



# The Diablo Bee

## March 2016

Newsletter of the Mount Diablo Bee Association, a non-profit 501-3(c) organization

Next Meeting: February 11, 7:00 pm @

The Pleasant Hill Community Center, Perera Pavillion.

320 Civic Center Drive, Pleasant Hill, CA

Bee Chat 7:00-7:15, Business/General Meeting 7:15-7:30, Program 7:30-8:30,  
Break/Focus Groups 8:30-9:00

Alright Beekeepers, get your  
spectacles on and perhaps  
something to drink.

Hope that you enjoy reading!

### In this Issue

- Message from the President
- Messages to the Membership
- March Speaker Bio
- Plant(s) of the Month
- Package Bee Order Info
- April 2 Bee Day Info
- Hive Tips
- Member Education Corner
- Treasurer's Corner
- June Randy Oliver Workshop Info
- Vice President's Corner
- Community Education Corner
- MDBA Library/ Books /Editor's Corner
- Regional Bee News/Events
- Club Classifieds

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wow, hasn't it has felt like spring lately?

The trees and flowers are blooming and the bees are building up with the warm temperatures. There's still the chance of a wet March, so things are still a bit unpredictable. May the honey bee spirits be with us!

The first of the swarm calls have started coming in, so let the excitement begin! Thanks to Mike Stephanos' presentation last month we're all better prepared for catching them and with Mary Andre's talk this month, we'll all be better prepared to keep our colonies intact.

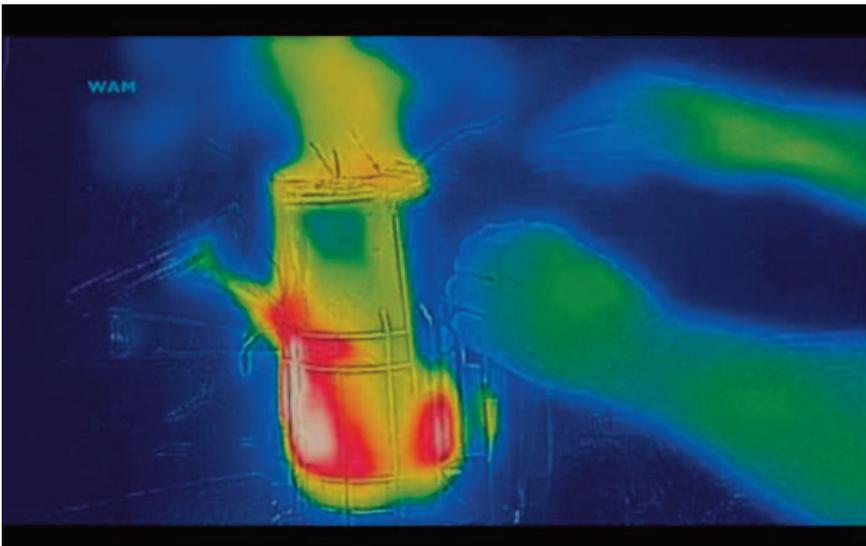
We'll meet in the Focus Groups this month, so plan to hang out after the presentation to meet other beekeepers in your area. The Focus Groups will be addressing getting and installing packages and nucs. Some of you who have experience will be very valuable to new members who haven't had hives before. We'll be spreading out in the space more this month in hopes of managing the noise better.

Some of the Focus Groups are already organizing themselves with email lists, mentor connections, etc. I encourage each of the groups to think about how you might best support each other in the process of becoming successful beekeepers. Some of the groups have considered organizing a Yahoo or Google group. That can be a great way to communicate with each other. Don't be afraid to speak up in your group and to take a leadership role. Building relationships with other beekeepers can really enhance your beekeeping efforts.

Our next raffle will be in April and should be quite exciting thanks to MarElla Honey Bs donation of beekeeping equipment. Their business at 950 Detroit Ave. #12 in Concord is a Mann Lake distributor. MDBA appreciates the support from MarElla and encourages our members to buy locally when possible.

A reminder to everyone that the Spring Bee Day/Workshop is on Saturday, April 2. In addition to picking up your packages, it's a time to explore aspects of beekeeping from package and swarm installation, Langstroth and top bar hives, hive inspections, and more. The Spring Workshop always proves to be one of the year's highlights. All workshops are open only to current MDBA members. Come join the fun!

