



from the **U. C. APIARIES** University of California



May/June 2009

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Newsletter Subscriptions

A snail mail (US Postal Service) subscription still is available for \$15 a year. Send your payment (preferably a check made payable to the **Regents of UC**) to me at the address at the end of this newsletter. Be sure your name and address are easy to determine.

If you wish to have this newsletter sent directly to your e-mail address, when it is published, please follow the instructions below.

Send an e-mail addressed to **listproc@ucdavis.edu**. Leave the Subject line empty. In the body of your message put in the following: sub ucdavisbeenews <your first name (without these “brackets” around it)> <your last name>. On the next line, insert two hyphens, not underscores (underlines). If I were subscribing, it would be:
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The hyphens are there to tell the subscription software on the server not to be confused by any following information that occurs, such as a “signature frame” (or signature block, as I call it).

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2009 WAS Conference

I will be devoting a good deal of this newsletter to the upcoming Annual Conference of the Western Apicultural Society (WAS). The organization was founded in 1978 by Norm Gary, Becky Westerdahl, and me to provide non-commercial beekeepers an opportunity to meet researchers and others of influence in the beekeeping industry in an informal, educational setting, without the distractions of beekeeping industry politics.

Unlike its eastern counterpart, the Eastern Apicultural Society (\approx 1,000 attendees), attendance hovers around 100 individuals who enjoy the friendships developed over time and who enjoy the bee research and beekeeping information provided by the speakers. I hope that you will consider joining us in the Wine Country for our next, laid back, beekeepers get together.

WAS Conference, 2009, Healdsburg, CA

The pieces are coming together quite well for our upcoming Conference. Details of the schedule are in a separate article. We have a good idea of what the Conference costs will be, but it always is a gamble to try to distribute those costs over an unknown number of participants to determine the registration fees. With people watching their budgets more closely, perhaps they will forgo their fancy vacations and decide to take a relaxing “staycation” in Wine Country and take in a top-notch bee meeting. There are very significant financial incentives for preregistering (before July 15th) for the Conference, even if you wish to pay only on a day by day basis. If BBQ and Banquet reservations are not made by July 15th, it is likely there will not be a later opportunity. You can download and print different registration forms from the Web site: (no www) groups.ucanr.org/WAS/index.cfm.

This is the time to consider nominating individuals for our two categories of awards. The Outstanding Service to Beekeeping Award "shall be presented at the annual banquet to a person, normally from the West, who has made outstanding contributions to beekeeping. These contributions may be in such areas as research, teaching, public relations, publishing, service to WAS or other beekeeper organizations, or any other creative activity that contributes to the art and science of beekeeping and the enjoyment of beekeeping as a hobby." This award actually can be given to anyone in the US or Canada. The second award, the Thurber Award for Inventiveness, "may be presented at the annual banquet to a person, normally from the local area, who has demonstrated abnormal creativity in inventing beekeeping devices or practices." There is no need to limit this award by locality, since we tend to circulate among a very few states and provinces. We will accept candidates for these awards from any western states or provinces. No formal application process is involved. Just submit the name of the nominee with adequate justification for the nomination to Eric Mussen, Entomology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616 by July 15th, 2009.

Two matters that will come up for a vote at the Annual Business Meeting are amendments to the Bylaws (thank you, Jim Bach, for the excellent update) that include increases in membership rates. The Bylaws require some fine tuning so that our current practices match the criteria listed in the Bylaws. The Bylaws amendments have to be distributed to the membership before the vote, so they are included in the Summer WAS Journal issue (visit the Web site). Our membership rates require a boost since the cost of publishing and mailing the Journal exceeds the income generated annually by our current membership fees.

Here is another gentle reminder about door prizes. If you appreciate the chance to acquire some little token for arriving at the sessions on time, then please keep your eyes peeled for a few things that might be fun to receive. We will distribute those items throughout the meeting in a very quick manner preceding the first speaker as sessions open. Silent auction items can be anything. They will be on display for days during the Conference. We will be accumulating door prizes and silent auction items in the Conference area of the Krug Event Center on Monday afternoon, August 17th. You are likely to find Vice-president Helen coordinating those events.

Don't forget to bring a jar of honey for the Honey and Wine Tasting event on Monday evening. Bring along a few extra jars or bears for trading with other honey producers.

