American Beekeeping Federation NEWSLETTER
July/August 2013 • Vol. 71, No. 4

From the President – On Sustainability

by George Hansen, ABF President

George Hansen
ABF President

At a presentation I was giving not long ago, I was challenged by the question, "Is it sustainable for beekeepers to keep using miticides to control varroa?" I know the questioner believes that the only sustainable way to control mites is through selection for traits that give bees resistance to, or at least tolerance of, mites, and the sooner we get there the better. I thought the question missed the point. If what we do to keep our bees alive is wrong because it cannot be sustained forever, well, look around at all the other unsustainable practices we employ. I have been asked to present or participate in a number of roundtable summit meetings to represent the industry this summer. Behind all this hangs the question of sustainability. That word pops up everywhere, not least of all in the mission statements of most large agriculture industry pronouncements.

The stated challenge is to feed the world's population as it grows by the billions this century. Having that many people on the planet has more challenges than just feeding them, not least of which figuring out how to keep them from killing each other. One of the challenges in increasing food production includes maintaining the finite amount of arable land and useable water. As a small but critical part of the equation, larger production yields of many crops will require more pollinators – a lot more. While the agriculture industry welcomes the challenge to make the selections and improve the technology to get those huge gains in productivity, one inconvenient outcome is already showing up – the honey bee and pollinator losses. Our ability to produce more of the key parts of our diet, where insect pollination is required, is pretty clearly being hampered by agricultural practices used to extract higher and higher yields from crops of all kinds.

Larger production yields of many crops will require more pollinators – a lot more.

At the Honey Bee Health Summit, organized by Project Apis M and hosted by Monsanto recently, I made the following statements on the subject of sustainability as it applies to honey bees:

- In the industry as a whole, varroa remains the most costly and difficult management issue. Having only one effective mite treatment at a time available for large scale beekeeping, will cause serious problems with honey bee colony availability for pollination because of the inevitable development of resistance and the lags in getting new materials registered.
- As well intentioned as they are, alternative forage efforts that involve planting small plots in unused areas are woefully insignificant. Realistically, when there are thousands of acres of monoculture orchard or crop, the commitment has to be for a similar number of acres of diverse forage within easy flying distance.
- Establishing habitat reserves has broad support from environmental groups and big chemical companies alike. If the result is to create isolated "reservations" safe for bees, while opening up the rest of the landscape for intensive, unfettered farming activity, this is not likely to improve the availability of pollinators for the diverse and disparate crops in the US. The native and unmanaged

(continued on page 16)

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Directors Brandi, Sundberg, Talbert and Wooten, along with the officers, comprise the ABF Executive Committee.

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CONTACT ABF

Regina Robuck
ABF Executive Director
reginarobuck@abfnet.org

Grayson Daniels
ABF Membership Coordinator
graysondaniels@abfnet.org

3525 Piedmont Road
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From the Vice President – Perspectives in Beekeeping: Success – I'll Settle for Survival Right Now

by Tim Tucker, ABF Vice President

Tim Tucker
ABF Vice President

I've mentioned it in the *ABF E-Buzz* before and told most of those who have asked that our losses were 42 percent this winter. That puts my loss for the past three winters at a 31 percent average, which is what the average seemed to be this winter nationwide from the respondents to the Bee Informed Partnership survey. Because of my experience with bees and planning for losses, I have managed to rebuild each year by constantly making splits throughout the year. We have also survived two years of negligible honey harvests with our sales of nucs to other beekeepers throughout the state of Kansas. We are also still very lucky to be able to purchase honey from friends to keep our accounts in the stores we service throughout the area, and I hope they can continue to produce at least average crops. I have been hearing reports of losses that are much higher than what I experienced this year. One friend in the Kansas City area and another in eastern Kansas lost 90 percent of their bees. Both have been keeping bees for over three decades, and both say the same thing – it's the roughest time for bees they have ever seen.

The intense heat came early in July and the bees just kept losing ground all during the summer and early fall. They weren't in good shape to start with as the vitality of our bees today just is not what it used to be – at least that's the way it seems to me. Something is always keeping them from thriving like we used to see twenty years ago. Everyone is trying harder, investing more time and work, feeding, treating and sampling for varroa, treating for nosema, European foul brood and re-queening most hives each year. The inputs are higher than ever and it still doesn't seem to be providing results.

I was saddened to hear that another large commercial beekeeper in New York has decided to call it quits. Jim Doan, ABF Director, has been keeping bees since he purchased his first colony when he was five years old. That's forty-five years of beekeeping experience and working in pollination and honey production that is lost. Jim pollinated lots of apples and cherries in the state, and he's not sure there's anyone who will be there to pick up the contracts in the orchards and truck farms that he serviced for so many years. Having run up to 3,000 colonies in the past, he is now down to around 300. While he admits he won't likely ever get rid of all his bees, he's going to have to do something else to produce an income for his family. It is just too burdensome to attempt to rebuild once again.

