



## LANE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

130 HANSEN LANE, EUGENE, OR 97404

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*Jared Pruch (541-359-8987)*

# May 2010 NEWSLETTER

<http://www.lcbaor.org>

### NEXT MEETING:

May 18, program at 7:30 PM

Come early to socialize and share your questions with experienced beekeepers.

Hall opens at 7:00

### Beekeepers' Q & A

Whether its your first year in beekeeping or your fortieth, you KNOW you have questions you'd like to pose to a group of your beekeeping peers. Our club has both depth and breadth of knowledge and experience to share. So come share your questions and answers with the gang!

## Trinity United Methodist Church

440 Maxwell Road

Turn West off River Road  
in Eugene, (South of  
Beltline)

### April Meeting Highlights:

**J. Loftin, Newsletter Editor**

Dewey Caron began our April meeting with a discussion of his OTHER recent statewide surveys on bee loss/overwintering. The Lane County survey was a significant contribution to the statewide results, and Dewey thanked the club for our participation and the priceless information it provided.

State wide results show higher losses among 'backyard' beekeepers compared to commercial producers (though Dewey shared some thoughts about what 'loss' might mean to those different groups). Overall, however, all groups of beekeepers reported more hives lost this past winter than in the previous survey. Taken together, the surveys also show a reduced use of chemical miticides when compared with earlier data.

A full report from Dewey is available in the "references" section of the LCBA website ([www.lcbaor.org](http://www.lcbaor.org)).

Our main presentation was a timely discussion of dividing hives, presented by Morris Ostrofsky, with the PowerPoint assistance of Rita Ostrofsky. Morris and Rita titled their talk "KNOW NUCS!" and it was full of the clear information, helpful tips, and zany humor we have come to expect when they give the program.

Some highlights (the full presentation, again, is available via the club website, where it can be found in the "References" section):

Hive divisions (AKA nucleus hives, or 'nucs' for short) are made to control swarming, increase hive numbers, and for other reasons.

Having your own nucs makes requeening a breeze, and a nuc from your own hives is a lot cheaper than buying a package!

Nucs are best made in May, June, July, August (hey—that's NOW!). Nucs can be made with purchased queens, with queen cells, or used to raise a new queen from eggs.

A nuc should be made with at least three frames of bees and brood, and you can use more if you have them! Nucs should be fed sugar syrup, and ideally a pollen substitute as well. Like many, Morris flavors his sugar syrup with Honey B Healthy, and finds that the bees are eager to consume the flavored syrup. When you make up the nuc, brood should be toward the middle of the hive with frames of honey and pollen, or empty combs, toward the outside. You should use mostly capped brood when making up a nuc (because it's easier for the bees to care for). Make sure you do not accidentally put the queen from the old hive into the nuc! Follow normal queen introduction methods if you are using a purchased queen. Put the queen in the middle of the brood frames in the nuc. It is a good idea to shake some extra bees from the parent hive into the nuc—and bees from brood frames are the best choice (they are less likely to be foragers that would return to the parent hive).

Monitor your new nuc to make sure it does not build queen cells (assuming you are introducing a queen) and that no eggs show up before your new queen gets out! If you find them, the old queen has somehow gotten into your nuc, and you need to track her down. Watch your nuc carefully; as soon as it begins to grow you should begin plans to move it into a full-sized hive body. And that's it—you have a new colony to replace a winter loss, "bank" a queen for an emergency, or develop into another honey producer. It can really pay to "KNOW NUCS".

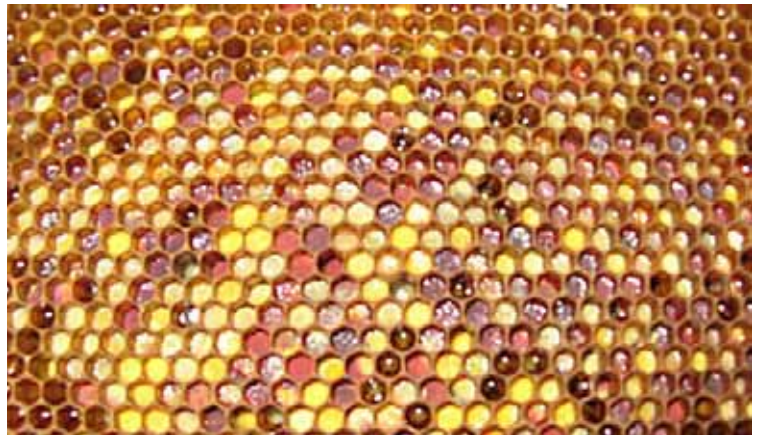
Morris referred us for further reading to *Increase Essentials*, by Larry Connor, and *Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey*, by Brother Adam.

