

Lewis County Beekeepers' Association:

May 2012 Newsletter

In This Edition:

- **Upcoming LCBA Events**
- **Notes from LCBA's April 11 , 2012 Meeting**
- **Mason Bee Information**
- **Bees & Honey in the News**
- **Beekeeping Supply Options**
- **LCBA Announcements: how to get new queens, upcoming classes & conferences, and more!**

Upcoming LCBA Events:

**May 9: LCBA Monthly Meeting – PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE – FOR 5/9 ONLY:
6:15 to 8:30 P.M.. [We'll be back to our regular 7 pm start time on June 13.]**

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW LOCATION FOR THIS & FUTURE MEETINGS!

**Centralia College, Washington Hall 103.
Address: 701 W. Walnut, Centralia 98531.
Cross street: Washington St.
Directions: see next page**

If you're coming North on I-5:

- Take I-5 Exit 81 (Mellen Street exit).
- Turn right and travel east (right hand turn from exit ramp) on Mellen Street.
- Mellen Street angles to the left and becomes Alder Street.
- Travel three blocks on Alder until you come to Washington Avenue.
- Turn left onto Washington Avenue, and travel three blocks to Pear ST., then continue on Washington one more block to Walnut Street.
- Washington Hall is the large building on Washington between Pear and Walnut. There are two side entrances on the Washington side and the main entrance is from the Walnut side. Street parking is available (you need a permit to park in one of the parking lots).

If you're coming south on I-5:

- Take I-5 Exit 82 (Harrison Street exit).
- Turn left and travel east (left hand turn from exit ramp) on Harrison Street.
- Harrison Street angles to the right, then to the left, and becomes Main Street.
- Turn right from Main Street onto Washington Avenue.
- Go 2 blocks south on Washington to Walnut.
- Washington Hall is the large building on Washington between Pear and Walnut. There are two side entrances on the Washington side and the main entrance is from the Walnut side. Street parking is available (you need a permit to park in the parking lots).

Speaker: Dr. Dewey Caron will be back to survey us on bee losses & update us on research news about the state of honey bees in the Pacific Northwest.

Dewey will start at 6:30 promptly because he has to catch a plane later this evening. Our business meeting will follow his presentation.

June 13: LCBA Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., Centralia College, Washington Hall 103; 701 W. Walnut, Centralia; cross street, Washington (see May 9 for directions).

Speaker: TBA

June 30: Advanced Beekeeping class, West Sound Beekeeping Association, Silverdale, WA; see announcements section of this newsletter for details.

July 14-15: Queen Rearing class, West Sound Beekeeping Association, Silverdale, WA; see announcements section of this newsletter for details.

October 4-7: Joint WSBA and Western Apicultural Society Annual Conference, Embassy Suites at Tukwila, just north of the Seattle Airport, WA. For details, see the Announcements section, below.

Notes from our April 11 Meeting:

New Location: We're in violation of fire code in the WSU – Extension classroom, and the room heats up uncomfortably with so many warm bodies packed inside. We have the option of meeting in Washington Hall on the Centralia College campus, free of charge. There is free street parking (parking in lots requires a permit), and there are excellent electronic / projection features. It's possible that we may get more members, students, etc.

Time change for our May 9 meeting only: 6:15 p.m. – this is so that Dr. Caron can start at 6:30 & leave in time to catch a plane. In June, we'll be back to our regular 7 p.m. start time.

The next LCBA Board Meeting will be 5 p.m. on May 9 at Washington Hall 103 on the Centralia College Campus. If anyone has concerns they'd like to bring to the board, please email Susanne (Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com).

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jon Wade reported that as of this meeting, our balance is \$3,927.71. \$309 roughly is our scholarship fund. Jon is keeping that amount separate. The question of what we're going to do with the money came up. For example, could we use some of it for a youth program? Norm said that we may be able to work more closely with Growing Places Farm, which is one of WSU-Extension's projects. Some of the funds from our prior beginning beekeeping classes went to set up hives at Growing Places. We will be working with them about utilizing their services after the next class taught by WSU-Extension.

