

Skagit Valley Beekeepers



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October 2014

The Bee's Knees

The next meeting will be **October 9th, 2014 at 7:00 PM** at the Skagit Farmers Supply CENEX Administration building, located at 1833 Park Avenue, Burlington WA. The speaker will be determined.

Fall is in the air and hopefully your bees are getting themselves ready for winter!

Well I've officially been the editor for the newsletter for a **full year now!** I can't believe you all haven't fired me yet! Actually you all have been very kind, ignoring my grammar errors, forgetting my spelling errors and putting up with my articles over these last 12 months. For me, it's been fun. Each month I worry about what I'll be writing about and each month I find a way to fill up three pages.

It is not rocket science but it still amazes me that I make it happen. You all have been a lot of help! Allowing me to follow some of you around and allowing me to ask silly questions and take pictures. You all have been nice enough to respond whenever I have an idea like those "Sting Stories" and like my request for your "honey harvest reports". Some of my ideas don't gain traction, others do. I find I just need to experiment to find out what people are interested in.

So thank you all for your help in making this as easy as possible. I sincerely appreciate it!

Things To Do This Month

- Make sure there's plenty of honey in the hive but that there is enough space for the bees to cluster.
- Make sure we do whatever we can to keep the hives dry, including moving the hives if needed to be in a place away from damp areas, in the sun, with good ventilation.
- Make sure there is an opening at the top which will allow moisture to escape from the hive.

- Make sure to not to restrict the flow of air at the bottom of the hive.
- Feed the hives if needed. Feed fondant, sugar candy, or using the "Mountain Camp" method, simply pour a 4-5 pound bag of sugar on top of newspaper which is spread on the top of your upper most frames or on a "candy board". The sugar absorbs moisture in the hive while feeding the bees. See <http://goo.gl/Zjqzrw> for more details on the Mountain Camp method.

David Sexton

David Sexton passed away on September 20, 2014 at the age of 85 at his home of Country Mountain Village. He was buried with military honors at Sedro-Woolley Union Cemetery. David was a long time member of the Skagit Beekeepers, keeping only a few hives but none in recent years.

At The Mount Vernon Library

Thursday, November 20th

Adventures in Beekeeping with Naturally Treated Hives in Our Region: for anyone interested in bees and beekeeping

Presenter's Title: **Karen Bean**, Owner, Brookfield Farm Bees And Honey, Maple Falls, WA

Targeted Audience:

General Public with an interest in Honey Bees and Beekeeping in our region

Length of Presentation: 30 minutes

Washington State Region 1a Annual Beekeepers Meeting

Speaker: **Sue Cobey** (see bio below)

Farmhouse Inn (Skagit Valley's Farmhouse Restaurant)
13724 Laconner Whitney Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98273
Google Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/1w8vI>

October 23rd, 2014
Dinner served @ 6:00pm, Buffet

Cost: \$25/person (includes buffet) Collecting payment at the door.

We need to get an idea of how many will attend, so please **RSVP to Bill Markus**
360-630-5086 or 360-661-0452
billm@skagitfarmers.com

About our speaker:

Susan Cobey is an acknowledged international authority in the field of instrumental insemination and honey bee breeding. She has established and maintains the New World Carniolan Closed Population Breeding Program. Sue's experience includes management of Honey Bee Research Laboratories at the Ohio University State and the University of California, Davis. She developed an independent research program focused on post instrumental insemination care and survival of queens. Working with Washington State University and U.S. queen producers, Sue's current focus is enhancement of U.S. honey bee breeding stocks. Honey bee germplasm of several European subspecies imported from their native homeland are being incorporated into US breeding stocks. The goal is to increase colony vitality and tolerance/resistance to pests and diseases.

She's a very interesting speaker and has the fantastic ability to speak about technical and scientific matters in a way that is easy to understand with information being quite important to us all.

Pears For Bees

by Elizabeth Agin

Thought this was interesting and Lisa Phillips also thought this was worth sharing. Every year our over ripe pears drop to the ground and usually get overtaken by wasps (making it a dangerous quarantine zone by our

standards). This year however is different. There are almost no wasps and instead the pears are covered by honeybees!



