

# The Monthly Extractor

Our goal is to increase interest in and knowledge of bees and beekeeping for the hobby and commercial beekeeper, and to educate the general public in the value of bees.

**Monthly Meeting Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> -Election night and gadget night meeting back at Wine Country Honey meeting room. Don't forget to bring your favorite beekeeping gadget to share with all of us! Back by popular demand will be the power point slide show of Ettamarie and Ellen's trip to Down Under!**

## From Your President

Thanks to all the people who took time out of their lives this year to volunteer at all the different events, speak at our meetings, contribute to the plant table, send me material for the newsletter and serve as officers. You all helped to make this one of the best beekeeping associations in the U.S.A.!

I was totally overwhelmed at all the wonderful people who pitched in to make our dinner a big success! As soon as I arrived people were there to empty my van and start setting up the tables. It all fell together beautifully. That 4-H Center really is a great meeting place! I hope everyone liked it as much as I. The food was wonderful. We are hoping the people who won the prizes for the best dishes will share their recipes with the other members. Emery and Karen Dann won for the delicious bread and sent their recipe for this issue of the newsletter. Sandra Alvarez won for her handmade tamales. Angelo Ibleto's tri-tips were a big hit and he won a prize for his pesto-honey pasta! The baklava also won but I don't have the name for the cook. Thanks to all who donated things for the silent auction. We raised over \$350 dollars in the evening.

I hope you will all take time to mark your ballots and either bring them to the December meeting or mail them back. We really want your opinions.

Bring your favorite beekeeping gadget to our December meeting and tell us why and how you use it!

*Ettamarie Peterson*

## November General Meeting

The potluck supper was truly a gourmet event. There was so much wonderful food it was impossible for anyone to taste it all! Added to the dinner were Angelo Ibleto's famous tri-tips. The turn out was great. We had lots of faces there we hadn't seen much of during the year. Hopefully they had so much fun they will try harder to get to more meetings in spite of their busy schedules.

The officers nominated at the meeting were Janet Leisen for Treasurer, Barbara Alois for Secretary, Emery Dann for Second V.P., Sean Straw for First V.P. and Michael Johnson for President. We are grateful for all these people's willingness to accept the nominations.

The silent auction was a great success. The following people and businesses donated items: Katia and Doug Vincent's beekind Store \$200 gift certificate, Western Farm Supply-a full set-up to make Ross Round comb honey, Luke Snyder-a special jar of honey, Ettamarie Peterson-a basket of assorted items collected in New Zealand and Australia, Carlos Bottini-persimmons and pomegranates, and Sharilyn Bunce-8 tea trays with cups.

Dennis Sala had the highest bid (\$30) on the 8 medium follower boards but left before knowing so they will be up for bidding again at the December meeting unless he brings in the money and claims them.

At the dinner I was introduced to a nice lady who owns Mariposa Landscapes/Nursery. Her name is Jana. Her business carries a list of plants that bees and butterflies like. She gave me a list of them. I got her to promise she would come back to talk to our association about the plants. Sean has her business card. The business is at 672 Piezzi Rd., Santa Rosa if you are doing any winter or late fall planting and want it to be bee friendly.

Thanks to Sean Straw for making the bidding sheets and the food labels. They were a big help!

## November Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held at Ettamarie Peterson's house on November 19, 2007. In attendance were Pres. Ettamarie Peterson, 1st V.P. Sean Straw, 2nd V.P. Michael Johnson, Sec. Kathy Kellison, Immediate Past Pres. Kathy Cox, and member Janet Leisen. Absent due to being in Oregon was Treasurer Donna Nelson.

Ettamarie Peterson announced that before Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008, a list of the new officers needs to be sent to the Secretary of State. She is holding the form to be filled out after the election.

The ballot will have the following names which were nominated by members at the December General Meeting: Janet Leisen for Treasurer, Barbara Alois for Secretary, Emery Dann for Second V.P., Sean Straw for First V.P. and Michael Johnson for President. Also on the ballot there will be an advisory vote to find out if the members would like to relocate the monthly meetings. The benefits of relocating the meetings to the 4-H center were discussed, with the board unanimously supporting that as a new venue, though no formal vote was taken.

Each venue was reviewed by the board. The reasons for moving to the **4-H Center in Rohnert Park** are its parking area is well lighted, paved, easily accessible, and large; the room has good acoustics, the building is centrally located; paying the rental fee of approximately \$55 per meeting supports the youth of Sonoma County (most of them interested in agriculture); there are good, clean restrooms which are handicapped accessible; there is a lawn area to have live bee demonstrations; and it is a neutral site.

In September Donna Nelson listed the reasons for using the **Wine Country Honey**. She said the Beekeepers' Association is not paying to meet at the WCH; we have a place to work in a beehive; parking is available; our library (books and videos) is easily accessible; the location is central to most attendees.

