



# The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 39

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[www.orsba.org](http://www.orsba.org)

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[www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org](http://www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org)

OREGON MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM

*A Joint Venture of OSBA and the*

*Oregon State University Extension Service*

[info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org](mailto:info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org)

**Image above:** Oliver Petty with his truck at Gibson Hill Apiary in 2009. Photographer not known.

## Oliver Petty (June 9, 1914 – April 6, 2014): Remembrances

**Note:** We are known not only by our resumes but also by the stories told, stories that often reveal a deeper kind of knowing. Among those who have been integral to the organization we name the *Oregon State Beekeepers Association* and have contributed to the work of beekeepers and beekeeping, much of it in a time we will not know again, is Oliver Petty, who passed on April 6, close to age 100. What follows are remembrances from some of those who knew him.

*From Bob Arnold:* Thanks for letting me know of Oliver's passing. I was concerned that I had not heard anything of him lately and wondered how he was...He was most active in getting young beekeepers started and served many years helping 4-H-ers with bees. He was always good for some old stories and...was much respected by the beekeepers that knew him closely both for his work with bees and his impact on beekeeping in western Oregon.

*From Dewey Caron:* At the 2010 30th Annual Western Apiculture Society convention in Salem, I proudly recognized Oliver's 60 years of distinguished service to beekeeping.

*From Marjie Ehry:* I am writing this remembrance through the eyes of a woman, a beekeeper, and a beekeeper's wife. Alan and I were once a young beekeeping couple. Oliver has been an integral part of our beekeeping experience from the very beginning. We became lifelong friends. Alan had just gotten out of the Navy in September of 1962. He had saved and put enough money together to get started as a commercial beekeeper, which was his plan for some time. He found an outfit for sale just outside of Newberg. John and Callie Burt, owners of Bee Good Apiaries, had been in business for 30 years. They had attempted to sell once already and had a bad experience with a guy from California, so they were really gun shy of a kid who had just turned 21, lived in a motel room, and—who was he anyhow?!

Oliver was secretary of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association and the Burts were active members, so Oliver said he would vouch for Alan. The deal was, the Burts wanted Oliver involved because Alan was so young, though he had plenty of life experience under his belt at that age. So, a contract was drawn up stating that Oliver bought the bees but gave Alan the right to take over after the first year "if" everything worked out as expected. Things did go well, and the Ehrys' lifelong commercial beekeeping adventure, Happy Bee Apiaries, was off and running.

I first met Oliver and Connie Petty at our wedding in December of 1962. Little did I know then, Oliver would be living with us 4 or 5 days a week for the next year. We lived in a one-room apartment in the back of a Quonset hut in Dundee. Oliver set up a twin bed on the other side of the wall in the area used for stacks of bee equipment. Our warehouse was across the highway: a big old abandoned railroad building that Oliver and Alan had rented to set up an extracting plant, render wax, store supers, and fill any other beekeeping needs. There was so much work to do between restoring the warehouse to usable condition and trying to get the bees and equipment ready after being neglected and abused before the pollination season just a couple months away. *This was one mentorship I am sure Oliver gave a lot of thought to after-the-fact!*

The first year, we had not planned on going to the bee convention. We just didn't

*Continued on page 10*

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I write this. April 15 is closing fast. It's either get the taxes done or file an extension. Sometimes I wonder if bees look at me like I'm a tax collector when I confiscate part of their honey on August 1. Hmmm... No wonder they seem so willing to sting at harvest time.

Losses this winter are higher than past years, at least for me and a few of the other small operations I have spoken with in the northern Willamette Valley. I expect we will be hearing some numbers from Dr. Caron soon on the statewide losses. If it's any indication, nuc demand is up. In the Tualatin Valley, it's increased about 35 percent over last year. This last week, I spoke with a beekeeper in Wisconsin who has 1,300 hives and relies strictly on honey production. He said his losses this year are at 60 percent and by far are the worst he ever experienced. Maybe I am not doing so bad after all.

I am happy to announce that Trevor Riches has accepted the Event Committee Chair. He has been meeting with the "new" State Fair management team, and they seem quite willing to work with us and are much more cooperative than the Parks Department was in previous years. I know that Trevor worked hard with Todd Bartlem and Bunny Cramer-Carter last year to completely overhaul the displays and put together a very attractive booth. I am looking forward to seeing what it looks like this year.

Take care and stay healthy!

*Paul*

WELCOME, New and Renewing Members since early 2014!

- |                         |                  |                             |                      |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Susan Alfano            | David Downs      | Cardee Kirkelie             | Craig & Anna Rodgers |
| Naomi Allan             | Eugene Doyle     | Pamela Knaub                | Mark Ross            |
| Patricia Anderson       | Scott Eckstein   | Rufus La Lone               | Elizabeth Rowan      |
| Ron Antoine             | Allen Engle      | Brian Lacy                  | Jason Rowan          |
| Pam Arion               | Eugene Evers     | Bud Luton                   | Tanya, Mike, & Ethan |
| Jack Armer              | Spence Everson   | Claire Mancha               | Rudometkin           |
| Dan Armstrong           | Robert Falconer  | Joe Maresh                  | Peter Schuler        |
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| Todd Balsiger           | Joe Fassio       | Art Martinak                | Brian Scott          |
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| Robert Aaron Bell       | Marc Gonzales    | Sheila Millet               | Fritz Skirvin        |
| Wayne Berry             | Troy Gooding     | Charles Mock                | Lauren Smith         |
| Zoe Birkle              | John Gregor      | Bob Morgan                  | Jessie Spurlock      |
| Ed Blatter              | Christie Griffin | Deb Morgan                  | Henry Stadelman      |
| John Bowdon Family      | James Hagerman   | Vince Morgan                | Ellen Steel          |
| Carolyn Breece          | Paul Heins       | Alistair Mowat              | Justin Steiner       |
| Ryan Bringel            | Frank Hesse, Jr. | Dave Muralt                 | Charlene Thompson    |
| Tad Buford              | Dan Hiscoe       | Wendell Neumeyer            | Alan Turanski        |
| Greg Buhr               | Richard Holcomb  | Bernard Newland             | Richard Turanski     |
| Matthew Carpenter       | Richard Hughes   | Rick Olson                  | Kisha Turner         |
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| Harry Clark             | Dennis Jefcoat   | Edward Ormsbee              | Steve & Cathy Vick   |
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| Henry Condron           | Barbara Jones    | Matthew & Dara Pickens      | Tim Wessels          |
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| Gary Dillon             | DeWayne Keller   | Sheila Reeves               | Linda Zahl           |
| Renee Dillon            | Todd Keller      | John Reser                  | Dan Zimmerman        |
| Jordan Dimock           | Patrick Kennedy  | Mike Robinson               | Monika Zweifel       |

