

# Buzzword



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**Next Meeting**

Tuesday, May 18, 2004,  
7:00 p.m.

**Mead Making**

By

**Beth Meyers**

At Stedman's in  
Silverdale

**Message from the President**

**G**reetings! I was told the best way to avoid becoming president was to show up for the election and I want to warn everyone that it doesn't always work! I'm sure I'll get to do lots of things I've never done before like registering our hives and being on time for the meetings, but since my wife Judy and I have only been keeping bees a couple seasons there are always plenty of new things to learn and try anyway.

One thing I always enjoy about coming to the meetings is finding out if my perceptions are similar to yours. Is it just me or is this the most amazing spring ever? Don't the flowers seem earlier, the days warmer, and there's just enough rain to keep the nectar flowing? Are your hives dripping with honey, bursting with bees and nary a swarm cell in sight? I can't wait to find out. See you at the meeting! **-Basil**



*President Basil inducts Ryan Hoskins, 17, into the joys of getting started in beekeeping.*

**Minutes of the Last Meeting**

April 20, 2004, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Stedman's Bee Supplies, Silverdale

**Treasurer's Report:**

\* Joe Grubbs presented a treasurer's report. We have 53 paid members as of April 20th. We have \$2577.55 in the checking account and \$2769.77 in the savings account.

**Announcements:**

\* Lots of discussion about the use of screened bottom boards. Jay Miller will forward a construction plan for screened bottom boards to Stephen so he can post it on the web site ([www.WestSoundBees.org](http://www.WestSoundBees.org)).

**Old/New Business:**

\* Nominations were opened for the officers' positions. Jim Willman, George Purkett and Basil Gunther were all nominated for President. After the first written ballot there was a tie between George and Basil. So we asked them to leave the room and we had a hand count. Basil Gunther was elected President for a one-year term. George Purkett was nominated for Vice-President and elected. For Treasurer, Joe Grubbs was nominated and elected. For Secretary, Tricia Sullivan was nominated and elected.

\* Door prize drawing: Roy Barton won a hive frame hanger.

**Program:**

\* Chanetta Ludwig gave an interesting program on Apitherapy.

**OFFICERS & COMMITTEES**

**President:**  
Basil Gunther 360-297-5075  
**Vice President:**  
George Purkett 360-895-9116  
**Secretary:**  
Tricia Sullivan 360-779-1210  
**Treasurer:**  
Joe Grubbs 360-871-5308

**Educational Materials:**  
Barbara Stedman 360-692-9453  
**Librarian:**  
Roy & Vickie Barton 360-613-0175  
**Newsletter Editor:**  
Stephen Augustine 360-779-1210

Another good reason  
to come to WSBA  
meetings -

## Door Prizes!

Congratulations to Roy Barton on winning a frame hanger—the second in our series of door prizes.

There's a door prize every month but you have to attend to win.

“The bee is more honored than other animals, not because she labors, but because she labors for others.”

- Saint John Chrysostom

## Congratulations!

To our new officers for 2004-2005. We had an excellent turnout for the last meeting and several good candidates running for office.

Elected were:

President: Basil Gunther  
Vice President: George Purkett  
Treasurer: Joe Grubbs  
Secretary: Tricia Sullivan

## BASICS IN NORTHWEST BEEKEEPING

Adapted from Ron Bennett (<http://members.aol.com/beetools/>)

**N**ow starts the most exciting period of the beekeeping year. Your bees should have been started, treated and fed, and should be in a dramatic growth mode. The queen (bless her little heart) is laying over 1,000 eggs a day. We have had many good days with the air above 50° and winds below 14 mph, and the bees have been out working very hard bringing in pollen and nectar.

