

# The Voice of Professional and Backyard Beekeeping

# Cowlitz Beekeepers Association Newsletter



Dedicated to Preserving the Honey Bee through Community Action, Awareness and Education

December 2023

Next Meeting

**Where:** In person at the Sons of Norway Bldg. 224 Catlin St. Kelso WA or  
Anywhere worldwide on your computer via Zoom

Attendees can join a Zoom meeting without signing into the app. Join us at our next meeting. Click the link I will send out a few days before the next meeting. If you are not a member but would like to attend a meeting request the code at

[cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com)

**When:** December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, 6pm

**Speaker:**

**Topic:** Christmas Party

If you live in Longview or the surrounding area and already keep bees, intend to do so, or are simply interested in this fascinating hobby, Cowlitz Beekeepers Association is the association for you. Even if you don't keep bees, joining us will help support our cause, our community action and awareness and education program.

## Association Officers and Board:

Ken Curtis, President (360) 261-2795 or  
[cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com)  
Al Wilmoth, V. President (815) 391-4089  
Zenobia Scott, Secretary (360) 425-2314  
Zebscott56@gmail.com  
Barbara Skreen, Treasurer  
David Scott, Trustee (360) 425-2314  
Elizabeth Peters, Trustee (360) 241-6954  
Anna Pitkin, Trustee  
Vicky Turek, Trustee (303) 808-3764

## 2024 CBA officers and board members

### Officers:

President: Ken Curtis  
Vice President: Vicky Turek  
Secretary: Zenobia Scott  
Treasurer: Barbara Skreen

### Board:

Trustee: David Scott  
Trustee: Elizabeth Peters  
Trustee: Al Wilmoth  
Trustee: Anna Pitkin

## Handmade Proud:

Looking to buy new woodenware at reasonable prices?

- Bottom Boards - Top Covers - Inner Covers -  
Hive Boxes and more...

Contact **Gerry Herren**

Ph. (360) 355-0051  
[Swarmchaser40@gmail.com](mailto:Swarmchaser40@gmail.com)

Beginning in spring 2024 we will be implementing a mentorship program. If you would like a mentor please bring it to Ken's attention.

The following CBA members have volunteered to be mentors:

Ken Curtis – Director ..... (360)261-2795 - Rainier OR  
Al Wilmoth ..... (815) 391-4089 - Kalama WA  
David Scott ..... (360)425-2314 - Kelso WA  
Vicky Turek ..... (503)737-7491 - Longview  
Elizabeth Peters ..... (360)241-6954 - Rainier/Clatskanie OR  
Scott Stulgis ..... (360) 751-0349 - Longview/Kelso WA



### *Annual Christmas Party Potluck*

It's that time of year again! On December 21, 2023 we will have our annual Christmas Party Potluck and white elephant gift exchange at 6:00 p.m. at the Sons of Norway Building located at 224 Catlin St., Kelso, WA 98626. It's a wonderful time to gather, visit and have fun, so don't forget your family at home. There will not be a regular meeting at this time, and you don't have to participate in the gift exchange. The gift exchange is for all who want to participate. Each person is to bring a gift to join in the fun and will start after the meal. Bring your favorite side dish to the potluck. A ham, beverages and tableware will be provided. Please **RSVP to Zenobia Scott at 360-425-2314 if you are coming and how many will be joining you.** Thank you.

Hope to see you there!

## Beginning Beekeeper Workshop

January 30, February 6, 13, and 20

6:00 – 8:30 pm

Cowlitz County Training Center

Designed to build basic beekeeping skills, the class covers bee biology, equipment, seasonal management, controlling pests, honey removal and processing. The course serves as an introduction to beekeeping for new beekeepers. **You must register by January 15. Class size is limited to 25 participants with registration at \$50.00.**

The workshop will be held in Longview. You will be given the location after you have registered. Walk-ins cannot be admitted. All attendees must pre-register and pay online at: <https://bee-keepers-workshops-2024.cheddarup.com> We cannot accept checks or cash at the workshop. Registration includes attendance of extra family member who can audit the class (no graduation certificate or manual). The program, sponsored by Washington State University Extension Master Gardeners and Cowlitz Beekeepers Association, will be held in Longview. For more information contact Ken Curtis at (360)261-2795 or [wabeekeeper@gmail.com](mailto:wabeekeeper@gmail.com) or Gary Fredricks at 577-3014 ext. 3 or [Fredricksq@cowlitzwa.gov](mailto:Fredricksq@cowlitzwa.gov).

Instructor: Ken Curtis  
President of the Cowlitz Beekeepers Association  
Washington State Beekeepers Association (WASBA) board member  
WASBA certified Journeyman Beekeeper

**Best Wishes and Stay Safe!**

**Supporting Veteran Beekeepers**  
**Healing Through Hives**

We support a new generation of Veteran beekeepers and Veteran-owned apiaries across Western Washington. We offer scholarships and other educational and networking opportunities and a chance to become a certified beekeeper from beginner to master levels. Join us for hands-on, in-person opportunities to learn and connect with other Veterans and beekeepers!