## PACIFIC NORTHWEST 2013 BEEKEEPER POLLINATION SURVEY

*Dewey M. Caron and Ramesh Sagili, Oregon State University, with Michael Cooper, Idaho State Department of Agriculture*

Beginning in 1986, Dr. Mike Burgett of the Honey Bee Lab at Oregon State University began an annual survey of pollination economics in the Pacific Northwest states (Oregon, Washington, and Idaho). Dewey and Ramesh, along with Mike Cooper, have continued and expanded this annual electronic and snail-mail survey of approximately 250 commercial/semi-commercial Oregon, Washington, and Idaho pollinator beekeepers.

For our 2013 survey, we were able to utilize 47 returns, 32 from PNW commercial beekeepers (12 commercial Oregon beekeepers) and 15 from semi-commercial beekeepers (8 from Oregon). Oregon commercial respondents managed an average of 2,676 colonies/individual; Oregon semi-commercial had 326 colonies/individual. The 20 survey responses from Oregon beekeepers were two more than our previous year's survey (see 2012 summary results in last May *Bee Line*). Total colony number 29,632 represents an estimated 50 percent of Oregon bee colonies (62,000 USDA NASS estimate of honey producers with more than 5 colonies), down from 60 percent representation of last year's survey. Overall for the three states, our survey responses likewise included owners of about 50 percent of estimated colony numbers.

The 2013 pollination survey continues to illustrate the importance of pollination rental for PNW beekeepers. Overall, the 12 commercial Oregon beekeepers reported an average 6.75 crop rentals (range 1–11), semi-commercials had an average of 3.6 crop rentals (range 1–9), both above the three-state region average of 3 rentals/individual (commercial and semi-commercial). The 47 PNW beekeepers reported 176 crop rental opportunities of over 15 crops for a total of over 200,000 colony rentals with just under \$18 million gross income (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

By far the largest rental fee generator for Oregon and PNW beekeepers is California almond rental, which has been the case for the last several survey years. Eighteen Oregon beekeepers rented 23,308 colonies (range from 160 to over 5,000 colonies) to

almond growers. Rental fee received ranged from \$127 to \$170 – weighted average = \$152.80, an increase of \$3.95 over the 2012 rental average, but \$2.50 below the PNW beekeeper almond rental fee. Almonds represent one-third (33 percent) of total Oregon beekeeper rentals, but 61.4 percent of total gross income. This relationship has been essentially the same for the last two years.

Closer to home, Oregon beekeeper rental for pears, sweet cherries, and some apples remains the top pollination opportunity. In 2013, 30 percent of total yearly rentals (26 Oregon beekeeper reported rentals) was to orchards. Gross income was 18.5 percent of total rental income. In 2013, almonds plus tree fruit rentals combined were almost two-thirds of all rentals and 80 percent of total rental income. Tree fruit represents 45 percent, 48 percent of total gross income within the three-state region (excluding almond rentals).

Berry rental (blackberry, raspberry, marionberry, blueberry, and cranberry) represents an increasingly important rental opportunity for Oregon and PNW beekeepers, primarily with blueberry. For Oregon beekeepers, it was 12.8 percent of rental colony total (19 percent of rentals in the three-state region). As with tree fruit, due to widely varying rental prices reported by survey respondents (range for

Table 1. Pollination rentals and income by crop type as reported by 47 Pacific Northwest (PNW), 20 of which are Oregon beekeepers, 2013.

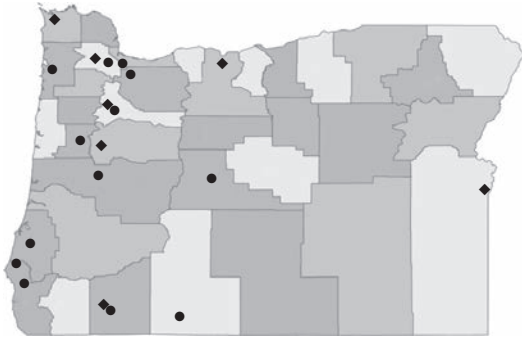
Crop	PNW & OR (number)	Colony Rentals (number)	Rentals (%)	Rental Income (\$)	Rental Income (%)
Almond	PNW/37	71,731	35.3	11,140,953	62.0
	OR/18	23,308	33.1	3,562,468	61.4
Tree fruit	PNW/62	64,852	31.9	3,688,316	20.5
	OR/26	21,254	30.1	1,074,476	18.5
Berries	PNW/27	21,215	10.4	1,089,575	6.1
	OR/23	9,060	12.8	463,360	8.0
Legume seed production	PNW/5	6,983	3.4	138,249	1.0
	OR/8	6,633	9.4	127,749	2.2
Vegetable seed production	PNW/21	10,723	5.3	608,996	3.4
	OR/16	7,393	10.5	424,824	7.3
Cucurbits	PNW/7	1,958	1.1	108,710	1.0
	OR/5	1,766	2.5	94,310	1.6
Oil crop	PNW/8	11,868	5.8	728,564	4.1
Meadowfoam	OR/6	1,224	1.7	54,824	1.0
Other <sup>1</sup>	PNW/3	9,082	4.5	452,951	2.5
	OR/2	82	0.1	2,951	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>PNW/176</b>	<b>203,308</b>		<b>17,958,414</b>	
	<b>OR/105</b>	<b>70,720</b>		<b>5,804,952</b>	

<sup>1</sup>Sunflower and mixed.

*Continued on page 13*

## Oregon State Beekeepers Association

### EXECUTIVE BOARD AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



#### OSBA OFFICERS

**President:** Paul Andersen  
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**Vice President:** Dewey Caron  
302.353.9914 (April–October)  
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**Past President:** Jan Lohman  
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**South Willamette Valley:** Jason Rowan  
80881 Turkey Run Rd, Creswell 97426  
541.942.6479; beetanical@q.com

#### • OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

##### Cascadia Queen Breeders

Meets quarterly. Contact the secretary for information.

