

The Monthly Extractor

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October 2023

President's Message

Happy October Friends!

So much has happened in SCBA this year, and there is so much more to come in the next few months. The event season is ending, and the schools are opening again. This means our community education shifts from the fairgrounds to the school classrooms and pollinator gardens. So, keep an eye out for volunteer opportunities.



There's a lot going on and it's always about doing what's right for the bees.

I am very proud to be a member of SCBA and I hope you are too. We have an incredible sense of community and service. It is what we are all about.

We do whatever we can to provide education for our member beekeepers and gardeners, but also for the community at large so that together we can ensure a thriving habitat for honeybees, and all the native bees and pollinators, in Sonoma County and beyond.

This includes providing scientific data and information about insecticides and honeybee density tracking, as well as growing and providing pesticide-free forage.

As one of the biggest and best beekeeping associations in the United States, SCBA is a leader in taking responsibility for how we interact with the environment. To this end, we will always educate and mentor member beekeepers, but more importantly, we encourage everyone, especially the community at large, to grow forage. The more abundant our forage in Sonoma County, the more we can support thriving bee populations. By planting according to the season, we can ensure that there will always be



something in bloom all year round. There are a lot of honeybees in our county, and we need food for them and for the more than 1,000 types of native bees who are vitally important to our ecosystem.

Make no mistake, everything we do; every school we visit, every festival we go to, every piece of legislation we endorse, all these things are for the benefit of the bees and their environment. Always.

SCBA is over 400 members strong, and we can make a difference.

Thank you for being a member of SCBA.

Your President,
Carol Ellis

Also, keep an eye out for all the information about our Bee Inspired Swap Meet, both of our Holiday Boutiques, and the Holiday Party!

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The SCBA newsletter reflects the various techniques, theories and art of sustainable beekeeping.

Honey and Pollinator Gardens Across Sonoma

By Shannon Carr

September turned out to be a fun month! It started with Michael Turner and Benson hosting a Honey Extraction Experience! They had hundreds of pounds of honey they needed to extract for clients and invited members to join them, learn about extracting honey, and bring their own frames for extracting. This was followed up with a honey tasting experience where we tasted the different flavors of honey harvested from various regions of Sonoma and Marin counties. It was an amazing learning experience and fun to see the various colors and flavors of honey.



and invited members to join them, learn about extracting honey, and bring their own frames for extracting. This was followed up with a honey tasting experience where we tasted the different flavors of honey harvested from various regions

This last month we also had a lot of fun connecting with our community. Gary and Lynn Grant, Sylvia Cook, Sacha Lepley, Rachel Parker, Elizabeth Holdmann, George Ellison, Elaine Dolcini, Mate Herceg, Will Ackley, Kim Bergstrom, Andrew Benson, and Ettamarie Peterson participated in community outreach events at Friedman's

Turn to pages 3 and 4 for photos from many of SCBA members' appearances through the county.

Home Improvement Santa Rosa, Sonoma, and Petaluma stores and at Prickett's Nursery in Santa Rosa. We talked to folks from all over the county about the importance of honeybees and pollinators and creating habitat for pollinators and Ettamarie and Benson both brought their observation hives to the events. These events are always a lot of fun and I was so glad to see some many of our members join me.

Gardening for Bees hosted two amazing pollinator habitat workshops. The first was at the Druids Hall where we learned about container gardening and replanted the planters with pollinator plants. The other was at Prestwood Elementary School in Sonoma where we helped the school build pollinator habitats in raised beds. Stay tuned for more educational pollinator habitat workshops, digs and tours from G4Bs.

Coming up we are getting ready for the holidays with

October General Meeting

Date: October 9, 2023; 6:00 – 8:30
Location: Druids Hall, 1011 College Ave - Santa Rosa

At our October General Meeting, we'll welcome the business members of Sonoma County Beekeepers Association. Meet the businesses that support SCBA and learn about what they do in the beekeeping world.

Also...bring your beekeeping Gadgets and Gizmos. Share the special contraptions you created and use to help with your beekeeping journey.

a couple of Holiday Boutiques. November 18 and 19 we are teaming up with the Santa Rosa Druids with a [Holiday Boutique at the Druids Hall](#). SCBA will also host our [2nd annual Holiday Boutique](#) at the Ellis School on Saturday December 2.

