American Beekeeping Federation NEWSLETTER
May/June 2014 • Vol. 72, No. 3

Perspectives in Beekeeping – On the Road Again

by Tim Tucker, ABF President

Tim Tucker
ABF President

It seems like I've been gone from home quite a bit this year! Whether on the road for the bees themselves or other ABF-related tasks, I haven't been home enough to keep up with things.

I've not planted a spring garden this year, but I still have hopes for fall. I have had two opportunities to head to Washington DC this year, and both of these trips were really beneficial. I have learned a great deal about how to get around on the Metro, which is the greatest invention since sliced bread! Hopping on the Metro can get you to the outlying areas where there are much better deals on hotel rooms and the noise level is much lower than in the center of town. The only night I stayed downtown, I was up most of the night due to the emergency vehicles and police cars sounding their sirens every fifteen minutes. Living in the country gets you accustomed to quiet nights.

Randy Voerhoek, Zac Browning and I were invited to a meeting on April 30th with two of President Obama's advisers who work in the Executive Office of the President (EOP). Apparently, the President has great concern about the state of honey bees and the decline they are experiencing along with lots of other species throughout the country. Lauri-Davies Adams with the Pollinator Partnership was instrumental in setting up this meeting and the general meeting involved representatives from other affected groups like Monarch Watch, which was represented by Chip Taylor from the University of Kansas, and Pheasants Forever, which was represented by Dave Nomson. Most of the 50 people in the room were from non-governmental organizations and leaders from industry such as Burt's Bees, Waste Management, Pacific Gas & Electric and Toyota. We also had a few scientists such as Marla Spivak, Dennis Van Englesdorph and Mary Ann Frazier from universities. It was rounded out with representatives from Bayer and Syngenta. It was a room filled with people that are concerned with the decline in pollinators of all types, but honey bees are always at the fore of these meetings due to their importance to our food supply. Our representatives from the White House were Dr. Micheal Stebbins, Office of Science and Technology, and Douglas McKalip, Senior Policy Advisory for Rural Affairs. Unfortunately, this meeting only lasted a couple of hours which was not enough time for everyone to speak, but most of what was mentioned revolved around how serious our plight has become and what kinds of initiatives are needed to resolve these problems. It is amazing to see how large corporations are interested in helping to make things better. I had never considered the amount of acres that exists under power lines and in utility rights-of-way. You also have to wonder how our federal government might be able to better manage its land which amounts to roughly a third of all the land in the U.S. There's no doubt that we can find areas that will provide safe and healthy forage for bees and all pollinators if we look for them and design plans for utilizing these acres wisely. There was a piece of legislation a couple of years ago that Pollinator Partnership and Tom Van Arnsdahl were promoting called the Bee Highways Act. This was a program to utilize roadsides along U.S. highways and interstates for the planting of habitat. If I remember correctly there was over 20 million acres along side of roads that are mowed down each year and made to look like perfectly manicured lawns. It's actually a much better idea to manage this land wisely and let the wild flowers and clover bloom and produce seed before cutting or mowing in the fall. This minimizes mowing, and saves money for all levels of government involved. The bill failed for a lack of interest then, but perhaps we can reintroduce this effort under this new Presidential initiative. Zac Browning mentioned the millions of acres that have been removed from CRP programs to plant corn for ethanol production. If some of these acres could be returned to CRP and planted with seed mixes that are helpful in establishing season long forage for pollinators there would be more oases for our bees and butterflies like the Monarch. Prior to this open meeting, the three of us were offered the opportunity to meet with Douglas and Michael for an hour late in the morning. We were asked what issues we feel are causing the large losses that we are encountering, what the government can

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American Beekeeping Federation
NEWSLETTER
May/June 2014 • Vol. 72, No. 3

Issued bi-monthly by **American Beekeeping Federation, Inc.**
Copy deadline is the first day of January, March, May, July, September and November for publications mailed at the end of the same month.

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“The Rest of the Story” Continued

by Gene Brandi, ABF Vice President

Gene Brandi
ABF Vice President

Greetings from dry, sunny central California. If you keep bees in portions of the United States with adequate rainfall, count your blessings as you will likely have the possibility of a honey flow this year.

We are well into our third dry year in a row in California and much of the “Golden State” is considered to be in extreme drought now that our “rainy season” is over until autumn. Given the lack of nectar and pollen from native plants due to the drought, we are hoping for some semblance of a summer honey flow from the ever shrinking acreage of irrigated crops. Keeping bees around irrigated crops brings the risk of exposure to pesticides, which can often compromise the health of bee colonies to the point that they may not be strong enough to make honey or pollinate crops, including almond pollination the following year. Beekeepers like me, who keep their colonies in California all year long, face this risk every year. However, in normal rainfall years there are usually some locations where bees can successfully be kept away from commercial agriculture for a portion of the year so that they can access clean, natural forage. We are hoping to survive this year with healthy bees and that “El Nino” will bring a welcome, wet rainy season this coming winter.

As I mentioned in the previous ABF newsletter, there were a number of beekeepers who reported brood/colony damage from the application of fungicides or fungicide/insect growth regulators to blooming almonds this year. The situation was severe enough that Rick Keigwin, Director of the EPA Pesticide Re-evaluation Division, and Don Brady, Director of the EPA Environmental Fate and Effects Division, traveled to my home town of Los Banos, California for a meeting in late March in order to learn more about the situation. Thirty two beekeepers attended the meeting in person, and an additional thirty or more listened in and participated via teleconference.