**Chair:** Paul Maresh

503.283.2060; pmaresh@spiretech.com

**Vice Chair:** James Hensel

**Secretary:** Alvalea Fong

503.742.0910; mamagoose@mac.com

**Treasurer:** Rex McIntire

503.720.7958; remcintire\_5@msn.com

##### Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, second Thursday

Partners in Care, 2075 NE Wyatt Ct, Bend

Visit [www.orsba.org](http://www.orsba.org), Message Board, Central Oregon

Branch. For information and meeting details, email:

[contact@cobeekeeping.org](mailto:contact@cobeekeeping.org)

**Ring Leader:** Bindy Beck-Meyer

**Bookkeeper:** Allen Engle

**Website:** [www.cobeekeeping.org](http://www.cobeekeeping.org)

##### Coos County Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December)

Ohlsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Point

**President:** John Gardner—541.572.3847

**Vice President:** Shigeo Oku—541.396.4016

**Secretary:** Bobbie Gardner—541.572.3847

**Treasurer:** Jane Oku

541.396.4016; janeoku1958@gmail.com

##### Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday (except Nov/Dec)

OSU Extension, 3328 Vandenberg Rd, Klamath Falls

**President:** Jim Smith

541.892.5888; tulebee@gmail.com

**Vice President:** Chris Kerns

541.884.8664; ker664@charter.net

**Secretary:** Cathy Vick

541.884.6274; elliott772@aol.com

**Treasurer:** Steve Vick

541.884.6274; stevevick@aol.com

**Website:** [www.klamathbeekeepers.org](http://www.klamathbeekeepers.org)

##### Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Trinity United

Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene

**President:** Katharine Hunt

541.607.0106; keehunt@gmail.com

**Vice President:** Pam Leavitt—541.344.4228

**Secretary:** Jodi Wiktorowski

**Treasurer:** Polly Habliston

**Website:** [www.lcbaor.org](http://www.lcbaor.org)



**Linn-Benton Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday, South First  
Alternative Co-op Meeting Room, 1007 SE 3rd, Corvallis

**President:** Linda Zielinski  
541.929.4856; llz50@peak.org

**Vice President:** Steve Oda  
541.745.7227; odafamily1@comcast.net

**Secretary:** Robert Williams  
rober2w@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Suzi Maresh  
541.967.9607; sjomaresh@msn.com

**Website:** www.lbba.us

**Oregon South Coast Beekeepers**

Meets 6:00 PM, third Wednesday, OSU Extension Office  
located at the Fairgrounds in Gold Beach

**President:** Carla Fletcher

**Vice President:** Jim Sorber

**Secretary:** Wayne Berry  
berrydogs@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Barbara Fitts

**Portland Metro Beekeepers**

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Clackamas Community  
College, Clairmont Hall, Room 118, Oregon City

**President:** Joe Maresh  
503.703.5060; joemaresh@bctonline.com

**Vice President:** Rex McIntire  
503.720.7958; remcintire\_5@msn.com

**Secretary:** Patty Anderson  
503.887.7057; wiseacrefarms@me.com

**Treasurer:** Barb Derkacht  
503.631.3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com

**Portland Urban Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, first Wednesday, Calaroga Terrace  
Rtmt Comm, Terrace Auditorium, 1400 NE Second  
Ave, Portland. For information, email: officers@  
portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**President:** Tim Wessels—503.380.9381  
president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**Vice President:** Bill Catherall—503.572.6467  
vice-president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**Secretary:** Mike Card—971.207.9726  
secretary@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**Treasurer:** Keith Gilman—503.830.3178

treasurer@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**Website:** http://portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

**Southern Oregon Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday, Southern Oregon  
Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point

**President:** John Jacob  
541.582.BEES; john@oldsolenterprises.com

**Vice President:** Ron Padgett  
541.592.4678; padgett25@frontiernet.net

**Secretary:** Dana Rose—puckamok@yahoo.com

**Treasurer:** Cheryl Housden—541.955.5146  
chousden@earthlink.net

**Tillamook County Beekeepers**

Meets 7:00 PM, second Tuesday, Art Space  
Hwy 101 & 5th St, Bay City

**President:** Bob Allen—503.322.3819

**Vice President:** Jim Fanjoy

**Secretary:** Jeffrey Hall

**Treasurer:** Stan Scrotton

**Tualatin Valley Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, last Tuesday  
Cameron Public Svcs Bldg, 155 N First Ave, Hillsboro

**President:** Mike Van Dyke  
503.642.5338; mvand581@gmail.com

**Vice President:** Andrew Schwab  
503.538.7545; beesbuzzin@gmail.com

**Secretary:** Paul Andersen  
503.332.5410; paulande@easystreet.net

**Treasurer:** Jerry Maasdam  
503.648.7906; jmaasdam@mac.com

**Willamette Valley Beekeepers**

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa  
Community College, Building 34, Room A, Salem

**President:** Richard Farrier—541.327.2673

**Vice President:** Bunny Cramer-Carter  
503.703.8546; dbcramer@hotmail.com

**Secretary:** Mike Rodia  
503.364.3275; 46donnakay@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Patricia Swenson—pkswenson@gmail.com

**Website:** www.wvbatoday.com

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## REGIONAL NEWS

### Regional Representatives

#### North Coast

April and we're just now finding nectar from the bigleaf maple in our coastal valleys. And pollens from the skunk cabbage of the wetlands. Spring has arrived for all the backyard beekeepers. Tillamook Beekeepers next meet on May 13 at 7 PM at the FreshCafe, 9120 5th St, Bay City, Oregon. Having a gathering once a month helps us all learn and share information. Beekeepers are growing in numbers as the need for pollination and quality food is in the public's mindset. We welcome the return of warm, sunny days here at the coast. All the best in beekeeping as we enter our busy time.

—Terry Fullan

#### South Coast

Shigeo Oku of the Coos County Beekeepers has been asked to remove the colony of bees in a madrone tree at Minus Park in Coos Bay. Park management decided to have the tree completely removed. Del and Myrna Barber will assist, their last activity before relocating for their assignment in the Peace Corps.

