President’s Message

Happy 2018!
I am thrilled to be your President this year and eager to get started on the many wonderful things we have planned.

It was great to see so many familiar and new faces at our Auction/Holiday party. From what I hear everyone had a great time and we fed over 250 members! Thanks to ALL of you for donating your time, energy and love. The amount of work that went into making sure everything was at it's best is astounding and commendable. A huge shout out goes to Darlene and John McGinnis and the Auction/Party Committee, Ellen Sherron and her Gardening group for contributing the beautiful centerpieces, and all the cooks who brought so many amazing dishes to share.

To all of you that pitched in, we couldn’t have done it without you!

It looks like we are out growing our space so I’m looking for other venues to hold 275 Beeks for our 2018 bash. :)

Please let me know if you have or know of anywhere that would be appropriate. Ideally it should be in the Rohnert Park/South Santa Rosa area.

This is going to be a busy year for us in a number of ways:

As this Association continues to grow we have to think of ways to be more efficient, effective, sustainable and community driven. Just as the bees teach us about community and cooperation, we’re seeing how working together in committees has helped us accomplish tasks more effectively. Our committee work is also providing us with opportunity to learn and grow from one another with a wonderful feeling of accomplishment however big or small. As we embark on some new ideas that can only make our already outstanding association more visible in our bee community, we depend on you for continued help in making this Association a success. As our volunteer program grows, we hope to be calling upon more of you for assistance. We love to get as many Beeks involved as possible and we need you!

We are over 400 strong with many volunteers dedicated to helping our bees thrive through education, mentoring, demonstrations, and sheer perseverance. Countless hours (day and night) catching swarms, helping others split their hives, creating and sharing programs, making cookies... all of this is what has created the Association I'm so proud to be representing.

Here is a peek at a few things in the works:
~The Bee sharing and Swarm Program
~“Beek Of The Month”
~A Cluster Calendar complete with Educational Events and Workshops
~Outstanding monthly speakers for our general meetings
~Expanding educational programs and outreach
~Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
~Summer Association Picnic
~Holiday Party/Auction

Looking forward to seeing you at our General meeting.

Sincerely,

Kelli Cox
President

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In future months this will be on the last page but we are welcoming the new board members and want you to be aware of them and also openings we need to fill.

2018 Board Members
and Other Helpful People

Board Officers:
President - Kelli Cox president@sonomabees.org
1st Vice President - Ann Jereb 1stVP@sonomabees.org
2nd Vice President - Susan Kegley 2ndVP@sonomabees.org
Secretary - Peter Jones secretary@sonomabees.org
Treasurer - Sue Owens/Bill Genthe treasurer@sonomabees.org

Appointed Boardmembers:
Extractor Editor - Ettamarie Peterson editor@sonomabees.org
Bee Sharing (team) - Christine Kurtz (Joy Wesley, Lizanne Pastore, Bruce Harris) beesharing@sonomabees.org
Education Coordinator (team)- Maggie Weaver (Thea Vierling, Jen Espinoza, OPEN)
At Large Director - atLarge1@sonomabees.org - OPEN
At Large Director - atLarge2@sonomabees.org - OPEN

Friends of the Board:
Auction - Darlene McGinnis, Christine Kurtz auction@sonomabees.org
Volunteer Coordinators - Karen Kappa, Carol Ellis, Sonja Moug and Emily Gaines volunteer@sonomabees.org
Assistant - Linda Burns assistant@sonomabees.org

Groups:
Topbar - Jim Spencer topbarcluster@sonomabees.org
Gardening Group - gardening@sonomabees.org
Swarm - swarm@sonomabees.org
Historian - Kirstie Stramler historian@sonomabees.org
Librarian - Nadya Clark librarian@sonomabees.org
Webmaster - Cheryl Veretto, Bill MacElroy webmaster@sonomabees.org

