our bees survive or not because after all it's the effort that counts, that you have tried in the first place, that you made a difference. A universal thanks, Mom. Not many of you know this but Ettamarie gives all her first Swarms to her 4-H Kids before she replenishes her own apiary, her selflessness is exemplary. She makes the footsteps you want to follow as nurturing the beekeepers of the future is the future. Thank you, Ettamarie, for always being there, for being my first mentor, for answering all my desperate phone calls, for being our "Mother".

Kelli Cox, Board at Large inherited that position during a vacancy and the board felt her to be a good fit already having managed all the volunteers for quite some time to be an at large representative. One of Kelli's incredible gifts, aside her organizational skills, is her sense of humor. The world could be falling to hell in a bucket and Kelli will build pillars and rafters of jovial attitude and laughter to hold it all together until everything settles and rebuilds itself and it does! This is someone you want to emulate or rub against hoping for some mitosis effect. Even though she is still raising a pair of almost 7ft tall twins, soon to be a grandmother and works full time, newly married, she pushed herself to find the time for the association. Kelli thank you for being who you are, for your precious time and all the laughter.

Thea Vierling, Regional Coordinator Support Staff and Board Honorary. Thea wanted to be part of it all from the beginning without being a board member. I appreciated her boundaries as it shows that you can take a great idea like the regional groups without having an official leadership title and with support make it happen. Some of us are just born leaders and born educators and the outcome is better than anything else in the world, better than a title. That is Thea for you, selfless and humble, giving and steadfast. I'm still giving her an honorary board title. If the board members are pillars of the association, Thea is the mortar. Thea has also been instrumental in developing the educational aspect of the association from adults to children. Thea is also incredibly astute and has a great sense of the whole. She has in addition been mentoring me throughout my presidency, her overdrive mind matches mine, and we found ourselves talking daily on how to improve, organize, problem solve probably every aspect of the association. She is not only a thinker but has the talent to follow through which is much to be admired. Thea thank you for being there for me everyday, for being there for the board, for pioneering the regional groups from our conception and holding it through its beginnings. You are twenty years my senior and I want to be just like you when I grow up.

Laurie Bounsall Swarm Coordinator Support Staff, who for two years fielded calls from the often panicked public and from our own members, problem solving often on a daily basis during swarm season and always thinking of how to make our swarm program better. She is the reason countless swarms found homes as she was determined to find someone available with an empty hive when one was needed, not always an easy task while everyone is bustling and distracted with their busy lives. She took the time and her people skills carried her through a successful bee and beekeeper real estate matching morph. Laurie has not been thanked enough for her dedication, her time, her tenacity

and perseverance. A big thank you Laurie, I really appreciate what you have done; the importance of what you have done is huge.

Linda Burns, Assistant to Membership Support Staff, when we put a call out for some help for the membership position Linda readily volunteered. Her help helping navigate the technical aspect of membership has been invaluable and her support so calming. Often having some great ideas or comments made her presence at the board meeting a hidden gem. Thank you for being there to help when we needed you. I am still chuckling about the miniature donkey pockey. If you want to find out what that is about come to the December 9 meeting.

Jennifer Espinoza, Education Coordinator Support Staff, another gem amongst us. It only needed one announcement for help for Jen to jump on the bandwagon. This kind of enthusiasm is a marvelous gift. There was a real hole in the number of requests we were getting from schools and the amount of resources we had to fulfill the requests. Some members had been diligently going to classrooms on their own for years but bees hitting the news and entering the consciousness of the masses filtered down to teachers and kids and the requests came streaming in. We did not have a standard grade specific curriculum across the board. Beekeepers had come up with their own curriculum which they are with our support still using but we needed to be able to train volunteers and thus an educational committee was born and consequently grade specific curriculum. Training in and out of the classroom started happening within a short few months and classroom requests have already been fulfilled this Fall! Thank you Jen for your pioneering effort on the educational front, for being so efficient, for having the vision. Planting seeds of understanding and change is paramount for our future survival and as we all know the kids are our future. I am looking forward to joining your committee and being your humble student.