When talking to beekeepers from around the country this year in hopes of finding some common themes, I keep coming up with the complaint that beekeepers are tired of this all being blamed on mites and viruses. Yes, mites are still a very large problem for those stressing their bees with constant movement to pollination sites. On the other hand, many of us are not seeing the problems with mites that we had five to ten years ago, and that is encouraging. Some are saying they don't see the obvious signs of "Parasitic Mite Syndrome" with spotty brood and lots of bees with k-wings, no wings or deformed wings running around. Drone brood is not as heavily loaded with mites to the extent we used to see seven or eight years ago. I'm beginning to wonder if we might be seeing a leveling out in the virulence of the varroa mite. This has happened with the tracheal mite, and it has to happen with all parasites that want to survive long term. Natural competitive forces should preferentially select for these survival mites, since a perfect parasite that kills its host finds survival impossible as well. Very few of us listened to Marla Spivak, Professor of Entomology at the University of Minnesota, when she advised to let the mites run their course and breed from the survivors. Yes, it would have been painful for a couple of years, but it might have provided for a quicker resolution to the problem, if our problems really are still the complete result of varoasis as some are still advocating.

The Managed Pollinator CAP program has released the results of phase one of its two-stage program. Sporting one of the best lineups of bee scientists anywhere, they proved that if you start with 30 colonies in each of seven states, you will end up with zero being alive at the end of three years. That's pretty remarkable when you think about it, and that really represents what a lot of us are experiencing each year. If you don't replace anything

(continued on page 4)

and you lose one-third of the original units each year, the result is everything dies! The study did show that there was a significant correlation between where the colonies were located and the rate of colony loss. Colonies exposed to higher rates of agriculture around the apiary did suffer significantly higher colony loss. It does say that pesticides may be a cause, but it also states that it could be due to the lack of quality bee pasture, availability of water and colony competition. The report says it created more questions than answers. The apiaries were set up in seven states across the country, and it was noted that the winter losses were more dominant in the northern states, such as Minnesota and Maine, and the southern states seemed to experience losses throughout the year. The factor of climate was explored, and those states with warmer temperatures during the summer experienced higher losses. Heat stress is a factor on the colony directly but also affects forage and nectar availability, which provides another level of stress as well.

I remember a time when I didn't know much about bees and did simply what I was told to do for both tracheal and varroa. I still managed to raise 100 pounds of honey crop in 1997 and 1999. Jim Doan said he vividly remembers years when he just kept piling on the supers, and the bees went wild. There was a vigor that I haven't seen for ten years or more in our colonies. The bees outgrew the mites in time to produce a crop and still raised enough bees in late summer and fall to survive the winter. You didn't have to be an expert to succeed and grow in the business, or at least that's what it seemed. We lived with varroa, droughts, warm summers, as well as cool and wet summers, but we didn't lose 30 percent of our bees. Winter losses were usually less than 10 percent, and you easily replaced this by making "swarm prevention" splits in the spring. This 30 percent number represents not just a loss of bee colonies, but it's starting to dramatically impact beekeepers and their families as well. If we keep experiencing these types of losses, there will be more who leave the business and we cannot lose 30 percent of our commercial beekeepers and still pollinate a food crop for this country and the world.

Somewhere we will reach the crux point where crisis will necessitate the real need for all parties to sit down and face the music. What we are doing isn't working, and we need to find the answers quickly. Most of us who have been trying to make a living in the business have a good idea where we need to start. Yes, we need better mite treatments, better genetics, better foraging areas, and more normal weather would be nice as well. Yes, it would help to reduce the stress we are putting on our bees, but we have to find answers to our present methodologies or paradigms in agriculture that are not killing bees. They are affecting populations of insects, birds, marine invertebrates and providing imbalances in the biosphere, which we cannot continue. The recent interest in helping bees coming from the chemical industry is encouraging, but for some, it comes too late, and there needs to be a real focus on help for the beekeeper as well. We are going to have to focus on producing more bee colonies to replace these huge winter losses. I'm not sure just how we accomplish this, but it is something that needs to be addressed while we continue to examine the situation, produce more studies and reports and build bee care centers and programs.