Cluster Leaders:
Regional Coordinator - OPEN – regionalcoordinator@sonomabees.org
Central - Brad Lee, Rorie Sweeney, Maggie Weaver, Ann Jereb centralcluster@sonomabees.org
East - Laurie Dorman, Susan Simmons eastcluster@sonomabees.org
North - Cheryl Caletti, Laurie Smith, Candice Koseba northcluster@sonomabees.org
South - Aerial Gilbert, Cynthia Rathkey. Kerrie Williams southcluster@sonomabees.org
Topbar - Jim Spencer topbarcluster@sonomabees.org
West - Bruce Harris, Gina Brown westcluster@sonomabees.org

This Month’s Calendar

Monthly Meeting: January 8
6PM  Check out books and videos from our library, buy plants at our fabulous plant table, talk to expert beekeepers willing to share their knowledge with you and help with any problems, socialize with refreshments and meet your cluster leaders. Bring your own cup, please. If you like to bake we also would appreciate donations of your cooking skills!

7PM  Steven Coy, of Coy Bee Company. Steven is a breeder of mite-resistant Russian bees from Mississippi and will be speaking about the breeding program they use to ensure transmission of the desired genetic traits in an apiary. (See more in the article, page 6, by Susan Kegley.) Steven was here to speak in October but unfortunately that was the day the fire started.

Upcoming Meetings/Events
•  Sunday Jan. 28th Scion Exchange See details on Page 9 in this newsletter. – If you can volunteer for a shift contact volunteer coordinators. Thanks!
*READ THIS*
AGAIN
IT IS IMPORTANT!

Membership Reminder

SCBA membership is on a calendar year.

**ALL 2017 memberships will expire on December 31st and need to be renewed by January 1st for the 2018 year.**

Renew anytime now and don’t miss out!
On February 15, 2018 all expired memberships will be dropped from the roster, and you will no longer receive email notices. You will also not be able to participate in great cluster cafes, hive dives, workshops and the swarm list.

If you joined as a new member anytime after August 1, 2017, your membership is current through December 31, 2018.

How to renew for general and business memberships:

- Or, download and complete a membership application and mail it with your payment to: SCBA, P.O. Box 98, Santa Rosa, CA, 95401
- Or, apply at the next SCBA meeting. Bring the completed application to the meeting, and payment can be made with Cash, Check, or Credit Card.

Everyone (new and renewing) must complete an application with his or her payment. This is the only way we can ensure that the information we have for you is current.

Thank you,

Ann Jereb

SCBA 1st VP Membership 1stVP@sonomabees.org
Pests in the beehive

A beehive is home to tens of thousands of bees in all stages of development. Inevitably, such a concentration of life and the mass of stores that sustains it attract many predators and parasites, not to mention commensal organisms. In fact, it does not take much effort while inspecting a hive to see signs of the presence of varroa mites, wax moths and now a days Small Hive Beetles, or the pests themselves. Other unwelcome visitors may include ants, mice and yellow jackets, just to name a few of the critters that frequently flock to bee nests. Although we can easily ignore the nonthreatening occupants of our hives, we must be careful not to create conditions with our equipment or hive manipulations that give an advantage to the pests over the bees.

For example, using screened hive bottoms that are suitably designed is a way to separate the elements the colonies discard, their trash so to speak, from the brood nests. This garbage includes varroa mites that drop from the nests. Solid hive bottoms, on the contrary, allow the mites to land safely and to climb back onto any bees that happen to walk by.

Consider the ubiquitous wax moths: You may see them on the outside of a hive waiting for darkness and a reduction in bee traffic to move in. Once inside, they lay their eggs on the comb and eventually, their larvae cause the damage we all know too well. The bees do all they can to protect their nest, but when a colony is too weak to protect all the comb it was given they relinquish some of it to the destructive pest. Knowing that hives inevitably draw moths, we can try to offer them an alternate place to occupy, rather than the bees’ nests. This is easily done by allowing hive waste to accumulate on the monitoring trays that are placed under the screens of hive bottoms. When this is done and the bees can patrol all their combs, the wax moths are forced to find refuge in the debris. They can lay their eggs in it and their larvae can feed on it without disturbing the bees, or chewing on the comb and woodwork. This works well when the trays are cleaned infrequently, basically only when moth larvae develop in significant numbers on them.