Yours,  
Judy Weatherly



Watch how to properly light your bee smoker. Notice how he keeps pumping the bellows and adding fuel until the unit is HOT.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbM-LLJmLCn8&ct=t%283\\_2016\\_The\\_Diablo\\_Bee\\_2\\_24\\_2016%29](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbM-LLJmLCn8&ct=t%283_2016_The_Diablo_Bee_2_24_2016%29)

## Announcements (3) to the Membership:

### MDBA T-Shirt Order

If you ordered a shirt, it will be available for pick up at the March meeting (or April if you miss it). Please arrive early to avoid the crush; this is a hot item! As a fundraiser, the shirts were a success with over 100 ordered. Because we bought so many, the production cost dropped by half; our club will net \$700. Plus there was no sales tax or shipping cost to you. Thank you everyone. I'm looking forward to seeing all these MDBA shirts walking around town. Washing care: Turn shirt inside out, wash in cold or warm water and line dry.

**Dues are due for 2016.** Save on Dues; Pay Now. Dues for 2016 go up to \$25 on March 31 so renew your membership now. You must be a 2016 member to attend Bee Day and the workshops, and to keep on receiving the Diablo Bee newsletter.

### 2016 MDBA Membership Roster Coming Soon

I'll be dropping all unpaid members from the Membership Roster on March 31. A few days later I'll send around the 2016 MDBA Membership Roster to all members. The Roster contains every member's name, city, telephone number, and email. (Student members have only their name listed.) We provide the roster as a benefit for members to help them communicate with one another. Please don't share the roster outside the club, and don't misuse it. If you want your name WITHHELD from the roster, please email me now at [vpmembership@diablobees.org](mailto:vpmembership@diablobees.org)  
Thank you!

--Janet Kaidantzis, Membership

## March Speaker Introduction: Mary Andre "The Art of Catching Swarms"



On March 10, we welcome Mary Andre as our guest speaker! Mary will present on the timely topic of "Swarm Control." She will give us the much needed information to help us keep our colonies where we want them to be—in our backyards and apiaries and not in our neighbors' bushes, trees, and overhangs!

Mary started her adventures in beekeeping while taking Honey Bee Biology taught by Dr. Norman Gary at UC Davis. She gladly accepted a job at the Bee Biology Research Lab working for Norm under the supervision of Sue Cobey. In the Lab, Mary maintained their bee hives and worked on various research projects. In the early 80's, her love for her husband moved her to Houston, Texas. Mary found the Houston Beekeepers Association buzzing with activity and easily found her place in the beekeeping community. Mary notes that what was most memorable about her Houston experience "was being in parts of town I would have no business in if it weren't for swarm retrieval and getting some hands on experience with Africanized honeybees." She appreciates what she learned from her Texas beekeeping community.

Mary has been back in California for years now. She has been backyard beekeeping, giving school and community honeybee demonstrations, doing swarm retrieval, and last but not least participating with and supporting the MDBA. Mary has recently "retired" from the MDBA librarian position and has been coordinating the MDBA Italian Package Bee acquisition each spring for years now. Mary looks forward to the opportunity of sharing her knowledge and experience with the MDBA and we look forward to hearing from her. Welcome, Mary Andre!

## 2016 Future Meetings and Programs

Some programs and speakers may be changed as the dates come nearer

### February 11

The Art of Catching Swarms - Mike Stephanos

### March 10

Swarm Control - Mary Andre

### April 14

Practical Beekeeping Tips for Throughout the Year - Bill Cervanka

### May 12

From Grassroots to Government: Who's Doing What for the Bees and How It Can Matter - Mea McNeil

### June 9

On Biologic Beekeeping and Husbandry - Scott Jorgensen

### June 25 and 26

Beekeeping Workshop with Randy Oliver

### July 14

Making Splits and Nucs; Overwintering- Doug Vincent

### August 11

Honey Tasting and Beekeeper Gadget Sharing - Membership

### August 15

Mini Bee Workday--Honey Extracting 10am-12pm @ Lois Kail's apiary

### September 8

Bee Health - Claire Kremen

### October 13

MDBA Member BBQ

There are no meetings in November and December.

