

# The Monthly Extractor



Volume 37, Issue 9 September 2014

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

## Monthly Meeting:

**Sept. 8th- 6p.m. Social hour-Bring your own cup for tea, talk to beekeepers who can help you with your questions, check out our library, and renew your membership.**

**7 p.m.- Amina Harris from U.C. Davis speaking on tasting honey. She has put together a collection of tastes found in all kinds of honey and categorized them on a wheel. We will also be tasting honey with her guidance.**

**Sept. 9, 10 & 11- Heirloom Exposition at Santa Rosa Fair Grounds.**

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## From Our President

This month will be the Heirloom Exposition and that means Sonoma County Beekeepers Association has a great opportunity to educate thousands of folks about the honey bees. We will be cooperating with our friend Rob Keller and his fabulous trailer with the most amazing observation hive you have ever seen. If you volunteer to help SCBA talk to the public, you will get a free pass to this event. It is one of the best events in Sonoma County. You will see all kinds of fruits and vegetables grown except no GMO ones! They will also have a display of heritage poultry, beekeeping, and speakers on food topics. The vendors that come to this event sell all kinds of seeds and other things that relate to growing food and living well. I highly recommend you find time to volunteer. Contact Cathy Kopshever if you want to help: [volunteer@sonomabees.org](mailto:volunteer@sonomabees.org). You will be so glad you did!

At our fabulous picnic I was able to talk more to Denise and Russell Hyde who have volunteered to work on the power point we will show at our December meeting. Denise said some people have already sent her some photos to use. We are asking people to send them photos in these categories: educational presentations to schools or groups, events showing our SCBA displays, meetings, and cluster activities. You can bring the photos to them on a disc or memory stick at the September or October meeting or you can e-mail them to [drhyde@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drhyde@sbcglobal.net). This will be our entertainment during dinner and then later used to show people what SCBA is doing to fulfill its mission statement to educate the public and beekeepers about caring for and protecting honey bees.

I want to give a huge thank you to Janet and Corrie Leisen for once again opening up their lovely farm for our picnic. They are very generous to let us use their farm especially when they have an extremely busy life growing all those fabulous vegetables, keeping several beehives and going to lots of farmers' markets and selling vegetables to some local grocery stores. Sonoma County is so fortunate to have sustainable farmers such as Corrie and Janet. They are the best! Next time you are at a farmer's market look for Leisen's Bridgeway Farm and buy some of their yummy produce! They have a fantastic melon selection right now!

*Ettamarie Peterson, President*

## **My September Beekeeping To-Do List**

**By Serge Labesque © 2014**

### **Are you going to climb trees to feed bees?**

The work of the bee colonies becomes focused on their preparations for winter just as soon as the season of colony reproduction is over. They accumulate and methodically organize stores within the hives; they evaluate and occasionally supersede their queens; and the brood nests and populations gradually change, ultimately producing winter bees. At the end of summer, beekeepers inspect their hives to find out how their colonies are progressing toward this goal.

Invariably, the subject of feeding colonies comes up. Ask yourself this question: Would you climb trees to deliver sugar syrup and pollen substitute patties to bees that live in hollow trunks and limbs? Probably not! Those bees are on their own. So, why should it be any different for your bees? They all belong to the same species! If they can make it through winter, they are tough survivors. If they cannot, it's because they do not possess the necessary "skills". Or, maybe it's because the local environment cannot support them. Nature mercilessly eliminates the unfit and does not tolerate imbalance. Many beekeepers recognize the huge value of the self-sufficient feral and wild colonies that are exposed to the challenges of their environment, and although the bees that are in their own apiaries are no different, they nurture them as if they deserved special consideration. Unfortunately, any interference with this crucial selection process weakens the species by making it more dependent on us.

When we keep several colonies in the same location we can see that they can fare very differently. This alone should convince us that there are bees that have what it takes to survive where and when others simply cannot. Then, knowing that the species only grows stronger from the loss of the weak hives, we can accept the demise of inept colonies.

Certainly, we feel bad when we see that our hives are at risk of failing because they do not have enough stores, and we want to help them. But when beekeepers feed sugar syrup or patties to their bees, they are really doing it for *themselves*, for their *own* benefit. But if we really love bees, we can understand that the species is more important than our own colonies, more important than any bee "business", can't we? The best way to feed bees is not to run to the grocery store to get sugar. It is to provide an environment that offers safe sources of nectar and pollen. After that we need to leave it up to the foragers to collect what their colonies will need for winter.

### **September in the apiaries:**

No matter what phase we examine in the life of bee colonies, we always find it filled with amazing facts and processes. Their preparations for winter are no exception. Behind us are the exhilarating spring development of the populations, comb building, colony reproduction, queen rearing, and the gathering of stores. In the months ahead, the bees will demonstrate their ability to endure the cold season, thanks to their astute and thrifty clustering mechanism. Right now, as we approach and pass the fall equinox, the intricately designed transition between summer and winter deserves our full attention.