In recent years, the Small Hive Beetle (SHB) has become an element of our local environment. Just like the wax moth, this new pest is strongly attracted to bee hives, and I have taken a similar approach to the one I use to lessen the impact of wax moths on my colonies: I manage my hives in such a way that the bees can work all the comb they have. Some of the beetles may be seen on the monitoring trays, where they cause no harm, but most are forced to find refuge from the bees in the “attics” of the hives, the hive top feeders where I occasionally place a few pieces of bridge comb. The bees actually hold the pests captive in these empty cells. As I remove and set aside the top feeders to inspect the hives, the bees that guard the beetles in their cells are unavoidably distracted, but the beetles cannot run into the nests to lay their eggs. Without hive top feeders to invite and hold the beetles, these pests would disperse throughout the hives and infest them at the slightest hive manipulation.

Trying to kill or eradicate any of these unavoidable pests has proven to be a ludicrous strategy. It generates ever tougher and more virulent bugs, and it does not let the bees participate in the defense of their nests. The approach I have outlined here is quite different and yet very simple: It amounts to configuring the equipment in such a way that the pests are led to places where they can live without causing damage, or where the bees can keep them under control. In a way, we just “send them to their room!”

January in the apiaries

Short days and unstable weather keep the bees inside in tight clusters most of the time. It’s only for a few hours on the mildest days that we may see a few at the hive entrances and in the flight paths. They may be out to perform cleansing flights or to forage for fresh pollen. As a consequence of the break or significant reduction in the production of brood, which occurs normally in late fall and early winter, the populations have been steadily decreasing. They will reach their yearly minimum in just a few weeks, in mid-winter.

Yet, this is a turning point in the pace of colony life, as important changes occur deep inside the hives in early winter: The queens resume egg laying or accelerate their production; the burgeoning brood nests that result force the winter bees to produce more heat and to feed the larvae. Consequently, the consumption of honey and bee bread begins to increase, which is evidenced by large amounts of metabolic water within the hives and on the monitoring trays. In poorly configured hives this elevated level of moisture can be a major cause of colony health problems and slow development. As water condenses on the cold contents of the hives, stores may spoil and cold water may drip down onto the brood nests that, instead, demand heat. When long periods of inclement weather prevent foraging, the bees find the proteins they need in the beebread they accumulated in their combs during the latter part of the summer. By the end of the month, young bees will be emerging in sufficient numbers to help rebuild the populations.

As we keep an eye on our colonies we make sure that the hive entrances are not becoming clogged by the bodies of bees that died inside. The monitoring trays are always good sources of information that reveal the location and growth of the new brood nests as well as, possibly, colony health issues. Toward the end of the month, on a warm, windless day and when the bees are actively foraging, we may peek into the top of the hives, perhaps to expand their volume by adding a frame or two alongside...
In summary, this month:

- Inspect the exterior condition of the hives:
  - Hive tops should remain properly set and secured.
  - Observe the entrances and the ground in front of the hives.
  - Verify that the hive entrances are not obstructed.
  - Maintain adequate and safe ventilation through the hives.
- Examine the monitoring trays.
- Watch for the appearance of drone brood cappings, and make a note of the date.
- Verify that mice have not entered the hives. Telltale clues of their presence, such as coarse pieces of comb and mouse feces, etc. are visible on the monitoring trays.
- When no activity is observed, place your ear against the side of the hive, and listen for bee noises. If the colony is dead, close the hive, remove it from the apiary, diagnose the problem, and discard or clean the equipment, as appropriate.
- In the latter part of the month and weather permitting, quickly peek into the top of the hives to assess the location of the clusters.
- Place supers or additional frames where and when warranted.
- Clean and scorch tools and equipment.
- Plan next season. Evaluate the need for equipment and bees.
- Procure, build and repair beekeeping equipment.
- Plant bee forage!
- Read and learn more about bees and beekeeping.