According to an informal survey of the beekeepers in attendance that day, approximately 70,000 of the colonies they operated in almonds this year were adversely affected by these pesticide applications, with nearly 3/4 of that number considered to be severely damaged. An additional 10,000 colonies, most of them severely damaged, were mentioned by some of the teleconference participants. These colony numbers were only those reported by beekeepers at the meeting or on the teleconference and should not be construed to be the total number of colonies damaged by these pesticide applications during almond bloom this season. The brood damage experienced by the severely damaged colonies made them unfit for splitting, making a spring honey crop, or for pollinating subsequent crops after almonds such as cherries, apples, pears, etc.

Some of the beekeepers from the southern US who participated in this meeting indicated that unless the situation improves, they might not bring their bees to almond pollination in future years, especially if honey prices remain high and their bees can stay home and remain healthy while producing an early season honey crop.

Fungicides have been applied to blooming almonds for many years and some brood damage has occurred, depending upon which product was used and when it was applied. In recent years, however, the problem has become more widespread and severe due to the addition of various insect growth regulators (IGR’s) to tank mixes which include a fungicide with various other compounds including adjuvants. These mixtures often result in synergism which makes the mix many times more toxic to brood than any of the products applied alone.

The fact that none of these products display a bee hazard warning on their labels is a fundamental problem that must be addressed, since these products are used on many blooming crops worked by bees throughout the nation every year, in addition to their application on blooming almonds. How are pest control advisers, growers, and pesticide applicators to know about the potential for these products to damage bee colonies without any bee label warning whatsoever?

Since the EPA representatives assured the group that label changes on these products would not be forthcoming prior to almond bloom next year, it was decided that a meeting with the California Department

(continued on page 16)

Government Relations Update

by Gene Brandi, ABF Vice President

As mentioned in my vice president's update, I attended a meeting with EPA officials in late March to discuss the issues surrounding the use of fungicides and insect growth regulators on blooming almonds. One week later, I met with Jim Jones, EPA Assistant Administrator, and Tom Moriarty, leader of EPA's pollinator protection team, in order to further discuss this and other bee/pesticide issues. They confirmed that it is not likely there will be any bee hazard warnings added to the labels of fungicides or insect growth regulators prior to next almond bloom in February 2015. According to Mr. Jones and Mr. Moriarty, the EPA is now using enhanced risk assessment on new products, which would include assessing products for their potential to damage brood. Unfortunately, there is no testing of tank mixes, which is often the manner by which bees are exposed to these products in the field. Products currently on the market are only scheduled for enhanced risk assessment when they are reevaluated several years down the road or if new uses are requested by registrants and data exist to support this assessment.

We also discussed the new "pollinator protection" label language recently adopted by EPA for use on neonicotinoid pesticides, which was intended to be harmonized for use on other pesticide chemistries which are also highly toxic to bees. ABF and others in the bee industry have been critical of this new language as it contains a number of exemptions or loopholes which would actually result in decreased pollinator protection. It was encouraging to hear Mr. Jones admit that EPA "missed the mark" with this attempt to improve pollinator protection from pesticides and is willing to revisit the issue. This is certainly welcome news and ABF willing to work with EPA in order to genuinely improve pollinator protection language on pesticide labels at any time.

In other Washington news, ABF and AHPA submitted joint testimony to the House Appropriations Committee (House Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and related agencies) pertaining to the FY 2015 budget. Strong support of the President's FY 2015 budget proposal was communicated in this joint testimony to the committee, including a $25 million appropriation for a National Institutes of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Pollination and Pollinator Health Institute; a $4 million increase in ARS funding for honey bee research within crop production funds; and a $2 million increase in funding for NASS surveys and studies.

The ABF was invited to a White House Pollinator Stakeholder meeting in early May in order to present our pollinator health concerns to the Executive branch. ABF President Tim Tucker and several others, including ABF Past President Zac Browning (representing Project Apis m), took advantage of this great opportunity by attending and communicating with representatives of the Executive Office of the President. The ABF also submitted joint comments to the Executive Office with AHPA as a follow up to the Pollinator Stakeholder Meeting.

A brief summary of those comments include:

1. Support for educational campaigns, training materials, and programs which can be developed and implemented to minimize the misuse and misapplication of pesticides.
2. Support for ongoing pollinator research at USDA which should focus on more sustainable technologies for crop protection; more effective treatments for honey bee pests and pathogens; geographic diversification of ARS laboratory locations; and more field studies of managed pollinators throughout the year.
3. Better guidance on stewardship of conservation land; uniform national policies on the use of public lands; and a collaborative effort by private land owners could result in substantially better forage for pollinators as more land is converted to agricultural uses.
4. EPA should better protect all pollinator species by taking actions to minimize exposure to pesticides while ensuring sufficient crop protection.

It is encouraging to see that there is a great deal of concern for pollinator health issues in the Executive Office.

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The ABF encourages you to keep in contact with your members of Congress – both your representative and your state's two senators. They and their staff members need to be aware of your beekeeping activities and of our industry's needs. And they need to hear this from you. Below are some tips on how to make these contacts. If you need any assistance, please contact the ABF offices at 404.760.2875 or info@abfnet.org.

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Write: The Honorable _____
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Call: 202.224.3121
Ask for your Senator's office and request to speak to the agricultural aide.

E-mail: To locate and e-mail your representatives and senators, visit www.congress.gov.

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The following individuals contributed to the Legislative Fund during the months of March and April 2014. These donations will help ABF's lobbying efforts in Washington, D. C.

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Foundation News

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees selected the 2014 4-H Essay contest winners on the topic "Beekeeping in the Colonial Times." They are as follows:

First Place: Hannah Falcone (age 13) from Plainfield, NH.
Second Place: Garret Smith (age13) from Starkville, MS.
Third Place: Hailey Ordal (age 16) from Medford, OR.

"Nothing but money is sweeter than honey!
–Benjamin Franklin.

A selection from first place winner Hannah Falcone"s Essay based on the Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees topic" Honey Bees: Colonizing the New World."

