



# Beekeeping News

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## Upcoming Events and Announcements

**WA State Beekeepers Meeting**  
 October 24—26, 2002 at Sun Mountain Lodge in Winthrop, WA. Cost for entire conference is \$90. Great speakers ( Eric Mussen, Steve Sheppard, Mike Burgitt, Lilia deGuzman, Marina Meixner) discuss a smorgasbord of topics ( Beehive design revisited, pest management , marketing, international beekeeping and much more), from a variety of settings. There is also a request for auction and door prize donations. Contact Miriam Bishop for registration and speaker information:  
 eMail: queenbee@methow.com  
 Phone: 509-997-9699

(Because we received information about the convention so late, no mail in registration will be available, but the final deadline for registration will be extended.)

**NW Regional Beekeepers Meeting**  
 Saturday, November 9th, 4:00 PM.  
 at the Best Western Cotton Tree Inn Convention Center at 2401 Riverside Dr., Mt Vernon. Phone: 360-428-5678.

(Directions: Heading north, take the E. College Way exit #227 Go to the 1st light, Market St., turn left & the roads ends right next to the Best Western Convention Center. Even though the address says Riverside Dr., Market St. is the least congested way of reaching the Best Western CottonTree Inn.)

4:30 Marina Meixner from WWU on honey bee breeding—a joint project with Cornell U.

5:30 Chicken Buffet Dinner Chicken, roasted butter garlic red potatoes, sautéed fresh veg., green salad, 2 kinds of bread, coffee & tea. Mt Baker Beekeeper Assn. is providing dessert. All members will be seated at round tables. The cost, including tax & tip is \$15.23 per person.

6:30 The Great and Famous Diederik Bron & Family. They have just returned this last August from a year in

China & Thailand & will be presenting a talk & video on Beekeeping in these two countries, including packaging of honey they collected, plus, offer a taste from there collection.

**IMPORTANT!!** RSVP by sending a check. Make check payable to Mt. Baker Beekeeper Ass. and mail to Roger Woods 4338 King Ave., Bellingham WA. 98226. Phone:360-734-8355  
 eMail: jarwoods@attbi.com

**PSBA November Holiday Party**  
 Mark your calendars for Tues, Nov. 19, 6:30 pm at the Arboretum's Graham Visitor Center. Come enjoy some great potluck food, conversation, and tall tales at the Holiday Potluck. We will also have door prizes and acknowledge those who have volunteered for the club this year. Please bring a potluck item and your favorite bee tall tale (fact or fiction) to share with others. The club will provide plates, napkins, cups, plastic silverware and some beverages. Wear a bee related item of clothing or jewelry and we will vote on the best bee item and the winner will get a door prize. If you have a door prize to donate please let Nancy know (206-937-5583) or (nbeckett@gte.net) and/or bring it to the October general meeting. We look forward to seeing you and your families at the Holiday Party on November 19th.

### PSBA DUES

Start saving up! Dues will be due soon. The registration form will be included in the November newsletter.

### PSBA OCTOBER MEETING

**At the UW Arboretum's  
 Graham Visitor Center**

2200 Arboretum Drive E. Seattle  
 Meetings are regularly scheduled on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month except July and December.

**October 22, 2002  
 Beginner's Session  
 6:30pm to 7:00pm**

**Wax Rendering**  
 Presented by: Van Sherod

**Honey Testing and Tasting**  
 Bring samples of your honey or exotic honey. Refractometers will be available to test moisture content.

**Main Program  
 7:30pm to 9:00pm  
 Honey and Health**  
 Presented by: Bob Zahler, NHB

**Next Trustee Meeting:**  
 Tues. October 22, 2002 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm. (concurrent with the beginner's session) in the Graham Visitor Center Conference Room.