## 2016 MDBA Board of Directors

**President** - Judy Weatherly

**Vice President** - Stacey Bauer

**Secretary** - Lois Kail

**Treasurer** - Ann Moser

**Membership** - Janet Kaidantzis

**Member Education** - Nancy Burke

**Community Education** - Jan Spieth

**Newsletter Editor** - Scott Jorgensen

**Ex Officio** - Gary Lawrence

**Past President** - Sylvia Goemmel

**Webmaster** - Andy Scheck

Don't be shy, introduce yourselves to us! We like to talk about bees. We'll be wearing nametags at the meetings.

## March's Featured Plant(s)

### Poison Oak, *Toxicodendron diversilobum*.

Now that you know bees like it, does that change your feelings about it?

Poison Oak...is a plant that we all give grudging respect to. Known for its ability to

cause painful itching when its oils are absorbed into the skin, it is also a major nectar source for bees and other pollinators. This major nectar supply ensures pollination and seed set, which is a reason why poison oak seems to pop up almost anywhere in rural or undeveloped settings. This plant typically begins blooming in March when the sun's rays become stronger, and the bloom finishes up in May.

Fun fact: each of the leaves of the poison oak shrub have different numbers of lobes on the leaves, which is another way to identify the plant if you are unsure. Go ahead and count them, there is no pattern! This bush is very properly named : *Toxicodendron* is Latin for "Toxic/Poison Tree" and *Diversilobum* = irregular lobes on the leaves.



### California Poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*

All hail the state flower!

The California poppy is a very special plant for all pollinators. The first blooms of poppies opened in mid-February, and the main bloom will continue during all of spring.

Having evolved in the California Floristic Region, our poppy is very well suited to all of the state's climates. Additionally, some poppies will delay blooming until the summer or late summer, possibly as an evolutionary strategy to ensure insect pollination at a time when other flowers are scarce in the landscape.

Pick a blooming poppy and rub its anthers. Your fingers will be stained with a bright orange pollen. This pollen is very nutritious for the bees. Gardeners will find the California poppy to be a very forgiving plant to grow. Just give it sun and water. Ornamental poppies come in many colors from orange to red to yellow, and every so often, white poppies (a recessive genetic condition) can be found in native populations of flowers.



## Package Bee Order Information for MDBA Members Only

### Italian Package Bees Orders

Last chance to place your order for Italian packaged honeybees is the March 10th MDBA meeting. Cash or check is due when order is placed. Please be sure your 2016 MDBA dues have been paid.  
\$85 for 3 pounds of bees includes mated queen. That's about 10,000 bees.  
Pick up your order Saturday, April 2nd, at the MDBA Spring Beekeeping Workshop.  
Empty, clean, good condition package boxes from previous years can be returned to the supplier. Bring them to the Thursday, March 10th monthly meeting.  
How to Install a Package of Honey Bees Watch these YouTube videos that are applicable for these packages:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVAYD3e9KOA>  
<http://www.nebees.com/package.php>

Thanks  
Mary André

### New World Carniolan Bees 2016

3Lb. Package New World Carniolan with Queen = \$105.00  
Queen only \$27.00

Please make checks payable to and send to:

Stephanos & Co.  
1966 Tice Valley Blvd. #156  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Also include: Your Name, address, phone number and email address.

Payment is due no later than March 26th.

#### SORRY NO REFUNDS

1. \* Pick up will be Saturday April 2th ONLY at the annual MDBA bee workshop day. This is held at Gary Lawrence's house at 253 Twinview Dr., Pleasant Hill CA.
2. \* You are responsible for keeping informed of any changes to the pick up date. Any changes will be announced either via the MDBA newsletter, MDBA meeting or the MDBA Facebook page.
3. \* Packages MUST be picked up no later than 12:00 pm. Any package not picked up by 12:00 pm will be donated to the 4H club. NO EXCEPTIONS & NO REFUNDS!
4. \* If you can not pick up your packages, please make plans for someone to pick it up for you. You MUST notify me 48 hours in advance of this change, I do not want to give your package away to an unauthorized person.
5. \* Unfortunately bees die, If for some reason your package of bees or queen does not survive, I am not held responsible for this act of god.
6. \* By purchasing these packages and queens you agree to the terms of the sale.