Hannah wrote about the origin of the honey bee and how they became an essential part of our colonial history. She describes the first modified beehives and how settlers, through experimentation, learned how to manage these hives.

"Honey Bees have a rich and beautiful history in America, as sweet as the delicious honey they produce every day. It appears that Benjamin Franklin certainly understood their value…and he's on the $100 bill!" Her first place prize is a cash award of $750.00.

Garrett Smith writes, "Honey bees are quite possible the most undervalued insect on our planet today." How true it is! Garrett wrote about the importance of honey bees to the settlers in developing their farming practices. The value of pollination became important to the early farmers of the revolutionary era. "This fledgling enterprise would later become a multi-million dollar industry in the U.S. alone."

Garrett is the second place winner and receives a cash award of $500.00.

"This Land of Milk and Honey: How the Honey Bee Shaped America."

A sample from Hailey Ordal's essay refers to the importance of the honey bee to the food that is on table. The white man's fly adapted easily to the New World and thrived.

Hailey wrote, "As the English colonized the New World, they adopted the hive as a metaphor for an ideal and well-organized society, a motif that would carry on into America's early days as an independent nation."

Her third place essay earned her a $250.00 cash award. You can find all three winning essays on The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, Inc main page.
State winners, who submitted their essay, were:

- Seth Abel, Ohio
- Ethan Byrd, N.C.
- Jacob Allen Ezell, Ark.
- Tucker Holt, Fla.
- Keelan Horton, Mich.
- Maya Jackson, Iowa
- Julia Kerber, S.C.
- Gabriel Ricchiuto, Calif.
- Casondra Rutschke, N.D.
- Natalie Shimo, Pa.
- Jannan Wine, Tenn.
- Kaylie Withrow, Del.
- Scott Wright, Neb.

Congratulations to all participants in our annual essay contest.

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, Inc.

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The following individuals contributed to the Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bee during the months of March and April 2014. These donations enable us to fund grants into beekeeping research and education.

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Walter Els
Vivian Schile, FL
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Honey Bees: Colonizing the New World

by Hannah Falcone

"Nothing but money is sweeter than honey!"
– Benjamin Franklin.

Honey bees are familiar to every American today, but surprisingly they are not native to the Western Hemisphere. The first honey bees arrived in 1622.[3],13 English settlers realized the importance of the honey bee for pollinating crops. They brought them over from England, where they were plentiful, in woven straw baskets called skeps[1]. The journeys were long, taking up to eight weeks. Honey bees were an essential part of colonial life because they provided precious honey and beeswax, in addition to pollinating crops. According to a long-standing beekeeper, Richard Brewster, the type of bees imported originally were Black Russian bees, which were "miserable as the devil."[10] They were much smaller than the bees we have today, and they no longer exist in the United States. Native Americans called honey bees the White Man's fly[3], and knew that white men were coming to the area when they were spotted. People transported honey bees by horse wagon (with a few stings along the way!). Honey bees also spread across the United States by swarming, and made it to the West Coast 231 years after bees arrived in America[1]. The settlers would seek out honey bees by tracking them from their water hole to their tree hive.[5] They would then cut the tree down and use part of the trunk as a hive with a removable top for harvesting honey. Gum trees were preferred for this, as the insides rotted out faster than any other trees, leaving space for bees to inhabit. These modified hives therefore became known as "bee gums."

Later, bees were kept in straw skeps[1], clay jars, box hives, or anything else at hand, such as a coil of rope! To observe bees and learn more about them, some people forced bees to build their hive inside of a glass vase. By doing this and similar experiments, people learned how the hive worked. Sometimes, the colonists added sticks to the insides of the skeps so that the bees could build comb on them. Box hives were wooden boxes with sticks inside for building wax foundation. But honey and honeycomb couldn't be removed from any of these containers, so in harvesting honey and wax, the colony would be completely killed off. Furthermore, it was impossible to tell if the queen was dead or if there were parasites, because the beekeeper could not lift the frames from the hives for inspection.

To harvest the hard-earned honey, people waited until winter when the bees were sleepy, and distracted them with smoke. They had to cut the comb out, and drain the honey from inside. They also got stung many times, even when the bees were drowsy and cold. Sometimes, to extract the bees from the hive, a technique called drumming was used[11]. An empty box was placed on top of the hive, and the farmer would bang it with sticks. The bees would exit the hive, and there would be fewer bees left to defend the honey.

Some smart beekeepers even designed hives to encourage the queen to not lay in certain areas, or the opposite.[1] They figured out that the queen only likes to lay in one part of the hive, and they hollowed out a space in the middle for her, including passageways for the other bees. This improved the quality of their hives, the health in general, and their honey!

Bees were very useful in Colonial times. During England's taxation upon America, honey was used instead of the highly-taxed sugar[3]. Colonists were able to provide themselves and neighbors with honey and beeswax. Additionally, these resources became an important source of income. Beeswax was used for candles, lipstick, shoe polishes, and even to coat the inside of wine bottles, so it sold well. Colonial beekeepers also drank and sold mead, an alcoholic beverage made with honey. On some early currencies, beehives were featured on the coins, showing how important honey was to the colonies and the economy.

There are many ways in which modern beekeeping is different from colonial beekeeping. Today we are able to order bees online in a very short amount of time, along with a hive and all equipment, whereas the colonial beekeepers took a great deal of time to track down swarms of bees nestled away in trees. Colonists had to fashion a bee gum out of the trunk with angry bees to deal with. When we go to harvest honey out of our modern hives, the bees and hive are not ruined, but the colonial beekeepers only had their hives until the winter when they killed all the bees and took their honey[5]. Finally, we have bee suits, which prevent us from being stung. But the colonial beekeepers had only veils to protect them, if they were lucky.[12] Colonists used honey as their main source of sweetener for food. Today, we might put some on our oatmeal or in a cup of tea, but we use sugar and other processed sweeteners more. People needed beeswax to make candles. In the days before electricity it was the only way to see in the dark[3]. A few centuries later, we use candles primarily for decoration or festivities, not as our only source of light. By contrasting beekeeping today and in Colonial times, it is easy to understand why honey bees were so important in the early days of America.