May your bee colonies bring you good health and intense joy in 2018!

Serge Labesque
© 2018

START THE YEAR OUT RIGHT!

Please read the Beekeeping Best Management Practices page as you renew your membership this year. We want all our beekeepers to have a good, safe apiary for themselves and everyone nearby. Here is the Link to SCBA BMP - http://sonomabees.org - there is a button in the middle of the page. http://sonomabees.org/new-membership-page/scba-best-management-practices/
**Spring 2018 Beekeeping Classes at SRJC**

Spring Classes at Santa Rosa Junior College with Serge Labesque. Website: https://srjcce.augusoft.net/

**Class Name: Introduction to Beekeeping**
Class Date(s): 01/31/2018 to 2/21/2018  
Weekly - Wed 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM  
4 sessions starting 1/31/2018, ending 2/21/2018  
Bech Hall, 1999  
Number of Sessions: 4  
Number of Weeks: 4  
**Class Web Description:** This short course will introduce students to beekeeping with a strong emphasis on beehive management techniques as practiced in Sonoma County without reliance on any treatment whatsoever for pests or diseases. Topics include: overview of the honey bee colony; beekeeping tools and equipment; how to start with honey bees; swarming; honey flow and harvesting of hive products; diseases, pests and enemies; hive and queen management; and beekeeping throughout the year.  
Max Class Size: 57  
Class Fee: $78.00 Materials Fee: $15.00 Registration Fee: $2.00

**Class Name: Intermediate Beekeeping for Spring & Summer**
Class Date(s): 02/28/2018 to 03/07/2018  
Weekly - Wed 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM;  
2 sessions starting 2/28/2018, ending 3/7/2018  
Bech Hall, 1999  
Number of Sessions: 2  
Number of Weeks: 2  
**Class Web Description:** This class will expand on the beehive management techniques that were explored during the Introduction to Beekeeping course. The focus of the class will be spring and summer management of beehives in Sonoma County. Detailed explanations of techniques that are used in apiary expansion, swarm prevention and capture, queen management, and hive division will be given.  
Max Class Size: 90  
Class Fee: $49.00 Materials Fee: $8.00 Registration Fee: $2.00

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**January Speaker**  
By Susan Kegley, 2nd VP

Our speaker for this month will be Steven Coy, of Coy Bee Company. Steven is a breeder of mite-resistant Russian bees from Mississippi and will be speaking about the breeding program they use to ensure transmission of the desired genetic traits in an apiary. For those breeding local Sonoma County bees, it will provide useful information for ensuring the spread and survival of our local stock. Steven holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Plant Science and a Master’s Degree in Biology, both from Arkansas State University. He is a charter member and current President of the Russian Honey Bee Breeders Association as well as an Executive Board member of the American Honey Producers Association. In addition to his work as a beekeeper, he also worked as a research technician at the USDA Biological Control Research Unit in Stoneville, MS and as a Research assistant on the control of Tamished Plant Bug in Cotton at Arkansas State University.
Bee Wise
“BEE NUMBERS AND HEATER BEES”
By Emery Dann

It is good to remember how important the number of bees present is in the hive! When the bee population becomes smaller with fewer bees, as in Dwindling Hive Syndrome, there are not enough nurse bees, winter bees or foragers to create the heat needed for the queen, cluster or brood (when present). The queen’s laying pattern will be spotty, spread out with not enough bees covering the brood nest to provide the heat that is needed.

If the queen lays too much brood in the fall, the hive may look healthy, but the colony is in trouble. It is the wrong time of year for so much brood! I would call it “Accelerated Hive Syndrome”. This hive will most likely run out of stores and fail in the winter.