As we enter fall, I can't wait to see what the rest of this year brings!

Shannon Carr, Program Director
programdirector@sonomabees.org

SCBA CALENDAR

The [SCBA online calendar](#) is updated frequently. Check it out to see current events.

October 7 & 8 – East Cluster Hive Dive Series
[Kenwood](#)
[Sonoma North](#)
[Sonoma South](#)

October 9 – [SCBA General Meeting](#)

October 15 – G4Bs: [Create a Pollinator Habitat – Hedgerow](#)

October 16 – [Beekeepers Zoom Forum](#)

October 21 – [Central & West Equipment Swap](#)

October 21 – [South Cluster Café](#)

October 22 – [North Cluster Hive Dive](#)

SCBA Members Roll Up Their Sleeves to Refresh Druids Hall Planters And Harvest Honey



Above left: Lida Del Carlo and Matt Lodge

Above right: Sara and Zach Bard

Left: Benson, Susan Ament, and Gayle Slade extracting honey at the Honey Experience hosted by Mike Turner at the Michael Ellis School for Dog Trainers

SCBA Members Meet Up at Garden Centers to Talk About Bees



Elizabeth Holdmann is the person to go to for bee-friendly seeds!



Ettamarie Peterson, Elizabeth Holdmann, Rachel Parker, George Ellison, and Shannon Carr talked to the public at Friedman's in Petaluma.



Will Ackley, Mate Herceg, Kim Bergstrom, and Shannon Carr talking to the public at Friedman's in Sonoma.



One of our Swarm Rescuers, Lynn Grant, dressed up and ready to go, helping with Community Outreach at Friedman's Home Improvement in Santa Rosa.

Bee Talk!

October: Providing Food, Warmth & Protection for Winter

By Mohammed Ibrahim

1st Vice President

October is the start of fall in Northern California, and it's time to get your bee colonies ready for the winter.



The weather is cooling down, and the days are getting shorter, so your bees will have less time to forage for food. This means they'll need to conserve their energy.

Here are some tips for beekeeping in Northern California in October:

- **Check on your bees**

when weather allows, making sure they're healthy and have enough food. Keep an eye out for pests and diseases and treat any problems right away.

- **Feed your bees if needed:** If your bees don't have enough food stored up for the winter, you'll need to feed them.

- **Shrink the entrance to your hives:** This will help keep your bees warm and safe from predators.

- **Insulate your hives:** You can add insulation to the top and sides of your hives to help keep your bees warm if your area gets a cold snap in winter.

- **Combine weak colonies:** If you have any weak colonies, you can combine them to create stronger colonies. This will help them survive the winter.

Here are some additional tips:

- **Harvest any remaining honey:** Once your bees have stopped foraging for food, you can harvest any remaining honey. Be sure to leave enough honey for the bees to survive the winter.

- **Clean your hives:** Remove any debris or pests from your hives.

- **Store your hive equipment:** If you're not using your hive equipment over the winter, store it in a dry place.

In addition to the general tips above, here are a few

specific things that beekeepers in Northern California should keep in mind during October:

- **Consider using a windbreak:** If your hives are in a windy spot, you may want to use a windbreak to protect them from the cold wind.

- **Provide a water source:** Bees need access to water year-round, but it's especially important in the fall when the weather is dry. You can provide a water source by placing a shallow dish of water near the hive.

Have fun beekeeping!

Serge's October Hive To-Do List

Assess colonies, their health, queens, brood nests and stores.

Check how the bees have organized their brood chambers and how the stores are packed around them. Ensure that there is some comb with empty cells, and pollen centered above the brood nests, between frames of honey.

Verify that the hives are queenright.

Early in the month, combine or requeen hives that are not performing satisfactorily.

Adjust the volume of the hives to match individual colony strength and needs.

Remove old and misshapen combs (follower boards greatly facilitate this).

Early in the month, configure hives for the consolidation of honey stores (Scratching the cappings of patches of poorly located sealed honey helps.)

Harvest, extract, and bottle surplus honey only.