## Almanac for Puget Sound Beekeepers

*Adapted from Roy Thurber Bee Chats, Tips and Gadgets*

### Month of November

Winterize your hives: make sure top covers don't leak and the hives that don't have screened bottom boards are tipped slightly forward so that water doesn't collect in the bottom box. Insulate the top of the hive with at least 2 inches of solid or fiberglass insulation material to prevent or reduce conden-

sation that chills and stresses the cluster. Use mice guards if needed but watch for clogged entrances if you do.

All equipment should be cleaned and put in a dry place in readiness for next season. All wax comb supers should be protected against wax moths. This is a good time to go through your supers

and pull out rotted boxes or comb that is damaged or that is dark and no longer translucent.

Think about new markets or labels if you are selling honey. Make a hot box for melting crystallized honey using a fireproof insulated container with a light bulb inside. Catch up on your "bee reading."



The embarrassment of a product recall is not something that happens only to large bureaucratic organizations.

### President's Message: Wet Honey

*John de Groot, PSBA President*

Conventional advice says that you can harvest frames that are three-quarters capped. I no longer trust this particular conventional wisdom. Many jars I filled with honey in the fall of 2001 had fermented by January. The embarrassment of a product recall is not something that happens only to large bureaucratic organizations.

On the other hand, three years ago I filled a 5 gallon plastic pail with presumed-too-wet (frames less than three quarters capped) honey and stored it "until I get around to it" for use in making mead. Half of it is still in storage, granulated

but not fermented at all.

If you don't want to rely completely on the three-quarters capped rule here's a few things you could do: Keep a few jars from each batch as a 'control'. Put a batch number or date on each label. Measure the moisture content with a refractometer. Adopt a standard that is more stringent than "three-quarters capped". Spin the nectar out of the uncapped cells of three-quarters capped frames before uncapping (you will need to spin slowly to avoid breaking the comb and will be able to remove only some of it).

What to do with the too-wet stuff? You can: feed it back to the bees right away, store it until spring and feed it back to the bees then, make mead or home-made soft drink out of it, or keep it for personal use.

Roy Thurber often titled his columns "Sadder but wiser". Yeah, I know.

## The Hive Corner PSBA Apiary Update

*PSBA Apiary is located at the UW Arboretum, just south of the main greenhouses.*

**2002 Apiary Manager:**  
Gene Bowley (206) 324-0759  
eMail: genebowley@yahoo.com

Van Sherod and Scott Eby brought the PSBA bees back from the mountains but were unable to replace them in the Arboretum Apiary due to a conflict with a plant sale. The hives will be kept temporarily in Van's Lake Forest Park apiary. Van said there was very little fireweed honey in the

PSBA hives this year.

Gene will be organizing a work party on Friday, November, 8th from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. The equipment in the apiary shed will be inspected, cleaned and prepared for the spring. All beekeepers functioning under the Adopt-A-Hive Pro-

gram are expected to attend. Others are invited. Check the website for details.

If you are interested in volunteering for work parties or the Adopt-a-Hive program, contact the Apiary Manager.

## Rock Paintings of Bees and Honey Hunting in Southern Africa. By H. Pager. Reprinted from Bee World 54(2):61-68 (1973)

This article describes 76 aboriginal rock paintings of Stone Age honey hunters in the Natal Drakensberg area of the Republic of South Africa that were discovered in 1971.

These paintings supply good evidence that honey gathering has taken place for at least four to five thousand years. The first picture, reproduced here, shows honey bee nests hanging from tree branches and ladders with honey gatherers headed towards the harvest.