Conference Details

We are attempting to cover quite a few areas of interest for beekeepers and those interested in native pollinators. Areas of interest are separated so that people living nearby, with special interests, may choose which sessions to attend. Monday afternoon will be “set up” time for vendors and the Silent Auction. A Delegates’ and Directors’ Meeting is scheduled for 3:00 pm in an out-of-the-way corner of the Conference room. Registration will begin around 3:00 pm, also, in the Krug Event Center.

Monday evening, August 17th, will start things off with a honey and wine tasting from 7 – 9:00 pm in the Krug Center at the Dry Creek Inn. The tasting will be led by WAS Treasurer, Mark Pitcher. A native of nearby Napa Valley, Mark teaches classes, annually, in wine making in northern California. Silent auction items will be available for bidding that evening, also.

Tuesday morning, August 18th, we are going to learn the latest information coming from university studies on honey bee diseases and honey bee health. Jerry Bromenshenk will describe the seasonality of virus titers in the samples they have processed. He also is likely to describe and display his hand-held, acoustic monitoring device that “listens” to the health of a honey bee colony. (For fun, look up Wood’s Apidictor in your browser to see its predecessor.) Following Jerry, Häagen Dazs postdoctoral fellow Michelle Flenniken will describe her efforts to determine how honey bees respond to being infected with viruses. She also will tell us how things are coming along with the bee disease microarray diagnostic chip. Then, Steve Sheppard will describe the changes in pathogen and parasite loads over the season in commercial beekeeping operations in the State of Washington. Jerry and Michelle may share similar baseline data on other commercial and hobby beekeeping operations with which they are involved.

Tuesday noon many of us we will carpool a short distance to April Lance’s property on West Dry Creek Road for a riverside BBQ (Dry Creek is too shallow for swimming). A map to the site will be provided in the green Healdsburg shopping bag handed out at registration. April is coordinating with a meat company to provide a great spread. A vegetarian entrée will be available upon previous request. Following the BBQ, participants can have a free afternoon or they can attend an afternoon session with Dr. Larry Connor dealing with topics of interest suggested by area club members. Dr. Connor’s sessions have an additional fee, beyond the Conference registration free. (Don’t abandon your carpool passengers!).

On Wednesday morning, August 19th, many of us will be leaving the Krug Event Center for a visit to Serge Labesque’s apiary in Glen Ellen (about a 45 minute drive). Among a number of other items of interest, we should have a Hungarian motorized, rotating circular combs hive, and a number of different top bar hives and apiary watering devices. Carpooling is essential for this trip. A map to the White Barn will be provided in the green shopping bag handed out at registration. In Glen Ellen we will be meeting in the White Barn, for an introduction from Anne Teller, the owner/manager of the organic farm and produce center (Red Barn) on the other side of the hill, before visiting the apiary.

For others, Dr. Larry Connor will be conducting a second, additional fee, half day session, dealing with a set of beekeeping topics different from the previous afternoon session in the Krug

Center. Following the morning activities, lunch will be on your own. A list of eateries, nearby the Krug Center, will be provided in the registration materials

Wednesday afternoon, we shift to native pollinators. UC Davis Emeritus Professor Robbin Thorp will introduce us to the fascinating world of non-*Apis* bees. He will be followed by two other professors, Neal Williams and Claire Kremen, who will describe their studies on the contributions of native bees to commercial crop production east and west of the Rockies, respectively.

Thursday, August 20th, the last day of the Conference, is a very full day. The morning session opens with Ron Fessenden, MD, MPH; founder of The Committee for the Promotion of Honey and Health, Inc., and co-author of the books: “The Hibernation Diet” and “The Honey Revolution.” Following Ron’s introduction to that topic, Dewey Caron, Emeritus Professor, author of the textbook “Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping” and next year’s WAS President, will be describing the natural history of a honey bee colony. Then, we have the Annual Business Meeting that will bring us to lunch time. Lunch is on your own and there are a number of interesting places nearby to find a meal.

Following lunch, Liz Applegate will continue the topic of honey and health by sharing her findings on the effects of honey on exercise physiology. The next speaker will be sideline beekeeper; part time researcher; part time school teacher; and bee journal author Randy Oliver. Randy will share with us his knowledge of many topics determined in many ways. After Randy, the Silent Auction ends and there is a Delegates’ and Directors’ Meeting at 3:30 pm.