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Balancing A Tidy Garden and Bird and Bee Buffets

By Ann Gallagher White
2nd VP of Gardening

Fall is here: Our autumnal equinox passed, and we drifted into fall, enjoying cooler weather, and wondering if a second summer may arrive just before we are too far from the sun to really feel its warmth. The recently cooler weather draws me outside into the garden, like many other gardeners. I am deadheading, removing dead annuals and plants I do not want to re-seed and clearing out underbrush (poppies and calendula). I am also adding compost, checking irrigation, and waiting for the rain so I may spread a cover crop of wildflower seeds.



G4B gardeners' fall gardens: Other G4B gardeners are busy planting fall/winter vegetable gardens, deadheading spent blooms, watching Maximilian sunflowers start to bloom, making soil improvements (mulching, adding amendments and compost) and one G4B gardener shared how fall is a messy time of year in her garden. She lets the veggies bolt for the bees, leaves seeds on plants/on the ground for the birds to enjoy and plants natives. We all seek a balance of leaving enough for nature (birds and bees) and maintaining the garden so that the brush does not become a fire hazard. My yellow arugula flowers are very popular with the bees right now and I would not dare cut them back!

Plant sale: Our G4B home nursery members sold out of plants they grew except for some rosemary (we had an extraordinary amount) at the General Meeting in September. We all felt extraordinarily happy that pesticide-free pollinator plants would be filling the gardens of Sonoma County because of G4B efforts. The plants sold at the meeting rocked and we are so grateful for our Home Nursery Group leader Kelly Corbett and all of those who helped grow/care for the plants, label them and transport them to the meeting. Collectively we are grateful for G4B wisdom in knowing what the bees need and then doing something about it – together we can and

do make the world a better place, one plant at a time.

Pollinator Garden Projects: G4B planted pollinator gardens in September with the leadership of Kim Bergstrom our Gardening Coordinator and many wonderful volunteer gardeners. Some projects include the Druids Hall (large planters are getting refreshed or replanted) and you may see an article in the paper from a school pollinator garden project (three to four raised beds) in Sonoma. G4B wants to hear if you have projects to get pesticide-free plants into our children's schools and other public/private spaces. If you have a suggestion, please let us know by reaching out: 2ndVP@sonomabees.org. Or, reach out to your gardening liaison for your cluster. Happy Fall and Happy Gardening!

Serge's October To-do list, from prior page

Render wax from discarded frames and from cappings

Return wet frames and cappings to the bees for cleaning (place them above hive top feeders or inner covers).

Watch out for any instances of robbing.

Install mouse guards and reduce hive entrances.

Ensure that hives are adequately ventilated.

Routinely clean and scorch tools and equipment.

Store unused equipment to protect it from damage caused by wax moths, mice, and the weather.

Secure the hive tops against high winds.

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Members Foster Pollinator Habitat Through Sonoma County

*By Kim Bergstrom
Gardening for Bees Coordinator*

Thanks to everyone who came out to buy plants from G4B's at our September General meeting! We sold out almost every plant that our busy "home nursery" team has been propagating. That means hundreds of plants across Sonoma County for our bees! Hurray!! Special thanks to Kelly Corbett for organizing this event.

We also held two very fun pollinator garden plantings: one utilizing containers to plant year-round pollinators for the bees at Druids Hall. We have created schematics of these pollinator plant containers, so the next time you are at Druids Hall for a meeting, please swing by to look up plants that you may want in your own garden. Many thanks to Gülten Eicher for helping to select plants for these containers. We also planted a year-round pollinator garden at the Prestwood School in Sonoma with several Sonoma



Matt Lodge, Sara and Zach Bard, Lidia Del Carlo, Shannon Carr, Kim Bergstrom revitalize the containers in front of Druids Hall.

Valley kids and members of SCBA. The children knew a lot about pollinators and the importance of providing forage for our bees and were excited to dig in the soil!

On Sunday, October 15th, G4B's will be hosting a "Hedgerow Workshop". Hedgerows play a vital role in supporting pollinators like honeybees, native bees, butterflies, and birds by providing them with a diverse and consistent source of food, as well as offering shelter, nesting sites, and corridors to move safely through. Come learn about how to prepare your space for a hedgerow and help us plant a hedgerow with a diverse set of pollinator plants. An educational handout and snacks will be provided.



Students work with Kim Bergstrom planting pollinators at Prestwood School.