Winter losses were reported at the March meeting, with colony losses between October and Spring Equinox tallied at 28 percent among all members present, with the commercial beekeepers Russ and Babette Rose at 21 percent, and with the remainder at 37 percent. Only Barbara Fitts in her first overwintering after completing the Apprentice level of the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program had 100 percent survival. She split her two original package colonies to accommodate two queens in the queen-rearing project with NW Queens. As to the question of which survived better, the Italian honey bees or the Carniolans, the tally showed no difference. The economy of the Carniolans remains a consideration.

The first swarm of the season was caught at the beginning of March in the Brookings area, up the Chetco River, by Russ and Babette Rose from their own hive of Italian honey bees. The first swarm of Gold Beach area was caught on April 3. Wayne Berry will drive to Koehnan Bee Farm to pick up packages ordered and will deliver them to members at the April meeting. We read that losses in the almond orchards were very high this year, thought to be due to fungicide in the tank mix for spraying the almond trees. It is our understanding that the bees that we will be getting are from colonies that have returned from the almonds. We'll see.

The head of the county road department joined us at the March meeting and made plans for obtaining bees to fill the hives that his kids, who were also in attendance with kids of their own, gave him for Christmas. We concluded the meeting with an ideal conversation with someone in charge of scheduling ditch clearing with herbicides. Carla Fletcher commented on the advantage of the very foggy day and broadcast the spray schedule we received to all club members, and advised keeping the bees inside for two or three days until the flowers wilted. Some gained a new understanding of how herbicides can have a detrimental

effect on honey bees even if they don't immediately kill the adult bees that make the initial contact.

Carla has several daughter queens that she has raised from the breeding program with NW Queens, Mark Adams, Washington. Several members have the initial queens in the colonies split off for them, and some hope to raise daughter queens this summer.

—Mureen Walker

#### Portland Metro

In August 2012, I reported that I had discovered small hive beetle larvae feeding on a patch of capped brood within my honey house. I speculated then that they had come from a commercial beekeeper who places hives adjacent to our property for blueberry pollination and leaves them there for a good portion of the summer.

People have since asked me if I have seen anymore? In 2013, I did not see any. But that changed very recently when my hives came back from California. Upon going through my hives, I discovered SHB larvae feeding inside a western division board feeder. The inside of the feeder was about half full of dry sugar and some pollen substitute had been placed on top of the sugar. The pollen substitute inside the feeder looked as if it had been scraped off and thrown in. I personally do not feed much pollen substitute, and certainly not inside feeders. This was an anomaly. All the larvae were feeding on this mass of substitute pollen. Adjacent frames and elsewhere were clean. Knock on wood, but I consider myself lucky that the two times I have seen this mass of feeding larvae (much smaller this time), they have always been localized to one area and had not spread.

The hive itself was an overwintered nucleus hive which was placed inside a deep hive body just before going south. Down in California, my commercial beekeeper friend, who I piggyback with, placed a western on top. The hive did very well and came back with some capped honey in the western. I even made a nucleus hive from it a couple days ago. What this incident tells me is that this is probably a common occurrence now with commercial beekeepers who send their bees in harm's way. They just don't talk about it. Bees that go south are exposed to the SHB, period. I hope they don't do well here.

—Todd Balsiger

### Regional Associations

#### Klamath Basin

Ramesh Sagili visited the Klamath Basin for the March 29 meeting of the Klamath Basin Beekeepers. His spirited presentation was both enjoyable and informative. The topic of Honey Bee Health, with a focus on genetics and queen production, and mite control was a valuable topic for members. Utilizing the OSU beekeeping resources and especially Sagili for research finds and beekeeping information is a wonderful opportunity for beekeepers of the Klamath Basin.

The Klamath Basin Beekeepers Association has had a busy spring. A beginning beekeeping class was held on March 1 and

March 15. Approximately fifteen eager beekeepers attended the two sessions. Sessions were led by experienced members of the club and by some of the members who are participating in the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program Apprentice class. The class provided necessary information for getting started in beekeeping.

Katharina Davitt and Doug Youngberg recently completed teaching eight classroom sessions for the Beginning Beekeeping class. We have twenty-one members participating in this course. In addition to the classroom sessions, two field sessions have been organized for this spring. One field session gives participants a chance to use a smoker, open a hive, evaluate the health of the hive and of the bees, and look for mites using a sugar shake. A second session will be held the day the packages are delivered to learn about package installation. A trip to the Olivarez Honey Bees Hobby Day in Orland, California, has also been planned as a part of the training and experience for the Apprentice beekeepers. Davitt and Youngberg have been the key resources in the planning and teaching of the class.

Packages will be delivered to members April 19, and beekeepers in the Klamath Basin are looking forward to a busy summer.

—Cathy Vick

### Lane County Beekeepers

During our club meeting in March, a short survey was taken with regard to mentors. We wanted to find out how many people are actually mentoring others. Just from the members in attendance (100+) that night, there were ten mentors who presently are mentoring forty+ people and would be willing to increase that number by at least five. Also three other members said that they would be willing to mentor probably eight people. There are probably others in the club who were not at the meeting who are also mentoring. We encourage members to volunteer in this way. A lot of the mentoring is done over the phone or by e-mail.

The club once again hosted an information booth at GloryBee's annual Bee Weekend, April 11 and 12. This event included live demonstrations, honey sampling, and distributing of pre-ordered packages of bees.

I mentioned in last month's report that Karen Richards from KLCC contacted us wanting to speak with an "old" beekeeper as well as one that was newer to this way of life. She interviewed Chuck and Katharine Hunt as well as Gary Morgan. She also spoke with Bill Bezuk of the Eugene Backyard Farmer and Dewey Caron, OSU. The piece aired a number of times on Monday, March 31, on KLCC. You can still find it on their website under Karen Richards's name. In April our speaker was Chuck Hunt. He discussed spring management and swarm control.

—Katharine Hunt

### Portland Metro Beekeepers

The Portland Metro Beekeepers opened the April meeting with an informative presentation on making nucs and splits, "How a beekeeper makes a new hive." Our speaker was

Vice President Rex McIntire. He explained when the best time is to make nucs and splits, and when it should be done to prevent swarming. We also heard from Jim Barlean. His topic was swarm collection. He has collected hundreds of swarms over the years and has made all the mistakes for us! He explained all the do's and don'ts, demonstrated his tools, and explained what works and what doesn't work—and threw in some pretty good stories, too!

