



SEMBA NEWS

Volume 15 Number 6 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association
November/December 2005

Upcoming Events:

SEMBA Annual Meeting

Sun., October 16, 2005 (See below for details.)

Seven Ponds Bee Club Meeting

Tues., October 25, 2005, Seven Ponds Nature Center

MBA Fall Meeting

October 27-29, 2005 (See page 1 for details.)

Indiana Beekeeper's Conference

November 4-5, 2005 (See page 2 for details)

Schoolcraft Bee Club Meeting

Tues., November 8, 2005 (See page 1 for details)

Seven Ponds Bee Club Meeting

Tues., November 22, 2005, Seven Ponds Nature Center

Oakland Bee Club Meeting

Tues., December 6, 2005 (See page 1 for details)

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SEMBA ANNUAL MEETING:

When: Sunday, October 16, 2005

Where: Lower Waterman Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, Michigan

Notes: Potluck dinner at 12 noon. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. Beverages will be provided by SEMBA.

PROGRAM

1:30 Business meeting
Election of officers

Speaker: Kent Stiles, "Urban Apiculture Project"

Bring items for sale or swap. A refractometer will be available to check the moisture content of your honey.

Nomination slate:

President--- Keith Lazar
First Vice President---Ted Hysen
Second Vice President---
Secretary--- Susanne Sadik

Nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Editor: Susanne Sadik souxsieq2@msn.com <http://www.sembabees.org>

Associate Editors: Mary and Roger Sutherland rsuther@hotmail.com

MICHIGAN BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION FALL MEETING

When: October 27-29, 2005

Where: Valley Plaza Resort, Midland, Michigan
Call 1-800-825-2700 for reservation details.

Notes: Featured speaker is Dr. Greg Hunt from Purdue University.

SCHOOLCRAFT BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, November 8, 2005 7:30 p.m.

Where: Lower Waterman Center, Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road., Livonia, Michigan

Program: "Lives of Social Insects" by Roger Sutherland

A refractometer will be available to check the moisture content of your honey.

Refreshments are welcome.

OAKLAND BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, December 6, 2005 7:30 p.m.

Where: E.L. Johnson Nature Center, 3325 Franklin Road, Bloomfield Township, Michigan

Program to be announced.

Refreshments are welcome.

MICHIGAN STATE FAIR UPDATE

In the September/October newsletter, we listed SEMBA members who worked in the SEMBA educational booth during the Michigan State Fair and winners of the honey, wax and bees competition. Since then, we have received the following additional information.

Educational posters were entered by Dyanne Tracy and Dick Miller, and Tom Jenkins entered an observation hive.

Mark Crawford, Jim Goodrich, Bob Handley, Cindy and Tom Lisk, Kynis Maynor, Dyanne Tracy, Dave Zurek, and Mary and Roger Sutherland all worked in SEMBA's educational booth.

Ann Kerwin deserves special thanks for lining up 53 SEMBA members to maintain SEMBA's educational booth.

COORDINATOR NEEDED FOR STATE FAIR

The SEMBA Board is looking for someone to act as a coordinator for SEMBA's beekeeping booth in the 2006 Michigan State Fair. Please contact Keith Lazar, 248-626-2483 or e-mail keithmlazar@hotmail.com

NOVEMBER DUES ARE NOW PAYABLE

If your mailing label denotes N05, your membership will soon expire. Please complete the enclosed membership renewal form and send with your check to the address listed on the form.

ENTERING THE STATE FAIR HONEY COMPETITION

Why not make a decision right now to enter one or more of the many classes in the apiary division of the 2006 Michigan State Fair? In preparation for those entries, consider setting aside some of this year's honey and wax for the competition. With four placements in each apiary category you are bound to win something for your \$10.00 entry fee: and with that single entry fee, you may also enter other agricultural products at no additional cost.

In this year's State Fair, individual prize-money totals awarded to SEMBA members who entered classes in the apiary competition ranged from \$40.00 to \$300.00. Hundreds of dollars more in prize money were available but there were no projects entered to be eligible for second, third and fourth places.

SEMBA MEMBERS ARE GREAT VOLUNTEERS

Many beekeepers in our organization are willing to volunteer by mentoring other beekeepers, working at the Michigan State Fair, or assisting non-beekeepers with "bee" problems. To list a few, Henry Semczak helps maintain the observation hive at E.L. Johnson Nature Center; Tom Lisk contributes considerable time as SEMBA's Web Master; and Ed Nowak faithfully conducts the SEMBA Bee Class. Also, at the annual beekeeping conference, several SEMBA members volunteer to conduct the workshop sessions.