At 6:00 pm we will have a no host social, then proceed to our Buffet Banquet and Awards Presentations in the Krug Center beginning around 6:30 pm. That evening, or the next day, everyone should enjoy a safe trip home or to wherever the next destination is.

Please note that we rapidly are approaching the deadline for price breaks on the Conference pre-registration. Also, if demand for rooms at the Dry Creek Inn has been typical, the room block of better priced rooms for the WAS meeting may have dissolved, since the contract said it would as of June 17th.

Travel Tips

Healdsburg does not have much other than local transportation and taxis. There is a Charles M. Schultz (Sonoma County) Airport. Currently, Horizon Air [(800) 547-9308] has one flight in and out to Las Vegas, daily; two flights in and out to Los Angeles, daily; one flight in and out to Portland, OR, daily, and two flights out and one flight in from Seattle, daily. Avis, Enterprise, and Hertz rent cars at the airport, but it is only an eleven mile trip to Healdsburg, so a taxi might be less expensive. There is an Airport Express that busses folks from the Sonoma County Airport to either the San Francisco or Oakland airport for \$32 one way (only save \$2 on round trip ticket). Greyhound does not stop close to Healdsburg, although it must go right through the town, as it has stops in Santa Rosa and Ukiah along highway 101.

**WESTERN APICULTURAL SOCIETY 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
 DRY CREEK INN AND KRUG EVENT CENTER
 198 Dry Creek Road
 Healdsburg, CA August 17-20, 2009**

Pre-Registration Form (by July 15th)

Name(s) _____

As you wish it (them) to appear on your name badge(s)

Current mailing address _____

Street, apartment #

City	State/Province	Zip/Postal code
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Phone no.	E-mail
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Conference Cost per person

Full (4-day) Conference Package (Includes Monday evening wine and honey tasting, Tuesday Riverside Barbecue, and Thursday Banquet)

Pre-registration before July 15th (Vegetarian) \$130 x = _____

Delayed Registration (July 16 or later – no BBQ or Banquet) \$ 90 x = _____

Any Single Day(s): Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., excluding meals (circle) \$ 25 x = _____

Tuesday Afternoon with Dr. Larry Connor (requires \$25 daily reg., also) \$ 45 x = _____

Wednesday Morning with Dr. Larry Connor (requires \$25 daily reg., also) \$ 45 x = _____

Barbecue (independent of Conference package) (Vegetarian) \$ 35 x = _____

Awards Banquet (independent of Conference package) (Vegetarian) \$ 40 x = _____

Can you provide Tuesday transport from the motel to nearby BBQ site? Yes No

Can you provide Wednesday transport to distant Glen Ellen Apiary? Yes No

Tour (optional)

Free half day visit to Glen Ellen Apiary (Wednesday) _____ Number

Annual Dues (US funds)

Individual: \$10, Junior & Senior: \$7.50, Couple: \$15, Associate: \$10, \$ _____

Commercial: \$50, Life: \$100, Couple Life: \$150, Benefactor: \$500, Patron: \$1000

Total Conference Registration Payment \$ _____

All W.A.S. pre-registration forms and payments at full U.S. rate (no credit cards) must be received no later than July 15th, 2009. Forms must be mailed, and checks must be made payable to **Western Apicultural Society**. Mail to: Mark Pitcher, Treasurer; Western Apicultural Society, 334 Walton Place, Saanich, British Columbia, Canada V9E 2A4. The cost of mailing a first class letter to Canada has increased to \$ 0.75.

Conference Lodging

Special Conference lodging rates (\$95 for “Vintage” and \$180 for deluxe “Tuscan” Rooms) per night, plus tax, etc., at **Dry Creek Inn** (Best Western) must be reserved on or before June 17th. Please call 707-433-0300 and specify Western Apicultural Society (WAS). This rate is not available at the normal 800 reservation number or on-line. **Request the special beekeeper rate.** That rate will return to the rack rate, around \$119-279 (if any rooms are available), after June 17th. No deposit is required and you can cancel a reservation up to 48 hours in advance of the Conference.

Other nearby lodging

Travelodge Inn, 178 Dry Creek Road (basically, right next door), Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 433-0101 – around \$129, currently.

Belle de Jour Inn Bed and Breakfast, 16276 Healdsburg Avenue, Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 431-9777 – Inn and cottages \$225-355, currently.

Grape Leaf Inn, 539 Johnson Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 433-8140 - \$265-575. currently.

