IN 2016 BEE GLORIOUS IN 2016

ABF Chooses a New President and Vice President

ABF’s 73rd Annual Conference A Success

Welcome the New American Honey Queen and Princess
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### Directors Appointed by the President

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(EC) indicates Executive Committee member.

Number in parentheses next to Director’s name indicates the year their current term ends and whether they are in their 1st or 2nd term.

Contact ABF or interested in advertising?
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Perspectives in Beekeeping: President’s Message January 2016

by: Gene Brandi
ABF President

Given that this is my first message to the ABF membership since being elected at the recently concluded 2016 American Beekeeping Federation Conference & Tradeshow in Florida, I must say that it is an honor to serve as your 2016 ABF President. As an ABF member since 1979, I have known and worked with many great ABF Presidents over the years and am well aware that I am following in the footsteps of beekeeping industry legends. The first ABF Presidents I had the honor to meet in the 1970’s were Hood Littlefield and Howard Foster. Both of these men poured their heart and soul into the ABF and I often think about them and their advice to me when I was a young upstart beekeeper. Other former ABF Presidents, including my brother Bob, have given me a great deal of sound advice over the years, which I certainly appreciate. After perusing the list of past presidents, it appears that Bob and I are one of only two pairs of brothers to hold the office of ABF President since ABF was founded in 1943, the first being Roy and Binford Weaver.

It was a pleasure to serve as ABF Vice-President for the past two years with Tim Tucker, who did a fabulous job as ABF President. Tim is truly dedicated to ABF, as he served tirelessly even when his bad knees were acting up, and especially during the last three months after he had both knees replaced. Tim was walking around Washington, D.C., less than three weeks after his first knee replacement in late September! I appreciate the fact that Tim continues to edit the ABF E-Buzz and maintain the ABF Facebook page. Social media is an important means of communication in today’s world, and Tim’s expertise in that area is of great benefit to ABF.

There are many ABF members who continue to volunteer their time, energy, and expertise to make ABF a stronger organization. I particularly appreciate the efforts of Anna Kettlewell, Honey Queen Committee Chair; George Hansen, ABF representative to the Honey Bee Health Coalition; Zac Browning, for his tireless work to improve honey bee forage; Blake Shook, Chair of the Membership and Marketing Committee, Dave Hackenberg, Co-chair of the National Honey Bee Advisory Board; and all the ABF Board members and those who volunteer at the annual convention and throughout the year.

Special thanks to 2015 American Honey Queen Gabrielle Hamesath and 2015 American Honey Princess Hayden Wolf, for the outstanding manner in which they represented the ABF and the beekeeping industry over the past year. Congratulations to 2016 American Honey Queen Kim Kester and 2016 American Honey Princess Tabitha Mansker. Best wishes to you both for a memorable and productive year as you travel the USA promoting honey, bees, and the beekeeping industry.

El Nino has arrived in California and has provided us with some much needed rainfall and snow in the mountains. However, the reservoirs started the season at such low levels that it will take well above normal precipitation before the effects of California’s four year drought can be mitigated. Many experts believe that it will take several wet years to make up for the severe water shortage, especially the overdraft of aquifers throughout the state. State and Federal water regulators will announce the 2016 preliminary water allotments for agriculture in mid-February. According to early reports, it appears that in spite of the welcome rains and snowpack, agricultural water users may face another year of severe water cutbacks. This is not good news for almond growers or others in California agriculture. That being said, it is refreshing to see green fields containing some early wildflowers such as mustard, fiddleneck, filaree, and shepherd’s purse providing pollen and a little nectar for the bees in many parts of the state. The increase in rainfall so far this season also gives beekeepers hope that maybe we can produce a decent 2016 honey crop in California!

There are many challenges facing the beekeeping industry today, and none more difficult than keeping our bees alive and healthy. The 2016 Almond bloom is rapidly approaching as I write this, and it is clear that many beekeepers are down in their colony numbers. It is too soon to tell if the shortage of good bees to pollinate the nearly 900,000 bearing acres of almonds will be severe this year, but appears there will be a shortage. Mites, pesticides, poor nutrition, and diseases continue to take their toll on the nation’s bee herd. Additional research is needed to find answers to the many problems facing our bees.

Speaking of research, one of the resolutions approved by the ABF membership at the recently concluded 2016 ABF Conference & Tradeshow pertained to “Integrity in Scientific Research,” where the ABF resolved to support the rights of scientists to freely conduct essential research and publish the results of their findings without fear of retribution. With that in mind, the ABF is supporting Dr. Jonathan Lundgren and his Blue Dasher Farms initiative, where he will conduct bee research while farming in a sustainable manner. Dr. Lundgren endeavors to develop and evaluate ecologically based pest and farm management solutions that reduce disturbance and increase biodiversity in crop and livestock production. ABF members are urged to consider supporting Blue Dasher Farms and can do so by visiting the Blue Dasher Farms website, bluedasher.farm.

Preparations are underway for the 2017 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow, a joint conference with the American Honey Producers Association. The venue is the Galveston Island...
Convention Center, which is the same place we met for the previous joint conference in 2011. I look forward to working the AHPA officers as we jointly prepare a program that will have something for everyone, from the largest commercial beekeepers to those just starting with bees. Many sponsors and exhibitors have already reserved their spots for the upcoming conference, and we certainly appreciate their support. Make plans to attend the 2017 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow, January 10-14 as it will be Texas sized.

