



# The PSBA Newsletter

February 2005

Volume 6, Issue 2

## EVENTS at the Arboretum Center

Graham Visitor Center  
2200 Arboretum Drive E.,  
Seattle, WA 98112  
(Meetings are regularly  
scheduled for the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday  
of each month except July and  
December.)

## February 22

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
“Woodenware Tutorial”  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
1. “Woodenware and  
Beekeeping Gadgets,”  
by Van Sherod  
2. “Mason Bees,” by  
Bill Rahr  
7:30–9 pm

## March 22

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
“Drone Congregation  
Areas,” by Jamie  
Strange, WSU  
Researcher  
7:30–9 pm

## Hive Calendar

### February—build, repair, read, plan

A few minor blooms. Bees may make cleansing flights on warm days.

Do not disturb hives. Keep entrances free from ice. Buy, build, and repair woodenware and equipment. Read technical books and journals. Plan your medication, requeening, equipment purchase, and migrations for the coming year. Buy bottles and packaging for the next year. Package and sell last year’s honey and wax. Render old combs into clean wax.

### March—examine, feed if necessary

Early bloomers include crocus, heather, skunk cabbage (pollen), pussy willow (misspelled to circumvent spam filters), maple, apricot, and alder (pollen in late March).

On a mild afternoon when the temperature is above 50° F, go through hives briefly: clean bottom boards and clean out dead hives. Feed hives that will not otherwise make it to summer. Feed all hives in order to medicate with fumagillin (Fumidial B). If medicating in the spring with Apistan or Coumaphous, install at the middle of March to allow enough time after removal for the required “medication free” period before supering. Do not use Menthol or Formic Acid gel packs in the spring; temperatures do not become warm long enough in advance of the nectar flow to install and remove per the label recommendation.

Year-to-year variation in temperature and rainfall, hills that block or funnel prevailing winds, northern or southern exposures, nearby lakes or rivers, and other geographic features near your apiary will speed or delay the blossoming time by as much as three and a half weeks. Use the hive calendar as a guide.

—Based on Roy Thurber’s *Bee Chats, Tips and Gadgets*

## Apiary Report

### Report from February

Attending the work party on February 12 were Rob Stevens, Anne McClure, Trent Elwing, and Bruce Becker. We got a good start cleaning out frames in the wax-moth farm and disposed of some decaying equipment around the shed. We also peeked at the hives, and it appears that three hives have survived, but they don’t have many bees.

### And looking ahead...

We’ll start up to six packages of bees in April, and we also need to have enough equipment ready to hive some swarms, too. The goal for 2005 is to have at least

## April 26

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
“Swarm Prevention  
and Capturing,” by  
Dawn Corl, Jerry  
Mixon, and Scott  
Enright  
7:30–9 pm

## May 24

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
“Pollen,” by Doris  
Mech  
7:30–9 pm

## June 28

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
1. “Requeening,” by  
Brandon Clayton  
2. “Integrated Pest  
Management”  
7:30–9 pm

## July 16

ANNUAL PICNIC  
At the Arboretum  
11 am–3 pm  
(There is no general  
meeting in July.)

12 hives, to provide more hives for the Adopt-a-Hive program and supply more honey for club outlets.

The next work party is Saturday, March 5, 1–4 pm. We’ll finish cleaning up old equipment and get new equipment ready. Plan to attend. If you have questions, call Bruce at (206) 527-0226.

—Bruce Becker, Apiary Manager

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## Work-party Schedule

Get out your calendar and pick a work party (or two) to attend this spring. Work parties take place Saturday afternoons at the club apiary.

Period	Leader
Feb/March	Bruce Becker
April 1–15	Dawn Corl
April 16–30	Bruce Becker & John DeGroot
May 1–15	Tim Celeski
May 16–31	Cary Therriault

*Thanks to all who participate in work parties.*

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## Club Notes

I wonder if February is the cruelest month? There are days when the temperature is warm, the air is fragrant, and yet it is still winter. Even the bees are somewhat discombobulated about the potentiality of the season. This adds to my frustration, wanting to look in hives and investigate to see how they are doing and which ones may need some help. I am told by older and wiser beekeepers that colonies can turn around and suddenly improve; winter strength is not an indicator of the future health of a hive. Still I am not completely hopeful. I have read in recent bee magazines and heard from other beekeepers that bees in the U.S. are having a rough winter. I plan to buy some packages and hope to maintain my colonies.

Winter is a good time to build woodenware. Nailing, gluing, painting, wiring is best done now because the beekeeper hopefully has more time available and isn’t distracted by the needs of spring and summer colonies. In the past I’ve needed honey supers and hive bodies and had to quickly throw together equipment because I wasn’t ready for a particularly good year of honey or for a swarm call. Hand in hand with this topic is purchasing of new equipment. There are several good resources available to us. If you have questions feel free to ask members of the PSBA. There are some tricks and tips that can make construction easier.

If you are new to beekeeping, consider signing up for the Adopt-a-Hive program. This is a wonderful service that we offer to members who either have not yet begun with bees or are still early in the process of beekeeping. An opportunity to work side by side with an experienced beekeeper is invaluable and can help to fill in gaps of information that bee books may miss. Relationships between beekeepers help to strengthen the association and make beekeeping less overwhelming. We are still accepting memberships. I encourage you to join and take advantage of our club offerings.