Brood production has been steadily declining through the summer until it briefly picks up in September to produce the nurse bees that will in turn feed the developing winter bees in October. This temporary increase of the brood nests bears no resemblance to the impressive development of the colonies in the spring. Nevertheless, everything else in the hives, including stores and brood chambers, is becoming more compact. The bees are re-organizing their stores, moving uncapped honey from the distant parts of the hives into and around the brood areas. Therefore, hive space management at this time of year is very different from what it is in the spring: Instead of augmenting the volume of the hives, we need to reduce it. This gives us the opportunity to possibly harvest some surplus honey and to remove unused, old and misshapen combs.

The brood nests are gradually displaced closer to the entrances as the bees relocate uncapped honey. Past the autumn equinox, the brood areas contract and become completely packed, which forces the queens to taper off their production of eggs. Although it might be tempting to provide egg-laying space, it is important to refrain from doing so. Indeed, the presence of large quantities of open brood would turn the winter bees into nurse bees too early in their lives.

Contrary to the well-stocked colonies that I see where sources of pollen and nectar abound, the drought and its accompanying dearth have left a deep imprint on my hives. Although some colonies are reasonably supplied, many are very light. None carries surplus honey this year. Remarkably, the oaks are not dispensing honeydew. This may actually be good, as undiluted by nectar this honey would hurt the colonies during winter months. My intention is to rapidly shrink the colonies that are low on stores to the size of very compact nucs. Overall, malnutrition set aside, the colonies are healthy and in control of the mite populations.

Having assessed our colonies, their queens, brood nests, stores and health condition, we can still make some adjustments to the hives and their contents. There is still time to requeen or combine colonies, and to follow up on these procedures before fall arrives in earnest. The careful planning of open hive inspections and the reduction of the

size of the hive entrances help avoid exposing our colonies to the dangers presented by robber bees and yellow jackets.

Swarms may occasionally be collected at this time of year. Although it is unlikely that they will overwinter successfully, I offer them a nest cavity: an empty super with a few frames. It's up to them to make the best of the situation. Certainly, I do not combine these unknown bees with other colonies, as they are very likely absconding swarms that can carry pathogens.

#### **In summary, this month:**

- Assess colonies, their health, queens, brood nests and stores.
- Monitor the progress of the colonies in their preparations for fall and winter.
- Requeen or combine hives that are not performing satisfactorily and those that have failed or failing queens.
- Reduce the unused volume of the hives (Follower boards greatly facilitate this.)
- Consolidate honey in honey supers (reduce the volume of the honey supers with follower boards).
- Manage frames in preparation for fall culling of the old and misshapen ones.
- Harvest surplus honey, if there is any, and with moderation.
- Beware of yellow jackets and of the risks of robbing. If necessary, reduce the entrances of developing colonies and of those that are under attack.
- Avoid hive manipulations that can trigger robbing.
- Provide and maintain sources of water.
- Provide some afternoon shade, if possible.
- Ensure that hives are adequately ventilated.
- Extract and bottle surplus honey.
- Return wet frames and cappings to the bees for cleaning (by placing them above hive top feeders or inner covers during the evening).
- Beware of the fire danger when using the smoker in dry-grass areas.
- Render wax from discarded frames and from cappings
- Routinely clean and scorch tools and equipment.

Serge Labesque © 2014

### **Need to Learn More About Beekeeping? Take This Class!**

#### **Intermediate Beekeeping for fall, winter and Early Spring**

Section 9650

Wednesdays, September 24 and October 1, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

2004 Lark Hall, Santa Rosa Campus Course fee: \$56

To register to the SRJC classes.

This can be found at: <https://portal.santarosa.edu/CommunityEducation/Information.aspx>

The options are:

- Online
- By phone: (707) 527-4372 during regular business hours
- By mail: with a check sent to Community Education Registration, 1501 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
- By fax: (707) 522-2731

Or in person at Community Education

### **Bee Plants of the Month By Alice Ford-Sala**

Native Plant of the Month Rudbeckia Asteraceae Family Gloriosa Daisy, Coneflower

You can be pretty sure that bees will love a flower if it is in the Asteraceae family- those daisy-like flowers of any size are attractive to many pollinators- the central disk is made up of many tiny flowers in a round flowerhead. These flowers each make a seed- sunflowers are an example. Rudbeckias are easy to grow. Several varieties are native to the eastern US, but *R.nitida* is native to California. So why not try *R.nitida* 'Autumn Sun' for a nice late season treat for hungry bees? Also called 'Herbstsonne', she is a perennial that can grow up to 6 or 7 feet tall. Leaves are long and thin and lobed. Flowers are big, 2 inches or so wide, yellow, and have raised greenish cone that continues to open tiny flowers for several days worth of blooming. The plants are so tall, you will want to have them at the back of the garden- maybe with hollyhocks and stake them so they don't flop over. Goldfinches love the seeds, so leave the seed heads on.