Thank you and happy beekeeping!

**IMPORTANT:** Please be advised that Mary and Mike do this as a personal favor for members of the Association. By submitting an order for packaged bees you are agreeing to purchase them at your own risk. Therefore, if the bees are injured, die or are in anyway harmed, before or after they are in your care, Mary, Mike, and/or the Association will be held blameless of financial or any other responsibility or compensation.



## April 2nd Bee Day Details at Gary's House

The following members are in charge of the programs:

MARY ANDRE will have your packages of Italian bees in the garage

MIKE STEPHANOS will have your packages of Carniolan bees in his tent on the back lot

BEES NOT PICKED UP BY NOON WILL BE FORFEITED

ANN MOSER and LOIS KAIL will register on the front porch

STACEY BAUER will welcome you

MARELLA HONEY B'S will have some beekeeping equipment for purchase in the front driveway

HERCULES BEES will have some top bar beekeeping equipment for purchase and order in the front driveway

VALERIE SCHMIDT will make coffee and coordinate breakfast snacks on the deck. Feel free to bring something, and let Valerie know

THREE BEEKEEPERS will open hives and describe what they are doing as they pass around frames for you to inspect:

- STEVE GENTRY from Orinda
- COLEEN WELCH from Vacaville
- SCOTT JORGENSEN (top bar hive) from Hercules

ELLEN WALTERS & GERRI KOBAYASHI will install packages of Italian bees in hives

JAN SPIETH will explain school visits at the demo hive

MIKE STEPHANOS will install a swarm in a hive

LARRY AREIAS will monitor equipment and supervise cleanup

RAIN OR SHINE - BUT HOPE FOR SHINE



# March Hive Tips

**Enlarge the Nest Cavity!** -- In March the colony population expands dramatically and we head into swarm season. Mary is going to talk all about that in her presentation. But, put simply, bees need more space than just a double deep in order to make a honey crop. Enlarging and creating space in the broodnest can delay swarming. Some colonies get big enough to fill five or six honey supers, so give them the room to do it. This year it finally rained!

**Explore the Beehive!**--March and April are wonderful months to be a bee in California. There is plenty of food and low stress on the bees. These are great months to have lengthier apiary sessions where you can practice using your tools, identifying things in the hive (drones, pollen, disease, etc), and observing bee behavior. Take advantage of their friendly dispositions.

**Chalkbrood** -- Chalk brood is a fungal disease caused by excessive moisture inside the beehive. It is not a fatal hive disease but can affect the rate of spring build-up. Visit here for more chalkbrood information. If you have chalkbrood mummies in your hives, it is very important to REMOVE THOSE MUMMIES from the beehive. Just flick them out in the grass. Otherwise, chalkbrood conditions will continue much longer in your colonies. Practice sanitation.

**Consider Splitting**-- Splitting your beehive into daughter colonies is a great way to make increase and hedge against winter losses. There are many recommendations to split every colony at least once per year as a form of Integrated Pest Management. This action performed as a swarm preventative measure keeps your bees in your boxes. Splits made in Mid to late March need at least brood frames as a good rule of thumb.

**Take Notes!** -- Dust off your notebook and start writing down what you see. Keeping good notes can help you troubleshoot any problems that may arise in the season. Record what is blooming, how the weather has been lately, conditions of the brood pattern, etc. The more that you record, the more that you will be able to see and understand.

**Seek Information!** -- There is a wealth of information for beginning beekeepers on the internet, but sometimes knowing where to look can be hard. For beginning beekeepers who want a thorough primer on keeping honey bees in contemporary America, the MDBA Board recommends reading the Beginner's Pages on Randy Oliver's website, [www.scientificbeekeeping.com](http://www.scientificbeekeeping.com). Another good resource to browse is [www.beesource.com](http://www.beesource.com) which is an interactive forum for beekeeping questions. Give it a look!

## Gardening for Bees

By Janet Kaidantzis

With Bee Day coming up, many of us are sprucing up our gardens to give our new bees a good start. Below are a few simple ways to make your garden more bee-friendly.