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Government Relations Update

by By Zac Browning, Legislative Committee Co-Chair

Zac Browning
ABF Past President

Directly following a meeting of the National Honey Board this April, industry representatives held a meeting in San Diego to further discuss and develop plans to address the continued need for a clear standard of identity for honey. The meeting was chaired by ABF president, George Hansen. The ABF was also represented by Tim Tucker, Gene Brandi and Zac Browning. This was the second such meeting in the last year. The ABF has been committed to developing a Federal Standard of Identity for several years. The process has been stymied by the FDA's reluctance to respond to industry petitions for a standard since 2006. In 2012, the FDA finally officially reported to the honey industry that it would not promulgate a standard. In the meantime, many states have adopted their own standards, with some differences, leading to confusion among customers, some of whom have filed suit against packers who filter pollen out of the honey that they sell. Clearly, there is a need for a recognized official standard or definition of honey, but the process of obtaining one, even after language is agreed on and proofed, remains uncertain. There is a possibility that once an agreement on language is reached, the standard could be adopted legislatively by congress, if it were to be attached to another related bill.

Farm Bill Process Ramps Up Again!

All indications now suggest that Congress will indeed take another crack at farm legislation this year. Far less certain is the prospect of actually completing the process, as this will be the second attempt in two years to draft language that congressional leaders can come to terms with amid so many fiscal constraints. Even so, the ABF has been working diligently with our Washington allies to ensure that our needs are on top of the stack. Representatives have been making visits to offices on Capitol Hill asking representatives to preserve funding for honey bee research, RMA (crop insurance) programs for honey, the ELAP program, the honey loan program and habitat through conservation initiatives.

There are many challenges for this farm bill cycle. In order to garner needed support for our goals, the ABF has reached out to other partners and stakeholders with shared interests. We have found common ground with many honey bee groups and other pollinator groups, as may be expected. We have also received support from other groups who have not been traditional partners, particularly with the issue of honey bee habitat. Recently, the ABF was joined by 22 other groups in an effort to ask the USDA to do more to develop and protect honey bee habitat through conservation programs. The groups included partner commodities that need bees for pollination, wildlife and conservation groups, pollinator groups and even agricultural chemical groups. Following up in April, the ABF met with key Senate staff in the company of Ducks Unlimited to appeal for pollinator habitat.

Hope for H2A and Future Guest Worker Programs

As the gang of eight senators, who were tasked with the job of crafting a potentially workable immigration bill, made the announcement that they had reached an agreement, the possibility of a more user friendly guest worker program was resurrected. The plan, which many feel will likely pass the Senate, contains provisions that appeal to most beekeepers using the program.

- H2A would expire following the terms of current visas
- New foreign agricultural workers program administered by USDA
- Program would include provisions for permanent, semi-permanent and temporary foreign agriculture workers
- Program would allow itinerant beekeeping with current special procedures grandfathered in

The ABF has been an advocate for changes to the H2A program for many years. As recently as April, representatives made visits in Washington asking law makers for consideration on many of the measures proposed in this bill. However, it is likely that changes will be made as this legislation is tested in the house, where there are already several less comprehensive immigration bills to be considered. In any case, the language and provisions sought by many beekeepers has remained intact after crossing the first of several hurdles. Stay tuned!

Foundation Update: Foundation Offering Five Graduate Student Scholarships

By Troy Fore, Executive Director, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees is again offering scholarships of $2,000 each to five graduate students in apiculture. This is the Foundation's ninth year to award such scholarships.

The Foundation is a charitable research and education foundation affiliated with the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF). The Foundation has benefited from a generous gift from the Glenn and Gertrude Overturf estate, and is sustained by ongoing gifts from ABF members and other supportive individuals.

The Foundation Trustees have chosen to use a portion of the grant to offer graduate student scholarships to foster professional development for young apicultural scientists. The purpose of the scholarships is to allow the recipients to attend the American Beekeeping Research Conference during the 2014 North American Beekeeping Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana January 7-11, 2014. The recipients will have an opportunity to meet other researchers and beekeepers and to present their research at the meeting. The Board of Trustees looks forward to their contributions to the conference. The scholarships are available to all graduate students. Graduate students enrolled in universities outside the United States are invited to apply.

Applications for the scholarships will be accepted until September 15, 2013.

Applicants should submit to the Board for consideration:

1. A cover letter from their university advisor outlining the student's progress toward their graduate degree (Masters or PhD), tentative graduation date, and any other information about the student and their research that would help the committee "get to know" the student.
2. The student's curriculum vitae or resume, not to exceed 2 pages.
3. A research proposal (not to exceed 3 pages), written by the graduate student. This proposal should outline the specific research experiments the student is conducting for his/her degree. The proposal should clearly state how the research benefits bees and/or beekeeping. The proposal can describe research that the student is planning to perform or the progress the student already has made toward that research. The proposal should begin with an introduction to the research problem and should follow with clear goals and objectives that state the research questions and hypotheses. The student should then discuss the methods that will be used to answer their research questions and the expected results or results to date. Recipients will be selected in October 2013.