Our featured speakers for May will be Dewey Caron and Bill Mares. Their presentation will focus on raising queens.

—Patty Anderson

### Portland Urban Beekeepers

The 2014 honey bee season is underway for hobby beekeepers in the Portland area. Nucs and packages have arrived and the weekends of April were spent installing them into cleaned-up deadouts and fresh new equipment. Unfortunately, there appears to be plenty of deadouts available for these installs as the winter loss rumors appear to be true.

In order to bring some definition to winter losses, PUB is working closely with Dewey Caron, Oregon State University, and Portland State University to implement its 2014 PUB "winter-loss" survey. This will be the second year that PUB has initiated its own. Although some of the questions are similar to other regional and national surveys (like the Bee Informed Partnership), the focus of this survey is Portland specific, with neighborhood-by-neighborhood detail. We have encouraged every Portland-area beekeeper to take the survey (deadline May 1) at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Xgi3reebBWZROjF9WVlrc1afE8OUomKJsTZF0qKydas/viewform>. Stay tuned for results later this spring.

Our April general membership meeting featured Dewey Caron, who just recently returned from his winter tour in Bolivia. He shared some of his experiences from this year's trip and what he learned about Africanized bees. He specifically spoke about the importance of participating in the local, regional, and national "winter-loss" surveys and also shared information gleaned from last year's data. As one might expect, the results provide answers to many burning questions, but unfortunately they also create many more. He followed this discussion with a lecture on apiary intervention and preventative management tactics that include cultural, physical-mechanical, biological, and chemical methods. This left many members with the age-old question of, "To treat or not to treat?" Our May meeting will feature Ellen Topitzhofer, a MS student in Horticulture at Oregon State University. Ms. Topitzhofer is currently working on relevant and important experiments around honey bee health and nutrition.

—Michael Carlson

### Tillamook County Beekeepers

Our first meeting after our very successful Bee Day on Saturday, April 5, was full of energy discussing Bee Day and planning for next year. Dewey Caron's presentation was flawless as usual and the round-robin workshops and



demonstrations came off without a hitch. These included: The Langstroth hive by Dewey; smokers and protective gear by Terry Fullan; budgeting and buying your first hive by Jim Fanjoy; assembling frames and hives by Jeff Hall; and hive products by Stan Scotton. We had a raffle of items donated by GloryBee and Ruhl Bee Supply.

Members have received their nucs, and there was much discussion on installing and what to expect in the coming weeks. Those choosing to install packages must wait a little longer and are expected the second half of April. Several members are planing to attend the Cascadia Queen Rearing Workshop. A few of us are looking forward to observing Morris Osrofsky's queen rearing method later in May. Dewey had mentioned at Bee Day that Oregon had suffered 50 percent colony losses through winter. A non-scientific poll taken at our meeting suggested we fared much better with some beekeepers reporting no losses at all—and no one had treated for mites.

—Jeffrey Hall

## KEEPING BEES IN MAY

Todd Balsiger

The summer's main nectar flow begins this month and lasts into early July. This roughly eight-week period is of critical importance for colonies to gather surplus honey and winter stores. The rest of the year, colonies mostly lose weight. This is a dynamic period in bee management with many overlapping tasks. Consider the following:

❖ We need to ensure colonies continue to build up for the main nectar flow. After the maple and fruit trees bloom,

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there is actually a decrease in available nectar, and with poor weather colonies can still starve. Although very infrequent, in past years it has been necessary to feed well into summer to prevent starvation. Discontinue feeding prior to supering!

❖ It is still possible to treat for Varroa mite if your infestation rates are too high. It should be with a "soft treatment"—really the only kind I recommend—if you plan to super any time soon. I have no specific recommendations on what soft treatment to use at this time.

❖ May is an ideal month to purchase queens, requeen hives, and make divisions. It is a more-forgiving and easier time to work bees than April, with increased daily high temperatures and less rain. Divisions may not make a honey crop and may require extra feeding to ensure adequate winter stores, but I don't like replacing queens that are not well mated.

❖ I was once told that a good starting time to raise queens here in the Northwest is when the trailing blackberry (our native blackberry) blooms. This usually is about mid-May.

❖ Continue swarm-control practices. Decreasing queen pheromone production and its distribution within the hive triggers the swarm impulse. The two best ways to reduce swarming are to regularly requeen (young queens produce more pheromone) and to reduce congestion (reversing, equalizing, making divisions, checkerboarding, supering).

❖ Nuc boxes containing a frame or two that has had brood, another frame with a mixture of honey and pollen, and the balance in foundation are ideal for catching swarms. Remember, frames need to be tight together when drawing foundation—too much space and the likely result will be burr or misshapen comb. You can feed sugar water to accelerate and sustain growth, just like that for divisions.

❖ Consider setting up bait hives (like the nuc box above) to catch swarms. Make sure the mice can't get in!

❖ Visually look at colonies for health and investigate why any colony is not keeping up with its peers. Does it have an underperforming queen? Has it become queenless and developed laying workers? Does it have a disease? Has it swarmed or is it on the verge of swarming with numerous ripe swarm cells (don't destroy all the swarm cells!)? Are the bees raising a supersedure queen? Take appropriate action (which may be doing nothing). If you don't know what to do, go to your next beekeepers' association meeting and ask.

❖ Look for signs that it is time to super—for example, the bees lose interest in syrup, the bees have zero robbing tendencies, or you see a new film of white wax, especially on the top bars.

❖ Provide abundant room for storing honey early in the season. I consider two supers as abundant. If paradichlorobenzene crystals are used for wax moth control, then air out the supers on a warm day to vaporize its residues.

❖ Bees generally work from the center up, so foundation



## CHANGE Visits [www.orsba.org](http://www.orsba.org)

### Thank You, Thom!



After “something like 13 years now” as webkeeper, Thom Trusewicz is moving on. *Thank you*, Thom, though there are not enough words, for all the uploads, downloads, and loads of responses made to those with questions through all these years. Thom will continue to be involved in other ways, including on Facebook, where he notes that we can “friend us” at Oregon State Beekeepers.