In the September/October newsletter, we featured SEMBA member Steve Burt who has volunteered to help maintain the observation hive on Belle Isle for the Detroit Zoological Society.

In this issue of the newsletter, we introduce and salute SEMBA member David Zurek of Northville.

"Dave started his beekeeping career last year with a bang. He took over Al Noall's beekeeping hobby and expanded the operation to 18 hives. He enrolled in the SEMBA beekeeping class with Earl Hoffman last year-where he learned everything he knows about bees. Dave went from 18 hives at 5 locations last year to 77 hives in 8 locations this year.

Dave says it's been a whirlwind of a year for him--actually the past two years. Two years ago Dave remarried; he lost his first wife to cancer 5 years ago. Since their marriage Dave and his wife Linda have a new 9 month-old baby. Last year also brought some fear and concern into Dave's life; he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, a sweat duct cancer, and his wife's pregnancy became critical in her last trimester. After two surgeries, a ten week recovery period and a premature newborn, Dave decided not to return to his corporate job as an Automotive Electronics Technologist. Life is just way too short.

He and Linda have plans to relocate to some property in the mid-state area and start an organic farm. Of course, honey will be his first crop. They want to farm a few acres for vegetables, livestock and poultry. Linda can retire at age fifty which is only a few years off. At that time they are going to leave the city life behind for good.

Leaving the work-a-day world behind has been anything but leisurely, relaxing or quiet for Dave and his family. Hannah, their 9 month-old daughter has kept both of them busy since she arrived. Since Dave expanded his business three fold it has taken a lot of time to build up equipment and keep the operation going. He spends two days a week selling honey at local farmers' markets and at least one day visiting his hives. One issue is their location: a nearly 3 hour drive to the bulk of his hives. 'It's OK though, "he says, "because this is the area where we intend to start our farm."

Dave and Linda are quite excited about honey sales. Recently, Dave's nephew got him some shelf space at a

local supermarket. They hope to be able to expand to other grocery stores in the future. Also, a church group approached him at the market a few weeks ago and they were interested in buying a couple hundred pounds of honey in the next month.

Along with the sales and marketing aspect of the business Dave is always interested in broadening his knowledge base of the honey bee. He recently accepted Roger Sutherland's offer of maintaining an observation hive at the Hands-On Museum in Ann Arbor. Roger has maintained the hive there for twenty years and Dave is looking forward to providing the museum with the same enthusiasm and quality of service for another twenty years. Dave is also looking forward to his first educational presentation to an elementary school class this fall.

As far as the corporate job, Dave hasn't looked back. He says, I wish everyone could enjoy their jobs as much as I love mine (beekeeper). All the best to every beekeeper hobbyist and commercial alike. May all your honey be sweet. God Bless."
~Roger Sutherland

DONATION MADE TO HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

Mary and Roger Sutherland were recently notified by Heifer International that SEMBA member John Piette has donated (in their honor) two hives of bees to a community in a developing country. We applaud this gift and encourage others to consider making similar contributions.

Heifer International is a nonprofit organization that helps to alleviate hunger, poverty and environmental degradation through gifts of food, training and income producing farm animals. These animals provide a source of protein, such as eggs and milk, for children and generate income for families through the sale of animal products. Since 1944 Heifer has helped over 4 million families in 125 countries to become self-reliant. Each family "passes on the gift" by giving one or more of its animal's offspring to another family in need.

Heifer International is raising \$1 million to help families recover from Hurricane Katrina. Hundreds of families in more than a dozen Heifer projects in Louisiana and Mississippi have been impacted. Money raised will help them and other struggling low-income farm families in the area rebuild their lives.

If you wish to learn more about this organization that promotes economic development through supporting sustainable agriculture visit their website:
www.heifer.org

INDIANA BEEKEEPERS CONFERENCE

The Indiana Beekeepers' Association will hold their Fall Conference at Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN., November 4-5, 2005. The park is near the Michigan border. Call David Barrickman 765-623-4633, dbarrickman@iquest.net for more information.

CHECK OUT THE REVISED SEMBA WEB PAGE

Sembabees.org

Tom Lisk, sembabees.org web master has created a new, easy- to-access page listing bargain corner items. We hope to update it weekly so that you will be able to readily advertise your sale or wanted items to the membership.