Sabin Larsen, Bee Geek Support Staff propelled us into the 21 century whether we were ready or not with the necessary push to computerize our management of the association. His patience with us outdoorsy computer illiterate beekeepers is commendable. When you reach 400 members the paperwork becomes staggering and you start feeling really guilty using all that paper and the cost of a stamp these days... As with any new system that is installed it comes with its own family of bugs, glitches, design needs and human errors. That is why companies have their own IT departments. Sabin suddenly found himself juggling the bugs, glitches, design needs and fixing our human errors while working a demanding full time job but took tremendous amount of time to go in 'the back door' of the program as he calls it fixing, re-writing, re-designing to make it work for us. Sabin moved here from Florida mid year, got some bees and immersed himself in our association. That kind of drive to help in a new community combined with sharing his talent shows real character. Thank you Sabin.

I have to give a special thanks here to **Jim Spencer**, not only a regional group leader, but also jumped in to help us with our members only website helping us navigate the changes, learning the program so he could help us use it, to connect when we couldn't and willing to train the rest of the regional leaders on how to create events for their group. Jim thank you for being there, we need you more than you know.

Thank you to everyone else who volunteered for making this past year so dynamic from the regional group leaders, librarians, merchandisers, education committee, for all those working behind the scene and those who consistently provide exceptional support. We would like to thank you and honor all of you at our December 9 meeting and hope you can come (starting early at 6pm with the opening of the silent auction, followed by a fabulous pot luck and awards). I hope you can all make it.

And lastly a universal thank you to us as a whole association as we won an environmental stewardship award this year from the Northbay Leadership Council. Although I accepted the award, we won it as a group. Cumulatively all we did this year and the foundation that was laid in prior years made us be noticed. We are making a difference. Thank you ALL for your efforts, big and small, whether it was keeping bees for the first time, helping each other or creating change in your community. Not only are you stewarding bees but stewarding the environment.

President Christine Kurtz

My December Beekeeping To-Do List

By Serge Labesque © 2013

“Should I get a beehive?”

“Last spring, there were no bees on our apple trees, and we only got a few measly apples. I think we should get a beehive. Is it expensive? Is it difficult to take care of bees? Does it take a lot of time?”

That's a great idea!

You'll need the equipment that is necessary to give your bees a good home, two or three simple tools, and enough protective gear to make you feel safe and relaxed around them. At least, get a hive tool, a smoker and a bee veil.

Join your local beekeepers' association and connect with a beekeeper in your area. You'll find them very willing to help. Ask to see a few beehives. You'll learn a lot from the experience. Read a bee book and maybe attend a beekeeping class. This will help you decide what type of hive is right for you and where to get your bees. Right now, in the winter, is the best time to get ready for them. However, plan on starting with at least two hives, two colonies.

The monetary cost of the tools, equipment and bees can vary greatly depending on the choices you'll make. But be prepared to assume some "emotional costs", as well. It's difficult to envision that we become attached to these insects, but we do. In beekeeping, as in all endeavors that involve live organisms, health issues and losses happen. You will worry about your bees when it's cold, in hot weather, when it rains, when it's windy, or whenever they are ailing. In return, you will exult at the sight of their lively activity and, yes, also when they visit your blooming apple trees. For sure, bees are one of the best expressions of life I know.

Taking care of your bees will be as easy or as difficult and time-consuming as you make it. You'll find beekeeping to be a fascinating activity. Soon, you'll see the world from the bees' perspective and your awareness of your surroundings will have deepened considerably. You'll start talking about bees all the time and with passion. People won't be able to get you to stop. You will be planting bee forage. You'll be a bee lover.

Your apples? They'll taste better than ever! So, give beekeeping a try. If you like it, you're gonna love it.

December in the apiaries:

What a tough year this has been for bees! Some say that it was the worst on record, if only gauging by the honey harvest.

The colonies grew rapidly in January and February, because of the unseasonably sunny weather. But the periods of wet weather that normally replenish the ground moisture at that time of year simply did not materialize. With supers in place, the hives managed to accumulate a remarkable amount of honey in early spring. Unfortunately, that was to be short-lived. This was pretty much the extent of the honey flow for the year and the bees' sole opportunity to build stores. Later on, without access to water, few plants could draw nutrients from the soil. The shallow-rooted annuals that normally contribute considerably to the spring honey flow bloomed briefly and then vanished. Nectar was soon in short supply and the nutritional value of pollen was questionable at best. Most bee colonies quickly responded by eliminating drones and drone brood. In early April, masses of dead drones suddenly covered the ground in front of my hives. Since this widespread and drastic reaction was happening long before what should have been the peak of the season of colony reproduction, it was a strong signal of dire conditions. I left most of the honey to the bees. They needed it. I also interrupted the production of queens and the division of my colonies, because the brood nests indicated that the conditions were not right. The colonies curtailed their annual build-up and preparations for swarming. Not surprisingly, there were very few genuine reproductive swarms later in the spring.