Honey bees have a rich and beautiful history in America, as sweet as the delicious honey they produce every day. It appears that Benjamin Franklin certainly understood their value…and he's on the $100 bill!

Hannah Falcone lives in Plainfield, NH, where she attends seventh grade at Plainfield Elementary School. She lives on a small farm, Five Sisters Farm, where she has alpacas, sheep, chickens, dogs, cats, gerbils, fish, and a hive of bees. She is planning to get another hive in the spring. She loves to run, paint, babysit, cook, and take care of her many animals and sisters. She plans to be a veterinarian when she graduates.

1 "Martinatnewton - SKEP BEEHIVES." Martinatnewton - SKEP BEEHIVES. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Jan. 2014.
2 "Popular Topics." ARS : Home. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Jan. 2014.
3 "Bees in the Colonies — Past & Present Podcast : Colonial Williamsburg Official Site." Past Present Podcast. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Jan. 2014.
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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!

BEE Our Guest – 2015 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow

SAVE THE DATE!
The 2015 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow will be January 6-10, 2015 at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, California

Mark your calendar and save the date to attend the 2015 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow. The conference committee is busy planning a top-notch conference that is sure to impress even the most senior of beekeepers.

CALL FOR PAPERS/PRESENTATIONS
ABF is pleased to announce that the call for papers/ presentations is now open. If you have important beekeeping research to share, a best practice in beekeeping or a proven track record with keeping the hives alive, we want to hear from you. Please complete the call for papers submission form and return to Tara Zeravsky no later than July 15th. The conference committee will review all submissions to put together the most informative conference agenda available. You will be notified of your participation in early September. As a reminder, all presenters receive complimentary registration to the conference. All other expenses are the responsibility of the presenter.

CONFERENCE WEBSITE
Conference website: ABF is currently going through a website transition. The full conference website will be available by the end of June. Conference registration will also be available at this time.

We are looking forward to a 'magical' conference is sunny California. We hope to see you all there!

Milestones

Congratulations to the following ABF members that have reached milestone years during the months of April and May 2014:

APRIL

10 Years
Richard C. Weltzin, MN

25 Years
Donald Berry, MN

MAY

5 Years
Blake Shook

10 Years
Gerald Dunbar, MI

15 Years
Jane Hart, IL
Louise Wright, TX

25 Years
Steven Conlon, WV
Peter Genier, HI
Charlie Parker, ON Canada

30 Years
Warren Johnson, FL

40 Years
Lloyd Shearman, FL

50 Years
Jim Kuehl, NE
Art Rittenhouse, MN

Bee Connected: ABF Facebook Fan Page

If you are a member of Facebook, you can be a fan of the ABF Facebook page. All you have to do is simply search Facebook for "American Beekeeping Federation" to access the page and click the "Like" button to become a fan.

Everyone is welcome. To date, we have 3,768 fans and are reaching new fans each day.

If you have a Facebook fan page for your business or local beekeeping association, let us know and we'll add you to our line up.

Please feel free to post your beekeeping photos on our page, write on our wall and keep sending your friends to our page. Stay tuned for ABF updates, fun facts, recipes and photos of our ABF members doing what they do best!

Make abfnet.org your home page and discover industry updates, ABF news and much more.

Log on and plug in today!

Research Donations

The following individuals contributed to the Research Fund during the months of March and April 2014. These donations will help ABF continue to support research efforts and grants within the beekeeping industry and community.

Hawaii Beekeepers Association, HI

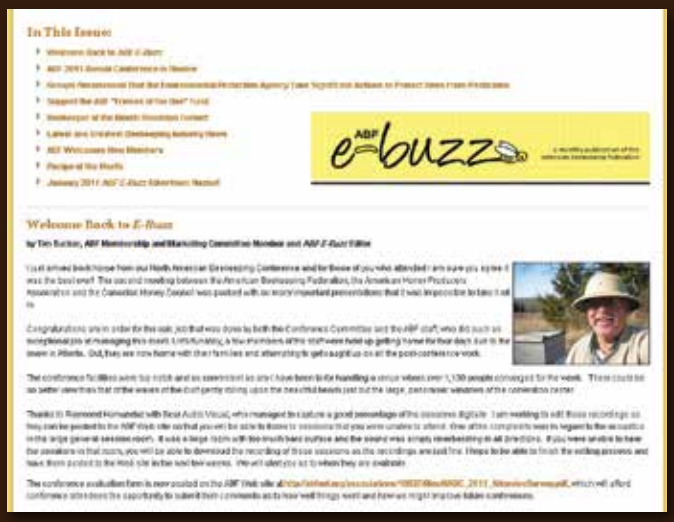
Know a new beekeeper?
Introduce them to the American Beekeeping Federation!

Friends of the Bee Fund Contributions

The following individuals contributed to the Friends of the Bee Fund during the months of March and April 2014.These donations enable us to fund educational programs and services that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

Jane Cameron, MI
Thomas Dennard, GA
Stephen Epley, CA
Samuel Golston, WV
Stephanie Pomeroy, IA
Bruce Schalcher, PA

Have You Caught the Buzz?