They do like regular water, but don't over do it. They prefer full sun to keep blooming all summer and fall. You can divide them after a few years and spread them around your garden or share with friends.

### Beneficial Plant of the Month Calamintha Lamiaceae Family

Another bee favorite, lamiaceae is the mint family, providing many tiny flowers, usually on upright spikes that bees return to over many months of bloom. Calamintha is a sweet-smelling little plant that is nice to have at the front of a garden bed. I have a couple growing along our front walk, under some apple trees, and it is always a pleasure to brush up against them and inhale the minty aroma. She has tiny green leaves and long stems that bear lilac-white blossoms from mid-summer to frost. Bees forage on those flowers from early morning until sunset. Calamintha can take full sun to part shade and only needs moderate water. Good drainage is important. You can also make a nice tea from the leaves, refreshing on a warm day.

Editor's Two Cents Sedum is blooming now and my bees are all over it!



### **BEE WISE: “REDUCING HIVE SIZE” By Emery Dann**

“There is nothing as unpredictable as the weather!” How much rain will we receive during this coming fall and winter? We hope we will have a normal to above normal rainy season to transition away from the drought of the last few years.

I have noticed that the bloom of many plants and trees have been early this year. As I look in beehives in different areas of Sonoma County, I am seeing capped brood, which are the winter bees. I am not seeing very much open brood now (end of August). This means to me that the queens are slowing down by not laying as many new eggs now. I also see there is not very much in pollen stores due to the drought. Honey stores vary from hive to hive—some have enough for now and others do not. The danger is in how fast the bees will consume stores before winter because of the short supply of nectar and pollen this year. Our challenge is to know what is happening inside our hives. We need to know how much capped honey and pollen stores there are and where the brood nest is located for our preparation for winter. Combining hives can be a good move to increase numbers, if it will make both hives stronger. Are there unused frames and space inside? At this time, we do not need to add space. Honey bees cannot build new comb at this time of year. We need to reduce hive size while leaving all the available hive stores. The winter bees are increasing as the summer bees are dying and drones are being removed from the hives. Two thirds of the stored nectar and honey the bees consume is for heat production. So by reducing hive size by removing unused boxes and empty frames inside hives will conserve heat and save what bees have in stored for the winter.

Having all our boxes the same size makes this an easy task to adjust. If some frames in the top box are empty, they can be removed. If there are empty honey frames on the outside the bees have cleaned out in the lower boxes, these also can be removed. Then frames with capped honey or brood from a top box may be moved down into the space you have made in the lower boxes. The frames are interchangeable because they are all the same size. Follower boards are valuable to contain and adjust the number of frames.

Protect the hive entrances by reducing the opening. Be careful of too little ventilation, too much ventilation or moisture build up inside a hive. Check your monitor boards for moisture. If more ventilation is needed the monitor boards can be left a few inches out from the back of the hive to give some extra ventilation through the screen bottom. But keep in mind, in a tree hive cavity, most often there is not air exposure coming up from the bottom of the cavity. Remember, smaller hives are better and healthier for bees, as long as they have the food they need above the brood nest that they can move up into through the winter.

There will be hives that do not make it for different reasons. When this happens, learn what you can about why and try again. Don't give up and quit. Honey bees are an amazing part of our lives! I am thankful to be able to assist honey bees that improve our community and local environment with their incredible teamwork ethic and tenacity!

## SCBA General Meeting August 11, 2014

Meeting started at 7:00 pm with Ettamarie giving out Hasna's horse nuggets for smoker fuel. Contact Hasna if you want more.



New members and visitors were welcomed: Joan, Alicia, Pat, Stacia, Tim, Bob, Ellie Rose, Cage.

Rob Keller explained his Napa County [barnraiser.us](http://barnraiser.us) project in which he plans to breed queens for Napa area beekeepers. Go to his website for info.

National Heirloom Expo is coming in Sept—9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Sign up with Cathy Kopshever at [volunteers@sonomabees.org](mailto:volunteers@sonomabees.org)

Sam Comfort, our speaker tonight was introduced by Thea. She met him 3 years ago in Hawaii at the Western Apiculture Symposium. She was impressed and arranged for him to come here, thanks Thea. Jim Spencer gets credit for hosting and transporting and feeding him well.

Sam started in beekeeping when he attended school in New York. He became

interested in Permaculture and a friend in Vermont invited him to help at a bee farm for the summer. There, Sam was responsible for 1000 hives. Nothing like jumping in wholeheartedly!