Applications must be submitted electronically, preferably as one PDF document to:

Marla Spivak at the University of Minnesota; e-mail: spiva001@umn.edu

If you have questions or need more information about the scholarship program, contact: **Marla Spivak, Scholarship Program Coordinator, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, spiva001@umn.edu.**

Foundation Donations

The following ABF members made general contributions to the ABF Foundation during the months of April and May 2013.

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2013 First-Place 4-H Essay: With the Honey Bee in Mind

by Elise Dunning, Eighth grade, Wash.

Imagine yourself in the blistering heat, wishing you were sipping lemonade and watching the honey bees buzz about. Instead, you are painstakingly hand-pollinating every single bloom with a wand composed of chicken feathers and bamboo. This is a completely alien idea to many of us. China, though, has succumbed to this fate of hand-pollination after their honey bees disappeared. Honey bees are mysteriously vanishing worldwide. Although there are many theories concerning their disappearance, there is strong evidence that pesticide use is one contributing factor. If we wish to save this exceptional insect that many of us are hasty to shoo away, our use of pesticides needs to significantly change. Working together to accomplish this goal, beekeepers, growers, and homeowners can raise public awareness of honey bee health, scrupulously follow application guidelines, and consider choosing natural alternatives to pesticides.

Many people don't realize how much we depend on honey bees. Incredibly, about one-third of everything on our table is a result of honey bee pollination. This includes nuts, fruits, flowers in our centerpiece vases, and even most of our dairy, since cows feed on honey bee-pollinated crops such as alfalfa. If more people recognize how much the honey bee contributes to our lifestyles, they will likely be more thoughtful with their chemical use.

Editor's Note: *Read more of Elise's first-place essay on The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees Web site at http://honeybeepreservation.org/2013/05/2013-4-h-winning-essays/.*

Thompson Bequest Benefits Foundation

By Troy Fore, Executive Director, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees is the beneficiary of a bequest from the estates of Victor and Margaret Thompson of Hesston, Kansas.

Victor Thompson retired in 1981 from Ohio State University where he had been a professor and honey bee researcher for nearly 40 years. He was involved in Dr. Walter Rothenbuhler's research into hygienic behavior in honey bees. He had a BS in entomology from Kansas State and an MS in apiculture from Iowa State.

Dr. Larry Connor, who had worked as an Ohio State extension specialist, said, "Vic was a quiet, unassuming person, who went about his business and did his job without a lot of fanfare. Margaret was much the same."

In retirement, the Thompsons moved back to Kansas. In 2006, writing to the American Beekeeping Federation to express appreciation for a 50-year membership recognition, he said they felt they "should return to 'our roots' in Kansas where many of our relatives still live." At that time, both at age 85, he said he enjoyed woodworking in the retirement center's workshop and gardening and "Margaret enjoys painting – mainly watercolors."

Until his last years, Mr. Thompson attended Kansas beekeepers' meetings, said ABF Vice President Tim Tucker of Niotaze, Kan., who remembers him as "a kind man." Mr. Thompson died in December 2012; Mrs. Thompson had died in March 2011.

The Thompson bequest is expected to total nearly $200,000, according to Foundation Executive Director Troy Fore. The funds have been invested along with the Foundation's endowment -- an earlier gift from the estates of Glenn and Gertrude Overturf.

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees is a 501(c)(3) research and education foundation; all contributions are tax deductible. For more information, contact the Foundation at P.O. Box 1445, Jesup, GA 31598, by phone at 912-427-4018 or on the web at honeybeepreservation.org.

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Welcome to the Beekeeper Education & Engagement System! The BEES network is a new online resource for beekeepers at all levels. The system is entirely internet based and aims to foster *an online learning community among beekeepers*. The structure of the BEES network is broken into three ascending levels of complexity (Beginner, Advanced, and Ambassador) and three general areas of content (honey bee biology, honey bee management, and the honey bee industry).

More information about the program can be found at:
http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BEES.htm

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Queen Committee Report

by Anna Kettlewell, Honey Queen Program Chair

With summer now in full swing, I hope you are experiencing much success in your bee yards. While we are working hard at home, the Honey Queen and Princess are working hard for all of us.

Caroline and Emily's summer schedules are in full swing, and they are keeping busy promoting the ABF and all beekeepers on their various stops at fairs, festivals, farmers' markets, as well as through multiple media outlets. In addition to their tireless promotion through these venues, the Queen and Princess take full advantage of social media promotion for the industry. During their busy travel months, they post an update about their promotions for us through the American Honey Queen Program Facebook page. This effort began in 2011 and has grown exponentially each year. If you aren't already a fan of the program on Facebook, check them out at www.facebook.com/AmericanHoneyQueenProgram.