In This Issue

ABF e-buzz

Welcome Back to E-Buzz

Sent via e-mail monthly to all ABF members, *ABF E-Buzz* is a key member benefit and is published to inform members about ABF activities, as well as key happenings in the beekeeping industry. If you haven't been receiving the newsletter, please be sure to contact the ABF office at info@abfnet.org or 404.760.2875 to ensure we have your most up-to-date contact information. Also, if you wish to contribute content to the newsletter, please contact Tim Tucker, *ABF E-Buzz* editor, at tuckerb@hit.net. We welcome your submissions!

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On the Road Again

(continued from cover)

do through its agencies to help address these problems, and what we can do to help? The last big question is what strategic partnerships could be formed to assist us in this venture? The three of us could have talked for several hours, but the one hour we did, provided a great deal of information exchange. I really felt that both of these men were genuinely interested in hearing what we had to say and that they were genuinely interested in hearing our recommendations. While it was a quick day, it was also extremely productive. I explained that none of us were scientists or toxicologists, but we were observers and we see the general decline in the health of honey bees and all insects, birds and amphibians that are not present in the numbers they were a decade or two ago.

We have witnessed a steep decline in the return on our efforts, which have easily doubled in the past 15 years and our bees still struggle. We need to utilize a wiser use of pesticides of all types and better risk assessment before new pesticides are released. We need to return to methods utilized years ago when we observed Integrated Pest Management techniques where we focused on using the least amount of pesticides possible to meet our needs of public and personal health, and crop protection. We need better forage areas where bees and nectar dependent species can find season long supplies of protein and carbohydrates for their survival. Better use of public and private lands and better seed mixes that provide valuable plants instead of narrow banded blends of grasses that provide no benefit for us should be another focal point. We also explained that our industry is very interested in forming alliances with any organizations or corporations to address these environmental concerns. It was good to see that there are so many interested in the plight of our honey bees.

All of these efforts on behalf of the beekeeping industry take a great investment of time and money. Traveling to D.C. is not cheap in any respect. Your leaders are dedicating individual resources to work in your interest as members of the ABF. Our efforts are also enjoyed by those who aren't members of either of our national associations that work on these issues at the national level. I would encourage you to find one new beekeeping friend who you can encourage to join the ABF and assist in the overall bottom line of our federation. We need a stronger voice in these types of venues and that takes an investment from all beekeepers. If you can, send a dollar a hive to the legislative fund or anything you can afford. Everything helps and never thinks five or ten dollars is just too small to bother with. We hate to be asking for money all the time, but our dues do not pay all the bills so we must. Thanks for your help. It is our hope that this interest from the President will move efforts in a positive way and may be the motivation for finding some critical and long overdue answers.

"The Rest of the Story" Continued

(continued from page 3)

of Pesticide Regulation would be a logical next step. In late April, my brother, Bob, Jackie Park Burris, Bob Curtis (Almond Board of California) and I met with CDPR Director, Brian Leahy, and several other top officials of the agency in order to define the problem and develop strategies that can minimize or eliminate future incidents. The Almond Board is on the same page as the bee industry. They want to eliminate these losses to bee colonies so that almonds can be the safest crop that bees pollinate every year. Education of pest control advisers, growers, and pesticide applicators is a primary goal which could be achieved prior to the next almond bloom. Time will tell if these educational efforts will bear fruit and convince the pest control industry to alter their practices during almond bloom. Future meetings with CDPR, the California Association of Pest Control Advisers, and others are anticipated in the near future as we continue to address these issues.

The recent release of the Bee Informed Partnership/ USDA bee loss survey numbers indicated that fewer colonies died this past winter as compared to the previous year. 23% winter loss is still an unsustainable number, especially considering the 20% losses reported from April to October which was also reported in the survey. Obviously we have a long way to go before our industry can be considered sustainable.

Even with all the aforementioned problems facing our industry, hope springs eternal amongst most beekeepers, and I certainly hope that your honey supers get filled to the max this summer and your bees remain healthy throughout the year!

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Queen Committee Report

by Anna Kettlewell, Honey Queen Program Chair

Spring is finally here for the most part and we're all busy getting our bees for the busy summer season. As Susannah and Elena have completed their spring semesters at the University of Central Florida and West Chester University respectively, their focuses have now turned toward the busy summer honey promotions. As the queen and princess's work increases, so does the work of the American Honey Queen Committee.

The American Honey Queen Committee is comprised of a dedicated group of people who make the program successful. As the chair, I am the queen and princess's main contact person, scheduler, and supervisor for the year. Like all positions on the Committee, I am a volunteer. I'm always surprised how many people think that I am a full time employee of the program or that I take a salary for my volunteer work for the ABF. There are many wonderful people who make this program successful. Below are some of the job duties that are filled by other members of the committee – all of whom are volunteers!

Program Treasurer – The Queen Committee has a treasurer who reviews and approves expenses for the program. Having an individual separate from the chair approving expenses provides a good checks and balances system for the program.

Brochure Coordinator – Two Committee members manage the American Honey Queen/Princess recipe brochure distribution throughout the year. They ship brochures for the queen and princess's promotions and send brochures to individuals purchasing a small quantity of brochures for their events.

Trainers – Multiple committee members serve as trainers for the Queen and Princess during their annual media and presentation training each year. Having multiple trainers gives the queens different perspectives, ideas, and approaches to use in their presentations, media interviews, and appearances during the year. Each has different areas of expertise and wisdom to share each year! Throughout the year, the trainers check in with the representatives to answer their questions or advise them on various scenarios.

Social Media Coordinators – Three committee members oversee the queens' social media activities, including the American Honey Queen Program's Facebook page, blog, and YouTube channel. This year, the queen program is also venturing into the world of Instagram. Additionally, another member worked to develop the Queen Program's Wikipedia page and prepares eblasts and program brochures, as needed.