The reason some people want to leave that location is that the company is in litigation with some other members of the association and it is not comfortable for all concerned members to be there. Other reasons are the parking area is prone to flooding in the rainy season and the bathroom is not handicapped accessible.

The other location under consideration is **New College** on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Santa Rosa. The reasons for going back to that location was that it is a neutral site and close to Highway 101. However it has poor acoustics, pillars in the meeting room that made for poor seating, poor parking especially on dark, rainy nights and we did have to pay \$50 plus a quart of honey (which they decanted into a honey bear with a non-member's label) each meeting.

We hope all members will read these descriptions over carefully and vote as they think the board should act. The ballot will be in the newsletter. Each member will need to mail back the ballot or bring it to the December meeting.

The other business the board worked on was wording for our membership form which will have a complete page on the reverse side for members wanting to be on the swarm list. This year any member wishing to be on the swarm list will have to fill this out completely and sign an agreement to abide by rules we formulated to keep the public and the bees healthy and happy. We have had a few reports of some bad beekeeping practices over the years and think it is time to tighten up. By signing an agreement the beekeeper will be made aware of the concerns. A violation of the agreement will cause the member to be taken off the computerized list. More and more people are going to their computers and finding our site with the list. We want to be proud to be of service to the community and save as many bee swarms as possible in 2008.

Minutes by Kathy Kellison and Ettamarie Peterson

### Got Books ??????????

Calling one and all outstanding library books. Check your car, nightstand, couch etc. for any SCBA books and bring them in to the next club meeting.



### I Learned About Beekeeping From This

I foolishly accepted an old bottle of some stuff called "Bee Gone" from an old beekeeper. The next mistake I made was putting it up on a high shelf out in the barn. It fell off the shelf and made such a horrible smell, I thought something had died out there! There is only one good product for getting bees to leave combs and that is Fisher's Bee Quick. Never touch the other stuff!

**Reminder to those who want to purchase ad space that the business card size ad is \$5, the 1/4 ad is \$10, and the 1/2 page ad is \$20. Classified ads are free to members.**

Wine Country Honey has an extractor members can use for \$5 a day with this money going to our association. The two association extractors are housed at Spring Maxfield's home and Ettamarie Peterson's home. They also rent for \$5 a day.

### Member Ad Space

(Free ad space to all dues payers)

We hope that you will consider **Bloomfield Bees Honey.com** as your local bee source. We are taking deposits for 2008. \$125 will reserve a whole hive. \$75 will reserve a 5-frame nuc. Queens will be available next May; on a first come first served basis.

**NUC-** 5 drawn frames, 2 honey and pollen, 3 bees and brood and their '08 queen marked. Two hour hands on class in the spring on Hive Management. \$150 (five frame exchange)

**HIVE-** bottom board, top board, deep with 2 follower boards and 8 drawn frames containing honey, nectar, pollen, bees, brood and their '08 queen marked. Two hour hands on class in the spring on hive management. \$250. (NOTE: Some of the equipment will be used equipment.)

Call to apprentice! You must commit to at least 4 hours of bee work.

Kathy, Rose, Jackie and Geof

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

By Serge Labesque

Rumors of die-offs, of CCD coming back and striking bee colonies abound.

How are the bees going to come out of winter? Did we do everything we could, everything we knew of to prepare our hives for the off-season? Of course we made sure that the amount of stores was adequate. But what about their nutritional value? Also, we insured that there were going to be large clusters of winter bees in our hives. And we are not disturbing them now. But there are so many other factors we have little or no control over that can affect bee colonies: Queens may fail at any time, diseases coming from who-knows-where can hit our apiaries, for example. And that rain that does not seem to be coming in amounts sufficient to penetrate deep into the ground! Where will the eucalyptus trees, the manzanitas and other deep-rooted plants find the moisture and nutrients they need to produce nectar and pollen? Our colonies would benefit from these trees to feed the growing brood nests in the next few weeks

and months? And did you notice how early in the fall the purple vetch, buckwheat, poppies and other spring plants germinated? Did you see those forsythias and plums blooming in November, and the buckwheat that has not stopped blooming? Hmm... Odd weather pattern, for sure.

So, here we are, "crossing our fingers", wondering how the bees will come out of this unusual winter that follows a terribly abnormal beekeeping season. But we can shake ourselves out of this doldrums. Anyway, it is difficult to get much of anything done with crossed fingers!

At least we can take an occasional look at the landing board of our hives, at the bee activity. We can check the monitoring trays, which provide good clues about the size and location of the clusters, among other valuable information. We can make sure that the hives remain rainproof and well and gently ventilated. We can assemble frames and supers to replace those we culled, or to expand our apiaries (just try to do *that* with your fingers crossed!)

And if we have a little soil around us, why not plant something? A pollinator-friendly plant, of course, rosemary, lavender, sage, a fruit tree, something insects will visit and benefit from.