Pro-rated Dues: Treasurer Jon had not been aware of pro-rating dues for first-time members and had been collecting the full amount from newbees. He has been directed to make some refunds, but will be able to get the paperwork done for our next meeting. If you are a new member, you pay from the month you join through the following October. We will be bringing a vote on a possible change in the dues schedule to the membership at our September meeting.

New Secretary Email: Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com.

WSBA: Opt-out for members' mailing addresses going to Washington State Beekeepers' Association: We voted over a year ago to join the Washington State Beekeepers' Association (WSBA). The cost is \$1 per LCBA member, and WSBA uses the funds to advocate for honey bee and beekeeper issues and activities like conferences that bring experts to consult with beekeepers. Susanne explained that individual dues-paid members of LCBA will be "affiliate members" of WSBA and LCBA will be one of the member associations of WSBA, entitling us to send representatives from our board to WSBA meetings. WSBA needs members' addresses to be able to document that the beekeepers they represent when they lobby on honey bee issues are real people. Anyone who does NOT want LCBA to give their physical addresses to WSBA should contact Susanne. The information will be disseminated to WSBA in May, so please contact her by the May 9 meeting.

Membership subcommittee: Gary has been invited to the next board meeting to discuss how we can reach out to people who have buzzed away.

Tim Weible, Honey Hut / Centralia BBQ & Deli: We welcomed Tim, who is teaching our beginner beekeeping class this spring, using the WSBA curriculum. He came to speak to our meeting.

A couple of years ago, Tim started beekeeping with his partner Debby and began the Honey Hut attached to the Centralia Deli, Steak & BBQ. While the Sherwoods were in business, Tim and Debby were busy building their restaurant and did not really promote the Honey Hut with LCBA. Now, though, he is our one dealer of bee supplies in Lewis County. Tim is teaching the WSBA Beginning Beekeeping class this spring; Norm and Bob were busy, and Tim volunteered to teach the class for LCBA this spring. The first class was Tuesday, April 10. There are 53 in the class, including people who drove out from Hoquiam and Gray's Harbor. Tim teaches the WSBA curriculum, so those who complete the class will get an Apprentice Beekeeper certificate. Also, Tim has all necessary beekeeping supplies at Honey Hut. Several members vouched for the food at Centralia Deli.

Package Options: Tim will be distributing bee packages in a couple of weeks. He can still take a few more package orders but people need to tell him within the next few days. Tim pitched in on our monthly beekeeping Q&A: see below.

Mentor/Mentee Coordination: Brandy, our mentorship coordinator, brought in a sign-up board for newbees and mentors.

- If you'd like to be connected with a honey bee mentor in your area, call Susanne at 360 880 8130 or email Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com.
- If you need help with Mason Bees, check with Kimo Thielges (kimosabe@compprime.com), or Ted Saari (KNT98632@q.com).

Swarm & colony removals: Norm and the Bee Team are ready to take calls for swarm and colony removals. If anyone would like to get bees out of their structures, they can call Norm or Susanne. Bees are removed for free, though structures that must be dismantled are not put back together by the Bee Team. The bees who are removed are hived and given to people who need bees or want pollinators. Anyone who'd like to ride along on a removal can call Norm, and Brandy will get a list going. Bruce Casaw helped Norm greatly last year and now is ready to go out on removals on his own. There is a video of the Salzer Valley (old schoolhouse) swarm removal from several years ago on the Chronicle website (see Bees in the News, below, for the URL).

Allergies to stings: The question was asked whether epinephrine pens require a prescription, and the answer is yes. For those not allergic to Benadryl, carrying chewable children's Benadryl can be a good idea when involved with removing colonies of bees from structures.

Package Bee Orders: Update: Our packages were distributed at Borst Park the Saturday prior to this meeting. Everyone reported a good experience of hiving their bees. Bob reported that in fact Ruhl's gave us an \$80 price per package, instead of \$83. Some people got their rebate; Bob and Susanne have the list of those who didn't, so Bob will bring the \$\$ to our next meeting. Mel

Grigorich volunteered to drive to Portland and brought the bees to Borst: Mel was thanked for his effort and reimbursed for the gas money. Steve Howard brought a sample empty package, frames, and queen cage to Borst so that we could give demonstrations of how to do hiving: thanks, Steve!