If you have a sunny spot in your yard, plant Lavender or Rosemary. These shrubs are easy to grow, drought tolerant, and long blooming producing both nectar and pollen. Borage, a reseeding annual, is a super feeder for bees; its blossoms refill with nectar every few minutes. For part shade, plant Spearmint, Hummingbird Sage, Campanula, or Bee Balm. Other bee friendly plants that flourish in our region are Ceanothus, Wisteria, Asters, Sunflowers, and Thyme. Just about anything in the Mint family, including Salvia and Basil, are good choices for bees. For more ideas, see UC Berkeley's Urban Bee Lab list at <http://www.helpabee.org/best-bee-plants-for-california.html>.

Big box nurseries sell many plants and seeds that have been chemically treated, which can be harmful to bees. Shop your local, independent nurseries and ask for "non-treated" varieties.

## Gardening for Bees ... continued

Honeybees practice "flower fidelity," foraging on one plant species at a time. Where possible, grow a single type of plant in a patch of at least one square meter. You'll help the honeybee to see your flower patch and reduce the distance the honeybee must fly from flower to flower, letting her work more efficiently.

Bees need a reliable source of clean water all year long. Place an old dinner plate or pie tin beneath one of your drip lines or sprinkler heads so it will refill regularly. They will remember and return to your improvised water feeder every day. Put a large mound of pebbles on the plate so the bees can drink without drowning. If this water ever dries up, the bees will move on, so keep it maintained.

Avoid using herbicides and pesticides; those marked "organic" are not necessarily safe for bees. Ask a nursery owner or check the Integrated Pest Management website at UC Davis (Active Ingredients database) for the honeybee toxicity levels of various chemicals. Go to <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/menu.pesticides.php?v=nocatg>. The site also shows bee-friendly alternatives and ways to manage your garden to prevent problems in the first place.

If you do spray, apply at dusk when bees are back in the hive and use the least toxic substance. This might reduce exposure. Yellow jackets can and should be trapped; do it now when the queens are emerging from hibernation and haven't yet established nests. Dump standing water to prevent mosquitoes. Wash, squash, or release predator bugs (such as ladybugs) to go after other unwanted insects. If there is a particular pest, weed, or condition you wish to combat, ask your fellow beekeepers during Bee Chat.

Thankfully, Mother Nature does her part to help the honeybee. Outside your garden walls, the spring rains are bringing up the wildflowers and coaxing native trees and shrubs into bloom. So once you have finished getting your own garden in order, sit back, relax, and pray for rain. How simple is that?

### From the Treasurer's Corner

Well the 2015 year is over and the appropriate Federal and State tax returns for MDBA have been filled.

Please know that the MDBA books for the year 2015 are open to review and audit by an audit committee. If you are interested reviewing the financial records, please contact our President, Judy Weatherly, and let her know you would like to volunteer to form the audit committee.

Best,  
Ann Moser

<b>MDBA Revenue and Expenses in Jan-Feb 2016</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Donations	75.00
Extractor Rental	30.00
Membership Dues	4,795.00
Raffle Sales	245.00
Speaker /Education Revenue	150.00
Swarm Fees	.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5,295.00</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
Bank and P.O. Box fee	33.00
BBQ	
Board meetings	50.00
Business Licenses & Permits	.00
Dues & Subscriptions	.00
Education Expenses/Supplies	60.50
Extractor Repairs	
Insurance Expense	975.00
Nametags	(20.00)
Library Books	.00
MDBA Donation	.00
Newsletter/Postage/Forms	28.06
Raffle Supplies	359.20
Rent Expense	330.00
Speaker Expenses	150.00
Supplies	57.35
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>2,023.11</b>
Net Increase	3,271.89

## Member Education Corner

We are heading into spring at a rapid rate. This is a very exciting time of the year for beekeepers because the nectar flow is starting and already some swarms have been reported. Beekeepers love to capture swarms, but we are not fond of our own hives swarming. It is important to prevent swarming so that your bees do not end up disturbing your neighbors.