Convention Coordinators – Five committee members manage different aspects of convention activities, including the American Honey Queen Program's annual quilt raffle (watch for more details in future newsletters), auctions, ABF auxiliary activities, and honey queen banquet activities. They help make the various functions of the convention move smoothly.

Our many other committee members are critical to guiding the policies, procedures, and direction of the program and providing support for other tasks through their volunteer service on our committee. The Committee meets annually at the ABF convention and on an as needed basis via conference call throughout the year. We work to tap into each member's skills to divide up the many tasks of managing this program.

I thank all our program's volunteers who make the American Honey Queen program successful. Without these members, the program would not have as expansive of a reach as it does, providing the public with information on the beekeeping industry, honey and its many uses, and the vital importance of the honeybee. If you have interest in serving on our committee, please contact me. When you contact me to request the queen or princess for your event, many of these Committee members are brought into the loop of the promotion to make the end result a success. Please contact me to get the ball rolling on your state or local event! You can reach me at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514.

HONEY QUEEN FUND

The following individuals contributed to the Honey Queen Fund during the months of March and April 2014.These donations will help to continue the purpose of the Honey Queen/Princess Program to have a public representative and educate the public about the beekeeping industry nationwide.

Bob Brandi, CA
Gene Brandi, CA
Stephanie Pomeroy, IA

From the Honey Queen

by Susannah Austin, 2014 American Honey Queen

Susannah Austin
2014 American Honey Queen

I've been very busy since my last article in March. I returned home from Kentucky and spring break promotions and immediately began the second half of my spring semester at the University of Central Florida. I also participated in beekeeping promotions in my state as I finished up the last month and a half of classes.

On March 11, I had an interview and photo shoot with Central Florida Ag News for a special article about commodity queens for their youth in agriculture edition. The Florida cattleman's state and county sweethearts, watermelon queen and strawberry queen were also interviewed for the article. It was a great opportunity to share about the honey queen program and why agriculture education is important; all while promoting honey and explaining honeybees' critical services to agriculture. The article will be included in the May edition of the Central Florida Ag News.

On March 17, I traveled to Tallahassee, Florida's State Capitol, to work with members of the Florida State Beekeepers Association (FSBA) to lobby for a new honey bee research facility addition at the University of Florida. I attended meetings with the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, Adam Putnam, as well as several other Senators and Representatives who were helping to support the bill. I also attended the meeting of the Florida Farm Bureau Apiary Committee and the annual Florida Farm Bureau banquet. One of the main goals of the trip to the capitol was for FSBA members to hand deliver information about the prospective bee lab as well as copies of a TaxWatch Survey, which predicted great economic benefit to the state if the lab was built, to each senator and member of the House of Representatives. To accomplish this goal I participated in my first "walk and knock" as we made our way across the State Senate and House of Representatives buildings speaking with senators, representatives, lobbyists, legislative staff and whoever else was interested in learning about the importance of honeybees. By the end of the day, we met our goal of delivering all the information packets, and it was time to remind legislators of another reason we love our hard working honey bees, because of delicious honey!

Queen Susannah was hard at work at GloryBee's Bee weekend, assisting with package delivery!

FSBA, along with many other agriculture industries, set up booths so that legislators could taste some of the products that are produced across Florida and learn more about the importance of different industries. We set up an observation hive so that people could see our bees while tasting some delicious honey. The most recent update from Tallahassee shows that $2.5 million appropriated for the honeybee lab in the budget which will be sent to the Governor for his signature. Unless there is a sudden change, the University of Florida should be getting a new honey bee research lab soon! I am very grateful to Tom Nolan, Ben Parks, and the Florida State Beekeepers Association for inviting me to participate in the events at the capital and for making my trip possible.

During April 9-13, I visited GloryBee Foods in Eugene, Oregon to help with their Bee Weekend activities. GloryBee has shipped packaged bees from California and distributed them to beekeepers across the state of Oregon for nearly 40 years! During Bee Weekend, GloryBee provided classes for getting started in beekeeping and lots of information for those interested in bees as well as live hive installation demonstrations so that people picking up bees were completely ready to take them home and get them set up.

During the last few years, Bee Weekend expanded to include educational activities for the whole community. GloryBee partnered with other community groups like Oregon State University (OSU), the School Garden Project,

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From the Honey Queen

(continued from page 19)

the American Apitherapy Society and many others to share information about other aspects of beekeeping and healthy living. A local Great Harvest Grainery also came to pass out samples of their honey wheat bread and Red Wagon Creamery served their special "Hail to the Bee" ice cream which was specifically created for Bee Weekend to help with the Save the Bee campaign. The ice cream was made with vanilla ice cream, clover honey from GloryBee, chocolate freckles and candied honeycomb, it was a delicious way to raise awareness about honey bees!

Queen Susannah hands out honey recipe brochures to fourth grade students in Fort Bragg, NC

Before Bee Weekend started, I participated in numerous other activities. I had a radio interview in studio to talk about the upcoming Bee Weekend events and the benefits of bees to the local area. I also had my first live in-studio television interview on the KEZI 9 morning show. In total, my media interviews during Bee Weekend were worth approximately $5,500 in free publicity. I also attended a Save the Bee fundraiser night which was a partnership between GloryBee's Save the Bee campaign and Oakshire Brewery. Oakshire Brewery created a special one batch beer using all of their ingredients from GloryBee. For the day of the fundraiser, $1 from each beer sold was donated to the Save the Bee campaign. It was also a great opportunity to pass out information about the upcoming Bee Weekend. I also visited three schools in Eugene and the surrounding area and gave presentations to over 100 elementary children. Because of GloryBee's outreach programs, many of the children were already familiar with the basics of honeybees and were eager to learn more. It was great to talk with so many kids who were excited about bees and were eager to see some live hives that weekend.