I look forward to working with newly elected ABF Vice President Tim May, the ABF Board of Directors, the staff at Meeting Expectations, Meyers and Associates, and others to serve the needs of ABF members.

Wishing you all a successful and prosperous 2016!
Greetings from the New ABF Vice President

Greetings, my name is Tim May and I am the new Vice President of the American Beekeeping Federation. I have been a member of ABF for over 30 years. During the past four years I have served on the ABF board of directors, as one of the directors of the Producer/Packer Shared Interest Group, and on the Membership and Marketing committee. I am honored to be selected as the new Vice President of this tremendous organization.

I have been a commercial beekeeper for almost 30 years. My grandfather (George) and father (Phil) purchased two beehives from a farm in Palatine, Illinois, back in 1948. They continued to expand the business while extracting honey in their Chicago garage and selling their honey on street corners around the city. In 1963 they purchased an old one-room school house and turned it into the new extracting plant. After several additions and modifications it remains our extracting plant today. May’s Honey Farms operates around 1500 colonies for honey production and local pollination. We pack all of our honey under the Sunny Hill Honey brand name and distribute it to over 150 retailers in the Chicago area. We do not move our bees except a couple hundred that go into local apple orchards and pumpkin fields. We still try to overwinter our hives, but recently have been pretty unsuccessful.

The American Beekeeping Federation has taken great strides towards improving the organization over the past decade. The addition of the Meeting Expectations staff, as well as an outstanding board, have made the ABF an organization that all of its members should be proud of and support.

The 2016 ABF Conference & Tradeshow, Palm Trees and Healthy Bees, was a great event. Outstanding speakers, discussions and research analysis along with the large trade show made this one of the best conferences I’ve ever attended. The weather may not have been what everyone was looking forward to, but the beautiful Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa provided plenty of space for all beekeepers to network and socialize.

New this year at the conference was the addition of the commercial beekeeper breakfast. There were over 90 attendees. They enjoyed a delicious Marriott breakfast and had a lively program with discussion based on the concerns of the commercial beekeeper.

The Kids and Bees program was well attended and fun for all involved. Sarah Red-Laird, with the help of Honey Queen Gabrielle and Honey Princess Hayden, did a great job setting up different educational and fun stations for all to enjoy.

The annual banquet was also well attended and enjoyed by everyone. The dinner was outstanding, the auction was successful, and the Honey Queen coronation was a great ending for the evening as well as the conference. Overall I think it was one of the best conferences I have attended. The success of this year’s conference was only possible due to all the hard work from President Tim Tucker, Vice President Gene Brandi, the conference committee and the staff at Meeting Expectations. I am really looking forward to next year’s 2017 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow with the American Honey Producers Association down in Galveston, Texas. Hope to see you there.
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January/February 2016 American Beekeeping Federation News
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On January 6, 2016, the United States Environmental Protection Agency announced its preliminary risk assessment for the neonicotinoid pesticide imidacloprid, which indicates a threat to some pollinators. EPA’s assessment, prepared in collaboration with California’s Department of Pesticide Regulation and Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency, indicates that imidacloprid potentially poses risk to honey bees when the pesticide comes in contact with certain crops that attract pollinators.

This announcement is welcome news for beekeepers whose bees have been negatively impacted by imidacloprid under many scenarios, since this pesticide was initially registered for use by EPA in the early 1990’s. This most recent risk assessment was conducted using an enhanced risk assessment procedure which analyzed various effects of imidacloprid on the entire colony in addition to adult bee mortality.

EPA has announced a 60-day period, beginning January 15, 2016, for interested parties to submit comments on this preliminary risk assessment. The ABF will be preparing comments for the docket and interested ABF members are urged to do the same.

This re-evaluation began in 2009 and is the first of four preliminary risk assessments on the neonicotinoid products most toxic to bees. The other products being reevaluated, whose revised risk assessments will be released in December 2016, include clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and dinotefuran.

The following resolution, which was approved by the membership at the recently concluded ABF convention in Florida, can be used as a guide for use in your own state:

WHEREAS, Pollinator Protection Plans are being developed by many states across the nation; and,

WHEREAS, these plans include bee registries in order to keep track of apiary locations so that beekeepers can be notified of impending pesticide applications; and,

WHEREAS, moving bee hives away from all pesticide applications is an impossibility and not a sustainable means of reducing bee hazards from pesticides on a broad scale; and, 

WHEREAS, non-apis pollinators should be protected by these plans as well as honey bees; and,

WHEREAS, all such plans must be designed to specifically comply with FIFRA’s primary goal of preventing unreasonable harm to man and the environment; now,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Beekeeping Federation work to ensure that state pollinator protection plans truly protect all pollinators and that no pollinator protection plans contain elements that are less restrictive than Federal pesticide law; and,

FURTHER, that the ABF continue to stress the fact that clear, enforceable pesticide label language is the best way to protect honey bees and all pollinators from the risks of pesticide exposure.

State Pollinator Protection Plans

Many states have been developing Managed Pollinator Protection Plans (MP3’s) as suggested by the Environmental Protection Agency. ABF officers and others are continuing discussions with various state and federal government agencies on this issue and some of us are planning to attend an MP3 symposium in Washington, D.C., in March. ABF members are encouraged to become engaged on this issue in their home states, as many state departments of agriculture are seeking input from their state and local bee industry representatives.