#### **December in the apiaries:**

This time of the year is not one for in-depth hive inspections. But visits to the apiaries keep us connected to our bees, and prevent stoppable losses from possible storms and other dangers of the season.

- Perform exterior inspections of hives.
- Verify that hive tops are properly set on the hives (add weight, or secure them with string as needed in windy areas).
- Verify that the hive entrances remain unobstructed.
- Observe monitoring trays. Verify that the clusters remain centered in order to maintain access to their stores.

#### **At home:**

- Review notes from the past season.
- Plan next season.
- Order equipment and tools, as needed.
- Prepare and build new equipment.
- Make foundation or comb starter strips.
- Repair and maintain equipment and tools.

Happy Holidays to all of you from the Labesques!

Serge Labesque © 2007

### **Elephants and Bees**

(Sent to the newsletter by Janet Leisen)

At a time when encroaching human development in former wildlife areas has compressed African elephants into ever smaller home ranges and increased levels of human-elephant conflict, a study in the October 9th issue of *Current Biology*, a publication of Cell Press, suggests that strategically placed beehives might offer a low-tech elephant deterrent and conservation measure.

The researchers found that a significant majority of African elephants fled immediately after hearing the sound of bees, providing "strong support" for the idea that bees, and

perhaps even their buzz alone, might keep elephants at bay. By contrast, the elephants ignored a control recording of natural white-noise, the authors reported.

"We weren't surprised that they responded to the threatening sound of disturbed bees, as elephants are intelligent animals that are intimately aware of their surroundings, but we were surprised at how quickly they responded to the sounds by running away," said Lucy King of the University of Oxford. "Almost half of our study herds started to move away within 10 seconds of the bee playback." King is also affiliated with Save the Elephants, a Kenya-based organization that aims to secure a future for elephants.

Earlier studies had suggested that elephants prefer to steer clear of bees. For instance, one report showed that elephant damage to acacia trees hosting occupied or empty beehives was significantly less than in trees without hives, the researchers said. In Zimbabwe, scientists have also seen elephants forging new trails in an effort to avoid beehives.

In the new study, the researchers tested the response of several well-known elephant families in Kenya to the digitally recorded buzz of disturbed African bees. Sixteen of the 17 families tested left their resting places under trees within 80 s of hearing the bee sound, the researchers reported, and half responded within just 10 seconds. Among elephants hearing the control sound, none had moved after 10 s, and only four families had moved after 80 s. By the end of the 4 min sound playback of bee buzz, only one elephant family had failed to move, whereas eight families hearing the control sound had not moved.

This behavioral discovery suggests that bees might very well be a valuable addition to the toolbox of elephant deterrents used by farmers and conservation managers across Kenya, King said. She added that such innovative approaches are sorely needed "to avoid extreme solutions such as shooting problem animals."

She cautioned that the use of beehives to shoo elephants away might prove to have limited application and that more research is needed if we are to understand its effectiveness. "But if we could use bees to reduce elephant crop raiding and tree destruction while at the same time enhancing local income through the sale of honey, this could be a significant and valuable step towards sustainable human-elephant coexistence."

Source: <http://www.cellpress.com/>

**Article from Daily Free Democrat  
Tuesday, November 22, 1853 Milwaukee,  
Wisconsin**

Someone having suggested that the administration of chloroform to bees would put them to sleep long enough to obtain their honey, a writer in the *Boston Cultivator* says he has tried the experiment with perfect success, the bees were put to sleep and have slept soundly ever since.

#### **What's In Bloom**

Wild mustard, some eucalyptus trees, borage and rosemary.



**SCBA Executive Board 2007**

- President - Ettamarie Peterson** 707-765-4582  
*president@sonomabees.org*
- Past President - Kathy Cox** 707-823-2804  
*pastpresident@sonomabees.org*
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President - Sean Straw** 415-342-2833  
*vicepresident@sonomabees.org*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President - Michael Johnson** 707-789-0900  
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- Historian – Jackie Whitford** 707-526-1029  
*geofwhitford@yahoo.com*
- Representatives at Large:**
- Hector Alvarez** 707-579-9416
- Serge Labesque** 707-996-3149
- Editor – Ettamarie Peterson** 707-765-4582  
*editor@sonomabees.org*
- Swarm Chairperson – Sean Straw** 415-342-2833  
*swarms@sonomabees.org*
- Extractor Tech:**
- Ettamarie Peterson** 707-765-4582
- Spring Maxfield** 707-527-5913

*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.*



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Enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service  
e-mail: [bardella@bardella.com](mailto:bardella@bardella.com)      <http://www.bardella.com>

The Monthly Extractor  
Sonoma County Beekeepers' Assoc.  
P.O. Box 98  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-0098

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**December meeting back at regular Wine Country Honey location.**  
**Bring your ballots and your gadgets!**