Upcoming Nuc Deliveries: Bob spoke to Mark Johnson, Tim Giese's friend who is our Nuc distributor, about the Nuc orders. On April 16, Bob will have a date for the Nuc distribution. There will be an email to all who ordered Nucs and phone calls to those who specified phone notification. Nuc prices were \$82. The target date will be around the 20th to 24th of April. Bob will try to set it for a weekend if possible.

The Nucs are coming with a feeder. Gary noted that he likes a front-loading feeder because we can see how much sugar water they have taken. Alan Sparling noted that the yellow jackets are already out, so it would be a good idea to get the yellow jacket traps out to help protect queens who are doing their mating flights.

Returning package boxes for deposits? Bring your packages back to our May meeting and Bob will give the \$6.50 cash for them.

Bee information for those who don't have Internet access: Brandy brought in printouts from Randy Oliver's Scientific Beekeeping website, as well as information from Priester Bee Supply and others. If anyone would like printouts of information noted at meetings, let Brandy know.

Our Monthly Beekeeping Q&A: Tim, Norm, Bob, and many of our knowledgeable members fielded questions from the newbees and nearly-newbees.

When should we put on a second brood box, and when should we put on supers? Tim likes to let the brood box get "fat," then add a second brood box, then when that's full, put on a queen excluder and super. Bees go up; they do not like to go down. He feeds a lot, five gallon pails at a time, and adds boxes and lets them build up. To decide when to put on that second box, Tim recommends inspecting the hive to see how congested the brood is. "How fat are the bees?" means: how packed are the frames with brood and food? If packed enough, add boxes, and Tim likes to add the supers early to maximize productivity.

President Norm Switzler suggested looking in the bottom box to see if they are doing anything there. If a colony is two or three years old, you may need to put in new foundation after reversing the boxes. Bees will ignore comb after a couple of years. Bruce had thought you check your deep body and if it has 7 frames full, it's time to put on a box above. The wasted space in the bottom is an issue. But they won't expand back down – they want to build up, and they may swarm. If you put on the box too early, though, they will build a small, narrow brood chamber in the shape of a chimney, and they won't have enough food storage below.

Questions about hive reversals: Marie Panesko lost a hive after reversing; Tim said he is not a fan of reversals either. When you reverse the boxes, you have to break every frame loose; the queen is photosensitive and will go to darkness. She will not want to go out, and Tim never heard of one falling out. Take the inner cover out and put the top box on top of the inner cover or the telescoping cover. There is no easy way to calendar when to do this: you have to do it in

response to what condition the bees are in. You must, Norm noted, examine your bees and see where the brood is. You don't want to reverse the boxes and end up a layer of capped honey separating parts of the brood chamber. Bob Harris noted that the bees don't read the same books that we do and that even if we do everything by the book, a colony still can fail. Tim checks for queen presence after reversing and if there isn't evidence of one, he re-queens that hive.

Gary Stelzner reported that he had no losses this winter and did not do any reversing. He thinks that bees know what they want and need and we should not interfere – trying to change what they want may simply cause the bees stress. Norm asked if Gary does anything to rotate the bottom box out; can't leave that wax in there forever. Gary actually does leave it. He has used Mite-a-way quick strips in the fall and then feeds with a Boardman in the spring. Bob said that at some point the aged wax will become intolerable to the bees and they'll leave. Norm said that even in the wall jobs he's done, where there is very dark old wax, the bees will not use it and will walk two feet to fresher wax pulled in the last year. Gary is thinking now to check his wax at the four year mark. Bob said the greater piece of Gary's point is that we can't make bees do what we want to do – even if it sounds like a good idea to us, it may not work for them. Also, there are many chemicals out there that they bring back into the hive and the hygroscopic wax absorbs moisture and chemicals.

How do you check for supersedure cells? If you don't go into your deeps, Bruce asked, how do you check for supersedure cells, etc.? Norm doesn't separate the boxes to look for swarm cells. He uses his hive tool to pry the boxes apart and looks rather than removes the box.

When to use entrance reducers? Last summer, Marie had a hive decimated by the hornets; she did not use an entrance reducer soon enough, and then it was too late. Tim said he uses his entrance reducer year round except July-August because of heat in those months, as well as the CO2 issue – the bees need air circulation. Tim noted that in snow, bees can get blocked up and suffocate, so it is important to check that entries to the hive are open in those conditions.