From there he moved to Montana where he helped tend 5000 hives for a migratory operation: almonds in CA, to apples in Washington, to cherries in Montana Flathead Lake area. But these bees had to be fed and medicated on a rigorous schedule. They went from one monocrop to another with no diversity in their pollen food. Sam explained that migratory beekeepers want Italian bees, who grow brood all the time so they can make splits from the live colonies to fill the dead-outs. They had pollination contracts to fill. Honey was an unwanted, messy byproduct; they just wanted frames of bees and brood. They used protein substitutes and corn syrup delivered by a gas nozzle.

Two years of working there went by, and then his old boss in Vermont called to say his bees were crashing. The 250 hives left alive were shipped to South Carolina in the spring of 2005 and he asked Sam to come help save them. They had used Apistan and Check mite for Varroa control, but it was no longer working (resistance builds up). Sam arrived and so did boxes of Formic Acid. He had no choice but to learn to use it, but it killed mites, eggs, brood and some queens. There were no queens available at the time, so he had to learn to graft queen cells at 40-50 cups per hive.

In So. Carolina, the Tupelo flow started and the bees bounced back with the rich food and his queen cell acceptance increased. By May he was back up to 1000 hives. His boss was so grateful; he gave him 10 hives to pick himself. Sam still has the genetic stock from those 10 hives, which he uses today. After the tupelo, the bees were moved back up to Vermont and New York for the dandelion bloom.

Sam moved to Florida for the winter where there's year-round nectar, but also small hive beetle, determined ants, etc. When spring came, he moved his Vermont bees to Montana and put them in an isolated canyon and raised extra queen cells. He leased 200 hives and sent them to pollinate almonds. He made enough money to take 5 of his original hives back east, and give up the lease on the others.

His experiences with the commercial pollinators made him determined to keep his bees in a healthier, more sustainable manner. He decided to get them off of foundation and the poisons impregnated in the commercial wax. He shook them out into foundationless hives and the first generation raised slightly smaller cells. He shook them out again, and it took 6-7 generations to get down to a natural size of 4.9 mm. This was his target according to recent research by Dee Lusby on Yahoo Organic Beekeeping group. The smaller cell size perhaps inhibits Varroa reproduction rates and timing.

About this same time, he noticed in Florida that the bees produced there were doing well without Varroa treatment. They were producing 5 frame nucs, where they would steal the queen to sell, and drop in a queen cell to develop. So lots of splitting and queen rearing was keeping them healthy. The reasoning is that there is a break in the brood cycle when there's no queen laying, therefore the Varroa can't live and reproduce.

So Sam brought his bees there and made 160 splits of 3-frame nucs. But he needed more equipment to put all these bees in!

That's when he started Anarchy Apiaries and studied Top Bar hives from info from Les Crowder in New Mexico, and another in New England. He could build a hive for less than \$5, but had to eat a lot of popsicles to form the comb guides. ☺

Usually, the brood nest is close to the entrance to better regulate cooling, and the honey is furthest in order to protect it better. Propolis is the antibacterial for the hive. Several pictures were shown of top bar hives made of burlap, woven wicker, bamboo strips, straw, Masonite. You can use anything natural and acceptable to the bees. He puts a bag of dry leaves on top of his bars and then covers with a lid. The better insulated a beehive or cavity, the less

ventilation is needed. The more sun you can provide in winter, the better.

There are many advantages to top bar beekeeping. There's no heavy lifting, inspections don't open up the entire hive, and you are less invasive. Fewer bees are mashed if you handle the frames correctly. Many have a side observation window so you can look in without opening the hive. Sam feeds his bees when newly installing them in a top bar hive.

During spring growth, Sam tries to make splits before the bees swarm on his best hives. He takes the queen and 3 combs, and a shake of nurse bees from brood comb. Within 10 days, there's queen cells in the parent hive and he now has 500 hives. He encourages us to raise our own survivor stock like that.

For info on Warre hives, you can download Emil Warre's book at [www.biobees.com](http://www.biobees.com). With Warre hives, you add boxes below the colony and use a piece of piano wire to slice off the oldest box from the top. This is how bees build in a hollow tree. But these hives are un-inspectable.

A bait hive should be 10 gallons in volume, which is either 1 deep, 2 mediums, or 12 top bars. Ideally it should hang 10 feet up on a building or tree.

He closed in quoting Brother Adam, "Listen to the bees and let them guide you."

We closed with a standing ovation to Sam Comfort!

Submitted my Becky Jackson, Secretary  
Photos of Sam Comfort workshops by Russell Hyde taken at Cluster Meetings before our General Meeting.



download Emil Warre's book at [www.biobees.com](http://www.biobees.com). With Warre hives,



**Board of Directors meeting August 4, 2014**

Met at the home of Rita Maloney. Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm after a fabulous meal.