Have You Caught The 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!
The Bees in Your Backyard
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The 2016 American Beekeeping Federation Conference & Tradeshow celebrated its 73rd annual conference in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa. This five-day conference featured an abundance of educational sessions from industry leaders, research updates from the USDA-ARS labs, interactive hands-on workshops, a sold-out tradeshow and lots of networking opportunities.

We kicked off this year’s conference on Wednesday, January 6th, to over 850 attendees with the presentation of colors by the Terry Parker High School ROTC. We continued the day with industry lectures and a keynote presentation by Marla Spivak, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, on “The Remarkable Natural Defenses of Honey Bees”. The evening concluded with the welcome reception in the tradeshow with entertainment provided by the 2016 American Honey Queen candidates.

Thursday morning featured our Shared Interest Group (SIG) meetings with additional educational sessions and the election of the new ABF Board. The Auxiliary lunch/meeting featured presentations from the Honey Queen candidates and the opportunity to learn more about the Auxiliary. Additional track sessions were offered for our Beginning Beekeepers, Serious Sideliners and Commercial Beekeepers. Thursday evening, close to 200 attendees participated in the social activity at the Jacksonville Zoo, where they enjoyed dinner and dancing and a visit with several zoo animals in the Range of the Jaguar.

We continued our general sessions on Friday with research updates and a keynote presentation by Dr. Geraldine Wright, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, on “Ambrosia and Royal Jelly: How Bees Meet Their Nutritional Needs”. Close to 90 people participated in the Foundation Luncheon where they met the 2016 Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees Scholars:

- Adrian Fisher II, a fourth year Ph.D. student at Texan A&M University
- Meghan McConnell, a current Masters student at the University of Maryland
- Carlos J. Vega Melendez, a third year graduate student at the University of North Carolina
- Ashley Mortensen, a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida’s Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab
- Doug Sponsler, a fifth year Ph.D. student at the Ohio State University
- James Withrow, a second year graduate student at North Carolina State University

Congratulations to these scholars who each received a $2,000 scholarship grant from the Foundation to continue with their course of study.

The Annual ABF Business Meeting was held on Friday where Gene Brandi, Los Banos, CA, was confirmed as President for 2016 and Tim May, Harvard, IL, was elected as Vice President. The members also approved a new membership campaign which is sure to draw many new members to the ABF. Anyone can join ABF, at no cost until December 31, 2016, if they have never been a member. Please go to www.afbnet.org/?comp to register.

The 2016 Honey Show live auction rounded-out our Friday night with proceeds benefiting the American Honey Queen Program. With over 85 entries, judging proved to be quite a task. Special thanks to Mary Kettlewell and all the judges for the time and energy involved in this year’s show. Congratulations to Norbert Neal, Elk City, KS, for Best of Show - Honey for his Extra Light Amber Honey and to Carmen Conrad, Canal Winchester, OH, for Best of Show - Related Products for her Honey Gift Box. For a complete list of the winners visit http://abfconference.com/images/2016_ABF_Honey>Show_Final_Results.pdf

Saturday morning, over 80 commercial beekeepers gathered for breakfast and knowledge sharing. A new feature to the conference, this meeting proved quite successful and garnered great discussions. Additionally, 15 hands-on, interactive workshops were offered throughout the day.

The conference concluded with the ever-popular annual ABF banquet. Close to 300 participants joined for an evening featuring award presentations, Sweepstakes drawings, a live and silent auction, and the coronation of the 2016 American Honey Queen and Princess. The ABF President’s Award went to Zac Browning, Idaho Falls, ID, in recognition of his outstanding and significant contributions to the American Beekeeping Federation and the US beekeeping and honey industry. Dr. Geraldine Wright, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, was the recipient of this year’s Hoopingarner Award for the best scientific presentation of the conference. Congratulations to both Zac and Geraldine!

Of course the conference would not be complete without the coronation of the new American Honey Queen and Princess. This year’s American Honey Princess is Tabitha Mansker from Nevada, Texas. Our 2016 American Honey Queen is Kim Kester from Nekoosa, Wisconsin. Congratulations to both Tabitha and Kim and Thank you for all the amazing work you will do for the ABF and the beekeeping industry in 2016.

We would like to recognize and thank our conference sponsors who make this conference possible for all attendees:
Save the Date: Please make your calendars and make your plans to attend the 2017 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow, January 10-14, 2017 in Galveston, Texas. This will be a joint conference with ABF and AHPA. It’s sure to be packed with lots of fellow beekeepers so we know you won’t want to miss it.

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2016 ABF Honey Show
Final Results
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

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Norbert Neal – Elk City, KS
Extra Light Amber Honey

BEST OF SHOW – RELATED PRODUCTS
Carmen Conrad – Canal Winchester, OH
Honey Gift Box

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2. James & Karen Belli – Wadsworth, IL
3. Charles Lorence – Aurora, IL

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2. M. Bryon Teerlink – Morristown, FL
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CLASS C – WHITE HONEY
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3. James & Karen Belli – Wadsworth, IL

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3. Branden Moore – Kennasaw, GA

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2. Norbert Neal – Elk City, KS
3. Lee Del Signore – Miami, FL

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2. James & Karen Belli – Wadsworth, IL
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3. John Piechowski – Redgranite, WI

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2. Charles Lorence – Aurora, IL
3. Virginia Webb – Clarksville, GA

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3. Gene Killion – Paris, IL

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2. Derald Kettlewell – Greenfield, WI

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1. George Hansen – Colton, OR
2. Virginia Webb – Clarkeville, GA

CLASS R – HONEY GIFT BOX
Sponsored by: Central Life Sciences
1. Carmen Conrad – Canal Winchester, OH
2. Jennifer Holmes – Stuart, FL

BEST OF SHOW – HONEY
Norbert Neal  – Elk City, KS
Extra Light Amber Honey

BEST OF SHOW – RELATED PRODUCTS
Carmen Conrad – Canal Winchester, OH
Honey Gift Box
I had the distinct pleasure to present this year’s President’s Award at the recent 2016 ABF Conference & Tradeshow banquet to Zac Browning. It was a great pleasure to serve on the board with Zac during his time as ABF president from 2010 through January 2012. I have come to know many great people in our industry over the years, and Zac is at the top of my list and a person whom I consider it a privilege and an honor to know.