G4Bs members bring pollinator plants to Prestwood School.

Wouldn't You Like to be a Cluster Coordinator?

*By Kelli Cox
Regional Cluster Coordinator*

Fellow Beeks: As we wrap up our hives and ramp down the year, I'd like to acknowledge and thank all our Cluster Coordinators and Co-Coordinators, as well as the many of you who have helped with the cafes, hive dives and other SCBA related cluster



events. This has been a great year thanks to the hard work and dedication you have all put in. I'm excited to see what next year brings.

We are still looking for an East Cluster Coordinator, Central Cluster Co-coordinator and West Cluster co-coordinator. For those of you who have attended the Cluster cafes and hive dives, you know what to expect and will only add to the experience. There is no better way to meet fellow beeks than as a coordinator. If you find yourself interested, please contact your current Cluster Coordinator or me. These next 3 months are going to be SCBAAction packed. I hope to see you at one (or all) of the events.

Beest,
Kelli Cox
SCBA Regional Cluster Coordinator



Central Cluster: Garden and Hive Preparations

*By Susan Kegley & Sacha Lepley
Central Cluster Co-Coordinators*

Greetings fellow beeks: Fall is officially upon us. During September's Central Cluster Café, we focused on preparing for winter in both the hive and the garden. Angie Nowicki led a discussion about sheet mulching in the garden to build soil, create a sponge for rain showers and reduce weeds by covering the ground in layers of cardboard, newspaper, straw, compost and then wood chips. She described the process of designing her garden a few years ago, which included sheet mulching and drip irrigation and provided us with an [article from the California Native Plant Society](#) about sheet mulching. Other resources about sheet mulching include [Gaia's Garden](#) by Toby Hemenway and [Between the Sheets – A Sheet Mulching Success Story](#) (Marin Master Gardeners Presentation).

Susan Kegley brought in an empty hive set up and used Serge Labesque's presentation, Preparing for Winter, to focus on how bees get ready for winter, creating good discussion of ways that members prepare their bees for winter and ways to insulate hives. Everyone, of course, had different ideas on how things could and should be done. We concluded from all these opinions that if the colony is strong, one can get away with doing almost anything. But if they're struggling, some of the extra things like insulation and feeder boxes with lavender to mitigate moisture can make a difference.

Bee-Inspired Swap Meet

Susan and Sacha are both going to be out of Sonoma County on Saturday, October 21, 2023, when we usually have the Central Cluster Bee Café. So we are combining with the West Cluster, which is hosting a Bee -nspired Swap Meet on that Saturday from 10am to 1pm at the Michael Ellis School. We will need Central Cluster members to help with set up at 9am and clean up AND to participate in this Swap Meet. Get all that unused bee equipment, frames, bee suits and gear that is laying around and put it to good use by sharing with other SCBA members. Bee products such as candles, honey, wax products are welcome too! Need something? Come out and see what others have to offer. Part of the get together will include how to sanitize old equipment and gear so we don't spread pests and diseases. We need a

Continued next page

few members to lead the cleaning bee equipment presentation. Please contact Sacha Lepley, 707-696-4622 or email centralcluster@sonomabees.org before 10/11/2023 to volunteer as a pest/disease control demonstrator or set up/clear up worker bee.

East Cluster News

East Cluster members gathered in September for a terrific presentation by Christine Kurtz, all about honey! Thank you, Christine, for covering a wide range of facts and perspectives to increase our knowledge. What a terrific speaker!

Next month on October 7th we will have four hive dives at member's homes (no meeting at Flat Bed). Experts, Susan Simmons, Erin Grey, Mateo Herzog, and Christina Kennedy have offered to demonstrate at four locations, how to prepare your hive for winter. Thank you so much for our experts and hosts! These will be popular, and space is limited so sign up soon.

And don't forget our Taco Wednesdays coordinated by Jamie Storck at Sonoma Eats!

November hive dive will be back at Flat Bed Farm with honey tastings!

South Cluster Shares Treats and Bee Advice

South Cluster members met for a cozy cafe at Maryle Brauer's cottage and garden in September. Over coffee and tasty treats, members engaged in an informative discussion of winter preparations. We discussed Serge Labesque's recommendations, as well as adaptations that some are considering for new cold temperatures.