<b>Board members Present:</b>	<b>Board members Absent:</b>	<b>Committee Chairs Present:</b>
Ettamarie--President	Jen Espinoza--Education	Christine Kurtz--Past Pres.
Hasna Wood--2 <sup>nd</sup> VP		Thea Vierling--Regional Coord.
Rita Maloney--Treasurer		
Becky Jackson--Secretary		
Laura Baker--1 <sup>st</sup> VP		
Denise Wright--2 <sup>nd</sup> At-Large		
Cheryl Veretto--1 <sup>st</sup> At-Large		
Cathy Kopshever--Volunteers		

The minutes of the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed. Laura moved to accept the minutes as presented, Hasna seconded and all approved (8 ayes).

President, Ettamarie Peterson thanked those who participated in and set up the Sonoma County Fair booth: especially Thea, Christine Kurtz and Katia Vincent. Thea's hand puppet was a hit and Cheryl Veretto moved to print 5000 more hand puppets at a cost in the range of \$300-\$500 for future educational events. Laura Baker seconded and all approved (8 ayes). Ettamarie will ask at the general meeting if anyone wants to give a short account of his or her Fair

experience. She will also get the names of ribbon winners in the honey/wax division of the Fair and print in next newsletter.

2<sup>nd</sup> VP Hasna Wood reports Sam Comfort will speak in August on Warre and Top Bar hives, and he will hold 2 workshops, which are sold out with a waiting list.

- September: Amina Harris from UC Davis on honey tasting. Hex jars of honey will be given to her from our member's apiaries, as she appreciates samples from all over.
- October: Kate Frey, a Master Gardener from Melissa Gardens.
- November: Gadget Night & nomination of officers
- December: Potluck and Silent Auction
- January will be Rob Keller, and Hasna was asked to get him narrowed down to a topic.
- February will be Serge Labesque on swarms/splits.
- March is tentatively Alena Lastro Nino, the new UC Davis expert. She will confirm after she takes office in September.
- Marla Spivak is Marin's speaker in May, and Hasna was encouraged to contact Marin to check their schedule now to try to piggyback onto some of their speakers.

1<sup>st</sup> VP of Membership, Laura Baker reports 390 total members now. She will send a pdf list of paid members twice per year to the keepers of the extractors (Denny Pederson, Debra Rodgers, Janet Leisen, and Ettamarie) so they can check whether someone is a member before renting to them. Cheryl also suggests a couple dozen Membership Applications be put in the events boxes to go to the fairs so people can join right there and then. Cathy Kopshever is happy to add them. Cheryl also suggested a locking acrylic donation box for the events (fairs). Denise Wright volunteered to get one at Tap Plastics, and get it to the Apple Fair next weekend. She will also price a custom beehive-shaped one.

Treasurer, Rita Maloney presented the July financial report showing expenses of \$222.86 and income of \$776.00. The main expense was for library books.

#### Group Reports

Regional Cluster leader—Thea Vierling reports Sam's 2 workshops are filled with 15 people each. People will pay their \$25 fee as they arrive. Jim Spencer will house Sam and transport him to and from the airport and the Marin meeting. After some discussion, we agreed Jim will be given a \$50 gas card and a pelargonium (from Cheryl).

Education—Jen Espinoza was absent and has no report.

Technology—Cheryl Veretto reports she may want to convert the old HTML website to WordPress. Right now, only the Members only section is the newer WordPress technology, and it is NOT public as it was set up. So adding things to the public site, she has to create a page and link it to the old HTML site, which is cumbersome. She will use the slower winter months to recruit Jim Spencer's help to consider doing that change. Cheryl will run a report on how many are using the site for next month's Board Meeting.

Per-Meetings—Christine Kurtz will bring the dead observation hive from the Fair display to the next pre-meeting. The Board commended her for a fantastic job she did on it.

Swarms—no report from John Krafft, but many had late July swarms that they were called to collect.

#### OLD BUSINESS

- Picnic is on track. Cheryl sent out the invitation to the membership last weekend.

#### NEW BUSINESS

- Heirloom Festival—Cheryl is coordinating it and will call to get discounted tickets for our volunteers. Rob Keller is bringing his trailer with observation hive. Sept. 9, 10, 11. The 10<sup>th</sup> is Kid's Day with tons of kids, which come by the booth. There will be bee hand puppets to give out.
- Zombees study can be promoted in the newsletter with a blurb they write, and they can come to the pre-meeting time to talk to people.
- Rob Keller's barnraiser website can also be treated the same as above.