During his term as ABF president there was great improvement in the leadership team and board under his direction, and the ABF was a stronger organization when his term was done. Four years ago, when he was head of the nominating committee, I was honored when he asked me to run for ABF vice-president. It was a moment in time I will never forget. In April of 2014, I was lucky enough to be asked to the White House to meet with the president’s advisers, along with Zac and Randy Verhoek, to develop the structure and make recommendations for the Presidential Memorandum for Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators. Zac has always been a big asset in representing ABF to the people in Washington. His efforts have been continuous during the past years, and we are lucky to have people like him representing ABF.

Zac has served the beekeeping industry as Chairman of The Honey Voluntary Quality Assurance Committee, as trustee for the Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, and as a current board member of the Pollinator Stewardship Council, True Source Honey, and the National Pollinator Defense Fund. Zac also works actively as a steward for the Pollinator Partnership and contributes to pollinator research and habitat conservation work, working in collaboration with Pheasants Forever, which is one of his great passions. He has always been a young man that I have looked up to, and there are few in the industry that have given so much, working tirelessly representing ABF.

For those that don’t know him, Zac is a 4th generation commercial beekeeper and co-owner of Browning Honey Co. Inc. With his brothers, he operates over 20,000 hives for honey production and pollination in Idaho, North Dakota, and California. Browning Honey Co. has been around since 1921. The company is approaching its 100th year of operation, and running 20,000 colonies of bees, Zac and his brothers have a job on their hands. They regularly produce over a million pounds of honey and do pollination in almonds and other fruits and vegetables as well. There is little time for relaxing, I’m sure. There is no one who better deserves this bit of recognition. Thank you, Zac and the Brownings for your many contributions over the years.
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Dad’s first beehive started in some stacked fruit boxes behind the chicken shed.

The hives had come with the old house my folks (George and Susan Hansen) bought, a chance acquisition that shaped the future of our family. It was the late 1970s and Dad’s teaching grant had expired, so he was working in a woodshop while Mom took odd jobs and my older brother Matt and I were just toddling around.

Those old fruit-box bees died (not the last bees the Hansen family would lose), but they sparked in my parents a lifelong love for those fascinating, industrious stinging insects.

Mom and Dad bought some packaged bees and proper equipment and started catching swarms. The fledgling apiary grew first into a sizeable hobby, then a nice means of supplemental income, and today a multi-generational family business. I often wonder what we’d be doing today if my parents had bought a different house, without bees. I doubt we could have done better.

My parents came up with a great generation of beekeepers, weathering a turbulent time for bees and beekeepers in North America: they survived the waves of mite infestations and new diseases, the shrinking habitat and increased use and potency of herbicides, fungicides and insecticides. From those first few hives, they built a commercial beekeeping outfit that now consists of 5,500 hives, three farms, two warehouses, a fleet of trucks and six year-round employees plus seasonal help.

My brother Matt and I pursued other interests earlier in life. He studied landscape architecture; I got a journalism degree and did a tour of duty in the newspaper business. Eventually we both decided to return to Foothills Honey Company in our early 30s (whether this was us coming to our senses or losing them is yet to be determined). We’re now married – Matt has two boys – and we are settled into comfortable lives of family and hard work.

Dad is starting to think about hanging up his hive tool and smoker (Mom became a teacher and then settled into retirement years ago) and pass what he has built on to the next generation. Dad will always be an important mentor and stabilizing force for Foothills Honey Company, as he has been for the beekeeping industry as a whole; he served as President of the American Beekeeping Federation and is currently serving as past president, sat on the National Honey Board until December of 2015 and belongs to various other committees, subcommittees, task forces and organizations.

I’m not sure to what extent somebody like Dad ever retires, but it’s nearing time for me and Matt to take over the day-to-day business. Dad will leave us with a strong foundation. At this point, Foothills Honey Company is misnamed; we’re primarily commercial pollinators, not honey producers. We start our season as most commercial beekeepers do: in the thousands of acres of almonds in California’s Central Valley, we do the tough fall and winter work required to have thousands of colonies ready for the early almond season, then dodging crazy drivers, mite re-infestation and pesticide sprays to pollinate one of the West Coast’s most valuable crops. It’s tough work, mentally and physically, but the money earned in California allows us to do things we couldn’t otherwise do.

After almonds, we then move directly into Willamette Valley blueberries, as well as pears in Hood River, high on the flanks of the Cascade Mountains. Then Foothills Honey Company settles into later spring and summer crops: myriad berries, cherries, clover,
meadowfoam, various types of vegetable and flower seed and many, many more. Eventually we’ll set bees out for the big Pacific Northwest blackberry honey flow in June, trying to find good honey forage land in an increasingly crowded beekeeping region; every year I see at least one new beekeeping outfit I don’t recognize, and it’s more and more common to see someone else’s bees around the bend or over the hill from one of our prime honey spots. There’s less room overall, particularly in the Willamette Valley and foothills of the Cascades. Natural and agricultural lands have given way to strip malls, apartments and houses. For bees, the world is getting smaller.