So how do we prevent swarming? It is important to interrupt the chain of events that leads to swarming in the hive. You want to think about keeping the brood nest open and occupy all those nurse bees. You can use Michael Bush's method by placing empty frames without foundation in the brood nest with two full frames of brood between them. BBEBBE for brood brood empty and so on. The nurse bees will begin to build comb and once the queen finds the new comb she will lay in it. You have changed their minds and distracted them from swarming!! If you do not have room in the brood box, add another box above and move some brood combs up there. This box might look like EEEBBBEEE.

Some beekeepers recommend requeening regularly as young queens are less likely to swarm. Others will clip one third of one wing of the queen so that she cannot fly off in a swarm.

Yet another method that we used in February in addition to opening the brood nest with empty frames was to reverse brood boxes. In our case the hive has three medium brood boxes. The colony was primarily in the top box earlier in February and by the third week of February had moved down into the second brood box. We brought up the third bottom box and put it on top of the other two. The empty frames mentioned previously were then placed in that box.

We will go into that hive in two weeks to assess how much space the queen has to lay and continue monitoring her for any hints of swarm preparation. Swarm prevention is an important part of beekeeping and a responsibility that we all have as beekeepers. Mary Andre will teach us more swarm control methods this month. Just like the rest of beekeeping; it is important to learn as much as you can about swarm control methods and try out the different ways that you can keep your bees in your apiary and have a bountiful honey harvest.

-- Nancy Burke

## ANOTHER GREAT BEE WORKSHOP!

It was another great day at Gary's Apiary for the February Bee Workshop. A healthy Langstroth hive was opened up for inspection observation and then the attention moved to the Top Bar hive. Scott Jorgensen gave an informative introduction to Top Bar hives and then installed a Top Bar nuc into Gary's bigger Top Bar hive. New beekeepers are especially encouraged to attend as many of these workshops as possible. There is always so much to gain by being around bees and beekeepers of all levels of experience, but especially for those new to beekeeping.

The March 12th Bee Workshop is again at Gary's Apiary in Pleasant Hill from 10 am – Noon. The workshop, "Are You Ready for the April Bee Workshop?" will focus on getting you ready for installing packages and/or nucs and making sure your equipment is ready to accept the thousands of bees you're about to install, and that you're as ready as possible to take on the next stage of becoming a beekeeper. You can sign up at the MDBA March 10th meeting. The Bee Workshops are open to MDBA members only. It's a nice way to get to know each other and have fun, too.



## **MDBA Randy Oliver Workshop June 25th and 26th**

MDBA is excited to present a workshop by Randy Oliver. Randy started keeping bees as a hobbyist in 1966 and went on to get university degrees in biological sciences specializing in entomology. In 1980 he began to build a migratory beekeeping operation in California and currently runs about 1000 hives with his two sons. Through his scientific background and practical experience, Randy offers accurate information to beekeepers through his website, speaking at conventions and writing articles for various bee journals. His website is a major resource to beekeepers in California and beyond; his website link is [www.scientificbeekeeping.com](http://www.scientificbeekeeping.com).



Randy will lead a two day workshop on Saturday June 25th and Sunday June 26th. On Saturday Randy will be doing a six hour lecture at the Church of the Resurrection Community Room in Pleasant Hill. The fee for the lecture will be 40.00 for MDBA members which includes a box lunch and 50.00 for non-members.

On Sunday Randy will do two three hour workshops for intermediate to advanced beekeepers who have minimum of three years or more beekeeping experience. Attendees must be MDBA members. As we are anticipating great interest in these workshops, the board will be using a lottery system to fill the workshops. The workshops will be held at Gary Lawrence's apiary in Pleasant Hill. The three hour workshop will cost \$40.00 and will not include lunch.

Registration will open on March 15th and close May 15th. A registration form will be emailed to the membership at large by March 15th. We are very excited about Randy coming to share his wealth of experience and knowledge with our club and hope you are too!

## **Vice President's Corner**

The MDBA Mentoring Program is taking shape! We currently have 47 generous members volunteering to mentor our novice members. Look for a special mentor designation next to names on the MDBA Roster coming out the end of March so you will be able to contact them directly.

We will add a mentor page to our website. This page will contain general guidelines for mentors and mentees as well as links to useful publications for the beginning beekeeper. These publications include PDFs from agricultural universities, books and magazine subscriptions.