Next September Board meeting is at Cheryl Veretto's home at 2358 Blucher Valley Rd. in Sebastopol.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:20 pm

Respectfully submitted, Becky Jackson, Secretary

### **Treasurer's Report for September By Treasurer Rita Maloney**

The combined bank account totals are \$15,439.10. Our main expenses in August were for Sam Comfort – speaker's fee, hosting and refreshments at the workshops. We also made some money on Sam's workshops, which helped cover the other expenses. By all reports (I was unfortunately on a business trip and missed Sam!), this was a wildly successful event. As we get towards the end of the year, the Board will be discussing such expenditures and undoubtedly keeping or even raising our Speakers line item in the budget.

Other expenses were rent on the 4H building for the first six months of 2015, new SCBA thank you cards and SCBA stickers for our education efforts in the schools.

We sold a ton of honey stix at the two events that we attended, the Gravenstein Apple Fair and the Sonoma County Fair. It always amazes me how many of those honey stix we sell. We only order honey stix that are completely natural (no coloring or flavorings added) and are harvested from bees on the West Coast.

My two-year term as Treasurer will be up at the end of this year. If anyone is interested in being the Treasurer for the Association, please come talk to me at the meeting or email me at [treasurer@sonomabees.org](mailto:treasurer@sonomabees.org).

### September's Speaker Amina Harris

Amina Harris is the Director of the Honey and Pollination Center at the Robert Mondavi Institute of Wine and Food Science, UC Davis. In addition, Amina is the owner of Z Specialty Food, LLC with her husband and son. Moon Shine Trading Company, a division of Z Specialty, has been offering unique American varietal honeys for over thirty years. The Honey and Pollination Center showcases the importance of both honey and pollination to the wellbeing of consumers through education and research. Projects and programs of the Center include the development of a Honey Tasting and Aroma Wheel, creation of a Master Beekeeping Program, FDA honey research and Mead Making coursework.

### The West County Cluster Highlights



The Sam Comfort workshop that only a lucky 12 were able to attend was a success and so was the Gravenstein Fair in Sebastopol. Our booth looked great at the fair and the observation hives that Ettamarie and Hector brought in were a huge hit. We really helped educate the community about the honeybee.

We had a hive dive with Marcus at Chris Dicker's apiary where all is well and there is even a surplus of honey in one hive. George Riner's splits with Doug seem to be a success with all hives re-queening themselves. Cool unseasonal foggy weather forced us to cancel another hive dive at the Michelle and Jim Glenn's apiary. "

Chris Dicker West County Cluster [westcluster@sonomabees.org](mailto:westcluster@sonomabees.org) Photo by Hasna Wood

### East Cluster Hive Dive



The East Cluster had a great hive dive with Serge Labesque. Tim Holmes offered his hives up for inspection and 20 folks attended. We learned so much as usual from Serge and from the four hives Tim has. We spent 3 hours looking through the hives and asking questions. Jim Spencer, cluster leader for East Cluster, encouraged members to have Bee Cafes and Hive Dives at their homes as well. It is the best way to learn beekeeping.

Photo & article by Thea Vierling

### December 8 Silent Auction by Christine Kurtz

Every year at our December meeting we honor all our volunteers, welcome the new board and sit down together for a wonderful meal, all along we also run a wonderful silent auction. Thea Vierling and I are starting to gather donations and would like all of your help to ask or give something for this event. Perhaps you own a business that can give an item or a gift certificate, perhaps you are willing to ask a business that you frequent a lot like a favorite restaurant, perhaps you are a woodworker that is willing to build some bee equipment or your own creation or ask a friend, neighbor or a family member who is, perhaps you have a craft or a hobby that you are willing to share. The donation does not have to be bee related and feel free to be creative. We encourage you to help us as soon as you can, there is a lot of work that happens behind the scene to make displays, catalog and organize and since it's during the holiday season it's really helpful and kind to pass on the donations early.

E-mail me at [petalumabeelady@yahoo.com](mailto:petalumabeelady@yahoo.com) to get the soliciting form and letter of intent that you can then either print or e-mail. We are a 501 c3 educational non-profit and donations are tax deductible.

**More on Silent Auction**

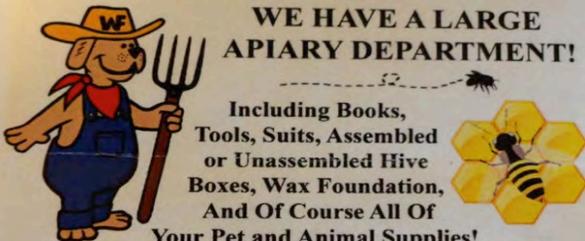
You can also call me at 707-840-3220 with any questions.  
Here are a couple of photos from last year's silent auction.



