

# Spilling the Honey

## GBA Monthly Newsletter

Editors: Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman



Photo of hives on pallets by Christine Fahrnbauer of Canton, GA

### Message from our President: Jerry Edwards

I hope all of you are as excited as I am about our "Winter/Spring" meeting next weekend at Lake Blackshear. The Friday night reception at 8:00 should provide a great opportunity for us to socialize and network about our bees. At 8:45 the next morning

the session begins, with a day filled with events and speakers who will be certain to inform and entertain us. Vendor slots are still open so if you know anyone who would be available, please give them the information. I would like to thank Bear Kelley, Mary Cahill-Roberts, and Rose Anne Fielder for their hard work planning the event. See you Friday at Lake Blackshear.

Jerry Edwards, President GA Beekeepers  
*Saving the World, One Bee at a Time*

### **Upcoming Georgia Beekeepers Association Spring Meeting!**

The Spring Meeting of GBA will take place at the Georgia Veterans State Park at Lake Blackshear Resort on 8 and 9 Feb 2013. The resort has two bedroom cabins available as well as a wonderful RV campground and the Park Manager is offering a 30% discount to GBA attendees that weekend. The resort is located about 8 miles west of Cordele (exit 101, I-75) on Hwy 280. There are also numerous motels and restaurants in the Cordele area for those interested. Reminder: There is no honey contest at the Spring meeting.

The meeting will start with a GBA board meeting at 7 PM on Friday, followed by a reception open to all attendees. The official meeting begins at 8:30 AM on Saturday with the president's message, followed by a day of helpful bee talks. Do plan to come and spend a great weekend with your fellow Georgia beekeepers.

Here is our meeting schedule:

#### **Friday, Feb 8**

7 pm: Board meeting

8 pm: Reception/cash bar - an opportunity for networking, gathering with old friends and meeting new ones

(Special door prize at the reception on Friday night!)

#### **Saturday, Feb 9**

8 am: Registration

8:45 am: President's call to order and address

9:00 am: **Carl Webb**: Update on Russian bees in Georgia  
9:45 am: Break  
10:00 am: Break-out Session one  
**Virginia Webb**: Beeswax in all its Glory  
**Buster Lane**: Nuc installation  
10:30 am: Break-out Session one (repeat of above two presenters)  
11:00 Break  
11:30 **David Kelton**: Nosema in Hives "Don't Forget about Me"  
12:15 Auction of website  
12:30 Lunch/vendors  
1:30 State Inspector: What's Happening with Bees in Georgia  
or  
1:30 **Keith Fielder**: How are the Commercial Beekeeper and the Small Scale  
Beekeeper Intertwined in Georgia?  
2:00 Break-out Session Two  
**David Kelton**: Queens  
**Lori Bean**: Georgia Jams Local Products  
2:30 Break-out Session Two  
Repeat of the above two presenters  
3:00 Break  
3:15 **Linda Tillman**: What I Did for Love or Why Go for Certification at Bee  
School?  
4:00 **Jerry Edwards**: President's Address: Where is GBA Headed?

Our vendors will be glad to take orders ahead of the meeting and you can pick your items up at the meeting, thus saving delivery charges.

Vendors for the GBA Spring meeting:

Georgia Jams  
Walter Kelly  
Rossman Apiaries  
Busters Bees  
Dadant  
Mann Lake Bee Supplies

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*"The privilege of being a beekeeper is not to generate as much honey as possible. We keep bees so that we can contribute to pollination. And*

*actually the future of beekeeping is not in one beekeeper with sixty thousand hives, rather it's in sixty thousand people with one hive; all of them approaching the art and the craft of being a keeper of bees as a holistic practice."*

Simon Buxton: [The Shamanic Way of the Bee](#)

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## **I am a CCD baby boomer beekeeper!**

**By Mary Cahill-Roberts**

As I was reading the news in 2007, I learned that the beekeeping industry was experiencing this mysterious event: *Colony collapse disorder*. I was disturbed by the implications of a species being decimated by a "virus" that beekeepers were unable to identify.

I am in healthcare and it reminded me of when HIV first started in the 80's. Now, 30 years later, there are treatments for HIV but no cure. And, 5 years later we may have identified factors of colony collapse, and may have an inkling of the cause, but there is still concern and still, I think, worry.