Every now and then the bees remind us of how well they can do when conditions are right and they can find what they need. Our 2015 honey crop was one of the best of the past decade. Once our honey is pulled, we finish the year in the high desert east of the Cascades doing the hard work of carrot seed pollination, another lucrative but highly challenging effort due to late summer timing, spray schedules and volcanic mud that turns into something like snot when wet.

Commercial pollination is hard work, requiring a sacrifice of sleep, family and fishing time, but it’s what we do. Dad is one of the beekeepers who figured out how to deal with the unique challenges, stresses and headaches of renting hives for multiple pollinations a season, as well as learning to be a self-taught business owner.

Matt and I can lean on some valuable lessons our parents have taught us over the years, and a few in particular come to mind: Find good employees and pay them well; feed your bees until you think you’re done feeding and then feed some more; satellite radio in your truck is totally worth it; bend your knees when pulling honey; remember the beekeeping industry is a small world and beekeepers have long memories.

Dad is fond of saying beekeeping is mostly problem solving and Matt and I will undoubtedly have our own problems to solve. Science and experience tell me our climate is changing, which means shifting ecosystems and growing zones, new pests and diseases. Natural pollinator habitat is disappearing, as is farmland. Agricultural chemicals are morphing into new kinds of products, ones with frightening potency and long lasting effects that are difficult to understand, let alone avoid. Cheap foreign honey will sometimes threaten domestic prices. As commercial pollinators our fate is tied to agriculture, which is vulnerable to drought, economics and corporate thinking.

Matt and I will spend our lives keeping bees in a different world than the one in which our parents bought some land and started setting bees out to make honey. We will struggle to find good bee forage and either sidestep or work with the mega-chemical industry. There will be new pests and diseases, and we don’t yet have cost-effective, reliable methods to manage some of the maladies that already exist. Hive beetles are showing up in Oregon. Bee theft seems to be on the rise. Meanwhile, I suspect there will always be bears – or at least skunks – and teenaged hicks looking to use beehives for target practice.

There will be challenges, but there will also be rewards. Honeybee pollination will continue to be a vital part of the agricultural system required to feed an exponentially growing population. At Foothills Honey Company, we’re growing our numbers to try and meet new pollination demands every year.

The public seems more interested in local, raw honey now than at any other point in my life. Consumers particularly want specialty honeys and artisanal products made with local honey – the mead section at my local grocery store is ever-growing – and people are willing to pay top dollar for these things. I think this is a very good sign. While we’re hesitant to return to the local value-added and craft markets Dad abandoned decades ago when the honey crop reached wholesale levels, perhaps this may be part of the future.

I also think more people are interested in keeping bees in their backyards as a hobby. As a result, our spring nucleus hive business is booming. We sold nearly 3,000 nucleus hives in 2015 to customers in Oregon and Washington, and the orders grow every year. I think this is also a very good thing. So yes, there will be challenges, but I believe that as long as flowers bloom and bees can find them, there will also be new opportunities. And that is why I believe it is going to work.

I would like to give a huge thank you to Joe Hansen for writing this article about his family business and love the youthful observations from his past and into the future. Please stay tuned for our next commercial article traveling to Hawaii to catch up with Gus and Sandy Rouse at Kona Queen Headquarters.

–Jan Lohman
Thank You for Your Donations to the Apimondia USA Bid for 2019 Effort

In 2014, a new nonprofit organization was formed to support a bid to bring the Apimondia Congress to the United States. Apimondia is our world beekeeping organization. A team of U.S. state and national beekeepers felt this would be a great opportunity for the beekeepers around the globe to see American beekeeping operations, and for US beekeepers to experience a Global Beekeeping Congress.

The USA Apimondia team spent many years on this endeavor, and we were confident about our chances of winning the bid. Creating a nonprofit organization helped us secure tax deductible donations to meet our mission of bidding to host the 2019 Apimondia Congress in the USA. The Apimondia team developed a very conservative budget, estimating we would need $120k in order to submit a high quality bid to the Apimondia Congress and its delegates. Through the help of generous donors we raised $96,879.57. As the Apimondia team fell short of donations, we were able to secure a loan for $20k to ensure we represented the US beekeepers to the best of our ability. Loans, of course, come with the stipulation that we would repay it.

Contributions made to Apimondia USA 2019 were donated by local and state beekeeping organizations, beekeeping companies, beekeeping suppliers, and most importantly by many, many individuals. These donations are sincerely appreciated, as we would not have been able to make this bid without these tax-deductible donations.

Most of you know that we did not win the bid. However, the team was still very positive about the experience, and encouraged about bidding in a future year. The team had wonderful interactions with beekeepers from around the world; however, in the end, many of us believed “geopolitical interactions” outside of our control led to our narrow loss of the bid.

The Apimondia team has been transparent in its fundraising, and all of its work was focused upon the mission of “seeking the bid to host the Apimondia Congress in the USA in 2019.” All of the donations raised supported this effort. Members of the Apimondia team travelled the country, spoke to bee clubs, and sought donations at conferences using their own funds and not those which were donated to the Apimondia USA bid effort.