With the spring honey flow tapering off, the bees switched promptly to their summer dearth attitude. The danger from robbing behavior was in the air. I reduced the size of the hive entrances and limited my summer inspections to the exterior of the hives and to the monitoring trays. By early June, there were almost no drones left, comb building had entirely stopped, and colony development was over. Throughout the summer, the dearth was relentless. Even though the tarweed and the California buckwheat were heavily visited by foragers, the stores were not building up in the hives. There was not enough nectar and I probably had too many colonies in my apiaries. Whatever else bloomed did so systematically earlier and much more briefly than in a normal year. At the end of summer, most colonies were light and several of them were essentially without stores. With no pressure from incoming nectar, the brood nests remained high in the hives, leaving the lower supers mostly empty.

Most of the colonies went into fall with their old queens. Those that attempted to replace their queens only obtained drone layer queens. The splits that had been successfully produced in early spring welcomed their orphaned bees. Many of the queens slowed or even stopped their egg production in early October. This left lots of concerns about their colonies' chances of overwintering successfully (low on stores; aging queens; small clusters; malnourished winter bees that have to last even longer than usual).

Fall brought a flurry of suicidal absconding swarms. I offered a home to a few of them, but, not surprisingly, none stayed more than a few weeks.

Now, with winter upon us, I keep an eye on their flight paths and on the monitoring trays. Often, when the bees are not flying, I place an ear against the side of a hive. Hearing the faint and calm humming sound of the cluster can reassure me.

This is a period of rest for our bees. After looking back at the past season, it's time to prepare for the next one. There is equipment to clean, repair and build, and there will also be new ideas to try and experiments to run. Hopefully, there will be enough bees left and some reprieve from this long drought...

In summary, this month:

- Inspect the exterior condition of the hives:
 - Hive tops should be properly set and secured.
 - Observe the landing boards and the ground in front of the hives.
 - Verify that the hive entrances remain unobstructed.
 - On nice days, observe the flight paths and the bee activity at the entrances.
- Examine monitoring trays. The clusters should remain centered in order to maintain access to their stores.
- Ensure that hives are adequately ventilated.

- Verify that mice have not entered hives (telltale clues of their presence are visible on the monitoring trays, as coarse pieces of comb, mouse feces, etc.).
- Clean and scorch tools and equipment.
- Scrub your smoker.
- Repair and build beekeeping equipment.
- Review notes from the year.
- Plan next season (evaluate the need for equipment and bees).
- Read and learn more about bees and beekeeping.
- Enjoy some honey.

Happy Holidays to all of you from the Labesques!

My Beekeeper Therapy! BEE WISE, by Emery Dann

Mark Twain was not joking when he said, "If you do what you have always done, you'll get what you have always got." I want my life and bees to be the best!

December is a good month for me, personally and as a beekeeper, to evaluate my past efforts and to consider adjustments *I need to make* for better results next year! To me this means taking a balanced look at how I have spent my time, resources, and energy. I do not believe in condemning myself for mistakes I have made. I need to accept where I find myself. No blaming, denial or excuses, either. I need the unbiased truth. This is not an exercise to make me "good" or "bad". I am simply asking myself, "What are *my* weaknesses?" "What blind spots do *I* have?" "Where do *I* need to change?" I don't like saying I am "busy". *I* want to be effective! This is not my, "Do it myself in isolation project". Honey bees are social insects that help each other. I need help! I am asking those who know me well and are close to me what issues *they* see in me as problems to my effectiveness, including my weaknesses and blind spots! This also applies to me as a beekeeper. I have to be a life-long "bee observer", "bee learner" and "bee explorer". I need education. I cannot assume there are not better ways to manage my life, time, and hives to provide the benefits my bees need from my intervention. I have to question, "What interferes in my life and with my bee caretaking effectiveness and responsibilities?"

Here is a sample of my evaluation:

My time: 1. Are too many interruptions causing my life to be ineffective?