Mold on dead frames & other hive cleaning issues: Remember that pupas that die are meat, and meat rots. Also, honey that was capped can ferment. Tim scrapes off the mold and dead bees and gets rid of it before letting other bees raid those frames. Tim would rather not waste the bees' energy cleaning house; he can do that for them, and they can use their energy on this year's honey.

Screened bottom boards? Tim dislikes the screened bottom board in winter for our climate – too much cold comes in with the convection and bees waste energy with extra fanning to keep the colony warm. He prefers solid bottom boards to help them stay insulated in winter. Gary found that when he uses screened bottom boards, he has no mold from the moisture problems of our climate, but when he used to use solid bottom boards, he lost hives and had major mold problems. [*Post-meeting note from Susanne: we used screened bottom boards in our hives for the first time this past winter – and we lost 3 of 7 hives, the first time we had losses. But there may have been other issues.*] V.P. Ted Saari has one year old hives with screened bottom boards and a hole in upper cover for ventilation; he also had the hive excluder off; his hives were fine this spring. There was much debris in the hives. He pulled out the debris and the hives have been fine so far.

Mason Bees – a presentation by Kimo Thielges:

Jim (he goes by Kimo, his Hawaiian name) has been giving talks about Mason bees and demonstrations at Gardening For Everyone for years. His Mason bees came out around April 5 this year. They are an excellent early spring cool weather bees who do a superior job to honey bees in pollinating fruit trees. They complement honey bees and it is great to use them in conjunction. Kimo and Ted Saari are both glad to get emails from people with questions (kimosabe@compprime.com or KNT98632@q.com).

John Panesko asked if he gets anything from the Mason bees beyond pollination, and Kimo said no. Kimo said that Mason bees range only about as much as a football field, but will work it to death, and they do not swarm. Ted sets his out in a flower pot in the spring, and temperature determines when they hatch out. Males hatch out first, wait for the females, then go off and die; females find a small hole [the dimensions are specific] and start to lay an egg and store some food in that hole, then on to the next and the next. They plug the hole with mud, and this is why they are called “mud bees.” Kimo was asked if it is true that Mason bees land on pistils and stamens of flower and honey bees on petals? Yes: honey bees are more skittish and Mason bees more systematic.

Boxes for Mason bees: You can make wood blocks with holes the size they like to attract them. You can also store the boxes indoors over the winter. One winter Kimo did have trouble with predators: the straws had been pulled out by birds, who ate the larva. Now he uses doors on the boxes with a hole covered by [something your scribe did not catch]. Kimo does not clean out the holes in his wood blocks.

Bees & Honey In the News:

- Thanks to Judy Kalich for sending this link to Norm's YouTube video of his beehive capture at Salzer Valley. Enjoy! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc7thvqXtjM>
- “2 Studies Point to Common Pesticide as a Culprit in Declining Bee Colonies,” by Carl Zimmer. The New York Times, 29 Mar. 2012.

Many of you have already heard about this new study, which suggests that neonicotinoid pesticides can “fog” the brains of our bees, messing with their navigation ability. They may also stop bumblebees from gathering enough food to be able to reproduce their own new queens. Click on the URL to read more:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/30/science/neocotinoid-pesticides-play-a-role-in-bees-decline-2-studies-find.html?scp=1&sq=honeybee%202012&st=cse>

- “How America's Sugar Addiction is Killing Bees: Insecticide-laced high-fructose corn syrup linked to colony collapse disorder,” by Leah Zerbe.

Many of us feed our bees sugar water: this article describes a new study that suggest that trace chemicals on corn plants, used to synthesize high fructose corn syrup, may carry toxins that could harm our bees. Ted Saari sent the link for this potentially disturbing news; we asked Dewey Caron about this after the April 25 Lyceum, too, and his response was that there were some flaws in this study that may render its results less alarming for us. I did not get all the details on this, so let's ask Dewey on May 9. Meanwhile, here is the link to the article:

http://www.rodale.com/pesticides-bees?cm_mmc=OGGazette-_-884738-_-04192012-_-how_america_s_sugar_addiction_is_killing_bees_title

- “Honeybees Benefit From Queen’s Promiscuity,” by Sindya N. Bhanoo, The New York Times, 19 Mar 2012. Web.