Honor Mansion, 891 Grove Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 433-4277 - \$275-600.

Duchamp Hotel, 41 Foss Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 431-1300 - \$350-425 per “Villa,” currently.

Exhibitors

Exhibit space will be available. Check with Eric Mussen for more information (ecmussen@ucdavis.edu).

2009 Conference T-Shirt

I asked famed graffiti artist (actually my nephew) to design this image for our WAS Conference. Others helped provide the color, and I contacted a shop in Davis that will print the shirts on pre-shrunk, shape holding, white blank shirts from the computer file. The shirts come in sizes Youth: small, medium and large; Adult small, medium, large, extra-large and double-X. All shirts will cost \$8.00, except the double-X that will cost \$10.

Please send your shirt orders directly to: Eric Mussen, Entomology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616. I need to receive the shirt orders by July 31st. You can pay for them at the Conference. If you are not coming to the Conference, but would like a shirt, anyway, then include a check with your order. Checks should be payable to: Western Apicultural Society.



CA Apiary Changes Coming?

I reported earlier that the CA Apiary Board hoped to be able to reinstitute an apiary assessment in order to generate substantial funding for honey bee research in California, across the country, or around the world. Current law specifies that a very large percentage of such collected funds be disbursed to individual counties and to CDFA for administrative purposes.

Originally, it was decided to rewrite portions of the CA Agriculture Code to set new assessment fees and to redirect where the collected funds would be expended.

That approach morphed into the possibility of starting up something like a California Apiary Commission, which has more options for spending funds and less guidance from CDFA. At the moment, given the dire financial fiscal condition of State Government, even currently functioning commissions are being raked over the coals as being completely unnecessary expenses by CDFA. In fact, some legislators would like to see CDFA integrated into other departments, in order to save staff and administrative overhead. This is not the time to try to request forming a new commission.

On to a third approach? Discussions held with members of CDFA, Holly Fraumeni of Platinum Advisors, and the CSBA Board of Directors, resulted in a third approach which would set up a Marketing Order Advisory Board using the mechanisms (no new legislation required) that allowed us to have a California Honey Board years ago. This time it would be something like the California Apiary Marketing Order Advisory Board. The proposed goals of the Board would be related to funding research on honey bee

topics and education of beekeepers and the general public about various bee-related topics.

Marketing Order Boards usually set a range of possibilities within which the annual assessment will fall. With windfall almond rental prices reined in a bit, the fees would have to be appropriate to today's realities. However, with little oversight by CDFA, the annual overhead would be reasonable and the amount of funding left for research and education would be substantial.

There is one fly in the ointment, however. Whatever type of entity the beekeepers would like to initiate has to be taken to the state's registered beekeepers in a referendum vote. Whoever requests the vote has to pay for the organization and implementation of such vote. CSBA would have to provide that \$10,000 – 12,000. In this case, there would be a hearing (included in those fees) to determine the consensus beekeepers' opinion, before a referendum even was conducted. Those funds eventually would be reimbursed by the state, regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

Staff at Platinum Advisors will be working on the verbiage of a possible Apiary Marketing Order. It will be reviewed and brought to the CSBA Board of Directors for their perusal in September. Depending upon the judgments of the Board members, the package may be provided to the CSBA membership for an up/down vote at the November convention in San Diego.

Sulfur Dioxide

The following information, excerpted from an article printed in the June, 2009, issue of Applicators News, published by the

Pesticides Applicators Professional Association, may be of interest to some beekeepers. The sulfur dioxide mentioned, here, is delivered in gas cylinders.

“When wineries add sulfur dioxide (SO₂) to wine as an antioxidant and preservative, the SO₂ is not considered a pesticide. However, when sulfur dioxide is used to sanitize corks, barrels and equipment, the compound is legally classified as a pesticide. That means that only SO₂ registered as a pesticide with US EPA and CA DPR can be used to sanitize corks, barrels and equipment.”

“Using unregistered SO₂ for winery sanitation is against the law and subject to fines and penalties.”

“Sulfur dioxide is a corrosive, deadly gas. Winery workers must carefully follow

safety rules when using SO₂, whether as a pesticide or not.” “Only certified applicators can use or buy it.” “Operator identification number is needed for purchase.” “Recordkeeping and reporting of use is required.”

“Federal and state laws require each winery that buys or uses a restricted pesticide to have at least one employee with a Qualified Applicator Certificate (QAC).”

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