**Honeybees**  
Gentle Local Bees & Hives -  
No chemicals ever used  
(707) 431-1569  
ApriLLance@aol.com  
Healdsburg



**WESTERN FARM CENTER**  
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### Fun at the Annual Picnic by Christine Kurtz

At the picnic held at Janet and Corrie Leisen on their wonderful sustainable Leisen Farms we had a scavenger hunt to encourage folks to visit various parts of the farm, from the amazing vegetable garden, two different chicken yards, the apiary, the barn, the bocce court, the redwood grove... A big thank you for hosting us again this year, it was fantastic! What fun to hang out with beekeepers who all have such interesting lives!! Part of the scavenger hunt was to find the apiary, there were two pictures there meant for good fun, one was asked to write a caption for and the other to identify, although the pictures are embarrassingly of poor quality here are the answers participants gave.

Picture one is of a beekeeper driving his car holding the smoker out the window. We asked for captions of this seemingly crazy beekeeping practice and here are some of the answers:

- Puff the magic Saturn
- No Smoking in the car
- 101 uses for a smoker. Use #27 A smoker turn signal
- Would you like a light?
- Finally drive through beekeeping
- Ha ha ha. Dad will never know we were smoking in the car
- Hey, Bud! Can you spare a bee?
- One more puff for the road
- Running on smoke
- If you light they will come
- 1 puff: Bees are tame; 2 puffs: Use caution; 3 puffs: Get the hell out of Dodge!
- Keep on rolling
- World bee Smoke out - Live dangerously



Picture 2 is a wad of wax with rubber band sticking out from a beekeeper helping the bees clean up rubber bands used to hold comb on frames from an extraction. We asked participants to identify the picture, which looks like a creature from outer space. Some of you got it right and here are the ones for good fun:

- Funguses - Under sea warty frog on top of hive
- Bee kraft - Feeder art - Rubber band octopus - Mutant comb
- Serge's pet frog - Bee disco- Deep fried fish head - Scorpion fish
- Bee designed piranha - Hive marker - Road art





### **Bee Education Needs You!**

Jen has received two requests already for presentations in schools this September. Would you like to come observe and decide if teaching would appeal to you? She needs more educators and this fall would be a great time to join in the efforts of spreading information about honeybees to children throughout the county. Please contact her at home 527-9272 or by email [education@sonomabees.org](mailto:education@sonomabees.org) for more information.

Even Uncle Sam wants you to help this committee.

### **Would you like to run for a board position for 2015?**

Every November, we accept nominations for the SCBA Board of Directors. Please read the following job descriptions and see if you would like to help SCBA by becoming a board member. These are non-paid positions but they are essential to the workings of our organization. If you, or someone you know, might be interested, please consider e-mailing your nomination to [president@sonomabees.org](mailto:president@sonomabees.org) or bring the name to the meeting. We would like to know who is interested early so we can help that person learn more about the position. This is especially important for our treasurer's job. Rita would like to facilitate a smooth transition to the next treasurer.

If you would like more information about a particular position, please email the current person – their email is listed below after the job title.

Hope you give this some serious consideration or know someone that you would like to nominate. Be sure that the person you nominate is willing to accept.

**We made a change in our by-laws last year.** This enables some of the other positions listed below to choose to be on the Board and gives the board flexibility for the current needs of the association.

### **BOARD MEMBER DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **All Board Members**

1. Uphold the By-Laws and protect the Association from harmful acts or unhealthy personal agendas or distractions to our Mission
2. Attend and participate in the monthly Board meetings
3. Attend the monthly Membership meeting, including the pre-meeting.
4. Prepare reports for the Board and articles for the Extractor in a timely manner
5. Follow up on all phone calls and emails in a timely manner
6. Support SCBA events as needed

#### **President** [president@sonomabees.org](mailto:president@sonomabees.org)

1. Chairs and schedules Board Meeting locations and General Membership meetings every month.
2. Receive and collects agenda items and e-mails to officers before the Board Meeting or brings and passes out agenda at Board Meeting.
3. Conducts voting by Board, but only votes in a tiebreaker.
4. Assist, responds and delegates to elected officers of the Association's needs, concerns and questions.
5. Assists, responds and directs members for their needs, concerns and questions, if necessary brings issues to the board.
6. Co-signs all Association checks - two signatures are needed for every check written.
7. Evaluates opportunities for our mission to expand and if we can accommodate them, bringing them to the Board to vote as necessary.

#### **First Vice President- Membership** [1stVP@sonomabees.org](mailto:1stVP@sonomabees.org)

1. In the absence of the President, or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, the First Vice President shall perform all the duties of the President, and when so acting shall have all the powers

- of, and be subject to all the restrictions on, the President.
2. Maintain and manage all aspects of the Membership database.
  3. Set up a table at monthly meeting to sign up new members, renew memberships and answer any questions regarding membership,

**Second Vice President – Events** 2ndVP@sonomabees.org

1. Select and book speakers for the monthly meetings
2. Coordinate volunteers for events with volunteer coordinator, execute required paperwork, act in timely manner for said events, and arrange for demonstration hive.