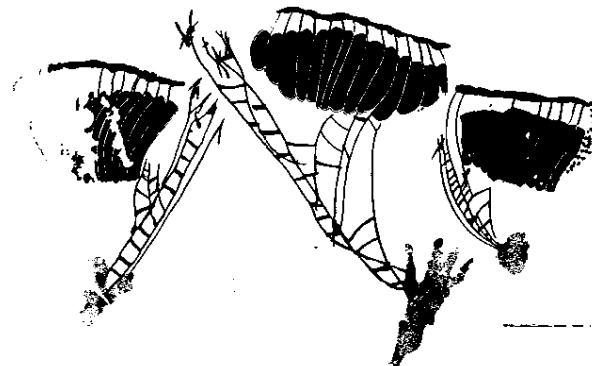


Fig. 3. Rock painting at Anchor Shelter, Natal Drakensberg, showing three ladders leading up to wild nests of honeybees. From "Ndedema" (Pager, 1971).

The second picture shows the honey gatherer with a smoker and hive tool. The essential beekeeping tools haven't changed much over the millennia.

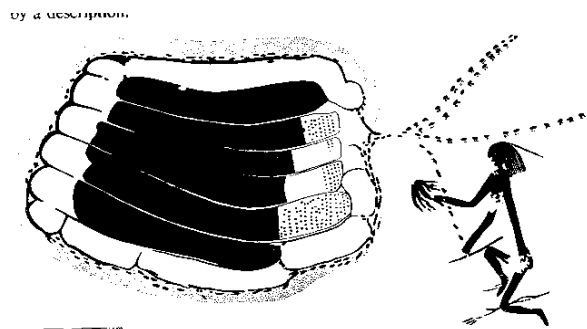


Fig. 7. Rock painting near the Toghwana Dam in the Matopo Hills, Rhodesia. This clearly illustrates the smoking of a bees' nest, and is the only depiction of this activity so far discovered in Southern Africa.

Thanks to Gloria Hall who provided this article to share with club members.



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## PSBA OFFICERS

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Jennifer Cochrane, Gene Bowley,  
Frank Fitzpatrick, Tim Celeski, John  
Keenan

## Tip of the Month

When does the beekeeping year start? Think of it starting as soon as you take off the honey supers and the colony is again a brood chamber. Actions that you take or don't take this fall will effect your honey harvest next year. The secret to big harvests are strong spring populations of forager bees. That means those wintering bees are important, because the size of the cluster by early spring determines the size of the brood nest which determines the number of bees that will be born which determines the number of foragers that will be ready for foraging in May and June. It's a challenge to successfully overwinter. So combine weak colonies, treat for mites, insulate the top of the hive and most important—don't be stingy with winter honey.

## Bees in the News

"Right Choice of Honey is the Key to Quality Mead" Seattle Times Wed. Sept. 11, 2002. Pg. C-5-6

This article featured a winery in Yakima that added mead to it's offerings. The owner has also started blending mead into some of his fine wines. The mead maker also happens to be the guildmaster for the Society for Creative Anachorisms Kingdom of An Tir. Some people really know how to have fun at work.

## Virtual Beekeeping

From Rich Webb:

"Phases in the life of a honeybee and other interesting bee facts." This is a color coded graphic that goes well with this month's Tip. It was easy to see that from egg to foraging worker, it takes 42 days. That means for 4th week in May nectar flows, the brood nest should cover the maximum area by 3rd week in April. Check it out. <http://home1.gte.net/richwebb/beesnees.htm>

"Extreme Urban Farming: Hollywood Bee Excavation." <http://www.xeni.net/bees/>

From Kate McWiggins: A really different new bee species has been discovered in the Amazon.

<http://www.nature.com/nsu/020826/020826-3.html>.

## Puget Sound Beekeepers Association

### PSBA Newsletter Editor

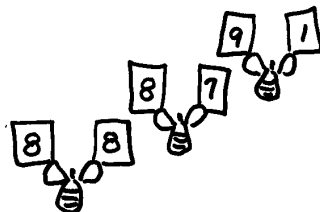
c/o Dawn Corl  
6226 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE  
Seattle, WA 98115

### FREE Service for PSBA Members !

Sarah Cooke will sample your bees for tracheal mites. (206) 368-5430

No ads were submitted this month.

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Jm

by Jerry Mixon