2. Where and when are these interruptions occurring? What/who can I say "No" to?

3. Am I doing too much, too fast? Spreading myself too thin?

4. Who can help me share the load or where can I find ways to make better choices?

My resources and energy:

1. What are within my limits? What/who do I need to say "No" to that are outside my limits and responsibilities. If I cannot say "No", my "Yes" is weak, diluted and has the same result as procrastination! Priorities wait until a later time or are dropped.

2. I do not want to burnout! Pacing my efforts is finding the right balance between living too slow or too fast. I need to schedule periodic rest for me to be recharged and effective!

December is a great month for me as a beekeeper to evaluate the past year, plan and prepare to make 2014 *different!* "Two roads diverged in a wood, (December 2013) and I took the one less traveled by, and *that has made all the difference.*" Robert Frost.

Winter Sore Throat Tea

Make sure you have some of this ready...great recipe for sore throats and chest colds

Ingredients to make about 2 cups.

1. Two lemons thoroughly cleaned and sliced

2. Two pieces of ginger about the size of your pointer and middle finger together sliced into coin size pieces

3. Honey (about 1 cup-maybe more)

In a 12-16 oz. jar combine lemon slices and sliced ginger.

Pour honey (organic is best) over it slowly. This may take a little time to let the honey sink down and around the lemon and ginger slices. Make sure when the honey has filled in all the voids, there is enough to cover the top of the lemon slices.

Close jar and put it in the fridge, it will form into a "jelly". To serve: Spoon jelly into mug and pour boiling water over it. Store in fridge 2-3 months.

Bee Plants of the Month By Alice Ford-Sala

Native Plant of the Month, *Ericameria ericoides*, Mock heather, Family Asteraceae

This native "heather" doesn't look too much like heather to me- no hanging bell flowers, rather bright yellow aster-daisy blossoms instead. The needle-like leaves do look a bit like heather, though. It is valuable for late fall blooms that nourish our bees when there is not much else out there.

This valuable habitat plant can grow up to 3 feet tall and 4 feet wide. It often grows in sand dunes along the coast, so you know it needs good drainage. Mock heather can also take salt spray, making it a nice plant for coastal gardens where full sun is appreciated. In inland heat, she can take some water and light shade. When drought stressed, the leaves will drop, then come back with winter rains (if we get them- if not, a good watering or two in winter would be beneficial.) You can prune mock heather in the winter to keep it neat and compact.

Beneficial Plant of the Month, *Arbutus unedo*, Strawberry tree, Family Ericaceae

Now this pretty tree IS in the Heather family- as you can tell by the pretty hanging pink or white "bells" that bees love in late fall-early winter. Strawberry tree is related to our native *A. menziesii*-, West Coast Madrone, sharing the pretty flowers, peeling layers of bark that eventually reveal the well-loved deep red smooth bark, and the shiny oval leaves. However, Strawberry tree is easier to establish in the garden than the notoriously difficult native Madrone. They can grow up to 25 feet tall, though some cultivars are smaller. 'Compacta' up to 10 feet, 'Elfin King' not more than 5 feet, and 'Oktoberfest' –with deep pink flowers- up to 8 feet.

As you might imagine with that name, the tree bears strawberry colored edible but mealy fruit. I would leave eating for the birds that do enjoy them. You wouldn't want to plant them over a concrete patio, as the falling fruit would make a mess. They are ideal lawn trees, or plant some annuals/perennials under them that won't mind the compost. They can take water, but are also drought-tolerant once established. They like full sun to very light shade.

I wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and joyous holiday season. See you in 2014!

Regional Cluster Updates:

By Thea Vierling, regionalcoordinator@sonomabees.org

If you are not getting into your members only website and/or if you are not communicating with your cluster leader, please contact me and I will get you to the right person. Regional groups can be so helpful in so many ways! There is a lot happening out there and you are missing out if you are not "on the bus"!

South Cluster: We had a Bee Cafe in December showing the movie "More than Honey" accompanied by a delicious potluck. Beekeepers are such good cooks!! The movie brought to the forefront how complex the whole bee issue is and how much there is to learn about bees. There was a lot of sharing of the status of our bees and good all around conversation. It's nice to get to know each other better.