The right number of bees and brood indicates that the queen is not exhausting herself. A resting queen is very important in winter for several reasons. She needs good nutritional royal jelly being fed her by nurse bees to maintain her health and prepare her for the coming year. The royal jelly is also critical when the nurse bees give each cell with an egg royal jelly. After 3 days when the egg turns into a larva the cell is fed bee bread until the 9th day when it makes a cocoon. The queen is always fed royal jelly. Bees need to be well fed to be healthy bees!

It is important when we inspect hives in the fall to evaluate the number of winter bees there will be in the hive for heat generation. We can combine healthy hives before winter. We reduce the number of hive boxes (Langstroth) with too much empty space so bees can move up into the honey stores and keep warm. This gives us fewer boxes full of more bees. Then in the spring and summer, when there is nectar flowing, and warmer temperatures, we add space for storage and hive expansion.

What about brood temperature? Honey bees are cold-blooded insects, so how do they keep the brood warm? Bees consume 2/3rds of what they eat for heat production. I have seen hives propolize the entrance to the hive in boxes and trees in fall preparing for winter. This keeps the heat inside by permitting only one or two bees at a time to enter or exit during the winter. When brood is present, the heat must be maintained for the brood between 93 degrees and 95 degrees.

So what about “Heater Bees”? Scientists have discovered that bees of all ages can become “heater bees”. Instead of 93 to 95 degrees, “heater bees” are able to heat their bodies up to 111 degrees, Fahrenheit–much hotter than normal bee temperatures. They do this by vibrating their abdomens or decoupling their wings from their muscles. Then they vigorously use their muscles without moving their wings. Scientists have used infrared technology to view heater bees in the empty cells they crawl into. “Heater Bees” can warm about 70 cells around the Heater Bee to the right temperature. Other bees feed the Heater Bees when their energy runs low from using their powerful wing muscles or as they vibrate to generate heat among the brood.

So the saying, “When you’re hot, you’re HOT” is very true about our bee friends. Bees have a built in thermostat for heat along with being an air conditioner in the Summer to cool the brood down to 93 to 95 degrees. Bees know how to turn up the heat in the fall, winter and spring while cooling the hive down to the right temperature in the summer! BEES ARE AMAZING IN SO MANY WAYS!!!
Welcome to 2018! Let’s hope that the New Year brings health and healing for our bees, the landscape and each other. 2017 brought overly abundant rain, then a hot dry summer followed by devastating wildfires throughout California. We can’t re-plant the wild lands; Mother Nature needs to work her ancient medicine there. People who have had their properties and homes burned will likely not be able to replant much this year. But those of us who are able, can plant forage in our gardens to support bees and other wild life that have had their food sources burned or damaged by reconstruction and demolition.

I am planning on focusing on medicinal herbs this year. It is interesting to me that so many of our traditional herbs used for centuries for human health are also highly attractive to bees. They are also typically quite easy to grow, and should flower abundantly the first year after planting.

I have been writing this column since 2011, I will use some of my previous material, but hope to expand on the uses of the herbs.

Bee Plant of the Month January 2018
Calendula  *Calendula officianalis*
Family asteraceae

Calendula is an easy plant to grow in Sonoma County. Here, it blooms from summer through winter. It looks like a bright daisy, and the sticky leaves have a mild sweet scent. The little “wild” calendula grows by the side of the roads and in vineyards and open fields in the winter. It is not a native flower, but does provide some nice bright orange pollen right now.

It is easy to cultivate in the garden, too. It can be started from seed directly in the garden or sprouted in pots or flats for later planting. The yellow or orange shades perk up a winter garden. Whether you sow seeds or buy plants from the nursery, remember that bees and other nectar loving pollinators prefer single flowered varieties. That is, there are one or two rows of petals surrounding the center. They can’t access pollen and nectar from the “pompom” or double-flowered types.

She likes well-drained, average soil with sun or light shade. After a couple of years you may find that Calendula has wandered about your garden, coming up in unexpected areas. Let her grow there, if you can, she is quite hardy, and will re-seed. I have some plants that volunteered right in front of my beehives a few years ago, and have been blooming almost year-round ever since.