### Welcome, Erin and Chris!



Erin Olmon has a background in computing and user experience design. Her favorite kinds of projects are the ones that bring communities together with technology. She is in her second year of keeping bees and finds the endeavor fascinating.

Chris Heath has a background that includes print, marketing, advertising, and computing. He’s been keeping bees for five years, has way too many hives, and considers tending bees to be the hardest job he’s undertaken. He firmly believes if we can save the bees, we can save ourselves.



### Please Complete the Survey!

Erin and Chris ask that OSBA members complete a survey that is posted online as part of a redesign of the website. Website possibilities continue to evolve, and they want to learn how the site is being used today to help make it as functional as possible for those who use it. For a *completely completed survey*, your name will be entered into a drawing for one pint of vanilla-infused raw honey (valued at \$90 and donated by CR Honey). Why pass up an opportunity to contribute to the update *and* a chance to taste and perhaps to spread something as delightful as this on a hot biscuit?

centered in the hive will be drawn the fastest. I recommend ten frames when drawing foundation to prevent burr and misshapen comb. After the frames are drawn, at least for supers, I recommend nine frames.

- ❖ I recommend queen excluders (there are exceptions).
- ❖ If appropriate water resources are absent, provide water early and let the bees train themselves to use it.

**Adapted from:** *The Bee Line*, May 2012.

### Without Chemical Treatment

*Lynn Royce*

Swarming may have an important function for the colony of bees in addition to reproduction. Think about the number of pests and diseases that depend on the brood to complete their reproductive cycle. If the bees break their brood cycle they will break the reproductive cycle of pests and diseases like Varroa, tracheal mite, foulbrood, chalkbrood, and others. We can break the brood cycle without letting the bees swarm. Caging the queen for a few days, making splits, and requeening are all possible ways to break the brood cycle, and with luck lower the prevalence of pests and diseases that depend on brood. Think about swarming to get an idea of how long you need to keep the colony queenless. To get ready for swarming the workers prepare the queen to fly. They stop

her from laying eggs so she will resorb any developing eggs and thereby reduce her body weight so she can fly. This takes several days. The bees left behind have a virgin to mate, so add the days for a newly emerged virgin to harden and develop muscle for flight, about 4–5, then a couple more days for mating flights, then 4–5 more days to develop ovaries and start laying. Now add up the time: 5–6 days to get the old queen ready to fly, plus 10–12 days to mate the virgin and get her laying. This gives you 15–18 days of broodless time during the swarming process.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Western Treatment-Free Conference.** August 2–3. Medford area. For more information, visit: [www.blisshoneybees.org/2014conference.html](http://www.blisshoneybees.org/2014conference.html)

**Western Apiculture Society Conference.** Late August or early September. Missoula, Montana. Information: [http://ucanr.edu/sites/was2/Conference\\_Information/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/was2/Conference_Information/)

**Eastern Apiculture Society Conference.** July 28–August 1. Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky. Information at: <http://www.easternapiculture.com/conferences/eas-2014.html>

**OSBA Fall Conference.** Seaside Civic and Convention Center, Seaside, Oregon. November 6–8.

**Oliver Petty**—Continued from page 1

feel we could afford it, only to find out Oliver had paid our registration and volunteered me to help at the registration table. We were to be submerged in every function of the OSBA, from the spring meetings to the summer picnics, the fall conventions and local Portland and Tualatin Valley meetings—oh, and the American Beekeeping Federation, letter-writing campaigns. This was all part of Oliver's mentoring technique!

Oliver was a cheap date! For example, when he went to the Federation meetings representing OSBA, the Association would pay his expenses. One year he turned in a total bill of \$29. We all laughed and asked how he came up with that. He said, "I stayed with beekeepers all the way and ate 19-cent burgers." That was Oliver.

The year we raised our cherry pollination fees in the valley and Hood River areas, I sent out a mailing to our customers in the valley raising \$6 to \$7 and \$8 to \$9, in Hood River. We didn't lose a customer! Oliver stopped by to visit, and when we told him the increase, he said, "Oh, oh, you should never go up more than 50 cents!"

I think Oliver was a man of his times, reflected in one aspect by his not thinking women should take leadership roles in a man's world, such as beekeeping. He was OSBA secretary for 17 years and had planned on 20 years. At the annual meeting, I was nominated and won by one vote. Oliver was shocked, and he told me privately, "You will just make a *Ladies Aid Society* out of the Association." That may have been challenging for Oliver, but we all grew from the experience, and a few years later Oliver was elected again and finished his 20 years.

Dirk Olsen, long-time beekeeper in the Albany area, shared a fun little story about Oliver. Dirk had stopped by to visit with Oliver one day while Oliver was having lunch at the kitchen table. A car drove up the drive way and the remote bell rang. Oliver looked up and said, "It's just the mailman." Then he said, "Last night Connie and I were sitting here and a car drove in, the bell rang, and Connie said, 'That bell has to go or I do!' Well," he said, "you see the bell is still here." That was Oliver's dry sense of humor. His wit and wisdom are just a few of the memorable characteristics that Oliver embodied.

Over the fifty-plus years I knew Oliver, he really did not change a lot. He was always determined and had a goal—whether you knew it or not. I could go on with so many stories about Oliver but one thing that I can't get out of my head is a comment he made about himself one day. He told me, "Marjie, I am very dogged." And he was. But he was kind-hearted. I never heard him raise his voice; he would just go on persistently, doggedly working toward his goals. That's Oliver.

*From Salem businessman, Jim Elkins:* I began beekeeping

as one of Oliver Petty's original 4-H students and continue to keep bees several decades since. My 4-H project was to set up a hive on a scale directly across the road from 100 acres of hairy vetch and record the weight daily. At the peak of the flow, there were three or four days of a net gain of 16 pounds daily. Then, the clouds rolled in and the chart nose-dived. Oliver was a very kind and decent man.

*From George Hansen:* Oliver always enjoyed reminding me that he was responsible for me becoming a beekeeper. Back in the late 1970s, I was teaching in Woodburn, and was looking for a career change. I had taken my personal days and driven to Pullman, Washington, to attend the Western Apiculture Society meeting. I really didn't know anyone, and after the day's meeting I walked with Oliver back to the parking lot. Talking about bees, our conversation went on and on. Instead of standing in the parking lot, we sat in his camper way into the night. (Oliver always said we were eating saltine crackers, but I don't remember that part.) I had already become restless as a teacher, but that conversation, where Oliver told me about his history becoming a beekeeper, and the people who helped him, about the memorable honey flows, and the disappointments along the way, was a meaningful point in my growth as a beekeeper.