Bees feeding on a pear.

photo by Elizabeth Agin

2014 SVBA Honey Harvest Report

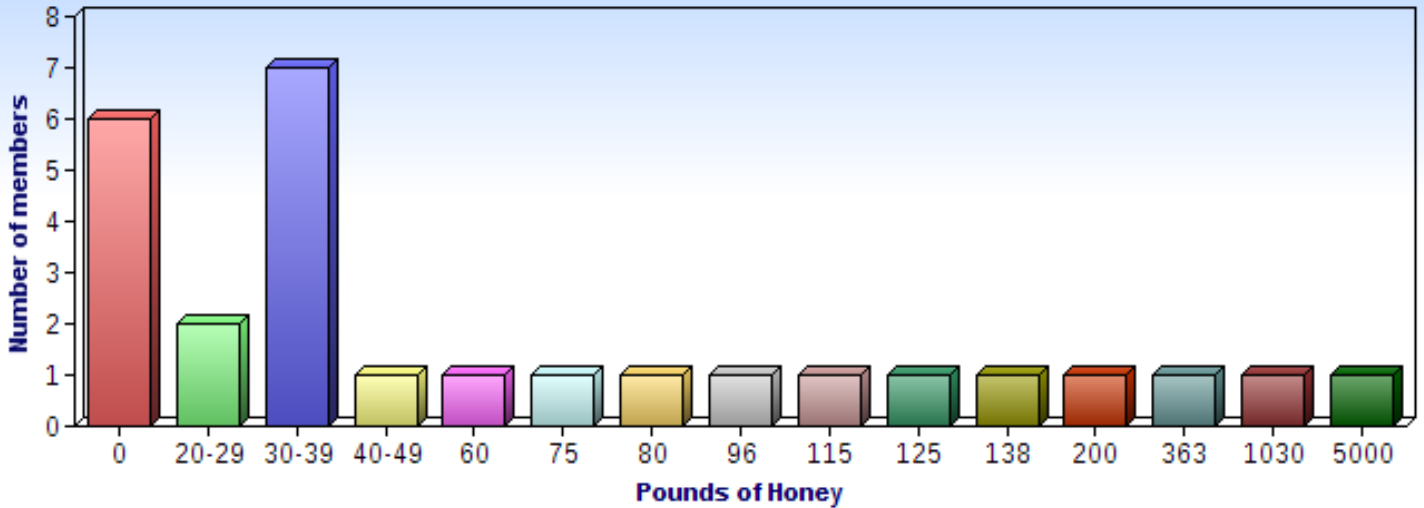
I've seen the honey reports in periodicals and on the internet that show how well various states did with their honey harvests. I've even seen comparisons of the United States in relations to other countries. I thought (and hoped) that it would be interesting to find out how we members of the Skagit Valley Beekeepers Association fared with their honey harvest.

I didn't quite know what to expect and didn't know how well the idea would be received. Some people are private in such a way that they might not want to give out that information. So, I kept it simple and decided to provide a blind result of the total amount of honey harvested by each apiary (or apiaries owned by one person/company).

There's a lot of factors when considering how much honey is harvested. Do you include fully capped frames? Or those boxes of honey that was left for the bees or moved from one hive to the next? I thought it best to just include those reports where the honey was pulled off the hive and harvested (taken from the bees). I had twenty seven people respond and the amount was quite interesting. Six people reported that they weren't taking any honey at all ..zero pounds. Then there was one, who reported an even 5000 pounds of honey. I'm not mentioning names as I promised to keep all that out of the report, concentrating only on the numbers. Even so, that number is an outlier and while I'll include it for the total amount of honey reported, I'll remove it for some of the statistics.

Skagit Beekeepers Honey Report

Total amount of honey pulled in pounds



The total amount of honey reported by all the respondents was 7617 pounds of honey. Make that 2617 pounds once you removed that one report of 5000 pounds.

Using the 2617 pounds from 26 apiaries (remember, we are excluding the one apiary reporting 5000 pounds of honey), the average was 100.65 pounds with the median being 35 pounds and the most common harvest reports being between 30-35 pounds of honey.

There were seven members that reported how many hives they harvested from when they reported their total harvest in pounds. The lowest amount as 5 pounds per hive and the highest reported at 125 pounds for one hive after joining two hives together. I wasn't sure how to count this report, as one hive or two? For statistical purposes, I decided to count it as two hives.

So, the average was just over 29 pounds per hive (with the outliers removed, the average still was close at 27 pounds per hive). The median being 25 pounds and with the sample being so small, the mode isn't figured in.

Students Manage Bees At Mount Vernon H.S.

The Skagit Herald recently released an article about science teacher Eric Engman and his class managing bees on the school campus. Read the article at:

http://m.goskagit.com/all_access/mvhs-students-get-their-hands-on-science/article_38318835-eccb-53d3-b107-7c1e650c2873.html?mode=jqm

Skagit Valley Honey Report

Amount of honey per harvested hive