If you are in need of a mentor or list of publications before the roster comes out or the web page is online, please contact Stacey Bauer at 925-360-0504 or [stacey@bauerfam.com](mailto:stacey@bauerfam.com) and I will forward the information to you.

Here's to a great year of beekeeping!

--Stacey Bauer

## **Community Education Corner**

On February 25th, a group of MDBA members gathered at the home of Ellen Walters for an informal orientation and discussion about MDBA community education. Members learned of the many ways to get involved in educating the public about bees: informal and unscripted events (Science Fairs), presentations covering specific curriculum (speaking to scout troops, teaching classes to elementary school students), programs about honeybees using power point slides (garden/social/fraternal clubs & associations).

This year, MDBA has been invited to present at Rotary and SIRs Clubs, public libraries, Rodgers Ranch Urban Farm, Forest Home Farms, Rossmoor Earth Day Celebration, etc.

You can become a Community Education volunteer for MDBA. Another member orientation is planned in March, so look for the informational email. Reaching out to our community with education about bees is personally rewarding and makes our community a little wiser and the world a little safer for the bees.

Questions? Talk with me at our meeting on March 10th or email me at [vpcommunity@diablobees.org](mailto:vpcommunity@diablobees.org). Hope to see you at our March orientation!

--Jan Pinkerton Spieth

## One of our Observation Hives



## Swarm Volunteers:

Are you a member in good standing of Mt Diablo Beekeepers Association for at least two consecutive years? Have you renewed your dues for 2016? Have you taken a swarm collection class or attended a presentation? If so, you may ask to have your name listed on the Swarm Volunteer list. At the end of the calendar year, we retire the old Swarm List and create a new volunteer roster from the current year's membership. If you would like to participate on the swarm list, please submit your name, the phone number where you can be reached, and the cities you will cover. Swarm volunteers' names and phone numbers are posted on the Diablo Bees website, where the community looks for help in rescuing swarms from house eaves or backyard shrubs. Volunteers collect a \$50 donation from the homeowner for MDBA and take the bees home or donate them to an MDBA member in need of a colony.

## READ A BOOK!

Have you ever used the club's AMAZING library to further your beekeeping curiosity?

Some of the most valuable beekeeping lessons occur outside of the apiary and within pages of writing.

Barbara Vigil and Russ Kettering maintain our books and would be very happy to direct you towards more information. Members in good standing are invited to check out books for one month per check-out. Remember to bring a \$40 deposit in order to check out books (sorry, we've had bad experiences in the past).

## Editor's Corner

Thanks for making it to the end of this newsletter! There will be a little bit left to go after this, most notably the links to other helpful beekeeping organization, literature, and informative sites. I encourage everybody to click on a few of them.



## Editor's Corner ...continued

I also encourage people to download and read (print it out to read if you want to) this FREE BOOK (click this text) about how specifically bees dehydrate their nectar to honey and how we can help them. This cutting-edge science from 1918 is still just as relevant towards maximizing our honey crop today as it was then. It's actually quite an enlightening read.

Also, I encourage every single beekeeper to put out bait hives for swarm season, and to keep one out in each apiary all year long for two reasons. The first reason is that you won't catch them in your box unless they can find your box. The second, and much more serious reason, is that the natural availability of suitable nest sites for honey bees has declined in proportion to the spread of our cities and development. As cavity dwellers, bees have evolved to use tree cavities. We've cut down lots of trees and are in a fierce land-use contest with bees. But bees are opportunists. Bees may decide that the best place to live is in the crack on your neighbor's roof unless you put out a bait hive for them. Also, bait hives are just plain fun. It's like fishing without waiting by the pole. Your bait hives should have

1. The right size
2. Has the right size openings (for defense, ventilation)
3. Is free of pests (read: ants)

The book Honey Bee Democracy, which was the last book featured on our newsletter, talks all about that rather well.