If you have items to list, you may contact Tom directly using the address on the web site or contact Roger Sutherland at rsuther@hotmail.com or call Sutherland's at 734-668-8568.

THE MYSTERY OF THE KING? (QUEEN)

The monarch is dead; long live the King! (Well, I don't think her loyal subjects will allow for that very long.) On one fine day I went out to the hive in the back yard to pull off 4 supers

above the queen excluder. I did not check for brood. When I removed the last super, there she was stuck in the excluder; at least her backside was. A few attendants were working on her on both sides of the excluder. I picked her up; she was still soft and pliable. How long had she been dead? I have no idea. I checked below the excluder and found eggs and 2 queens. I did not plan for that. I checked the 4 supers and found just a small amount of brood capped but no eggs. Did she run out of room to lay and go looking for her sister and get into an argument? If so, she lost when she got stuck in the excluder. She was a very nice looking queen. I put her in the honey house on a windowsill. Almost at once 6 bees were around her. They seemed to be grooming her and trying to get her to move.

This went on for several days. Never give up. I cleaned off the ledge. She is gone for good now. Where did she come from? I found no queen cells in any of the 4 supers that I had taken off. Questions always questions. ~ *Bill Sirr*
wsirr@aol.com

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

We have a golden opportunity to promote our product every year at Halloween. Our young children enjoy collecting sweet treats and their parents want the treat to be good for their children. Honey is the perfect solution. Last year we gave out honey straws and every comment was positive from each kid. They also were saying thank you and looking forward to discovering the delicious results. You will be amazed to see the results of someone experiencing good tasting Honey for the first time. Another way to give the kids a special surprise is to give them a chunk of Honeycomb. It is easy. Just cut them into small bite size cubes and place each cube into an one ounce plastic cup and top with its leak proof cover. Let them know the wax is edible and healthy for the body. Our children need to have a chance to choose between something that is good and very good.
~ *Gerald Dunbar*

LETTER FROM A BEEKEEPER WANNABE

My name is Kent Stiles and I live in Rochester Michigan. Although I am 59 years of age, I became a SEMBA member just last year. I also am not yet a beekeeper, but would very much like to be, in spite of starting late in life. I asked the SEMBA Board of Directors for the opportunity to write a regular column in this newsletter for a number of reasons that I describe below:

My first reason is as a way to begin two-way communications with other SEMBA beekeeper "wannabes" who find that they share some, or all, of the same beekeeping related interests that I do. For instance, I want to keep my bees right on my suburban home property. I would like to produce several varieties of honey. I would like to try out beekeeping without making a significant upfront investment, in case I change my mind, etc.

My second reason is as a way to provoke experienced SEMBA beekeepers into telling me what I am doing wrong, or even right. Part of what I want to include in these columns is information about my plans and activities related to beekeeping and then report on what they tell me. I would also be interested in hearing from other new beekeepers about their plans and activities and report on them. By doing this, my hope is to take the best advantage of the knowledge of the dwindling number of experienced SEMBA beekeepers without abusing their time and energy.

My third reason is as a way to find out if there are other SEMBA members who would be interested in establishing a formal Southeast Michigan beekeeping cooperative. I will discuss my thoughts about this cooperative in future columns, but essentially it is cooperating as beekeepers in

ways that SEMBA members have done in the past, but in a more consistent and vital way. It is my belief that it is cooperatives like the one that I will be proposing that will do more than anything else to revitalize the beekeeping "industry" in the U.S., whether a person wants to simply make beekeeping a hobby or whether they want to make it a full time business.

My fourth reason is that I would like to "recruit" potential team members for a project that I have tentatively called the "Urban Apiculture Development Project". I will be introducing this project at the October 16th Annual meeting and in future newsletters.

As I indicated above, there are a number of reasons that motivate me to want to become a beekeeper here in Southeastern Michigan:

The first reason is that I enjoy honey and appreciate honeybees. A few months ago, my wife and I hosted a honey tasting party in my home and we invited my two sons and their wives. I had acquired only eight varieties of honey from the grocery store, our local farmers' market and a fellow SEMBA member, but the whole family had a great time tasting the honey and learning about honey and honeybees. My older son is a systems engineer with an interest in Microsystems technology and he shares his father's interest in the complex and productive behavior of these living Microsystems called honeybees.