In addition to Facebook, the Queen and Princess are active bloggers. The program's blog, www.buzzingacrossamerica.com, began in 2010 and has become a social media outlet geared toward children. At each school presentation, the Queen and Princess direct students to this blog to learn more about the industry. Each month, they create and post an educational piece about some aspect of the industry on their main blog page. Topics have ranged from swarms, different types of bees, honey varieties, encaustic art and many others. The pieces are intended for a third grade audience, but the material is interesting to many outside our industry. In addition to the main page educational piece, young readers can find honey recipes, learn about the Queen and Princess's travels each month, learn a unique honey or bee fact for each state, find activities and watch educational videos. The Queen and Princess provide travel updates once or twice a month and also contribute new facts about each state every year.

The blog is also linked to the Queen program's YouTube channel (search for AmericanHoneyQueen). The Program's official YouTube channel began in 2012, but the queens have been preparing educational videos since 2011. This has been a great tool as the queens give educational presentations. Sometimes, there are concepts that are simply easier to explain by way of video than large photos, props or simple words. The queens use these videos in their presentations and direct people to this channel to learn more about simple concepts. Examples of videos that have been posted include how to mark and clip a queen bee, what happens when a honey bee stings, cooking demonstrations, installing package bees, migratory beekeeping and liquefying crystalized honey. The Honey Queen Program plans to grow this channel each year, and each queen and princess brings a unique perspective and fresh ideas to improve this channel each year.

These outlets are reaching thousands of people each year, helping to create a greater buzz for our industry. I encourage you to check out each of these platforms and support the queens' behind the scenes promotional work.

Now is the time to start thinking about how to promote your 2013 honey crop come the fall and winter months. One great way to do so is with a visit by the American Honey Queen or Princess! Fresh honey is an easy product to promote, so consider taking the opportunity to draw more attention to your farmers' market booth, fair, festival or other promotional event this fall with the Honey Queen or Princess. Honey is also a great product to promote for the holidays, so consider a honey queen promotion around Thanksgiving, Hanukkah or Christmas in your area to promote your freshly bottled honey, your company's honey at the local grocery store or even your beeswax products, perfect for holiday gifts. Contact me at 414.545.5514 or honeyqueen99@hotmail.com to schedule a fall or winter visit from the American Honey Queen or Princess. Happy promoting!

Is Your Contact Information Up-to-Date in the ABF Membership Database?

If not, you're missing out on important communications from us, such as annual conference details, industry updates and alerts, and the monthly ABF *E-Buzz* electronic newsletter. Please call us at 404.760.2875 or send us an e-mail at info@abfnet.org to update your information today!

From the Honey Queen

by Caroline Adams, 2013 American Honey Queen

Caroline Adams
2013 American Honey Queen

Hello, fellow beekeepers! It has been a busy spring traveling across the United States.

On April 25, I visited Dooley Elementary School in Plano, Texas, to speak to 155 first and second grade students about the importance of honey bees in our daily lives. The best part of the presentations came when I was explaining to the children why pollination was important and how it helps us get our favorite foods. I was showing the cycle between bees pollinating crops, the crops feeding livestock and the livestock providing food for us. All of a sudden, one of the little girls sat up straight, eyes wide with interest, and mouthed, "I get it!" It was such a delight to see this young child's enthusiasm as she understood the vital role of honey bees! On May 1, I presented to 331 kindergarten, first, and second graders at Andrews Elementary School in Plano, Texas. Because honey bees touch each and every one of us, it is important to educate even the youngest of consumers. The children were very interested and asked excellent questions. They also greatly enjoyed seeing the many beekeeping tools and supplies I brought.

On May 11, I travelled to Waco, Texas, for more presentations to the deaf community. I visited Alta Vista Elementary School to present to 20 deaf students in sign language. The children had recently learned about honey bees and other insects, and it was exciting to have the students not only tell me what they had learned, but to share additional information with them. Their enthusiasm, as they touched, smelled and saw many beekeeping supplies, was wonderful. Later that day, I presented to the Central Texas Deaf Senior Citizens. The members were fascinated by the information and asked dozens of questions as they absorbed these facts, many for the first time in their lives. It was such a privilege to be able to open up the world of beekeeping to these people and to help them understand the beauty and intricacies of honey bees!