During the actual GloryBee Bee Weekend, I worked with Bee Girl, Sarah Red-Laird, (ABF's Kids n' Bees coordinator) to teach groups of children about the importance of honeybees. Sarah set up a huge children's area with books about bees, microscopes showing different parts of the bees' anatomy, bee crafts and honey tasting. Several schools in the area brought busloads of kids out for a honeybee field trip and I took them out into the bee yard and opened a hive so they could see a live beehive up close! I also attended VIP events to discuss the importance of bees with local officials and their impact on the local area. Additionally, I donned my new BJ Sherriff bee suit and helped to pass out all of the packages of bees from the bee trailer to attendees picking up their bees for the spring. Worker bees may do all the work in our hives but as a honey queen I get the chance to roll up (or down) my sleeves and help move some bees. This was my first experience helping at such a large package pickup and I really enjoyed working in the trailer filled with seven million honey bees, especially since I wasn't stung once! I am very thankful to everyone from GloryBee Foods for making my trip possible, and especially to the Larson family for hosting me and to Kristin Kokkeler for scheduling my presentations.

After returning home from Oregon, on April 13, I attended a workshop at my local beekeeping association. We checked on the health of our hives and split several to prevent swarming, it was a good opportunity to explain the amazing phenomenon of swarming behaviors to new beekeepers and also teach them to find eggs, the queen and pests within their own hives. It was exciting to see new members visiting the bee yard for the first time. I even persuaded a friend from my school to come learn about honeybees as well!

I traveled to North Carolina between May, 8-13 for the first leg of a two-state trip. I had the opportunity to stay with my older brother and his wife near Fort Bragg and Fayetteville during my visit. My brother Paul is in the army and currently stationed at Fort Bragg so I had the opportunity to talk with the children of some of the military personnel at Fort Bragg. I visited six schools both on and off base during my trip. I spoke with nearly 700 children during my time in North Carolina ranging from pre-k to 8th grade. Because many of my presentations were to groups of more than 50 children, I used PowerPoint presentations so that everyone could easily see the different pictures of the different bees, plants and honey. When presenting at schools, PowerPoint is

(continued on page 22)

From the Honey Princess

by Elena Hoffman, 2014 American Honey Princess

Elena Hoffman
2014 American Honey Princess

March started out mighty busy with trips to Texas and Connecticut. The first leg of my trip was in Texas from March 14-17 where I worked with the Harris County Beekeepers Association as well as the Texas Honey Princess Shannon La Grave at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. The livestock show was packed with an attendance of over 200,000 people. Princess Shannon and I spent our time explaining basic bee biology to the onlookers of the three observation hives. The Harris Country Beekeepers had an excellent display! The second day at the show was "Go Tejano Day," celebrating Houston's rich Hispanic heritage with daylong festivities. Shannon and I spoke to attendees through translators and even tried out a few Spanish words ourselves, like the word for bee, "abeja." We also handed out our brochures and the National Honey Board's Spanish recipe booklets. This was a great venue to reach another community and spark interest in beekeeping. I send a huge thank you to Ed and Elaine Michalik for being fantastic hosts and setting up all the wonderful promotions for Shannon and me.

Princess Elena shares cooking with honey tips at the Houston Livestock Show

After a wonderful promotion in Texas, I made a stop in Connecticut for a variety of promotions during March 18-23.The first promotion I attended was Ag Day in the Capitol in Hartford. I worked alongside the Connecticut Beekeepers Association to inform residents and their state representatives about beekeeping in their state. I met and spoke to Connecticut's governor, Dan Malloy, and the Ag commissioner, Steve Revisczky. Following the capitol promotion was a visit to Wamogo Agri-Science High School in Connecticut. I taught to a class of 30 students about hive biology and the honeybee's importance to the agricultural industry through pollination. I was excited to find that at least two boys in the class had four or more hives, and one was doing research with top bar hives for his Future Farmers of America (FFA) project. It was an amazing experience and all the students were great.

In Connecticut, I also assisted at the Connecticut Beekeepers Association Workshop at Massaro Farms. I introduced myself to the attendees and helped answer any questions they had on beginning beekeeping. The workshop also allowed them to put a hive box together and construct frames. It was a great workshop for getting started with beekeeping. My final event in Connecticut was a visit to the Ansonia Nature Center. I talked to 40 people on the importance of the honeybee and answered plenty of questions on the first year of beekeeping alongside some Connecticut beekeepers. We had equipment with us to show attendees what a beekeeper needs to start hives, such as the hive tool, smoker and bee suit. Attendees left with a little jar of Connecticut Beekeepers Association honey. Handing out a little jar of honey at a meeting is a great way to market your honey and get your name out locally in your area. Thank you to Ted and Becky Jones who were fantastic hosts and set up wonderful promotions for me.

It was April before I knew it! I traveled to Tampa, Florida during April 11-14 to work with Queen Kathleen, LLC, lending a hand at the Florida Blueberry Festival. The event was buzzing with around 60,000 people, all of whom were excited to come to the honey booth and try blueberry honey and blueberry soda. The blueberry soda was made with honey as an ingredient! I stood outside the front of the booth enticing people to sample not only the blueberry honey, but the many other varieties of honey that were available. After getting a few questions about where I'm from due to my pale Pennsylvanian skin, the onlookers were more than willing to ask how honey is made and the state of honeybee health today. I extend a special thank you to Kathy Gillam and Wade Fisher for inviting me into their home, treating me like family and showing me around their beekeeping facilities.