The Apimondia team is making this final report to the beekeeping community, our donors, as part of our due diligence in managing the Apimondia USA 2019 bid nonprofit. We are closing out the financial records of this nonprofit, and closing the registration of the nonprofit at the end of this calendar year. The Apimondia team is being responsible concerning the nonprofit we created, and respectful of the donations and our donors, and submitting this report to the beekeeping community. The Apimondia team will make available the IRS 990 tax report we must file for this calendar year on the American Beekeeping Federation website (www.abfnet.org), as well as on the Pollinator Stewardship Council website (www.pollinatorstewardship.org). These two national organizations, along with the National Honey Board, were directly involved with the Apimondia team, and the team effort was a national effort of beekeepers. Again, the 990 will be filed at the close of this calendar year per IRS regulations, and it will be available for anyone to review.

Generally, the expenses for the Apimondia USA 2019 bid consisted of marketing materials, the design and construction of a booth for the Apimondia Congress in Korea this past September, entertainment for the booth, and gifts for delegates. The largest expense was shipping! We received in-kind donations of almonds, Craisins, and honey, but the cost of shipping these items to Korea (and costs at customs) exceeded the value of the in-kind donations. The booth design and shipping alone cost the Apimondia USA 2019 bid nearly $52,295. Twenty-three Apimondia team members from the US travelled to Korea to staff the USA booth. All of these twenty-three team members paid their own travel expenses to and from Korea. They all paid for their hotel and meals while in Korea. They all paid for their own registration fees to the Apimondia Congress in Korea. The donations were used to support travel for ONLY the two entertainers and the American Honey Queen, who staffed the booth every day, all day, and were fantastic ambassadors for American beekeeping.

The Apimondia team members who spoke to bee clubs, called prospective donors, and mailed letters donated their time and travel costs to the nonprofit Apimondia bid USA 2019. When the Apimondia team travelled to Florida, Washington, D.C., and Minnesota to determine in which city to hold the USA Apimondia Congress, the team members paid for their own travel. When the Apimondia team met with the International Apimondia Conference committee in Minneapolis, the team members paid for their own travel.

Per the bylaws of the Apimondia USA Bid 2019, the dissolution article advises us how any remaining funds are to be spent. The Apimondia team did not raise enough in donations to cover our budget and needed to take out a loan. This loan must now be repaid. However, the balance of funds after all bills are paid leaves $14,236.37. According to our nonprofit incorporation documents,
the balance will be used to repay a portion of our loan from the American Beekeeping Federation. The balance of the loan may be acknowledged through the Apimondia team providing the booth to ABF for their use for education at conferences, and overall marketing of ABF. The booth graphic design “skin,” however will have to be re-done by ABF, as the original “skin” was developed for Apimondia. ABF is not receiving a booth with a $33,859 value, they will receive a booth framework. Please remember, the majority of the cost of the booth was shipping it to Korea and back to the U.S.

All nonprofits have a “dissolution article” within their bylaws. This dissolution statement, for Apimondia USA bid 2019, states any such assets remaining shall be distributed by the Board of Directors for the purpose of beekeeping education and research. The Apimondia team was able to responsibly pay all of the bills from this project, and we will close this nonprofit organization with a zero balance.

The Apimondia USA bid 2019 team is grateful for the support of all of the donors who made their nonprofit contributions in support of this national effort. Even though we are closing down the nonprofit, your donations remain tax deductible contributions for this tax year for your own taxes. As a nonprofit entity, the Apimondia team met their mission: we submitted a bid (and a darned good one) to host the Apimondia Congress in the USA in 2019. We used your donations wisely, appropriately, and responsibly. The Apimondia team worked hard to secure your support, gain your trust, and represent American beekeepers to the best of our ability.

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- Gene Brandi, Vice-President ABF
- Todd Klingel, Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce
- Chris Hiatt, American Honey Producer Association
- Michele Colopy, Pollinator Stewardship Council
- Jim Bobb, Chairman Bid Committee
- Rachel Bryson, Chairman Marketing Committee
- Virginia Webb, Finance Committee
- Dr. Louisa Hooven, Program Committee

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- Gayle Prest, Director Minneapolis Sustain’y
2016 promotions have started with a bang! Your new American Honey Queen and Princess have been hard at work ever since their selection to these positions. We are pleased to have Kim Kester of Wisconsin and Tabitha Mansker of Texas join the ABF family and are eager to see all they accomplish for our organization through their many promotions this year.

Ten days after their selection, Kim and Tabitha arrived in Wisconsin to complete their professional media and presentation training with the American Honey Queen Committee. I extend my deepest appreciation to the outstanding team of trainers who aided in the Queens’ development program, including Carmen Risi, Louann Hausner, Danielle Dale, Angie Lundeen, Jolene McNutt, Rachel Bryson, Amy Blakeney, Dan Plechowski, and Bill Graffin. During training, the Queens had multiple hours of media training and practice, including on-camera experience and learning how to give effective media interviews in a variety of lengths, settings, and formats. They learned effective presentation techniques, industry information, and travel tips and tricks. They also put their new skills into action by speaking to area third and fourth graders for the first time as American Honey Queen and Princess.

In addition to media practice, the Queens set some impressive goals for the year. In the last seven years, social media has become a major component of the American Honey Queen program, and this year will be no different. We encourage all members to like the American Honey Queen Program Facebook page. Having encouragement from our members and program supporters helps the Queens promote our industry even more enthusiastically each year. In addition to their Facebook training, the Queens created YouTube videos introducing themselves to our organization.