You can keep bees in your back yard? What! I had never heard of such a thing.

I would become one of the **CCD baby boomer beekeepers**. I started my journey by going to an Atlanta community garden and spending two hours with a man who discussed bees and keeping them. I learned about hives and how to put the boxes together. There were three students in the class. One of them made the comment that it might be too late to get bees for the coming April, since this was already February.

I didn't realize one had to buy bees and order them. How did that happen anyway? I wasn't sure of how the whole process started. My own process started by going to the two-hour class and reading a couple of books. I

then ordered some supplies, including the bees, picked them up on April 21, 2008, and brought them home.

I listened to Mike, the guy who sold me the bees, describe how to put them into the new hive. How hard could that be? I drove home the 60 miles to my house with 2 nucs of bees in the front seat of my Prius, listening to them hum. It was 8:30 pm and I was really excited. I brought them around back to my yard, put them on top of their respective hives that were all ready for the new girls, opened the nuc boxes and RAN.

I waited two days before I went out and moved them. After my introduction to the business end of the girls (**four times**) they were settled into their new homes. I had bought some equipment from PN Williams and he gave me the low down on what to do with the hives. Talking with him was really my first short course on how to take care of the bees. I spent two hours, one on one, asking him all sorts of questions. He was very patient and helpful. He told me that if you open the hive up a lot, you'll kill the bees. I took his advice and did not open those hives up very much.

Sometime in May, a bee stung me on my arm and it became swollen to twice its size. My family told me that I was allergic and I needed to stop with the bees already. "That is what happens when you get stung and have a reaction," I told them; "No big deal." Five years later, you can't tell where I have been stung half hour after the event.

Now I am involved with a local club and at the state level. I attend all sorts of bee conferences, Young Harris Institute, Georgia Beekeepers Association, and Eastern Apiculture Society. Now there are more new people involved with bees than ever: the people are younger, and this group includes more women. I have made a ton of friends and met a lot of nice people.

Overall, I think as a CCD baby boomer, CCD may have been one of the best things to happen to beekeeping since the Varroa mite.

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### February Street Cred:

This video came from ApiNews, January 2013

For an interesting look at neonicotinoids, [here is a video](#) that appeared in Apinews in a recent issue. ApiNews writes: “In this 27 minutes video you will find the report about the Environmental Protection Agency, who allowed neonicotinoids on the market without adequate tests to determine their toxicity to bees and the environmentalists who want neonicotinoids banned until needed safety tests are done.”

When you go to the link, click on “LinkTV” to see this video. It is educational and well-worth your viewing...share it with your friends

**“All the bee books are fine, but the first bee hasn’t read a single book.”** P.N. Williams

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### Who’s got the Best Honey?

by Jay Parsons

Who’s got the best honey?

If this is your question and you are marketing your honey for sale or show, the correct answer and state of mind is “My honey is the best.” Anything less will provide you with much less in return for your expectations. Whether you are selling honey or entering a honey show,

proving that your honey is the best may take a little extra work and some special preparation of your end product, but the effort will be worth it.

You need to help your honey speak.

If you are marketing honey, the first thing to consider is what jars and labels you will use. There are many jar styles and sizes available as well as a plethora of label designs. What you put on the label is important and should showcase your endeavors and beekeeping practices. You will have to choose from large labels versus small. You may want a hangtag with recipes.

Is it raw? Put that on the label. If it's really local, whether from Folkston, Flowery Branch or Fulton County, then it should be highlighted on your label.

Pricing and venues are important too and may take some searching and evaluating. There is a handy six-page pamphlet available that puts all these aspects and more into perspective put out by [Certified Naturally Grown](#) called "Help the Honey Speak."

On the other hand if you aren't looking to sell your honey, but are just seeking some recognition and glory, then a honey show may be in your future. Although you won't have to worry about the labels and marketing, you will have to pay attention to some very fine details. Cleanliness of the honey container is paramount, especially if you are in a contest officiated by a Welsh Honey Judge. The outside of your bottle will be first. No fingerprints allowed! Is there a smudge? Well, you're out of luck if there is.

The rules will vary slightly based on the category of honey being evaluated, but fill lines, neatness of packaging, and "cleanliness" of the honey all count. Make sure there aren't any dust specks in the honey, under the lid, or in the jar threads. These will surely make for a downgrade or disqualification. You want the blue ribbon!