From June 3-5, I traveled to Houston and Beaumont, Texas, to participate in a variety of local promotions. First, I visited Pomeroy Elementary School to speak to 253 pre-k and kindergarten students. With cotton being a major Texas crop, it was exciting to tell the children how even our clothing comes to us, in part, because of honey bee pollination. I then presented in sign language to about 40 deaf, hard of hearing and hearing guests at the Houston Police Department's Deaf Positive Interaction Program. The guests and police officers alike were extremely interested and asked many excellent questions. One of the main points I emphasized was the gentle nature of honey bees, the best ways to behave around them and how to deal with them in and around one's home. After the presentation, one of the police officers told me that this was the first presentation the group had received in eight years in which an interpreter was not needed to translate a spoken presentation – how special for the presentation to be about honey bees and beekeeping!

Queen Caroline presents in sign language to deaf guests at the Houston Police Department.

The next day, I traveled to Lamar University in Beaumont to present in sign language to deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing students, staff and community members. At deaf presentations, I love to tell the audience that honey bees are deaf, too, and that, like sign language, bees use their bodies to communicate through means such as pheromones and waggle dances. It was wonderful to see how this simple fact instantly formed a positive connection between the audience members and the bees. For the guests, beekeeping suddenly became very personal. It is such a pleasure to be able to share honey bees with the deaf community.

(continued on page 14)

From the Honey Queen
(continued from page 13)

Finally, I went to the Chicago, Ill. region June 6-9 where I spent several days promoting the beekeeping industry in a variety of settings. I spoke to residents at Windsor Park Retirement Community, and the residents were very interested in learning about the many medicinal uses for honey. I also presented to employees from Testing Services Corporation about the many issues honey bees are facing and provided positive ways the employees could help. Primarily during my visit, I worked at Wanda's Honey House at Kline Creek Farm, a historical farmstead. Guests of all ages visited the honey house that weekend to learn about honey bees and the beekeeping industry. They viewed a movie that showed a colony inspection, sampled and explored various products from the hive and asked a myriad of questions. It was rewarding to share the information with the attendees and to be able to tie beekeeping into many of the other activities they found on the historical farmstead.

Queen Caroline teaches elementary students about the queen bee in Plano, TX.

Queen Caroline explains honey extraction to visitors at Wanda's Honey House in suburban Chicago.

I would love to visit your event! To schedule a visit from Princess Emily or me, contact Anna Kettlewell at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514. Be sure to stay tuned for more updates. I hope you have a wonderful summer!

Milestones

Congratulations to the following ABF members that have reached milestone years during the month of May 2013:

10 Years
Paul Bergling, Minn.
William Blodgett, Pa.
Quincy Burgess, Bermuda
Joe Carson, Alaska
Joe Daly, Ohio
Marianne Gamber, Pa.
Jim Haskell, Va.
William McLernon, N.Y.
Will Oberton, Minn.
Robert Seifert, Calif.

15 Years
Robert Cosgrove, Calif.
J. Dwight Hull, Minn.
Bill Mares, Vt.
Nick Nickels, Ky.

20 Years
Glenn Clayton, Va.
John Foster, Calif.
Jeff Hull, Minn.
Gerald King, Fla.
James Naylor, Fla.
Ron Spears, Calif.
Charles Vorisek, Pa.

25 Years
Mary Bost, Texas
Oliver Collins, Md.
Liz Vaenoski, Wis.

30 Years
Milton Eiden, Minn.

35 Years
C.A. Hottell, Ind.
Bruce Steele, Calif.

40 Years
Margaret Ahlers, Wis.
Gary Reynolds, Kan.

55 Years
Curtis Meier, Texas

70 Years
Morris Weaver, Texas

From the Honey Princess

by Emily Campbell, 2013 American Honey Princess

Emily Campbell
2013 American Honey Princess

Happy summer… finally! Although spring came in slow this year, my schedule kept me nice and busy before the really busy summer season begins. Since mid-April, I have been busy with many local promotions in Minnesota and North Dakota.

My first promotional visit to Washington was one I had been looking forward to for quite a while. From April 28-30, I attended the Minnesota State FFA Convention, held at the University of Minnesota campus in St. Paul, Minn. There were approximately 2,000 students from all over Minnesota who attended this event. I gave two presentations at the convention that focused on how students could use beekeeping as their Supervised Agricultural Experience, also known as an SAE. Many students had not even thought to consider starting beekeeping, but my presentation sparked a substantial amount of interest. SAE's provide students the opportunity to explore many different agricultural areas that they may not have experienced before, while also giving them the opportunity to win awards all the way up to a national level. The presentations attracted a very large crowd and got rave reviews from the Minnesota State FFA Officers. Hopefully my presentation inspired a few members to start beekeeping! I absolutely love speaking to FFA and 4-H groups because they are organizations that are very important to me. I would love the opportunity to speak to members of each organization in every state I visit as your American Honey Princess.