The second reason is that I like beekeepers. I believe that most of them possess personal characteristics and integrity that we need more of in our communities and I like associating with them. Therefore, I am interested in encouraging more young people, particularly young people in our increasingly urban society to become beekeepers. I am encouraged to find out that there seems to be a renewed interest in beekeeping and that our SEMBA membership is growing.

The third reason is that beekeeping fits very nicely into my interest in having a home business where I can take maximum advantage of my property, time and energy. I am also a gardener and live just a few blocks from where Rochester has a small farmers' market where I would like to sell what I produce. However, I also like being able to have a "business" where I am producing things that I can give to my family and friends as gifts and know that they will appreciate them.

The fourth reason is that one of my past career interests is what I call "enterprise development". I would get great satisfaction and feel like I had made a lasting, long-term contribution to the betterment of mankind, if I were successful in playing a significant role in revitalizing and transforming the beekeeping "industry". I keep putting quotes around the word "industry" because one of my goals would be to enable people, not only to do what they enjoy doing, but be able to choose to make it their life time business, or simply keep it a hobby, or function anywhere in between without having to choose ahead of time. I even have a vision of Southeastern Michigan becoming the center for beekeeping in the U.S., particularly for high quality, varietal honey, and honey products, similar to various regions in the world that are famous for high quality wine of various varieties.

The fifth reason is that beekeeping is what could be called a "foundational" enterprise that can lead to the establishment

of other small businesses or hobbies (enterprises) that utilize all of the things that bees produce, enterprises that supply beekeepers and even enterprises that use the bees themselves. Most of us are familiar with some of those enterprises, though we probably would be surprised by some of them. My belief is that with the help of beekeepers, scientists will find many more uses for honeybees and their products.

A major part of my past experience has been in computer information management and so I also am interested in having beekeepers take maximum advantage of home computers and the Internet. These are wonderful tools for online learning, transacting business, and particularly for the establishment of a very practical and comprehensive beekeepers cooperative. The SEMBA Board has begun to take advantage of this new technology and so you can expect to see many extensions and improvements in the SEMBA website in the near future, some of which I have already had the privilege of influencing.

Again, my hope is that I will find that some of you share some or all of these same reasons for becoming beekeepers and would be interested in cooperating in order to help yourself, and others, become better beekeepers more quickly. If you find that you do share these interests and might like to participate in some way in this collaboration, please call me at 248 652-4031 or send me an email at kstiles@exphysica.com.

~Kent Stiles

SEMBA Bargain Corner

Free:

- 45 frame galvanized extractor. **Call John Wrosch, 734-678-2706, jpwrosch@att.net**

For Sale:

- 1891, 1901 and 1905 editions of ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture. **Call Theodore Helzerman, 517-223-9710**
- New medium and deep supers, frames, screened and regular bottom boards, inner and telescoping covers, 5 gallon buckets w/lids and other wood items. **Call Keith Lazar, Cell 248-361-1710, Home 248-626-2483**
- Bee blower. **Call Blanche Barber, 248-634-7017**
- 12-24 Dayton Stainless steel extractor, Woodman 4 frame hand crank extractor, Galvanized rendering barrels, funnel strainers, 20 gallon galvanized square tub w/ stand, electric uncapping knives, new and used shallow and deep supers, some with frames. **Call Gloria Cogar, 248-437-1648**
- Honey for sale: **Donna Laws, 248- 698-6908; Mark Megel, 586-216-2056; J. Brown Honey Farm 734- 422-0296**
- Package bees from Wilbank's Apiary, April 2006. **Call Blanche Barber, 248-634-7017**
- Bee Books For Sale: 1891, 1901, 1905 EDITIONS ABC-XYX OF BEE CULTURE **Call Ted Helzerman, 517-223-9710**

Wanted:

- Honey wanted: **R.Sutherland, 734- 668-8568; Kent Stiles, 248-652-4031, e-mail: kstiles@exphysica.com**
- Needed, someone to assist with the Michigan State Fair program for 2006. **Please contact Keith Lazar at 248-361-1710**

Note: ads in the Bargain Corner are free to SEMBA members. To place an ad, contact Susanne at souxsieq2@msn.com, or phone 248-476-4991 or Roger Sutherland rsuther@hotmail.com.

Southeastern Michigan
Beekeepers' Association
Organized April 1, 1934

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



Seven Ponds Beekeepers' Club



SEMBA Membership
5488 Warren Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9425