**Reach out to us!**

Email: [jennah@goodgrub.org](mailto:jennah@goodgrub.org) Visit: 



## Cowlitz Beekeepers Association

## Monthly Meeting

November 16, 2023

Meeting came to order at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: In person	17
via Zoom	<u>8</u>
Total	25

Our guest speaker was Erica Shelly, Phd. She talked about "Beekeeping For the Future" and what is best for bees. You can find her on Facebook at Best for Bees or if you have questions you can go to [erica@Bestforbees.com](mailto:erica@Bestforbees.com). She can also be contacted at 226-220-2863.

Voting for new officers and trustees took place. Here are our new officers and trustees starting January 2024.

President:	Ken Curtis
Vice President:	Vicky Turek
Secretary:	Zenobia Scott
Treasurer:	Barbara Skreen
Trustees:	Anna Pitkin
	Elizabeth Peters
	David Scott
	Al Wilmoth

Congratulations!

Our Annual Christmas Party Potluck will be held December 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m., at the Sons of Norway building. Ham, beverages, plates and tableware will be provided. It was suggested that all who will be attending to RSVP to the secretary.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes taken by,  
Zenobia Scott, Secretary

Cowlitz Beekeepers Association  
Mentor Meeting via Zoom  
November 10, 2023

Meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m.

In attendance: Ken Curtis, Al Wilmoth, Elizabeth Peters, David Scott, Scott Stulgis, and Vicky Turek.

WASBA is putting together a mentor program. It will be a Mentor Certification Course which mentors will be taking. It is all in the works at the moment.

For mentors in our club, we talked about having generalized questions that every mentor can answer in about the same way when helping a mentee. Ken talked about maybe having mentors come up with 5 questions that they think a mentee would ask and have answers ready for those questions. Also, each mentor should have a copy of the 'Beekeepers Handbook'. Mentors can make a list of viable resources for the new beekeepers.

Vicky suggested that mentees should be at least 18 years old and sign a waiver. Ken didn't want to exclude younger beekeepers and Zenobia said that they could become a mentee if their legal guardian signs a waiver allowing them to participate.

Scott suggested that the Mentors be listed in our monthly newsletter along with their phone numbers.

Discussed what type of inspection is being done on a beehive. That we actually have different levels of inspections for inspecting our beehives and the mentees need to know these.

We need to add a guideline for new beekeepers to the draft and that the program is based on the Langstroth hive.

There is a new program on Facebook called "Ask a Washington Beekeeper." It is every third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Question was asked about who would become the director or in charge of heading up the Mentor/Mentee program in our club. The suggestion was made that the President would be in charge to begin with and then someone could take over for the following year.

Thank you Al for putting together our draft for the mentor/Mentee program.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Minutes taken by,  
Zenobia Scott, Secretary

## Winter Hive Inspections

By Ken Curtis

After months of caring for the bees it's time to take a deep breath, relax, and wait for spring. Or is it? I don't know about you, but for me waiting for spring is the hardest part of beekeeping. On cold wet rainy days and nights, I can't help but wonder how my bees are doing. Are the bees still alive, do they have adequate food stores, were my fall varroa treatments enough, are my hives properly ventilated, etc.?

We can't control the weather; However, there are steps we can take to prepare for winter. We can place Styrofoam insulation between the outer cover and the inner outer cover or on top of hive(s) to help control condensation on top of the hive. Hives can be wrapped. We can install quilt boxes and/or upper entrances for

ventilation to control moisture. Entrances should be reduced, and mouse guards should be installed. We should have tipped our hives slightly toward the entrance to direct what condensation does form on the top of the hive toward the front of the hive rather than dripping on the bees. On warm days it's a good idea to remove dead bees away from entrances to ensure that bees can get out for cleansing flights. Entrances should be cleared of snow when necessary.

So how do we know if our winterizing measures are enough. We perform speedy winter inspections on warm days (twice a month if the weather permits). Sometimes this inspection might be as simple as lifting the hive to check the weight. Sometimes we need to open hive(s) to take a quick look inside.

Bees do a decent job of keeping the hive warm and can recover after the hive has been opened for a short period, even on cold days. Never open hives if it is raining or snowing unless it is absolutely necessary. Do not pull frames or separate boxes. Check food stores by lifting the inner cover and peaking inside or by lifting one end of the hive to check the weight. If food stores are low feed sugar cakes, dry sugar, or my preferred feed, fondant. Perform inspections around noon, which gives the bees time to recover and warm up before nighttime temperatures drop. I treat with oxalic acid vapor in December, January, and sometimes February.

These are steps I take. The steps you take may differ, but preparing for winter is vital to the survival of honeybee colonies.