Princess Emily received a certificate from Aitkin Mayor Gary Tibbits proclaiming May 20th "Emily Campbell Day" in Aitkin, MN.

I continued educational presentations in schools throughout April and May. On April 25, I visited Sacred Heart Catholic School in East Grand Forks, Minn., speaking to over 170 students in grades K-6. On May 2, I gave a school presentation at Cathedral School in Crookston, Minn. to 35 elementary students. The kids were excited to learn about how dynamic honey bees are. They were especially shocked by how much honey one worker bee produces in her lifetime (1/12 of a teaspoon, in case you didn't know).

Princess Emily presented to Minnesota FFA members at the Minnesota State FFA Convention. Students were able to examine beekeeping equipment first hand.

After a particularly brutal week of final exams, I was ready to hop back on the presentation stage, but this time with a little twist. On May 13, I presented to eighth grade social studies students at South Side Middle School in Grand Forks, N.D. It was a wonderful opportunity to focus on the industry in North Dakota and to discuss the revenue generated in the beekeeping industry in our nation's top honey-producing state. A few days later on May 6, I was back on my home turf in Aitkin, Minn., and I continued my educational tour back home. I spoke at many of the surrounding schools, including McGregor Elementary School. On May 20 and 21, I was in the Brainerd and Baxter areas and gave school presentations at Lake Region Christian Academy and St. Francis Catholic School. It was a nice way to end the school year for many of those kids. It is comforting to send kids off for their summer vacation and know they have a new respect for honey bees. In all, I spoke to 807 students through April and May through school presentations!

On the evening of May 20, I had the opportunity to speak before the Aitkin City Council. The council took a large interest in the role of pollinators in Aitkin's heavily

(continued on page 16)

From the Honey Princess (continued from page 15)

agricultural community. The council is considering starting community-owned hives in the near future. To my surprise, May 20 was also proclaimed as "Emily Campbell Day" in the City of Aitkin! In the future, honey bee-themed and gardening events will be offered on this day. To complete the month of May, I presented at the Aitkin County Board meeting. The board members were concerned about the declining number of honey bees in the Aitkin area. I explained to them the important role honey bees play in the Aitkin community, as well as gave the board ideas on making Aitkin County a more bee-friendly area.

Overall, April and May were successful months for promoting honey bees. I am looking forward to the busy months I have ahead of me. Let the state fairs and farmers' markets begin! Hopefully I will see many of you at my upcoming promotions. If you would like to schedule a visit from Queen Caroline or me, please contact Anna Kettlewell at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or at 414.545.5514.

From the President (continued from the cover)

pollinators will be disastrously impacted. It is a little disingenuous of some to support these reserves, while confidently maintaining that the pesticides being used and the practices being employed in farming areas do not harm bees.

- Except around the periphery of beekeeping, say with transport and processing, it is hard to imagine what one would mean by "modernizing" beekeeping. Large agribusiness concerns are simply unable to grasp the complexity of being successful with honey bees. Making a lot of money producing pesticides or almonds or having made a lot of money in the stock market are not credentials for being able to keep any number of hives profitable, let alone healthy. Managing a hive of bees does not lend itself to mechanization. Robots? Gene spicing? Aside from the fact that beekeepers are so woefully under-capitalized and unable to invest heavily in modern technology, it is hard for me to align this thought with the basic husbandry required to help bees thrive. For now, there is no replacement for a knowledgeable, experienced beekeeper studying, sensing and responding to the hive's needs.
- One of the most troubling trends, as it applies to sustainability of increased food production, is the increasing tendency of beekeepers to reduce their participation in the broad demand for pollination. After almonds, many beekeepers, to one degree or another, shun crop pollination, especially in certain crops. In the long term, the colony's health is put at risk. No matter the PR or lobbying claiming there is no harm, beekeepers are voting with their feet and staying away from risk when they can.
- Beekeepers have been an easy target for those looking to deflect fault in colony losses. It is a disrespectful cheap shot to blame beekeepers' use of unregistered materials to control varroa when no effective registered control was available until late last fall after the treatment window had passed. Poor management? Beekeepers have a vested interest in the health of their colonies and have generations of experience in problem solving. Resolving our current hive survival issues will depend on objectivity in all matters and recognition of universal vested interest in solving honey bee problems.
- One really has to wonder where the next generation of beekeepers will come from. I have noticed an increase in young faces in the audiences I speak to, and many immigrants are trying to seize the opportunity to have honey bee businesses. Time will only tell if there are enough willing to take the challenge to replace the number of hives and businesses we are losing. In the long term, a shortage of beekeepers may become a really significant issue in food production.