I have long since ceased being paid as a teacher. But I do find myself teaching from time to time. When I am teaching about beekeeping, I often find myself passing on wisdom and key insights that I gleaned from decades of interactions with Oliver Petty.

*From Mark Johnson:* He was the *old salt*, helped many yet kept a low profile.

*From John Mespelt:* There's still life in that! No matter what it was, it could be used and reused. That was Oliver! I was just one on the young guys he worked with and mentored over his many years as a beekeeper. In 1980 we worked together moving his bees into the almond orchards, and when we moved out they were my bees. Oliver was ready to retire, but he never quit. He always had some bees and sold honey until just a few years ago from his honey house at home on Gibson Hill.

*From Dirk Olsen:* Oliver always tried to promote the goodness of honey bees to others. For years he ran the little 4-H club, I think it was called *Honey Hustlers*, here in Albany. He trained many young people in the art of beekeeping—would set up hives for them and would enter stuff in the Oregon State Fair that they had in the 4-H section. He did the best he could with what was available at the time, raised a family off the bee business. One time he told me how commercial beekeepers often work long hours by themselves and how he considered himself and other commercial beekeepers to be lone wolfs in

their personalities. He loved going to the bee conventions—both state and national ones—and visiting with long-time friends.

In 1990 I went to the ABF convention with Oliver and Morris Smith. We roomed together. It was quite an experience. I do recall that the waitresses really “honeeyed” up to those two—they made quite a cute pair! Oliver would get up very early and beside his bed do pushups and stretching exercises for about a half an hour. Maybe this explains why he lived up to being just two months shy of hitting his one hundredth birthday.

Oliver in his beekeeping career had seen things that only we can dream about—thousands of acres of hairy vetch blooming all over the Willamette Valley and other bee forage untouched. Oliver also kept bees in a day when the bee boom was the state of the art piece of equipment for moving bees. Forklifts for moving bees were unheard of. His 16-frame reversible extractor was a beekeeper’s dream, and he spent many long hours in his honey house extracting can after can of honey with it. Yes, *cans*—not barrels or drums as we now do—for Oliver’s beekeeping days were the times when commercial beekeepers packed their honey in sixty-pound square cans as drums were not used for honey.

Being a product of the Depression era, Oliver was always frugal with his pocketbook and would always stretch things out to get their full value. In this day and age, he would have a difficult time doing the recommended comb rotation every few years of throwing what looks like perfectly good frames into the rendering pot to be recycled. Oliver was a hard worker, knew his bees, was willing to help others, true to his values and beliefs—and just a true friend to have.

**From Mike Rodia:** Up until the last year or so Oliver was a fairly regular attendee at the WVBA monthly meetings. You could always count on him to give the answer to beekeeping questions that us newbees were not sure of. He would carefully listen to comments that sometimes were really off the wall, and only comment when asked to and then carefully not to offend anyone.

**From Lynn Royce:** I know Oliver best from his 4-H students. He was an amazing teacher for honey bees and beekeeping.

**From Phyllis Shoemake:** Oliver was completely devoted to bees and their keeping, and he had years

of advice to share. I bought a few packages from him years ago.

**From Fred VanNatta:** While a mid-valley resident, I’m sure Oliver was well known across Oregon. He set a high standard for me a couple of decades ago. A family friend in Salem had a holly orchard for many years and with it, a dozen or so bee colonies. When he passed away prematurely by our standards, his wife asked me to find a home for his bees. Oliver agreed to take them. He showed up with a pickup and trailer and we started loading two- and three-story 10-frame colonies. By my standards, Oliver appeared old, so I asked his age (so I could catch my breath!). He responded, “78.”

I kept up with him until we got all the bees loaded, but my parting comment to him was, “I sure hope I can get around like you do when I am 78.” He is an icon and role model who will be missed by those who knew him.

**Note:** Many OSBA members today did not have an opportunity to know Oliver. I’ve scanned works from past issues of the newsletter and added links to them along with additional materials to the OSBA website ([www.orsba.org](http://www.orsba.org)). In time, I’ll add links to articles about Connie Petty, Morris Smith (who is mentioned by Dirk and was also an honorary life member of OSBA), and others as well. Although OSBA had its beginnings in 1921 and there are accounts of an earlier version, the current incarnation of the newsletter *The Bee Line* debuted in 1977. Volume 1, Number 1 cites Oliver Petty as secretary and Connie Petty as editor. Available information about Oliver Petty includes the following:

OSBA’s Life Member (noting that Oliver Petty is the organization’s one honorary life member). *The Bee Line* (1982), volume 6, number 12, page 1.

Interview: Oliver Petty by Marshall Dunham. *The Bee Line* (1988), volume 12, number 4, page 6, number 5, pages 6–7, number 6, pages 6–7.

OSBA honors Smith and Petty. *The Bee Line* (1988), volume 12, number 10, page 1.

Oliver Petty: Biography from Diamond Pioneer Career Achievement



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Award nomination by Marge Ehry. *The Bee Line* (1988), volume 12, number 10, page 6.

Guess who just turned 90? by Harry Vanderpool. *The Bee Line* (2004), volume 29, number 9, pages 1, 3.

The Committed: Oliver Petty. In: *Smokejumpers of the Civilian Public Service in World War II: Conscientious Objectors As Firefighters* (2006) by Robert C. Cottrell. Chapter 4, pages 57-64.

Oliver Petty—still going strong at 99 by Dewey M. Caron. *W.V.B.A. Newsletter* (June 2013), pages 2-3.