Check out the American Honey Queen Channel on YouTube. We encourage you to subscribe to our channel. In addition to videos about the program, the channel primarily highlights different aspects of the industry. You can use these videos when you are giving educational programs. Each Queen will create educational videos this year to further this channel. Check it out and subscribe!

Honey Queen recipe brochures will be hot off the press soon and ready for the Queens’ promotions. If you have a promotional, educational, media, or government relations event that you would like the Queen or Princess to attend, please contact me as soon as possible. We’d love to send the Queens to your event this spring and early summer! Contact me at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514.

Member Milestones

5 Years
Lani Basberg, KY
Daniel Conlon, MA
John Gibeau, Canada
Toyokazu Matsumoto, NY
Sheila Millet, ID
Jerry Paul, OH
Kevin Rader, FL
Kathy Widing, OH
Phillip Wimmler, WI

10 Years
Bob Morlock, ND
John Turner, MA

15 Years
Peter Sliwka, PA

20 Years
Kenneth Ashurst, CA
Frederick Burdell, OH
Barry Purkis, FL
William Speer, TX
Bonnie Pierson, OH

25 Years
Judith Doan, NY

30 Years
Steven Duff, MN
Janyce Olson, MN

35 Years
Roger Olson, MN

40 Years
Oren Best, MI
Donald Byrne, MI
Ronald Fischer, IL

50 Years
Hachiro Shimanuki, FL
My name is Kim Kester, and I am deeply honored to serve as your 2016 American Honey Queen. I cannot wait to hit the road and begin promoting the beekeeping industry for you!

I am originally from Nekoosa, Wisconsin, where I grew up on a small hobby farm. I showed many species of livestock through my eight-year 4-H career, including horses, llamas, poultry, mini donkeys, and peacocks. My passion for agriculture grew, and I began to recognize the quiet diligence of the honey bees and the impact they have on American agriculture through pollination.

I served as the 2014 Waupaca County Honey Queen and 2015 Wisconsin Honey Queen. My beekeeping adventure began with two hives, and I will have six hives to manage this year. It is my personal goal to start producing chunk honey and comb honey in addition to liquid honey.

As American Honey Queen, I will be promoting our amazing honey industry all across the country. To achieve this, Princess Tabitha and I went through intensive training January 20-26 in Wisconsin with the American Honey Queen Program chairperson Anna Kettlewell. We were joined by several past Queens and Princesses that offered valuable insight into the many aspects of promotions.

Angie (Olson) Lundeen (2000 American Honey Queen) demonstrated how to utilize our blog, www.buzzingacrossamerica.com, which is geared toward elementary level students. The blog is where we post monthly educational articles about various topics within beekeeping or about honey. Princess Tabitha and I will tell every school we visit about Buzzing Across America and will encourage them to go online with a parent or teacher and ask us questions. We will offer quick replies to the students and hope to fuel their curiosity about honey bees.

Another avenue where we can reach youth and adults is YouTube. Danielle Dale (2012 American Honey Princess) guided us through the process of creating our first video, which can be viewed on our channel, AmericanHoneyQueen. YouTube allows us to teach the public with visual aids and information from a distance, drastically increasing our potential audience. Be sure to subscribe to our channel to be notified when new videos are posted!

Perhaps the largest social media outlet we can use to our advantage is Facebook. Jolene (Hoefs) McNutt (2006 American Honey Queen) showed us examples of types of posts that are excellent at engaging the audience and getting them actively involved. We will focus on tagging the schools, businesses, and organizations where we promote to reach even more people. During the week of training, we boosted our total page “likes” by 240 people! Liking the American Honey Queen Program Facebook page enables everyone to stay updated on all of our promotions and events.

In addition to expanding our audience through various types of social media, I will be placing particular emphasis on speaking to 4-H and FFA groups. It is crucial that youth understand the magnitude to which honey bees contribute to American agriculture and food, especially youth that are directly involved in the production of food crops. I will also aim to promote in two new states and in five governmental visits throughout the year.

I am proud to be your American Honey Queen and look forward to working with you all. If there is an event in your state that you would like me to attend, please contact Anna Kettlewell at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514. Thank you to all who have helped Princess Tabitha and me prepare for the upcoming year!
My name is Tabitha Mansker, and words cannot express how excited I am to be your 2016 American Honey Princess! I am honored to be chosen for this position and can’t wait to serve this amazing industry. I want to say thank you for your support of this program and for giving me this once in a lifetime opportunity. I am excited and humbled to be chosen to represent the ABF.

I am from a small farm town, Nevada, Texas, near Dallas. On my family farm, we raise honey bees and many animals, including goats, horses, donkeys, alpacas, and pigs. Being heavily involved in 4-H for eight years, I have had many opportunities to grow and mature by experiencing many hands-on activities. In 4-H, I participated in Angora goat showing, competitive cooking, and competitive fashion, learning many unique things about each industry.

I first was introduced to beekeeping when my older brother received a scholarship from the Collin County Beekeeper Association in 2007. From the beginning, beekeeping was a family activity. We all helped when it came to extracting the honey, and I really enjoyed taking pictures of catching swarms or going through the hives. When I was 15 years old, I had the opportunity to work for a commercial beekeeper, John Talbert. He and his wife Lavada invested in my life and helped me grow tremendously through beekeeping. For the past five years, I have worked with multiple beekeeping operations each summer, gaining an increased knowledge of the industry through hands-on experience. Since 2007, my family has expanded our apiary, and we continue to sell our honey as hobby beekeepers. I enjoy learning new things about the industry each day and am excited to have the opportunity to share my knowledge with others.