Central Cluster: We're still getting acquainted with the Members Only site and subsequently you may have received more than one invitation to our last Bee Cafe (sorry about that!). That Chris Conrad hosted bee café and they extracted honey using a hand cranked extractor. Everyone learned a lot and was exhausted afterwards (Where was the electric extractor?). We also had another Bee Café at Wildwood Nursery. If you attended, then certainly you were not only wooed by the colors of fall, but also by Thea's sexy plant talk. The topic was on plant sex and reproduction, and how it relates to bees. She made useful demonstration by way of a squash blossom, which clearly showed the difference between male and female plant parts. It was awesome! We'll be holding a workshop in January, and we'll give you notice when the date is set.

West Cluster: We had a movie night under the stars in West County. Over 20 folks showed up including Doug Vincent who had some interesting comments about the movie. Thanks Doug. I would be happy to host an equipment workshop after the holidays. In case of bad weather, we could hold it in the empty workshop on our property or maybe someone else wants to volunteer his or her place?? Also thinking of meeting members at the Luther Burbank Experimental Farm, they have a plant sale every Wednesday morning 9-12.

North Cluster: There will be a Holiday gathering on December 7th. For more details write to your Kristine Siebert at northcluster@sonomabees.org

East Cluster: We had a Bee Café at Wildwood Nursery and sculpture gardens in November. This nursery specializes in Maples and Dogwoods so the colors were just incredible. We also had a plant sex presentation by Thea Vierling who laid it on the line as to why those "loosey goosey" squash family plants cannot reseed and get the same kind of fruit as the fruit they came from! The squash family plants will just about accept any pollen they can get; not like other plants who only like the pollen from their own species! (Editor's note: I once had a volunteer that turned out to be a cross between a zucchini and a pumpkin. It was a little green cannon ball and not at all good for anything!) There will

be an equipment making and cleaning workshop in January. Details to follow.

Silent Auction/Potluck December 9

On December 9 we will have our wonderful end of the year celebration with the best potluck ever (did you know that beekeepers are excellent cooks?) There is going to be our traditional best dish contest in 5 categories (appetizers, salad, main dish, dessert and made with honey) with a \$25 gift certificate to Beekind or Western Farms as a prize to the winner.

Our fun and exciting Silent Auction will also take place. We are in need of some more items. Here below are a few things we have gathered this far, we are at about 1/3 of our goal. If you have anything for us please e-mail me at President@sonomabees.org. It does not have to be bee related. It's always amazing to see what interesting things come in. Thank you!

- 1 Set of mini Bee Raised Bed Corners (Art in the garden)
- 10 frame Cypress IPM Bottom Board (Brushy Mountain Farm)
- 6 pairs Beekeeping Gloves (Bucko Gloves Inc.)
- Bee stepping stone (Christine Kurtz)
- One Hive unassembled (Western Bee Supplies Inc.)
- Ventilated Jacket (Mann Lake Ltd)
- One Two-Night Stay (Cassini Ranch)
- A whole day beekeeping with Rob Keller (Napa Bee Co.)
- 2 hrs. mentoring with Serge Labesque
- 2 hrs. mentoring with Hector Alvarez
- 2 hrs. mentoring with Doug Vincent
- Signed Arnold Palmer Magnum
- 2 Vintage Pure Linen Busy as a Bee Dish Towels
- Beekeeper Large T-shirt
- Collectable Large SCBA T-shirt
- Deep Basic Start Up Hive (Beekind)
- Basic Tools and Gear (Beekind)
- 3x 32 oz. Honey Jars (Beekind)
- Large Mellivo Veiled jacket (Shastina Bee Girls Store)
- Mellivo Starter Kit (Shastina Bee Girl Store)
- 13 un-assembled deep supers (Shastina Bee Girl Store)
- \$52 Trader Joes (Mendocino Ave) products
- 5 yards of dirt (Sonoma Compost)
- Hafner Vineyard Magnum in a wooden box
- Tasting for 6 with food pairing
- \$50 Gift Certificate Cafe Citti Kenwood
- \$25 Gift Certificate Wildwood Nursery
- French Glassware with bees
- 3 x \$20 Gift Certificates Lemon Grass Thai (Petaluma)



Bee Garden Tile will be in the silent auction.

SCBA Board Meeting Minutes November 4, 2013

Held at the home of Cheryl Veretto

Present: Christine Kurtz, Cheryl Veretto, Deborah Hammerlee, Rita Maloney, Kelli Cox, Thea Vierling, Ettamarie Peterson, Paty Hermosillo-Perkins

Meeting called to order at 6:18 pm

I. Approval of Minutes - Kelli moves to approve the minutes from the October Board and Membership meetings, Ettamarie seconds, 6 ayes.