Despite all of the above, or perhaps because of them, this is a period of tremendous opportunity for beekeepers. Honey is valued and commanding high prices. Pollination service is in strong demand, and the relative scarcity of hives is causing the pay to increase substantially. All we have to do is keep the bees alive. Even in this period of opportunity, colonies die, and beekeepers quit. If it is our intent to feed the world, our challenges go beyond Colony Collapse Disorder.

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Friends of the Bee Fund Contributions

The following individuals contributed to the Friends of the Bee Fund during the months of April and May 2013. These donations enable us to fund educational programs and services that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

- Dewey Caron, Ore.
- Brian Marcy, Pa.
- Tracy Middlebrooks, Ga.
- Pat Williams, N.Y.

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DADANT WEBSITE

From the Auxiliary

by Lillian Kelley, ABF Auxiliary President

Now that the really warm weather has finally arrived, hopefully the honey flow is going strong, and you are busy putting on supers to make lots of honey. If you haven't joined the ABF Ladies Auxiliary, I encourage you to join. You can contact Louise Johnson, ABF Auxiliary Secretary/Treasurer, at louisej@alpinecom.net. The dues are $10 and are used to support the American Honey Queen Program. With the bees working hard to make honey, now would be a good time to take some pictures of your favorite beekeeper, beehives or bees in action. The more photos we have, the more exciting the Photo Contest will be. I also encourage you to continue trying recipes for the Baking Contest.

Photo Contest Information and Rules
There are five categories:

- Adults and Beekeeping
- Kids and Beekeeping
- Honey
- Bees and Nature (bees on flowers, bees on frames)
- Pollination and Beekeeping

Requirements:
Submit two 5x7 photos for each entry (5x7 size before matting). At least one photo must be matted for judging (single mat only). 3x5 index card must be attached to back of photo with name, address and photo category.

Important Information:
Photos must be submitted by noon on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 during the annual conference.

Photos can be submitted by proxy or mailed to a committee member if you are unable to bring in person.

Amateur photographers only.

If requirements are not met, photos will be disqualified. Photos will not be returned. Waiver for rights to photos will be signed at conference.

ABF Auxiliary Officers

President
Lillian Kelley
309 Ridge Creek Lane
Troutville, VA 24175
lkandlk@ntelos.net

Vice President
Beth Hackenberg
799 Grange Hall Road
Milton, PA 17847
dbhack@evenlink.com

Secretary/Treasurer
Louise Johnson
34147 310th Street
Guttenberg, IA 52052
louisej@alpinecom.net

Historian
Rachel Bryson
610 Strite Road
Chambersburg, PA 17202
brysonrachel@yahoo.com

Join the ABF Buzz Club and Bee $100 Richer!

Want to be a member of the ABF Buzz Club? It's easy and rewarding! Starting in July and running through the end of the year, the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) will hold an ABF Buzz Club membership drive, which will be open to all ABF active members. For every new member you bring to the ABF, your name will be entered into a drawing to win a $100 Visa gift card. The more new members you bring the more chances you have to win the gift card. (Please see Rules and Regulations below.)

Have a question or need membership applications? Contact Grayson Daniels, ABF membership coordinator, at 404.760.2875 or graysondaniels@abfnet.org.

Thank you for your participation and let's start buzzing!

ABF Buzz Club Rules and Regulations:

- The completed membership application must have the current ABF sponsoring member's name written on the form.

- All membership applications and payment are due no later than December 31, 2013, at 12:00 a.m. ET.*

Membership can be paid with cash, check, money order or credit card. Applications and payment can be mailed to the American Beekeeping Federation, 3525 Piedmont Road, Building 5, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30305.

**Must arrive on or before December 31, 2013, to be eligible for the Visa gift card drawing.*

FEDERATION MARKETPLACE

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Baton Rouge is one of the fastest-growing cities in America. With so much to see and do, you'll want to start planning your agenda now. There is never a dull moment in Baton Rouge!

The River Center is centrally located in the downtown area, within walking distance of various attractions, cultural sites, hotels, restaurants and nightlife. With surroundings rich in Louisiana culture and entertainment, the River Center provides a unique environment for memorable experiences, including the 2014 ABF annual conference.

The Belle of Baton Rouge, the conference host hotel, is located just steps away from the Baton Rouge River Center. This hotel features 278 guest rooms, complimentary high-speed Internet access, complimentary airport shuttle, heated outdoor pool and a fully equipped health facility.

The 2014 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow is sure to offer top-notch education sessions from industry leaders, various networking opportunities, a variety of hands-on workshops and lots of fun.

Watch for details on the ABF conference website at www.nabeekeepingconference.com.

American Beekeeping Federation