Thanks for reading,

-Scott Jorgensen, Newsletter Editor

*P.S. The picture above shows one of my top bar honeycombs which the bees had sealed too well against the hive body during my harvests in February. I thought that I had cut all side-attachments away, but I missed one on the bottom and ripped the top bar off of the comb. Oh well, I guess I'll harvest that one. February was a great month to harvest excess honey left on colonies during winter and some winter nectar flows as well.*

### **Do you want to travel to Cuba for the bees?**

Dear Beekeepers,

You are cordially invited to the 2016 Apiculture Conference from July 17-22 2016 in Havana, Cuba. Discover the rustic glamour of Cuba on this 6 day/5night exploration, where participants will learn about Cuban beekeeping practices, Cuba's native stingless honeybee, and learn why all of Cuba's exported honey is organic. You will take part of Cuba's Apiculture Conference including tours through local apiaries and apiculture facilities.

Tanseair Travel is inviting all apiculture researchers, beekeeping, enthusiasts, and lovers of bees to one of the most unique trips of a lifetime! Join us for this special opportunity to immerse yourself in the rich culture and rhythms of daily life in Cuba. This program has been designed to unravel the richness of Cuban culture while interacting with local residents and professionals to gain a new, in-depth perception of Cuban life and beekeeping. Now is the time to ignite your passion for apiculture and beekeeping while also enjoying the lively Cuban culture! Don't miss this unforgettable travel experience.

For more details visit us at [www.cubabeekeeping.com](http://www.cubabeekeeping.com)

Thank you,  
Transeair Travel LLC

# The Diablo Bee Classifieds

## LOST ITEM

Brown womens' cardigan, wool, GAP brand.  
Lost at the February Mini-Bee Workday at Gary's  
If found, please contact Neysa Garrett  
925.254.3054

## WANTED

Cappings Requested  
If you have unwanted cappings I will melt and clean them for the beeswax.  
AND: Bee Suit Repairs  
Please contact Lois Kail  
lois.kail@gmail.com or 925.356.2602

**WANTED:** Help in the kitchen before and after the monthly meetings! We are a volunteer-run organization.

## WANTED

Returning beekeeper looking for space for one new hive.  
Walnut Creek, Concord, Pleasant Hill area.  
Contact Neal at 503-799-0267

## FOR RENT

The MDBA honey extractors (electric)  
\$10 for 1st day and \$5 for days 2-5  
\$10 per day thereafter  
For Concord area contact Lois Kail 925.356.2602  
lois.kail@gmail.com  
For Alamo area contact Leo Tschanner 925.838.5600  
leotschanner@comcast.net

## FOR SALE

Grafted Queen Cells from a cell builder colony (my best stock)  
Cells available in March. Pick-up only, in Livermore.  
\$10/cell, Place order ASAP so that know when to make the next batch  
My operation uses organic miticides and IPM only  
Contact Scott Ball  
925.997.0336 or 66gtsball@gmail.com

## Bee Happy Solutions

Honey Bee Attractant  
Great for marking bait hives.  
Chemicals derived from lemon grass extract  
\$22 for 0.5 oz bottle  
415.272.0596 or beehappysolutions@gmail.com

## FOR SALE

Approx. 500 back issues of American Bee Journal and Bee Culture  
\$200 for the lot  
Contact Major Branzel  
707.643.9433

## FOR SALE

### BEESWAX

Lemon-yellow, candle grade  
\$7/lb or \$6/lb if 20lbs or more  
Bill Cervanka, Cervanka Apiaries  
650.365.5548 or billcervanka@comcast.net

Hercules Bees

### SELLING OVERWINTERED COLONIES

Avg. 10 top bar strength in a 4' box @ \$600+ limited quantities  
Will sell splits later in the year. Delivery Available.  
Top Bar Beehives  
www.herculesbees.biz  
510.421.3671

## MarElla Honey B's

Beekeeping Supplies and Honey  
Authorized Dealer on Mann Lake Ltd. Supplies!  
950 Detroti Ave, Suite 12, Concord, 94518  
www.marellahoneybs.com  
<http://www.marellahoneybs.com/Bees-for-sale---2016.html>  
925.575.7444

## Concord Feed

Concord Feed now sells basic beekeeping equipment.  
10-frame beehives of the Little Giant brand. Smokers and protective gear as well  
228 Hookston Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
925.940.1200

To Submit Articles or Classified Ads

Have you got something to share about bees?  
Contact Scott Jorgensen at newsletter.mdba@gmail.com  
Deadline for submission is the 25th of each month