But, here in the Northwest, there is about a three week period from the end of April into May where the nectar flow drops to almost zero. This is a very critical situation for your bees. They have been stimulated to build up a huge population to take advantage of the main nectar flow at end of May and are committed to raising and feeding a lot of young bees. Without feed sources around, your bees, which look big and strong and hard working, can actually starve out in the next three weeks. So, watch your bees carefully and don't let colony stores get below 15 lbs. If the colony starts to get light, FEED!!! Use a light syrup (1:1 sugar to water by volume).

Now is also swarm season when you hope that your neighbor beekeeper is not as good a beekeeper as you are and you can catch swarms from their hives while your good management practice keeps your hives from swarming. Swarm control is probably one of the least successful areas of beekeeping. Swarming is the natural way for bees to ensure the survival of their species, and like all teenagers, the instinct to reproduce is very difficult to control.

One of the ways to minimize swarming is by requeening

your hives. A swarm is a portion of your bees leaving with the old queen, and this tends to be with queens in their second year. So by requeening with a new young queen, you not only assure yourself of a strong queen, you cut down on the chance of her swarming. A second technique is to reverse your hive boxes. The bees will start the swarm process when the queen starts to run out of perceived space in which to lay. Since she tends to only move upward, she does not use the space available below the brood cluster. By reversing the boxes, you force the bees to reorganize their stores and therefore create new space for the queen to lay in.

Another method is to remove queen cells as they appear. But this rarely works since it's next to impossible to find all the queen cells. Additionally the constant intrusion into the hive will stress the colony greatly. With that in mind, examine your colonies about every 10 days. Set off the supers; tilt up the second story and look for queen cells along the bottom of the brood comb. If you find only eggs or larvae in the queen cells and the hive is crowded with bees, remove all the cells -- top and bottom. Put the hive body containing mostly worker bees or larvae on the bottom board, and the other containing mostly sealed brood on top. Next put on the queen excluder and add supers to provide 10 to 15 empty full depth comb, or their equivalent in the supers. Place the empty comb directly on the excluder.

If you find sealed or ripe queen cells, or possibly hatched ones, divide the colony. Set the top body, usually with most of queen cells, onto a bottom board and cover with a lid. Put this hive on a separate stand. Remove all queen cells from

the lower body; put on the excluder and add supers to provide 10 to 15 empty full depth combs, or their equivalent, above the excluder. Several hours later, look for the queen in the divide. If you find a virgin queen (no eggs laid), let her remain, but if you find the old queen pick her up and let her run into the entrance of the colony on the old stand. Let the queen cells hatch in the divide. If you find no attempt to rear queens, and the hive is full of bees, examine the supers and add more to provide 10 to 15 empty full depth combs, or their equivalent, above the excluder.

Give your hives a 3/4 inch depth entrance for better ventilation. Some beekeepers use a additional 3/4-1" hole in the upper box as a entrance and to provide ventilation.

Keep on the lookout for American foulbrood and take remedial action as necessary. If it's a very small outbreak it may be possible to remove the affected frames and treat with Terramycin. If treating with Terramycin do not treat with supers on that you intend to extract for honey. In the event of a full-blown outbreak the recommended action is to destroy the colony and burn the equipment.

Give supers with foundation, but only to those colonies that are working in the supers. Place directly over the queen excluder, if you are using one. If you have been fortunate and the honey flow has been good, add new supers under supers with capped honey. Remove and extract the supers containing well-ripened honey.



## Cleopatra, my kind of queen

By Stephen Augustine

Of our four hives, queen Cleopatra is my favorite. When all the other bees are frantically coming and going, Cleopatra's girls drift by at a very sedate pace. In the evenings I sit next to her hive entrance and watch the girls chatting and rubbing wings on the porch while next door Isabella's foragers are still frantically coming and going and Lana's porch bees are busy fanning the hive entrance.

I can open up Cleopatra's hive and carry out a frame-by-frame inspection without smoke, without gloves, and even without a veil. Those girls carry on with their wing-rubbing and their chit-chatting as if I wasn't even there. On the other hand, with Anna, the grumpy Russian, I spend twenty minutes just getting suited up plus I have to clear the surrounding two blocks of any stray pedestrians, young children, chickens and gawking bystanders.

