

# SKAGIT VALLEY BEEKEEPERS



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Our Association meeting is Thursday, March 8th in Burlington, WA at CENEX Administration, 1833 Park Lane. **Because it is the March POTLUCK, THE START TIME IS 6:30 PM.** Skagit Farmer's is just over the railroad tracks and kind of behind Camping World.. Turn in at the KIA dealer just north of Burlington on Old Hiway 99 and turn right on Park Lane. CENEX Skagit Farmer's is near the end of the street.

This is our traditional true potluck which means we have a nice ham and whatever else folks bring, main dish, hot dish if you are from Minnesota, salad, dessert, you decide on your favorite offering. It is always great, it is well attended and EVERYONE is welcome. The cook in me says bring a self labeled serving utensil for your dish. We usually have condiments, paper plates, napkins and utensils. Old timers often bring their favorite designated heavy duty potluck plate/cup/shovel but it is not necessary. I do! Please come!

There is an auction. I believe Bill would ask us for some items for that. I got my lotion bars nicely packaged and will bring several with candles/ornaments. I have seen wine, plants and what not past years,



really great items whose sale will support the Association.

I have not heard who received the grant from the State Beekeepers. That money last year helped us a lot. We need feed for the bees at the experiment station. \$\$\$

As we know, winter just arrived in March after an early Spring in January and early February. I'm wondering if we have a repeat of two years ago when it never quit! I hope to gosh I am wrong.

The willows have been blooming here for two weeks to no good help for trapped bees.. The cabbage farmers are splitting their seed plants to force them already. I'm told it has been a good winter for them so far, large plants not beat up by weather. Tulips are being picked all around La Conner.

Dr Steve Sheppard tells us in *Bee Culture* magazine that HopGuard strips placed on bees when they are broodless in late Fall really clean up mites. Follow directions.

POTLUCK!

This newsletter is on-line.  
Please e-mail your e-ddress

I am continuing to read about drenching bees for a nosema treatment, especially with nosema cerana now here. This is in place of an in-hive feeding treatment in syrup. The proper thin syrup with Fumagillin and/or Nozevit is sprayed on your bees with a hand pumper so they are forced to ingest the medication while cleaning up themselves and the hive. I have wondered for years about hives that just sit all summer doing nothing and this MIGHT be what is going on. I just run out of steam in August and I know better!

Jerry Hayes from Florida in *The American Bee Journal* reports the phoretic 'zombie' fly we are hearing about really has been around for a while. It has gone 'back burner' it seems. If that is the case, why was it 'just' discovered by California folks? I don't understand His comment in his *Classroom* column was it had to be a slow news day when this first was thrown in the news mix..

I was in a specialty import food store in Seattle and saw Tasmanian leatherwood honey for about \$18.00 for a medium can. That is quite a boat ride. Lots of world honeys are around now it looks like.

I got my annual official letter. I sent my \$10.00 to the WA Department of Agriculture to register my bees. Grudgingly. It is time. It should be done.

To DO List: It is early March and your bees are brooding up if you are lucky. That means feed may be needed.

- Pollen patties for brooding and/or light syrup should you choose. If you start you cannot stop. Don't let your bees starve out. Four combs of feed should be in your hive. Any less and you need to get with it.
- Clean off bottom boards. Get the winter crud out.
- Any mouse guards should come off.
- James Bach would tell us to watch big hives closely. Move brood frames to the center of bottom boxes and empty combs to the sides of the second box if you have them in place. The queen will brood upward from center and the bees can more easily care for brood pushed together.
- If you have LOTS of bees you might consider a honey super by months end. We need some nicer weather before that happens. Maples are coming!
- If you need bees/queens it is past time to call around and order. I have not heard about demand this year but there are sure a lot more ads in the bee magazines every month.
- Think about how to get your bees out of the rain next Fall. It can't hurt.
- IT IS TIME TO REREGISTER WITH THE ASSOCIATION. Buy the bee magazines at the Association discount.

Our speaker will have to be a surprise. Bill is still looking. Our potluck might be a good bribe! Remember to bring an auction item as you are able. You provide the bragging rights!