Oliver Wendell Petty. June 8, 1914-April 6, 2014. *Albany Democrat-Herald*, April 11, 2014. [http://democratherald.com/news/local/obituaries/oliver-wendell-petty/article\\_436b6cba-c101-11e3-aaca-0019bb2963f4.html](http://democratherald.com/news/local/obituaries/oliver-wendell-petty/article_436b6cba-c101-11e3-aaca-0019bb2963f4.html)

Oregon's Oldest Beekeeper, Gone but Not Forgotten: Remembering 99-year old Oliver Wendell Petty, A

Beekeeper's Beekeeper by Bonnie King, *Salem-News.com*. <http://salem-news.com/articles/april182014/oliver-petty-bk.php> (Slideshow by itself: <http://www.kizoa.com/Video-Maker/d9761439k6564045o1/oliver-pettyrip>)



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**Pollination Survey—Continued from page 3**

many of the crop rentals was almost double from lowest to highest fee reported; in blueberry, for example, the fee ranged from \$35 to \$68, average \$50), the total fee income at 8 percent (regionally 20.5 percent) was nearly half that of tree fruits.

Table 1 illustrates both PNW and Oregon beekeeper rental numbers and gross income. Figure 1 illustrates the last 15-year weighted pollination fee – both annual weighted average (\$88.32 for all rentals in 2013) and for almond (\$155.32 weighted average) and other crops. As shown, legume seed rentals (9.4 percent of Oregon rentals) and vegetable seed rentals (10.5 percent of Oregon rentals) together accounted for about an additional 10 percent of gross income. Irrigated seed gross income is about double the average for Willamette Valley or other area growing region rentals. Rental to three cucurbits (watermelon, pumpkin, and squash/

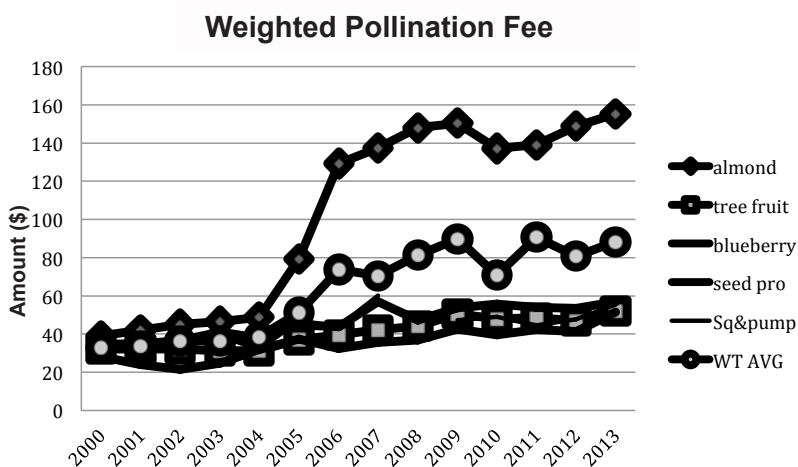
pumpkin) and canola and meadowfoam (oil seed crops) were the other major crop rentals (about 5 percent), though rental income was about one-half that percentage of total income.

Twelve Oregon commercial beekeepers returning surveys estimated their approximate income source as 25 percent honey sales, 73 percent pollination, and 2 percent other. For the 8 Oregon semi-commercial beekeeper respondents, honey was indicated as generating more income (54 percent) compared to pollination rental income (45 percent).

Our survey asked if a pollination contract was used. Almost equal numbers of PNW commercial beekeepers indicated yes, no, or sometimes one was used, while fewer semi-commercial beekeepers said they were using or sometimes used a contract. Respondents also were asked for number of employees. Responses included from 1 to 9 employees with 60 percent saying 0, 1, or 2.

When asked to estimate cost of maintaining a colony, responses varied widely with a range from under \$120 to over \$300; the 16 commercial and semi-commercial responding average costs were slightly over \$200.

A full report of the 2013 survey with comparisons to previous years is in preparation. Although the survey populations have varied over the 28 years of the survey, we believe the returns of beekeepers of our 2013 survey as managers of about 50 percent of the estimated colony numbers maintained in the PNW region (including Oregon) point to the rigor of the survey and validity of our sampling method. We believe we present a realistic snapshot



**Figure 1.** Weighted colony rental fee for all PNW rentals (middle bolded line with circles), almond (top bold with diamonds), tree fruit (lower bold with squares, includes pears, sweet cherries, and apples combined), blueberry, vegetable seed crops (principally carrot, radish, and onion), squash and pumpkin, and meadowfoam crops, 14 years, 2000–2013.

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of beekeeping activities of larger-scale Oregon and PNW beekeepers. It is the only such survey of pollination economics and as with all such surveys the information is only as accurate and complete as provided by individual respondents. We thank all those who sent back a survey.

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The **Oregon State Beekeepers Association** is a nonprofit organization representing and supporting all who have an interest in honey bees and beekeeping. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. Membership includes the ongoing work of the organization on behalf of the honey bee and beekeeping, a vote in OSBA elections, discounts on publications, placement on the swarm call list, three free ads on the website, and an annual directory and subscription to *The Bee Line*. For new memberships and renewals, please send check made payable to **OSBA** with this **completed** form to:

**Lynn Royce, 30807 Decker Ridge Rd, Corvallis OR 97333**

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**To Share or Not to Share?** The OSBA respects the privacy of members. Please indicate contact to be information included in a printed annual directory sent to **OSBA members only**:

**Share the following:** \_\_ ALL \_\_ NONE \_\_ Mailing address \_\_ Phone \_\_ e-mail

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*Effective Date: 1/1/2014*



**FARM BILL AUTHORIZATION**

The 2014 farm bill has authorized the Emergency Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) to be administered by the USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. A fact sheet describing the program is available on the OSBA website: [www.orsba.org](http://www.orsba.org). For additional information and questions, please contact your local USDA-FSA office.

For 2012 and 2013 losses, the sign-up runs from April 15 to August 1 of 2014.

For 2014 losses, the sign-up begins April 15 through November 1, 2014.

Also for 2014, producers must submit notice of loss within 30 days of the time when the loss became apparent.

A crop acreage report must also be filed for program participation.

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### ***The Bee Line***

*The Bee Line* is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. Annual subscriptions to the newsletter are included with membership.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as events, corrections, comments, questions, photographs and stories (both from “old” times and “new”), interviews, recipes, and points of view to: Rosanna Mattingly, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; email: [osba.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:osba.newsletter@gmail.com). It’s *your* newsletter—we want to hear from you!

The next issue to be printed will be the June 2014 issue. The deadline for submitting copy is May 10, 2014.

*Thank you!*

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