II. Old Business

- **Members only website** status and problems to resolve
- **Cafepress and Members Only tutorial** - show to membership ASAP.
- **Newsletter format and mailing cost** - \$40.46 per person for snail mail.
- **2nd VP responsibilities and recommendation for 2014** - BOD reviews descriptions.
- **Event/Volunteer Coordinator** - working in conjunction with event chair to organize volunteers. Sonoma Co. Fair, Heirloom Expo, Gravenstein Apple Fair with the emphasis of speaking and education. BOD of 2013 recommends the above 3 major events.
- **2014 Board Nominations** - current but changeable slate of nominees reviewed.
- **Silent auction/Potluck/Thank you's**
Christine has a list and Kelli will want to recognize volunteers at-large

III. Events and Speaker Report

- **Motion: Cheryl moves that SCBA purchase a notebook for membership use and events. Kelli seconds. 6 ayes.**
- **Gadget Night** - Ticket person at the door in order to divide time accordingly.
- **Pre-meeting** - can we show folks how to join the members only portion of website?

IV. President's Report

- **Award** - Northbay Leadership will be announced at the Dec. meeting.

V. Regional Group Report

- Thea reports that she created a Hive Dive Info sheet to recruit 40 experts/ experienced beeks to lead a hive dive within regional clusters beginning in the spring. Hive dive programs are designed to run with smaller groups.

VI. Treasurer's Report

- Oct. financial report (see attached or view in Members Only website)
Motion: Cheryl moves to purchase enough hams and turkeys for 200 people and for vegetarians tofurkey for the December Potluck - 2 hams, 1 tofurkey and 3-4 turkeys or turkey breasts. Ettamarie seconds. 6 ayes.

VII. Membership Report - October

- 408 members and one expiration.

VIII. Newsletter report

- fee will have to be raised in order cover costs. Deb will send Thea the list.

IX. Swarm Report

- Laurie will not continue as chair.
Meeting adjourned 9:47
Minutes By Sec. Paty Hermosillo-Perkins

Treasurer's Report December 1, 2013 By Treas. Rita Maloney

The combined bank account totals are \$11,186.39.

Our main expense this month was extending our rental of the 4-H building for the first half of 2014.

Membership dues are rolling in and we also had a sizeable deposit from sold merchandise at the Heirloom Expo and other fall events.

Our new librarian has purchased some new books – make sure that you check them out!

Membership Meeting November 11, 2013 4-H Building, Rohnert Park

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

83 members in attendance

New members are introduced.

President's Report

- Christine speaks of fall hive loss
Janet L. also mentions that even organic chemicals can be harmful to honeybees
- Membership will lapse in January. Rotating memberships began this year. Folks will receive an email reminder. Sabin tells folks that there will be a direct link in the email reminder in order to renew membership online. Sabin or Jim Spencer are happy to help folks needing assistance.
- Events - SCBA board would like to cut back on events next year, keeping our mission of education as our primary organizational focus.
- The Extractor Newsletter will only be sent electronically. Snail mail became too expensive. However, if you do not have a computer, please let us know and we'll find a way to get you a newsletter.

Regional cluster report - 2 groups have merged

- Jim Spencer - East cluster, Sierra Castillo - West cluster, Christine Kurtz - South cluster, Christine - North cluster
East county - Garden tour
South county - More Than Honey movie

Nominations for 2014 Board

Ballot will arrive via email and possibly online

First VP. - Laura Baker

2nd VP. - Linda Hale

Sec. - Becky Jackson

Treasurer - Rita Maloney

President - Christine Kurtz nominated

Board at Large - 2 positions to be voted in by the board

Ballot will also include a By law change re: the number of board members

December meeting - annual potluck

All members bring a dish - prizes are given in 5 categories

Appetizers, salads, main dish, dessert, honey dish

Can bring alcohol

Silent Auction - we are still taking donations!

Randy Sue announces Ettamarie's birthday!!

Cheryl announces gadget night -

1. **Ken** - shows us his swarm box with a mock handle on the bottom held in place with screws and adjustable bungee cords.