A new study explores the reason why honey bee queens - in contrast with other “social insects - seem to need to mate with many drones in order to promote a strong colony. The study suggests that “promiscuous” mating results in more “good” bacteria, not only in the queen’s bodies, but in their hives themselves. Click on the URL to read more:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/20/science/honeybee-colonies-benefit-from-queens-promiscuity.html?scp=2&sq=honeybee%202012&st=cse>

Beekeeping Supply Options:

- ***In Lewis County:***

- ***Tim Weible, The Honey Hut at Centralia Deli Steak & BBQ, 708 Harrison, Exit # 82 off I-5, 2 1/2 blocks east on your left. Phone, 360-736-1015; email, centdelisteakbbq@aol.com; website, Centraliadelistekandbbq.com.***

Tim is our LCBA Beginning Beekeeping instructor for Spring 2012. He is a longtime beekeeper and has become a licensed Mann Lake dealer. Tim’s “Honey Hut” has pretty much everything you may need by way of supplies in stock: suits in small to XX, gloves, boxes assembled or unassembled, supers, wax and plastic foundation, frames, tops, bottoms, smokers, tools, and books. Tim also offers specialty items like local honey and even mead, as well as bee-related gifts.

- ***In Rochester, WA:***

- ***John Martin, 19019 Moon Road SW, Rochester 98579; Phone, 360 280 5274; email, hjweaver@emypeople.net.***

John visited our March meeting. John is a construction worker and beekeeper from Rochester, WA, who has started a business importing woodenware products from woodenware-worker Harold Wieber of Beeline Apiaries and Woodenware, which is based in Pennsylvania. John's shop is in Rochester, and he spoke to us about their woodenware products: frames, boxes, and more, and he will have bee suits in stock in April. He demonstrated the fit of his boards. To connect with John, please call ahead at the number above.

- ***In Oregon:***

- ***Ruhl Bees, Portland: 17845 SE 82nd Drive, Gladstone, Oregon 97027; Phone, 503 657 5399; email, staff@ruhlbeesupply.com; website, <http://www.ruhlbeesupply.com/>.***

John Edwards, owner of Ruhl Bees, has a full array of bee-related products and offers a 10% discount to current dues-paying LCBA members. John has addressed our club and is our contractor for our spring 2012 package bee order. See his website for details, informational links, and more.

If you need a new queen, Steve Howard reports that Ruhl Bee orders new queens every week. If you place your order by a Thursday, the queen will come in by the following Tuesday. The cost for Italian queens is \$26.50. Shipping, (Priority Mail) is \$9.10 for up to a total of five queens. Beats driving!

- ***Priester Farm Bee Supply, 31890 Tide Creek Rd, Deer Island, Oregon 97054; Phone, 503.556.1060; email, beewhisperer@priesterbee.com; website, www.priesterbee.com.***

Kevin drove up to make a presentation at our March meeting. His store is just over the Columbia in Oregon— between Rainier and St Helens off U.S. 30, about 5 miles about Goble. Kevin sells wooden wares, medications, supplements, and bees and tries to keep his costs competitive. He has about 70 packages, Carniolans and Italians, left available to order; he will be picking his up on April 7, and his bees come from near Oliveras, where John Edwards gets his bees. Kevin is essentially a new beekeeper himself, having been beekeeping for several years. He thought this would be a good opportunity because of supply and demand in the northwest. His is a family run business;

he works full time for a construction company and runs his bee business by appointment only and on weekends.

Kevin's bee supply is open weekdays, after 6 p.m., he's usually open till 10 p.m. It's a good idea to call ahead. Carniolans \$84 per package. 4 pound packages are \$94 per package. Queens \$31. He buys as much American made equipment as he can. 90% of his material is made on the west coast. He builds boxes and frames for sale. Kevin was asked what type of wood he uses: pine or cedar, he said. Cedars can have some material toxic to bees; more aromatic woods can be more toxic.