Next month, we will change up our beverages to cocktails! Join us for an evening cocktail party featuring honey-infused drinks. Timing and location to be announced. Watch your emails and sign up!

West Cluster Is Buzzing!

Our September Bee Café was all about composting, vermiculture and sheet mulching. Our resident Master Gardener, Gulten Eicher hosted us at her home and showed us composting, beginning with a small container inside the home, transferred out to a nearby container and then out to a larger container further out in the yard. Gulten explained do's and don'ts on feeding her worm bin, layering a leaf compost pile and finally a demonstration of sheet mulching that I'm sure we are all eager to see the results in spring!



On September 30th a small group will meet to begin our 1st Plant a Pollinator Garden Project. Ellen Sherron has offered to mentor us through the steps of site design, plant selection, what supplies will be needed, preparing the soil, irrigation and digging up and transplanting. After this project we will move on to another project.

On October 21, our Bee Café weekend, we are hosting the Bee-Inspired Swap Meet at the Michael Ellis School for Dog Training, 3421 Stony Point, Santa Rosa, 95407. This is open to all SCBA members to bring unused bee equipment, bee suits and other gear, gadgets and 'Bee Inspired' products to share with other members.

I'm happy to announce that our November Holiday Party location is secured! I will send out an email to ask for a small group of people to volunteer to help in the planning of this event.

Thank you to the members who have attended our West Cluster events.

These are opportunities to meet other members, ask questions and share experiences about working with bees and gardening. We usually have some good food and have fun! I hope to see more members at our Holiday Party and future cluster events!

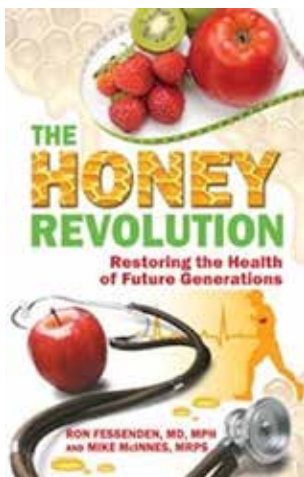


SCBA BOOK NOOK

[Honey Revolution: Re-sorting the Health of Future Generations](#)

By Ron Fessenden

Honey is such an amazing food! Created by bees, is a natural sweetener and has so many health benefits and healing qualities. *Honey Revolution* provides



facts that underscore honey's role in reducing physiologic and metabolic stress. It explores how honey, when used as a natural sweetener, can lower the risk for insulin resistance, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and hypertension. This book explores ways you and your family can benefit from the many disease prevention properties found in honey.

SCBA has more than 250 books and DVDs in our Library. *Honey Revolution* is just one of many books about bees, gardening for bees, and products from the hive in our collection. You can view all our books and DVDs available to you at [SCBA-Library](#).

We are looking to expand the SCBA library with current books and resources. If you have any suggestions for books related to honeybees, beekeeping, native bees, gardening for bees, and products of the hive, please email your suggestions to Librarian@sonomabees.org.

SCBA Library is available to members at in-person general meetings and during the week by appointment. If you are interested in checking out a book, email our librarian at Librarian@sonomabees.org, to plan to pick up one or two of the books or DVDs available to SCBA members.



Peterson Farm is Still Abloom -- and Abuzz!

Photos By EttaMarie Peterson



Blanket Flower is loved by bees and butterflies.



Figwort is also known as California Bee Plant. The bees love it!

What Says Autumn? Honey-Ginger Cake

By Rachel Parker

Back in the 1980s, my husband and I enjoyed driving our little aging Volkswagen Bug up from San Francisco or Oakland to Mendocino. It was in the era of the “Murder She Wrote” TV series, which opened with scenes of rocky coastlines and little houses ringing the cliffs. It could have been Mendocino. And once we got there, we loved going to the Café Beaujolais restaurant. Founded in the early 1980s by Margaret S. Fox, the small restaurant emphasized quality local ingredients, thoughtful preparations, and homey welcomes. As a fan, I picked up the *Café Beaujolais* cookbook as we paid our bill; I’m now the proud owner of two butter-splattered copies, their bindings held

together with tape and lots of love.