Calendula flower petals are used to treat skin ailments and are used in many creams and ointments for chapped skin, eczema, insect bites etc.

To make an infused oil that can be used in salves or creams, combine 1-cup fresh flowers, or ½ cup dried, with 1 ¼ cups almond, jojoba or olive oil. Macerate or whirl in a food processor or blender, store in a dark place for up to 3 weeks, shaking the jar daily, then strain and use in your recipe.

A tea of calendula is said to be good for stomach upset, sore throat or inflammations.

Generally considered quite safe, Calendula is even used in creams for diaper rash. But if you have never used it before, you may want to try a small amount first to make sure you don’t have a reaction.

May 2018 bring health, prosperity and abundance to you and your loved ones.

*Alice Ford-Sala*
This past December, the education committee presented topics to 6th, 7th and 8th graders at one of the local charter schools. The presentations included the following topics: 1. Pollination and the importance of the honey bee, 2. Life Cycle of the Honey bee and the Varroa Mite; and 3. The honey bee genetics and the importance of the Queen. The students were very interested and the teacher was thrilled. These topics were related to the topics being covered in the classes. We had one main presenter and 3 assistants. The assistants, all beekeepers, learned a lot as well. We had a great time and so did the students. If you are interested in helping with presentations, please email Maggie Weaver at education@sonomabees.org

**California Rare Fruit Growers**
Redwood Empire Chapter

**SCION EXCHANGE**

Sunday - Jan. 28, 2018
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Members get in at 9AM – you can join at the door

Santa Rosa Veterans’ Building
Across from the Sonoma County Fairgrounds
1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa 95404

Free cuttings for grafting - often over 500 varieties!  
Free grafting demonstrations by expert grafters.  
Various rootstocks available for sale.  
Custom trees grafted at your request.  
Fruit Experts available to answer questions.  
Tree Sales, Bee Blocks, Books, & More!

Bring big baggies, tape to write-on, and a "Sharpie" pen for cuttings

CRFG is a nonprofit "hobbyist" organization.  
Come to the Scion Exchange and join!  
Public Welcome  
$5 entry fee at the door
BEE SHARING 2018
~By the Bee Sharing Special Interest Group~
Christine Kurtz, Joy Wesley, Lizanne Pastore, & Bruce Harris

Spring 2018 will be a spring like no other in recent history. The fires that ravaged regions of Sonoma County left the landscape barren—blooming trees, Manzanita and other flowering brush, along with our blooming groundcovers were charred to a crisp. In addition, many of our friends and fellow beekeepers lost some, much, or all. As we watch the earth regenerate over the coming weeks, hoping an abundance of blooms appear to provide enough forage for our bees, the bee sharing team is working extra hard at making this year’s Bee Sharing Program a little more streamlined and easier to participate in.

The Bee Sharing Program is a special interest group. Participation is completely voluntary and is open to every member of the SCBA. Currently, we are a team of 4, see our names above, and we represent 4 of the 5 regional clusters. We’d love to have someone from North Cluster join in! Our program charter is still being reviewed by the board, and once cleared, we hope to publish it in the Extractor for all to read. The Bee Sharing SIG is committed to both the bees and the beekeeper by trying to keep local, survivor bees in their adapted microclimates through matching splits and swarms with beekeepers in those regions from beekeepers willing to share. Additionally, we want the program to have an educational component: local, small hive dives with a split “leader” can help less experienced beekeepers gain hands-on experience in making “split decisions.” We hope that in the coming years our beekeepers become adept and comfortable with winter and spring management as it relates to building up colonies and ultimately dividing the healthy survivors. In the future, with the experience gained through this educational process, the Bee Sharing SIG hopes to introduce queen rearing in each regional cluster as well. With so many beekeepers these days, it is entirely possible that no one would need to procure bees from outside their areas.