—Tim Comstock, PSBA president

## August 23

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
“Honey Plants,” by  
Thom Lee  
7:30–9 pm

## Sept. 27

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
1. “Honey Sales”  
2. “Integrated Pest  
Management,” by  
Miriam Bishop  
7:30–9 pm

## Oct. 25

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
1. “Honey Tasting”  
2. “The Chemistry of  
Honey and Pollen,” by  
Louis Metaj  
7:30–9 pm

## Nov. 15

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Election of Officers,  
Potluck Dinner, Tall  
Tales, and Awards  
“History of PSBA,” by  
Bill Rahr  
*(NOTE: This is the third  
Tuesday of the month  
instead of the fourth—bees  
don't like to compete with  
turkeys.)*

# February Meeting

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22**

**Beginners Instruction: 6:30–7:15 pm**

Tonight's focus is beekeeping equipment—the different types, and how to assemble it all. Van Sherod's beginner lesson segues into the main presentation.

**Main Presentation: 7:30–9 pm**

This annual “Hands-on Woodenware Building” is a must if you're a beginner, and even old dogs will learn new tricks tonight. So roll up your sleeves and dig in!

Bring your unassembled frames, supers, lids, and bottom boards. Bring your glue, nails/screws, saws, screwdrivers, and hammers. Bring your questions and tips.

Experienced members who have wiring jigs and various assembly equipment should bring those to the meeting to help show the beginners how to put the stuff together. New beekeepers: Bring an assortment of your new equipment so that a mentor can show you how to assemble it. We'll also bring in some of the club apiary's frames to be assembled at the meeting.

—*Newsletter Editor*

## Group Package Buying

As in years past, PSBA is once again arranging the group purchase and delivery of packages from California, to get healthy bees at a cost savings to club members. (If you don't already know, a package consists of 3 lbs. of bees with a queen and is the start a new colony.) The PSBA Package Bee orders will be delivered approximately 2nd or 3rd week in April, depending on the weather. Cost will be \$49 each. We are requesting that all orders be pre-paid. Price of individual queens will be advised at a later date. Look for an announcement and sign-up sheet at the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Purchasers have their choice of Carnolian, Italian, or MLK Carnolian queens. Be sure to bring in your old package boxes prior to April.

## Beekeeping Classes Start Now

**In Snohomish**

At Beez Neez Apiary Supply, 403A Maple Ave., Snohomish, WA 98290 (360) 568-2191. Five weekday evenings, 7:30-9:30 pm at the store. \$50. Select either Wednesday classes or Thursday classes beginning Feb. 23 or 24. Taught by Jeannie Bassett. [www.beezneezapiary.com](http://www.beezneezapiary.com).

**In Woodinville**

Presented through the Northshore (Woodinville) School District continuing education program. This hobby beekeeping course covers all the information you need to get started keeping honey bees. Topics include protective clothing, tools, key success factors, typical annual schedule, harvesting, set-up, medication of colonies, and more. On five successive Monday evenings 6:30-8:30 pm starting Feb. 28, plus a beeyard visit on a Saturday in April, TBD. Taught by John de Groot. Classes meet at Leota Junior High School, 19301-168<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, Woodinville (north of Woodinville-Duvall Road). Check for \$32 to Northshore School District. To sign up, call Denise Pleasant, school district registrar, at (425) 489-6204. [www.nsd.org/Downloads/community\\_schools/win\\_sp\\_05\\_catalog.pdf](http://www.nsd.org/Downloads/community_schools/win_sp_05_catalog.pdf).

## December

We do not meet in December.

*Reindeer and honeybees don't play well together.*

## Jan. 24, '06

MEETING 6:30–9 pm  
Beginners Instruction  
6:30–7:15 pm  
Main Presentation:  
“Commercial  
Beekeeping”  
7:30–9 pm

### PSBA OFFICERS

#### President

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# Trustee Meeting Report

Twice a year the club trustees meet for a half-day session of planning and policy-making. Any club member may attend; all are welcome to get involved in running the club. Here are some outcomes from the recent spring meeting.

### “Disease of the month”

New this year, at each monthly general meeting a short period of time will be allotted for discussion of a disease or pest. The schedule of monthly topics is:

February	Nosema	August	Yellow jackets
March	Foulbrood (AFB/EFB)	September	Mites (again)
April	Varroa mites	October	Wax moths, mice, and rats
May	Tracheal mites	November	(Holiday potluck, no topic)
June	Small hive beetle	December	(No meeting)
July	(No meeting)	January	Chalk brood

### Other motions and decisions

A new fee of \$10 (payable to PSBA) will be charged to those club members interested in having their name(s) listed on the PSBA Swarm List as being able to provide additional services beyond simple swarm-removal for which those individual would charge a fee.

Separate from the Swarm List, the club will start a list of members interested in providing pollination services. There is no charge to be on this Pollination List.

To expand the club apiary, as many as six packages will be purchased.

—Cary Therriault, PSBA Secretary

# Renew Your Membership

### Have you renewed yet for 2005?

PSBA membership dues for 2005 are due in February and remain at \$20 per family. You can choose to receive your newsletter by e-mail (as attached .pdf file) or by paper mail—please indicate your preference. Newsletters are also posted on the club Web site, [www.psbees.org](http://www.psbees.org).

### Discount journal subscriptions

Club members can receive discounted subscription rates to popular beekeeping journals. Prices are for mailing addresses in the USA.

*American Bee Journal*; 1 yr \$17.20, 2 yr \$32.75, 3 yr \$46.05

*Bee Culture*; 1 yr \$17, 2 yr \$32

*Speedy Bee*; 1 yr \$13.25, 2 yr \$25.25, 3 yr \$34

Send to PSBA Treasurer Paul Knutzen, 8036 S. Langston Rd., Seattle, WA 98178

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