My job as the American Honey Princess is to promote the beekeeping industry and to educate the public on the importance of honey bees to our everyday lives. From January 20-26, I traveled to the freezing cold state of Wisconsin! Here, eight experienced trainers helped to prepare Queen Kim and me for the busy year ahead!

Intense days of training led to amazing results. One of the areas this really showed was in media interviews. Media training was one of the major things we worked on throughout our week. Though it felt like we did a million practice interviews and were very shaky and unsure at first, Kim and I are now equipped and prepared for this important task. One of our most important outlets for reaching the public is through media, whether this be radio, newspaper, or television interviews. Communicating effectively and accurately is so important for every interview. Taking the time to think ahead and be prepared is equally important, so before we even started training in front of the camera we outlined many important things to keep in mind when speaking with the media. Two things really stuck out to me. The first would be key messages and knowing the messages that you would like to convey in the interview. We learned to keep them short and to the point, and how to pick something catchy that the audience will remember. The second is bridging or moving from topic to topic smoothly and effectively in the interview. Whether your interview is for one minute or 45 minutes, bridging is an important skill to have. These are just two of the many, many things we talked about during our training, but learning these simple skills helps you feel confident and communicate effectively!

Now that training is over, I am getting ready for my next trip to Florida, so please be sure to follow the Queen’s and Princess’s travels on Facebook to find out more! Thank you for your support, and if you have an event that you would like Queen Kim or me to attend, please contact Anna Kettlewell at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514.
ABF DONATIONS

The following individuals contributed to the ABF Funds during the months of November and December 2016. These donations enable us to fund programs and services that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, Inc.
A group of former Wisconsin Honey Queens,
in memory of Keith Rowe
G. Aschenbrenner
Jordan Bagg, New York
Judith and Edward Doan, New York
Laura Ferguson, Arizona
George Hansen, Oregon
Fran Healy, Pennsylvania,
in memory of Michael March
Brenda Kiesling, Virginia
Larry Krause, Wyoming
Joan Malarkey, Maryland
Jan Misuraca, Missouri
Martha O’Carroll, Illinois,
in honor of Kristie and John Johnson
Perry Plescia, Illinois
M. Smith
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Amanda Stoker
Robin Voreis, Minnesota,
in honor of Melissa Anders
David and Michiko Watanabe, California
Harold Wilmerding, New Jersey

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Larry Krause, Wyoming
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Will Oberton, Minnesota

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Gene Brandi, California
Gloria Dickey, Texas
Essex County Beekeepers, Massachusetts
LA County Beekeepers, California
NW New Jersey Beekeepers
Sandra Rea, Pennsylvania
Kevin Shafer, Wisconsin,
in honor of Anna Kettlewell

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Gloria Dickey, Texas
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Larry Krause, Wyoming
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Doug Ruby, North Dakota
St. Croix Valley Beekeepers, Wisconsin
Kirk Stoller, Ohio
Valeri Strachan-Severson, California
David Sundberg, Minnesota

General
Dadant
Kirk Stoller, Ohio

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From the Auxiliary

The 2016 ABF Conference & Tradeshow in Ponte Vedra (Jacksonville), Florida, was very successful for the ABF Auxiliary. It was great to reunite with old friends and make new ones.

During the annual ABF Auxiliary luncheon, our 2015 American Honey Queen, Gabrielle Hemesath and American Honey Princess, Hayden Wolf, shared with us the activities involved in their very busy year. The 2016 Queen Candidates (Tabitha Mansker of Texas, Rebecca Eldridge of Indiana, Kim Kester of Wisconsin and Jessica Onsted of Pennsylvania) entertained us with their presentations, which were most enjoyable.

Congratulations to our new American Honey Queen Kim Kester of Wisconsin, American Honey Princess Tabitha Mansker and runner up Rebecca Eldridge of Indiana. We are so excited to have you represent the American Beekeeping Federation and the honey bee industry.

INGREDIENTS:
• 2 c. milk
• 2 med. bananas, cut in pieces
• 1/2 c. yogurt (plain or vanilla)
• 1 1/2 T. honey
• 1 1/2 T. wheat germ
• 1 tsp. ground cinnamon

DIRECTIONS:
Place all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Pour in a cup and enjoy!

ABF AUXILIARY OFFICERS

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Beth Hackenberg
799 Grange Hall Rd.
Milton, PA 17847
dhack@evenlink.com

Vice President
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From the Recipe Box of Beth Hackenberg

Banana Smoothie

Thank you to those who joined and continue to support the ABF Auxiliary. We appreciate the bee motif items that were donated for sale at the table or for the silent auction. As many of you know, the ABF Auxiliary supports different funds within the ABF. All the money raised from your donations are given back to support the Queen fund, Legislative fund and others.

The photo contest had a lot of very good entries and will be continued next year. Thank you to everyone who entered. Please continue to take those photos throughout the year, so that you will be ready to participate in the next contest at the 2017 conference in Galveston, Texas. Thank you to Louann Hausner for all her time and hard work as chairman of the photo contest. The note cards made from the photos were a very popular item at the ABF Auxiliary table, and we plan to continue them for next year.

We are looking forward to another outstanding year and a great conference in Galveston, Texas, in 2017.
FEDERATION MARKETPLACE

Interested in advertising in the Federation Marketplace?
Contact Regina K. Robuck,
ABF Executive Director
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