(continued on page 22)

From the Honey Princess

(continued from page 21)

I closed out April promotions on April 26 at a Sherlockian meeting in Camden, New Jersey. I engaged members of the Mycroft League, a Sherlockian group based out of Philadelphia, with the tale of, "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Disappearing Bees." I worked alongside Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild president, Suzanne Matlock, to teach the Sherlockians more about honeybees, Sherlock Holmes's relationship with honeybees and some of the factors contributing the decline of honeybee populations. Did you know Sherlock Holmes retired in England to keep honeybees? Holmes also had four rules of beekeeping. Out of those, rules number one and three are my favorites. His rule number one states, "Stay calm." Rule number three – my ultimate favorite rule of beekeeping – states, "Never cease to feel wonder."

Finally, on May 12, I visited Walnut Hill College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I spoke to 25 students about the importance of the honeybee to not only the agricultural industry, but also to the culinary industry. As Walnut Hill is a culinary college, the students were amazed by how honeybee pollination directly affects their industry and future careers. The school also offers career guidance in hotel management, so it was a fantastic opportunity to talk about the growing trend of hotels having onsite apiaries to help spark future interest in the idea.

A couple asks Princess Elena how honeybees are related to the agricultural industry at the Florida Blueberry Festival.

Through mid-May, I have generated approximately $20,000 of free media publicity for the beekeeping industry. I have reached an estimated 261,880 people through promotions (not including media reach), and have visited nine states. I cannot wait to continue the hard work and visit more promotions and states as the year continues. In upcoming months I'm looking forward to promotions in Delaware and Pennsylvania. I'm also interested in visiting your state! If you are interested in having Susannah or me attend your promotion, or lend a helping hand in your state, contact Anna Kettlewell now at 414.545.5514 or via email at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com!

From the Honey Queen

(continued from page 16)

a great tool to show the students the bees up close and show them the amazing happenings in the insect world. Speaking at the military schools was a unique experience for me because many of the children have lived in different parts of the world and seen different types of agriculture and crops. They enjoyed learning about honeybees that have also spread across the globe. The eighth graders that I visited were studying ecosystems in their science class, so I focused on talking about the important role of honeybees in plant life. They were fascinated to learn how dependent we are on such tiny insects and how many areas outside of agriculture that honey bees effect, such as medicine and cosmetics. I really enjoyed my time in North Carolina and am very thankful to Paul and Johanna for going out of their way to make my trip possible.

From North Carolina, I flew to Texas to help the Harris County Beekeepers at the Pasadena Strawberry Festival outside of Houston and give several school presentations with the Texas honey princess, Shannon LaGrave. I am eager to report on this promotion in my next article, as I am just beginning this promotion while I compose this article.

My last few months have been busy ones, full of new experiences and promotions. I am looking forward to upcoming promotions in Florida and Colorado. I am really enjoying my presentations across the country this year and would love to participate even more! If you would like to invite Honey Princess Elena or me to attend your event, or would like more information about the American Honey Queen Program, contact Anna Kettlewell at 414.545.5514 or by email at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com. Follow the American Honey Queen Program on Facebook at facebook.com/AmericanHoneyQueenProgram to see more pictures and updates on our travels.

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From the Auxiliary

by Lillian Kelley, ABF Auxiliary President

We hope the adverse weather has ended and spring like weather has finally arrived. The trees and flowers are blooming and the bees are busy working all sorts of vegetation. Beekeepers are busy moving bees across state lines, splitting and re-queening their hives. Hopefully there are lots of healthy bees to split. This would be a perfect time to take your camera into the bee yards and take some prize winning pictures for the photo contest.

This issue includes two winning recipes from the baking contest held in Baton Rouge. Enjoy!

by Ellen Sundberg

- 1 c. Soft Butter
- 2/3 c. HONEY
- 3 Egg Yolks
- 1 tsp. Vanilla
- 3 c. Flour
- Maraschino Cherries (for decorating)

DIRECTIONS

- Cream the butter, honey, egg yolks and vanilla together
- Add 3 c. flour and mix well
- Put dough through cookie press onto ungreased cookie sheet
- Cut pieces of the Maraschino cherries and place on middle of cookie
- Bake at 400 degrees for 7-10 minutes
- Let cool and serve

Honey Glazed Snack Mix

by Louise Johnson

- 1 c. Honey
- ½ c. Butter
- 2 c. Bugles
- 1 c. Butter Pretzels
- 2 c. Kixs
- 1 c. Honey Wheat Pretzels
- 1 c. Cheerios
- 1 c. Twisted Pretzels
- 1 c. Wheat Chex's
- 1 c. Multigrain Cheerios
- 1 c. Rice Chex's
- 2 c. Wheat Thins
- 1 c. Corn Chex's
- 2 c. Honey Comb

DIRECTIONS

- Melt butter in microwave for 1 minute
- Blend honey in melted butter until it looks creamy
- Mix together all other ingredients
- Pour honey mixture over cereal mix until mix is well coated
- Pour into pan coated with Pam-bake 350 degrees for 25 minutes stir every 5 min.
- To prevent burning- cool on parchment paper- stir frequently to prevent clumping
- Place in air tight container.

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2015 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow

January 6-10, 2015
Disneyland Hotel « Anaheim, California

Mark your calendars and save the date for the 2015 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow. Anaheim, California is the host city for the 2015 ABF conference and is sure to be a fantastic destination for our January event. The conference will be held at the Disneyland Hotel, a AAA Four Diamond property, featuring three swimming pools, five dining locations and a quick walk to Downtown Disney.

The recently renovated Disneyland Hotel displays classic Disney décor and offers the following guest room amenities:

- One king-size bed or 2 queen-size beds
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- Flat screen TVs
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- Comfy robes
- Voicemail service
- Wheelchair-accessible rooms available
- Coffeemaker
- Irons, ironing boards and hairdryers
- In-room safe

The ABF conference committee has already started planning for the 2015 conference and it's sure to be a "magical" event. We hope you can join us in the place where "dreams come true" for an experience you won't soon forget. Visit **www.abfnet.org** for updates!