



# BEE BITS

## NEWSLETTER

### Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 18                      Time: 7 PM  
 Gateway Centre Suites                1313 E. Maple St.  
 The Rainier Room, Ste. 301        Bellingham, WA  
 "Bee-giners" session: 6–7 PM Rainier Room



### THE 2016 NORTHWEST WASHINGTON FAIR

It's never too early to get started on planning for the Fair. Our coordinator this year, Kelly

Pederson, has already held preliminary meetings for those interested in participating in the event.

The Fair is our best opportunity to reach out to the public for support. If we can better inform them of the needs of beekeepers, the better for all of us. And, hopefully, have fun in the process!

Kelly is looking for suggestions on a theme for our booth, as well as other displays that members (and the public) would like to see included. Photos of local apiaries, (yours!) for instance.

The Fair is August 15–20 this year, and if we really want it to be a worthwhile project, we need to support Kelly's efforts. Contact her at [kelly@justenough.biz](mailto:kelly@justenough.biz)

Kelly was featured in the July 2015 Bee Bits in our "Whose Hive is That Anyway" segment. Her hives were victims of the yellow-jacket robbing that swept the county last year. This year she's starting over with a package and a nuc, and the technique of mixing foundation and foundationless frames.



Fair coordinator Kelly Pederson



### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

Local entrepreneur Steve Pabody has stepped up to take Mindy Collins' spot on the MBBA board of directors.



New board member Steve Pabody enjoying some of the bounty of his fields

Steve's businesses were featured in an October 2015 Bee Bits Business Profile. You can learn about his u-pick apples at <http://smapples.com/> and his expanding flower business and internships at <http://triplewrenfarms.com/>.

Steve started getting bees for the orchard and flower fields last year with just three packages that quickly grew to nine hives. He kept his flowers watered last year, and while many bees languished without nectar, his flourished. He's expanded his property, and this year, with almost six acres of flowers and foliages, the flower business has tripled, and he's already reached his goal of 30 hives. "As an added bonus, the new property is surprising us daily with all the natives species that are flowering and my bees are LOVING IT!" *Best of luck, Steve!*

Here are a few of the associations you can find on the Triple Wren website; all have great links and info:



### Meeting Refreshments

Anyone is welcome to bring something to eat or drink and give us an excuse to schmooze. Thanks for cleaning up after!



Hunter Thompson, son of Belleville Honey owners Eric and Heather Thompson, pitches in on package pick-up day.

Note the white envelopes stapled to the sides—packages from Belleville always come with the sugar plugs that are used to gradually release the queen.

### PACKAGE ISSUES

Spring packages always bring excitement, and can make the newbie installer fairly nervous. There are (as with anything related to beekeeping) so many different options for hiving a package.

The consensus this year was that most hiving went well, but rumor has it that there were some “issues.”

The upshot of that is an idea to organize a workshop next year to go through the process for those who would be interested. If this is something you think might be helpful to you, please contact:

[beebits@mtbakerbeekeepers.org](mailto:beebits@mtbakerbeekeepers.org)



A successful package installation using the “dump” method

## A VERY EXCITING ADDITION AT THE CAPITOL



Olympia Beekeepers Association members Duane McBride, Mark Emrich and Jeff Coleman (left to right) install bees in two hives on the lawn of the governor’s mansion Wednesday, April 20

### HIVES IN OLYMPIA

As reported in the News Tribune, “Behind the scenes, several other state agencies are working to improve forage for bees, including encouraging native plants to grow along freeways and distributing seed packets to help people grow bee-friendly plants.

Last month, the Legislature passed a measure to help replace noxious weeds, which include pollen-rich plants such as blackberries, with other, noninvasive species that can also nourish bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Gov. Jay Inslee signed the measure into law a few weeks ago.

Why all the focus on bees? About one-third of the human diet comes from insect-pollinated plants, with honey bees responsible for about 80 percent of that pollination.

**“JUST THINK OF ALL THE DIFFERENT THINGS THAT MIGHT BE ON YOUR DINNER PLATE THAT NEED POLLINATORS.”**

State Rep. Strom Peterson, D-Edmonds, who sponsored a measure that aims to improve habitat for honey bees

And speaking of package installation, the following link has an excellent series of photos showing how they did it at the Governor’s mansion:

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/politics-government/article73484907.html>

*Beginning Beekeeping with MBBA  
member Miguel Boriss*

Repeating his popular workshop at Whatcom Community College, Miquel Boriss covers the basics of beekeeping, including setting up an apiary, managing your bees through the seasons, and being a good beekeeping steward in your neighborhood.

The one-session workshop will be held on Saturday, May 21 from 9 am to noon. Registration is \$49, and participants are encouraged to register early. Call 360.383.3200 or register online at [www.whatcomcommunityed.com](http://www.whatcomcommunityed.com).



Miquel will also be offering the next step for students who take his beginning beekeeping course; in July, he'll be teaching Beekeeping II, which will cover integrated pest management and honey bee biology as well as other beekeeping concerns.

Students who have some beekeeping experience are also welcome.

**OVER THE BORDER**



**Day of the Honey Bee May 29**

Our Canadian neighbors, the Honeybee Centre is setting aside a day to promote public understanding of honey bee health and the state of honey bees around the world.

Their website <http://www.honeybeecentre.com/> has a wealth of information, as well as an introduction to all the products and services at their wonderful facility. Certainly worth a visit.



**BEE MYTHS**



**SHOULD YOU AVOID EATING BANANAS  
BEFORE A HIVE INSPECTION?**

Isoamyl acetate is an ester that causes a banana to smell the way it does. It also is the alarm pheromone produced by a bee sting that calls other bees into fight mode. So, are bees more likely to sting a person near bananas, or who have eaten bananas, because of the presence of isoamyl acetate?

It's all about concentration; the amount of the chemical in a banana is too small to cause a reaction. Apparently, you would have to bathe in a vat of bananas to get a bee riled.

Turns out there are lots of sites exploring this bee myth, including this enterprising mythbuster who posted a hive's reaction to a banana peel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxtP0cUnh9w>

But what other BEE MYTHS are lurking out there to be proven or busted?? Dark clothing? Facial hair? What has your personal research uncovered?

Let us know! Send your myths to: [beebits@mtbakerbeekeepers.org](mailto:beebits@mtbakerbeekeepers.org)

*The banana myth busted courtesy of the esteemed Dr. Dewey Caron.*