This time of year, with days becoming shorter and crisper, the book falls open naturally to a recipe for gingerbread: It is spicy and rich with molasses and buttermilk. To change this to a honey cake, I halved the amount of fresh ginger so as not to overpower the honey and swapped out the molasses and corn syrup for a bright spring honey. While the original gingerbread is delicious with a dollop of lemon curd for serving, for this lighter cake, I opted for heavy cream whipped with a little sugar and orange zest.

Honey-Ginger Cake

Adapted from *Café Beaujolais*, by Margaret S. Fox

½ cup unsalted butter, softened
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup honey
1 egg, lightly beaten
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ cup buttermilk, at room temperature
1 oz piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cream together the butter and sugar. Add honey, egg, and salt, and beat until smooth. Mix the flour and baking soda. Whisk in half the flour/baking soda mixture to the butter mixture, then half the buttermilk, and repeat. Stir in the ginger until it is well dispersed.

Pour into an 8-inch square buttered pan and bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature, with whipped cream (see note) or perhaps lemon curd.





SCBA Business Members, Donors, and Sponsors

SCBA Business Members

Beekind Honey and Beekeeping Supply

Doug & Katia Vincent
beekind@beekind.com
www.beekind.com

Located in Sebastopol, Beekind is the place to get all your beekeeping supplies as well as gifts from the hive.

Bees N Blooms

Susan Kegley
Info@beesnblooms.com
www.BeesNBlooms.com

Sustaining bees, trees, blooms and you. Bees N Blooms is home to thousands of honeybees and native bees, a lavender labyrinth, a butterfly pollinator garden, and acres of pollinator-friendly plants and trees.

Buzz Off Honey

John & Darlene McGinnis
goahwayranch@gmail.com
www.goahwayranch.com

John McGinnis, with his expert craftsmanship, makes all the equipment he sells by hand. You'll find hives, nucs, swarm traps and all the equipment in between.

K2 Ranch and Vineyards

Ken and Kat Savano
<https://k2ranch.com/>

K2 Ranch and Vineyards offer vacation rental, event space, and gardens

Marin Coastal Bee Co.

Michael Louis Turner
<https://marincoastalbee.com>

Raw Pacific Coast honey and bee-hive removal Services in Marin and Sonoma Counties.

R Honey Pots

Liz & Joey Russell
rhoneypots@gmail.com

Liz is a beekeeper and potter motivated by the intersection of art and conservation. Along with pottery she offers live bee removal and backyard beekeeping services.

Sonoma County Bee Company

Candice Koseba
info@sonomacountybeecompany.com
<https://www.sonomacountybeecompany.com>

Dedicated to the support and practice of regenerative beekeeping in Northern California, Sonoma County Bee Company maintains colonies for individuals and small businesses.

Tauzer Family & Apiaries Sola Bee Farms / Honey Bee Genetics

info@solabeefarms.com
www.solabeefarms.com

Sola Bee Farms prides itself on maintaining healthy bees from safe, local regions. They produce and package honey in a sustainable manner through maintaining innovative, socially responsible and eco-friendly practices.

Wild Wills Honey

Will Ackley
willackley@gmail.com

Beekeeping consultations including bee hive setup for new beekeepers, bee rescue, and full service bee removal. Serving Sonoma, Marin and Napa Counties.

Habitat Sponsors

Bees find forage in all kinds of environments -- from pollinator gardens to hedgerows of blooming plants, to meadows of wildflowers, to tree canopies. Your organization can be part of the effort to support the bees. To become a habitat sponsor, click here www.sonomabees.org/donate

Canopy – \$5,000+



Hedgerow – \$1,000+



Meadow – \$2,500+



SCBA Member Matt Lodge of Sonoma County Properties will donate 10% of the income from a property sale to the non profit of the sellers' choice.

Russian River
Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

Pollinator Garden – \$500+



2023 Board Members

and Other Helpful People

Click Here
for the Up-to-Date
Roster of SCBA Resources

The Monthly Extractor Staff

Editor: EttaMarie Peterson, editor@sonomabees.org

Managing Editor: Rachel Parker, managingeditor@sonomabees.org



SCBA's Newsletter team, EttaMarie Peterson and Rachel Parker, with EttaMarie's observation hive

You can support SCBA by signing up for eScrip. A small percentage of each sale will be donated back to SCBA, at no extra cost to the customer.