What about the rules? Well, there aren't too many published. The Metro Atlanta Beekeepers Association has a [list of rules](#) as well as [suggestions](#) for showing honey.

A unique honey show is coming up in March. The Welsh Society of Georgia is sponsoring a honey contest in Rockmart and will be awarding slate medallions instead of ribbons. The honey contest website is <http://welshfest.vpweb.com/The-Honey-Show.html> . It's the first Welsh sponsored Welsh Honey Show I know of in Georgia and probably in the U.S.. The winners will be able to covet and hold precious those unique Welsh slate medallion prizes!

Maybe you can brag about having one this spring since you have the best honey, right?



Editor's note: This is a spelling bee medal – couldn't find a picture of a Welsh Slate medallion!

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#### GBA Club of the Month

### The Coweta Beekeepers Association

The Coweta Beekeepers Association is a growing group of beekeepers in the Newnan, Georgia area. Currently we have over 100 members.

Our motto for 2013 is “a year of learning” which includes educating the public and beekeepers. We will offer numerous classes this year including an **Introduction to Beekeeping** class on January 26 and a **Top Bar Beekeeping Weekend Intensive** class on March 9 and 10. More classes covering other subjects will be announced soon.

We also speak at various community meetings educating the public about the fascinating ways of honey bees, the importance of honey bees and how to be an educated honey purchaser.

Our monthly meetings cover topics of interest including: apitherapy, marketing honey, swarm traps, nectar sources and winter preparations. Speakers include local and regional experts. Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black spoke at our August 2011 meeting.

We have started a network of Internet based hive scales in the area. Data containing weight, inside temperature and outside temperature is collected every five minutes and uploaded to servers. The data allows non-invasive observation of a hive and can be accessed by any Internet connected device.

The Coweta Beekeepers Association  
website [www.cowetabeekeepers.org](http://www.cowetabeekeepers.org) Hive scale  
information [www.hivetool.org](http://www.hivetool.org)

Submitted by: Steve Page, Webmaster for Coweta Beekeepers

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## Upcoming Bee Events

- **GBA Spring Meeting**  
February 8 – 9, 2013  
Lake Blackshear Resort  
Cordele, GA

- **Queen Rearing and Breeding Class Workshop**

March 1 – 2 Foley Alabama

Roger Bemis, Fee \$50 Starts at 9 AM. Bring your hat, gloves and coveralls. You will be working in the bee yard most of the time. No meal provided. For more information call: 251-213-0168 or email: [bemisroger@yahoo.com](mailto:bemisroger@yahoo.com) or write to PO Box 353, Bon Secour, AL 36511. Nice door prize!

- **North Carolina & South Carolina State Beekeepers Associations**

Joint Spring Meeting

March 1-2, 2013

Rock Hill, SC

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### **Help Us Help You**

Your editors, Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman

We are grateful for the opportunity to be the GBA newsletter editors! Please know how important it is for us to receive your contributions, whether it is a bee photo, a silly story or a beekeeping trick or technique. This sharing with one another is what makes us the Georgia Beekeepers Association and connects us!

Membership in GBA is a real bargain. For just \$15 a year you get the opportunity to meet beekeepers from around the state at the two annual meetings; you can list yourself and your honey business on the GBA website; and you get to read and add to our newsletter each month.

If you know a beekeeper who is not a member of GBA, please encourage them to join us. If you are a member, please let us know what you would like to see GBA do to better our club. As a beekeeper in Georgia, we need your ideas and help in building our organization.

Gina and Linda

Note: You can read this newsletter and all of our newsletters online at:  
<http://spillingthehoney.blogspot.com>



Photo of bee in cucumber to make us all wish for bee season by Julie Civitts of Toccoa, GA

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### **GBA Officers 2012**

**President** – Jerry Edwards

**Vice-President** – Bear Kelley

**Treasurer** – Roseanne Dorn

**Secretary** – Mary Cahill-Roberts

**North GA Director** – Buster Lane

**Middle GA director** – Steve Prince

**South GA director** – Fred Rossman

**Past president** – Steve Nofs

**Newsletter Editors** – Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman

Georgia Beekeepers Association

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**Webmaster** – Bill Owens