**Secretary** secretary@sonomabees.org

1. Take notes of the important points at the board meetings and as well as any voting that takes place and highlights of the general meetings
2. Write an overview of monthly meeting, including speaker synopsis.
3. Count the number of attendees at the general meetings

**Treasurer** treasurer@sonomabees.org

1. Maintain records of all financial transactions
2. Develop an annual budget for board approval
3. Provide a current monthly profit and loss report
4. Maintain, completes, and submits other forms that are required by the State of California and the Federal Government.
5. Maintain the contracts for various functions for the association like the rental agreement for the monthly meetings, the insurance contracts, and fees for participation in the County Fairs.

**ADDITIONAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

(These positions may or may not be Board positions depending on the elected person's preference and board needs).

**Education**

1. Trains members that are willing to speak to schools and other groups.
2. Co-ordinates speakers and requests for speakers.
3. Keeps track of educational materials and orders more as needed

**Regional Group Coordinator**

1. Keeps communication between Regional Cluster leaders, problems solves and updates the board.
2. Helps set up seasonal appropriate mini-workshops upon request.

**Swarm** swarm@sonomabees.org

1. Be the contact person for the swarm program, field phone calls and delegate calls.
1. Problem solves swarm issues and brings un-resolved issues to the board.
  2. Run 15 min swarm etiquette workshops January- June at Pre-meetings and approve members on the swarm list.
2. Send out postcards to public agencies on a timely manner.

**Volunteers** volunteers@sonomabees.org

1. In Coordination with the 2ndVP, finds and organizes volunteers for the events.
2. Sets up cookies and tea at meetings

**Merchandise:**

1. Set ups Merchandise table at meetings and sells merchandise.
  2. Keeps inventory and coordinates for cash box with the treasurer.

**Librarian:**

1. Keeps the library materials
2. Checks out the materials and reminds people to return them in timely manner
3. Orders new books and other materials that are appropriate for members' education.

**Pre-Meeting :**

1. Finds "ask me" volunteers to answer members questions
  2. Makes sure room is set up for the speakers and members (chairs and tables)
  3. Comes up with seasonal themes and discussion possibilities.

***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. Dues can be paid online at our website [sonomabees.org](http://sonomabees.org), at our monthly meeting or by mail. Please see our web site for the application and various kinds of memberships available.***

***Our mailing address is***  
**Sonoma County Beekeepers' Assoc.**  
**P.O. Box 98**  
**Santa Rosa, CA 95402-0098**

**2014 Board Members and Other Helpful People**

**Pres. Ettamarie Peterson 707-765-4582 [President@sonomabees.org](mailto:President@sonomabees.org)**  
**Past Pres. Christine Kurtz –(707) 849-3220 [pastpresident@sonomabees.org](mailto:pastpresident@sonomabees.org)**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres. Membership– Laura Baker - [1stVP@sonomabees.org](mailto:1stVP@sonomabees.org)**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President –Hasna Wood [2ndVP@sonomabees.org](mailto:2ndVP@sonomabees.org) - 707 827-3515**  
**Secretary – Becky Jackson - [Secretary@sonomabees.org](mailto:Secretary@sonomabees.org)**  
**Treasurer Rita Maloney [Treasurer@sonomabees.org](mailto:Treasurer@sonomabees.org)**  
**Librarian –Nadya Clark [Librarian@sonomabees.org](mailto:Librarian@sonomabees.org) 707-938-4762**  
**Reps. at Large – Denise Wright – [atlarge2@sonomabees.org](mailto:atlarge2@sonomabees.org)**  
**Cheryl Veretto [Webmaster@sonomabees.org](mailto:Webmaster@sonomabees.org)**  
**Volunteer Coordinator – Kelli Maciel 707-762-1800**  
**Editor Ettamarie Peterson – [Editor@sonomabees.org](mailto:Editor@sonomabees.org) 765-4582**  
**Swarm Chairperson- John Krafft [swarms@sonomabees.org](mailto:swarms@sonomabees.org)**  
**Webmaster- Cheryl Veretto [Webmaster@sonomabees.org](mailto:Webmaster@sonomabees.org)**  
**Historian – Kirstie Stramler [historian@sonomabees.org](mailto:historian@sonomabees.org)**

**Extractor Techs- Call Ettamarie 707-765-4582 or Janet Leisen 707- 528-2085 or Denny Pederson e-mail [denny1@sonic.net](mailto:denny1@sonic.net) to rent the electric extractor for \$5 a day. Rental fee is \$5 per day. Denny is located in Forestville. Janet is North of Santa Rosa. Ettamarie is in Petaluma.**

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