Bee vacuum - for use in wall/structural extractions

Important to keep vacuum parallel with hose

4 horse power seems to be just right - keeping it gentle for the bees

2. **Chris** - 7 frames of honey left by dead hive

Decided to crush honey using 2 pail method. Bottom pail with cloth sieve. Top bucket with holes drilled

3. **Kirk** - small bucket vac from Home Depot/Lowe's

Can be very gentle with valve option

Vacuuming is a better option than exterminating bees

--Thea reminds everyone that you have to be a member of SCBA to be on swarm list

4. **Christine** - solar wax melter 1, 2 and 3

#3 double pane window

Steam table pan with holes drilled at one end

Wheels would be a nice addition, or on a wagon

Lint and beeswax are good smoker starters as well as horse falls

5. **Daryl**

Water for bees - wine corks! Shallow containers seem to work best

Corks might be best for hive top feeders

Another suggestion - comb in water which floats!

6. **Cheryl** - bees needing water all the time. Do not let it go dry! Set up water source before installing bees.
Tanging - metallic clanging when bees are in the process of swarming. Perhaps banging closer to the hive would bring them back to the area where you want them. Bees must be in transition, in flight.

7. **Sherman** - bees respond to vibrations, which is what they are responding to from metallic clanging
Brought an acupuncture tool for a sting remedy. Remove stinger first, then use tool right on welt.
The device shoots electricity into skin - electronic acupuncture device (magneto) acupuncture stimulator pen

8. **Ettamarie**

Plastic cup with domed lid, using a yellow jacket trap lid inside of the domed lid. Purchase yellow jacket lure, add water and now you have a reusable yellow jacket trap

File folder frame - hanging folder frames to hold frames while you are inspecting hive

Used bamboo skewers inside of a frame instead of wire

When melting wax, put coffee can in a double boiler. Then strain by placing a berry basket lined with an old nylon and then place in a half-gallon carton.

Hot wax will bleed color, so use something without dye.

White t-shirt material can be used as a filter and later used as a fire starter.

9. **Nadya** - duct tape on monitoring tray to help pull the tray out without the need for a tool

Uncapping bin from Mann Lake. Beekind sells one also

10. **Thea** - preferred method of feeding bees. First shows the front-end feeder, which she places on top of lid in a very ingenious arrangement!

--Cheryl announces that the Dec. meeting will begin at 6 pm. Please bring a dish that will feed 6-8 people. BYO tableware also.

On auction night we can accept credit cards, checks and cash!

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm


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This bee is collecting propolis from old equipment. Propolis is a mixture of sap and wax. Notice where she is carrying the load. Photo by Ettamarie

Regular monthly meetings of the Sonoma County Beekeepers' Association are held on the second Monday of each month, at 7 pm. The meetings cover a wide range of topics of interest to beekeepers. Everyone wanting to learn about honeybees is cordially invited to attend. You do not need to be a member nor a beekeeper to attend these meetings. Please contact the treasurer to pay dues.

2013 Board Members

Pres. Christine Kurtz –(707) 849-3220 President@sonomabees.org

Past Pres. Mike Kelly- 707/322-8503 pastpresident@sonomabees.org

1st Vice Pres. Membership– Deborah Hammerlee - 1stVP@sonomabees.org

2nd Vice President – Cheryl Veretto

2ndVP@sonomabees.org

Secretary –Paty Hermosillo-Perkins -

Secretary@sonomabees.org

Treasurer Rita Maloney Treasurer@sonomabees.org

Librarian –Nadya Clark Librarian@sonomabees.org 707-938-4762

Reps. at Large

Volunteer Coordinator – Kelli Maciel 707-762-1800

Editor Ettamarie Peterson – Editor@sonomabees.org 765-4582

Swarm Chairperson- swarms@sonomabees.org

Webmaster- Cheryl Veretto Webmaster@sonomabees.org

Historian – Historian@sonomabees.org

Extractor Techs- Call Ettamarie 707-765-4582 or Janet Leisen 707- 528-2085 to rent the electric extractor for \$5 a day.
--

Sonoma County Beekeepers' Assoc.
P.O. Box 98
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-0098
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My grand daughter Kasey Peterson drew this.

**Monthly Meeting Dec. 9, 2013.
4-H Foundation Building in
Rohnert Park – 6 p.m. Annual
Gourmet Potluck dinner and
Silent Auction.**

**Bring your family and your
own place settings to make
this a “green event.”
Beverages provided by SCBA.
We can take credit cards but
would really appreciate your
checks or cash for items
purchased at the silent
auction. Voting for 2014
officers!**