Please watch your inboxes for announcements and surveys for participation. You’ll be asked about your needs or your ability to share in any capacity. This is really a cutting edge idea: rearing strong colonies and sharing with others to eliminate the need to procure outside bees that may not be genetically adapted to the variety of microclimates here in Sonoma County. In addition to helping our Sonoma honeybees and beekeepers, we hope to serve as an example for other beekeepers from around the world to follow.

May 2018 brings us all less “fire and fury” and more peace, love, and bees.
A Few Touching Words
Of Hope and Inspiration
By Ann Jereb

After reaching out to our beekeeping members who suffered losses from the firestorm, we received many heartfelt comments from them. We were touched by their responses and wanted share a few of their sentiments and feelings with you.

“In all the destruction, my bees – or most of them – are flying. That is so life affirming and hopeful.”

“I must say that something that has really sustained me through the losses, beyond all of the kindness, is that both of my hives survived. Fire was on both sides of them. Another hive stand right next to them (luckily no hives were on it) was burned and the peach tree that gave them their summer shade is burnt to the ground and there was evidence of the fire actually going under the hives. These are my miracle bees!! They are bringing pollen in and I don’t even know where they are finding it. What an inspiration to carry on. I feel like a protective mother now after all they’ve been through and will try not to hover too much over them this winter as I check on them.”

“The fire went around the hives. The ceanothus, lavender, salvia, and other plants that I planted near the hives are all gone from the fire and the hives survived! There must be a “bee angel”. None of the homes around us survived. A time of building again will soon start-we will be glad.”

“There are no words to tell you what our Kenwood Glen Ellen Bee community has meant to me during this horrible experience. They may be new friendships but they are friends for life! I am so grateful for the entire Bee community and all of the support and love that it has shared with us.”

“It’s times like this when people come together that makes the difference in what we are going through. Once again thank you.”

“I am overwhelmed with the kindness that members have shown me.”

“I am so touched by this generosity. This is such a beautiful group of caring people that makes me proud to call myself a beekeeper among you all. Thank you for all the support.”
A Call For Assistance
By Ann and Don Jereb and Roger and Claire Simpson

“We wonder if you can help us?” The call came through to the SCBA association swarm line. The caller, Kim, stated that all had been lost on her parent’s property, “our home, barn and most of the surrounding trees and plants had burned”. One tree in particular, a beautiful big oak had toppled to the ground after the trunk was burned. The tree now lay across what remained of the drive way to the home.

They noticed a group of bees flying into and out of a small knothole in the tree. This was a remarkable sight after all of the destruction left by the fires.

“We’ve lost everything, but if we can save these bees, a tiny bit of life from our home can perhaps carry on”. Roger and Claire heard the heartfelt request from this caring family member and were ready for the challenge.

Set out with chain saws, brooms, gloves and beekeeping gear and a trailer, Roger, Claire, Don and I got to work assisting Roger as he cut the large arching tree into segments in order to get to the area with the bee colony. After consulting Emery Dann, we attempted to find the top of the hive in the tree. Apparently bees don’t go up very far into the tree once entering a knothole but start to build down into the tree. At last Roger made a cut that showed the start of the comb at the top. Next he needed to cut up the trunk toward the bottom of the hive. At this point, we needed to figure a way to get this 4-½ ft. segment of tree to land on a ramp we constructed out of two gates found in the ashes of the barn and roll it into the trailer. Four hours later we had the tree segment with the hive of bees in the trailer and ready for transport to Roger and Claire’s home. Kim stayed through the entire process snapping photos to show her parents and family. Once home Roger settled the tree by placing it upright and giving it a roof. It truly took a team effort and made for a successful bee rescue.

The bees have continued to fly and appear to be surviving after their horrific ordeal. Perhaps these bees that have miraculously survived the firestorm’s devastation are a hopeful sign that nature will recover and heal. And with time, we will too.