- ***In California:***

- ***Country Rubes, 20693 Dog Bar Road, Grass Valley, CA 95949; phone, 530-913-2724; email, rubes@countryrubes.com; website, countryrubes.com.***
Country Rubes owner Janet Brisson has presented at LCBA; several years ago, she gave us a great demonstration of how she dusts her bees for mites using organic powdered sugar, which knocks down many mites and spurs bees to groom each other, knocking off still more. Her special design of screened bottom boards is key to her approach to “integrated pest management.”

- ***Online Suppliers: for details, check their websites:***

- ***Dadant:***
 - <http://www.dadant.com>
 - 888 922 1293
- ***Mann Lake:***
 - <http://www.mannlakeltd.com/>
 - 800 880 7694
 - if you order \$100 or more, shipping is free
- ***Glory Bee:***
 - <http://beekeeping.glorybee.com/>
 - 800 456 7923

LCBA / WSBA News and Announcements:

Need a Queen? Steve Howard reports that Ruhl Bee orders new queens every week. If you place your order by a Thursday, the queen will come in by the following Tuesday. The cost for Italian queens is \$26.50. Shipping, (Priority Mail) is \$9.10 for up to a total of five queens. Beats driving! See Ruhl Bee contact information, above; if you are a dues-paying LCBA member, you should be able to get a 10% discount.

New LCBA Secretary Email! Please note: beginning with our May newsletter, I will be using my Gmail account: Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com. Please be sure to put it in your list of "safe" email addresses.

Need Help with Your Bees? Call LCBA bee mentors!

- *If you'd like to be connected with a honey bee mentor in your area, call Susanne at 360 880 8130 or email Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com.*

- *If you need help with Mason Bees, check with Kimo Thielges (kimosabe@compprime.com), or Ted Saari (KNT98632@q.com).*

Would You Like to Volunteer as a Bee Mentor? Bee mentors take calls, answer questions, and may visit members' bee yards. If you're interested in serving this way, please call Susanne at 360 880 8130 or email her at Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com.

Free Swarm & Colony Removals by our "Bee Team." This service is free, though we accept donations to support our educational programs. Need a swarm removed? Call Susanne at the contact information above:

Free Swarm & Colony Removals: Can You Help In 2012? Swarm/colony removal is a free service that LCBA, as a nonprofit educational organization, offers the public. Swarm season is over (let's hope!!), but if you're interested in riding along when it all begins again next May, give LCBA Secretary Susanne a call (see # above): it's free, fun, educational, and it saves bees from the exterminator!

Joint WSBA and Western Apicultural Society Annual Conference, October 4 - 7, 2012.

Embassy Suites at Tukwila, just north of the Seattle Airport, WA.

Info: http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS/Conference_Information

This year's conference will draw a much larger group of beekeepers, because it will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Washington State Beekeepers' Association.

Besides more attending beekeepers, there will be more vendors and more invited speakers than are typical for a normal WAS Conference. There will be more presentations devoted to commercial beekeeping topics, but we will honor our roots and have concurrent sessions for the small scale interests.

Currently it is estimated that registration will be around \$155 per person and will include lunch on Friday and Saturday, as well as morning and afternoon beverage breaks. It appears that the banquet will cost \$42 per person and will be held between 6:30 and 9:30 on Saturday. Conference details will be available as they become firmed up.

Queen Rearing Classes & Other Opportunities from West Sound Beekeepers:

T. J. Jorgenson, president of the Westsound Beekeepers Association in Silverdale, WA, wrote to let us know that his club is putting on two new courses this year:

* Queen Rearing: July 14 & 15, 2012 9:00am-4:30pm at West Sound Beekeeping Association located at Stedman Bee Supplies, Silverdale, WA. Cost: \$125 for individual, \$100 for 2nd individual from same family. For details on course content, see attached PDF file.

* Advanced Beekeeping: Saturday June 30th, 2012 8:30am-4:30pm at West Sound Beekeeping Association located at Stedman Bee Supplies, Silverdale WA. \$60.00, registrations on or before June 15, 2012 \$75.00, registrations after June 15, 2012.

* For details on these courses, see attached PDF files or visit: <http://www.westsoundbees.org>. You can also contact T.J. at hansvillehoneyfarm@gmail.com.

Respectfully reported—bee happy!

Susanne Weil, LCBA Secretary: Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com; 360 880 8130