Anna, Cleopatra's other neighbor, grew so fast this spring that she probably had twice as many bees as Cleopatra and consequently put out about three swarms and left about 10 virgin queens running around inside the hive. I know

I can count on Cleopatra to not swarm and save me a death-defying climb up the apple tree. She's one girl who's too relaxed to leave the comforts of hearth and home and besides, one queen in a hive is quite enough.

Anna, Lana and Isabella have each made

close to two full supers of spring honey compared to Cleopatra's one super but, as far as I'm concerned, all that honey is more of a bother than not (bad back and all).

Ah yes, I can imagine the nay-sayers and the doom-sayers out there muttering and shaking their heads. "These kind of genes shouldn't be propagated", I can hear them say. "That's one lazy queen", I hear them say. Go ahead then and breed your superbees who'll make a thousand pounds of honey for you

and work themselves to death in the process (after stinging you multiple times of course). I'm happy to bask in the sun in the company of Cleopatra's girls and besides I still don't know what we're going to do with the 100+ pounds of honey that she'll inevitably make without even trying too hard.



## Trees for Bees

After the meeting on Tuesday Judy and Basil will be selling small trees and plants. Featured will be the Evodia, the Chinese Lacebark Elm, and the Little Leaf Linden, all trees beloved by man, woman, and bee!

*Evodia hupehensis*, the Bee-Bee tree grows into a small, wide-headed tree with large creamy white flower clusters in late July. Likes sunny well drained sites. Go see Al's behind the honey shed. The Chinese Lacebark Elm, *Ulmus parvifolia*, with its colorful, blotchy, peely bark quickly grows into a medium-large (50') tree. Resistant to Dutch Elm disease, tolerates dry poor soils, and best of all flowers in September to top off those little bee larders. The Little Leaf Linden, *Tilia cordata*, besides having a reputation for plentiful and delicious honey producing nectar, is well suited to this region. While not known for its large size, it never stops growing and can reach over 100 feet! It also works in sheared hedges and can handle shade. Rusty King can tell you how its inconspicuous fragrant flowers are all abuzz in July!



### Refreshment Schedule

**May:** Jay Miller,  
Roy Barton  
**Jun:** Betty & Walter  
Schicker, Joe Higdon  
**Jul:** George Purkett,  
Mike Hoey  
**Aug:** Summer Picnic

If you are unable to fulfill your commitment to provide refreshments for a meeting please notify Barbara Stedman by giving her a call at 360-692-9453 before the meeting date.

### WSU Bee Lab 2nd Annual Spring Field Day and Picnic

June 4 and 5, 2004,  
Pullman, WA

At this event you will learn more about honeybees from researchers in the lab of Dr. Steve Sheppard, get hands-on lab experience, and see how and where honeybee research is done at WSU. Proceeds from the event benefit honeybee research at WSU.

The course begins at 12 noon on Friday, June 4. Classes continue at 8 a.m. on Saturday, June 5. Cost is \$20 per family. The Washington State Beekeepers Association Summer Picnic will be a catered lunch beginning at noon on Saturday. Choice of entrée includes all the fixings. Cost per person is \$12.00

Questions? Call: 360-297-6743, Email: myrasprings@centurytel.net Or send your registration in to: WASBA, P.O. Box 1331, Kingston, WA 98346



# Swarm Season Is Upon Us

*A pictorial from Bees By The Bay*



**This after-swarm took off, milled in the air for ten minutes and then came right back to the hive.**

**A virgin queen with deformed wings - the first time I've seen this**



**A primary swarm in the hedge**

*Photographs by Stephen Augustine & Tricia Sullivan*



**West Sound Beekeepers Association  
3763 NW Anderson Hill Road  
Silverdale, WA 98383  
<http://www.WestSoundBees.org>**

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Mead Making  
7 p.m. at Stedman's in Silverdale**