Our heart felt sympathy to Kim and her family. A big thank you to them for caring about the bees and reaching out to try and save the hive.
A Call For Assistance, Cont.

The "hive in the tree" finds its new home with a decorative pot to keep the top cover board in place!
SCBA Monthly Meeting
December 12, 2017

Location: 4H Building, Rohnert Park
Meeting started: 6:50 PM
Meeting finished: 8:45 PM
Approx. attendance: ~112

1st VP/Membership Report - Ann Jereb
2nd VP and Events Report - Susan Kegley (absent)
Regional Coordinator Report - Kelli Cox / Christine Kurtz
Swarm Report - John McGinnis
Education - Maggie Weaver (absent)
2018 Treasurer - Sue Owens, Bill Genthe

Items covered:
This meeting was the annual SCBA Holiday Party!
2018 Board Member Election Results
2018 President - Kelli Cox wins election with 179 out of 190 votes.
1st VP/Membership - Ann Jereb wins election with 179 out of 179 votes.
2nd VP/Events - Susan Kegley wins election with 165 out of 177 votes.
Secretary - Peter Jones wins election with 178 out of 178 votes.
Treasurer - Bill Genthe & Sue Owens (job share) win election with 166 out of 167 votes.
Over 200+ silent auction items were on display for members to place their bids.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Jones
Secretary

Note from the editor: Just a few years ago there were about 40 people at this meeting! Thanks to all the work the different groups did to make this an outstanding event! The garden group decorated the tables. Christine Kurtz was a big help passing on her silent auction knowledge and experience to Darlene McGinnis. So many people volunteered to help in so many different ways it is impossible to list all of their names. Thanks to everyone that got donations and/or donated auction items. The funds raised make it possible to run the many programs, obtain good speakers and rent the entire building eleven months a year. The generosity of this Association and its friends is mind-boggling!

Below are some photos I took to try to capture the participants on this wonderful evening.
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*Designed and endorsed by Serge Labesque*
*Recommended by Christine Kurtz*

John McGinnis
(707) 478-9787
803 Lynch Rd, Petaluma, CA 94954
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Beek Of The Month

Greetings SCBA Beeks!

There are so many of you out there that volunteer countless hours to help make our SCBA thrive. Although we may not have personally thanked each one of you, please be aware that your time has not gone unnoticed.

This year we’re going to do something new and recognize a “Beek Of The Month” for their outstanding contribution of time and effort.

Our “Beek Of The Month” for December is

Darlene McGinnis

Darlene spent countless hours planning and organizing the 2017 Auction. It was all the little things that really made this auction so outstanding. From individually written signs to countless basket creations to tags for the wine pull and so much more. While our party/silent auction has always been very successful, Darlene raised the bar this year to make our Auction the most successful it's been. John McGinnis also went out of his way to create stands so there was space to display all the items.

The committee members contributed many hours under her guidance and Darlene pulled it all together for a great fun filled evening.

Thank you Darlene for all your time and energy in making our 2017 Holiday Event so enjoyable for each of us and successful for SCBA!

Kelli Cox
President

Darlene McGinnis

Thank you for supporting us, we appreciate you!
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Contact Information

Regular monthly meetings of the Sonoma County Beekeepers’ Association are held on the second Monday of each month, at 7 pm at the Rohnert Park 4-H Building. 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, at our monthly meetings or by mail. Please see our Website 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

Honey Extractor Rental

Members have use of the association’s honey extracting equipment, as available. Rental fee is $5 per day. Extractors must be returned clean.

Email or Call to reserve:

South
Ettamarie Peterson
707-479-1613
editor@petersonsfarm.com

Central
Paul Quistgard
PaulQuistgard@aol.com

West
Cheryl Veretto
707-827-3774 (preferred)
cheryl@cbfreelance.com

East
Susan Simmons
925-408-4529
Susanjsimmons@gmail.com

The Top Bar Hive group has a fruit press available for use in honeycomb crushing. Contact Jim Spencer at topbargroup@sonomabees.org