Again, the full version of Morris's presentation is available through the club website, [www.lcbaor.org](http://www.lcbaor.org) where it is found in the "reference" section. The web version has lots of photos—makes things clear!

## SPRING POLLEN IN EUGENE

Good nutrition is imperative for honeybee health. One problem with commercial bee nutrition is that the bees receive a single source of pollen, for example from almond blooms, instead of from several sources providing a full complement of protein and minerals. Here in the city of Eugene, however, our bees are exposed to multiple sources of pollen, especially in the spring and summer and I am currently finding an amazing variety of pollen in my downtown hives. On May 9 I took this photo of one of my frames loaded with pollen from various sources. Check out the varieties of colors: pale yellow, bright yellow, dark red and purple. I even found a cell of green pollen. With frames like this, there is no need to do supplemental protein feeding.

—Judy Scher, LCBA President (text and photo)





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# President's Notes

Judy Scher, LCBA President

## Getting Comfortable With Chaos

April and May can be one of the most chaotic times in the bee yard. If everything is perfect, your hives are building up, have ample food supply and space for the queen to lay eggs. But not even the best beekeeper can prevent the occasional swarm or loss of a hive. What you need to do is to Get Comfortable With Chaos!

My chaos, these past weeks, has gone like this: I got my 4 healthy hives through the winter and watched them build up nicely at the start of spring. I made a few splits from my strongest hives and one even made their own well mated queen in between rain days. The moment I felt that things were off to a fabulous start I got stung by chaos. First of all, one of my little splits died of starvation because I provided too much space. The tiny cluster was too cold to reach the fondant above and too cold to get the syrup below. A painful lesson.

At the same time a large hive I'd been working on so hard to prevent swarming, issued the biggest swarm I've ever had! The neighbors thought this was the best entertainment since the movie Avatar, as I watched my swarm settle 35

feet up a cedar tree. I put a western box on my roof with attractant and some old brood frames with a little honey and pollen. Next day the bees were still in the tree and LCBA member Amy Beller, and I climbed up the tree to put a box as near the swarm as possible with deliciously attractive things inside like a frame with some brood..



One hour later I walked across the street to take a photo of the box and swarm and noticed there were no bees! A last climb up the tree confirmed no bees in the box. A climb on the roof confirmed no bees in the lure hive. In that one hour, those bees escaped vertically from the tree and I couldn't hear or see them. They probably flew a mile or so to establish a new home someplace I don't want to know about.

The remaining hive was queenless because I had previously removed all the queen cells. Once a hive has made up its mind to swarm it will do so, even leaving no way to make a replacement queen unless a beekeeper saves it. After losing half the population my hive buzzed that queenless buzz and the bees were downright mean and restless. There was no capped brood, no larvae, no pollen, and very little honey. I gave it a couple of frames with capped brood and some eggs/larvae from my strong hive and indeed, the hive is now making their own queen.



20-20 hindsight: I should have made a much larger split from that hive and replaced the old queen before they started making queen cells. I swear to try harder next year.

After nine years of beekeeping, I am still learning hard lessons. But there's no better path in learning to be a good beekeeper. One just must get comfortable with the chaos and not get discouraged. Learning by making mistakes lets you learn the subject so well that you begin to own it. I just don't know how many years this takes but meanwhile, the joy in learning is still there for me.

## Ken Ograin's Notes and IPM Update



**IPM Update:** Many of us have started new hives in the past few weeks and those of you that were doing good hive management have been able to evaluate your overwintered hives.

Remember that package bees that have been hived on bare foundation need to be fed sugar syrup 1-1 in order to build comb without depleting hive resources.

Many questions have come in about colonies that were strong last month but were found to be empty of bees this month. What may have been happening is that the colony was already gone last month and what you were seeing was robbing going on. When you inspect the comb from those hives look for torn rough and jagged edges of the cells, this is a sure sign of robbing. (See picture)

If you would like a high resolution close up of this send me an e-mail. [woodrt@pacinfo.com](mailto:woodrt@pacinfo.com)

Yellow jacket queens have not been in any abundance at my home but if you are seeing them be sure to get your traps set out.

Two new reports out this month on winter hive losses and CCD, basically managed hives losses are still above 30%. On the CCD front they have been able to isolate some genes that are associated to hives showing signs of CCD.

You can find the full reports and the latest updates at <http://www.extension.org/bee%20health> you will find these under the featured articles.

Let's not forget that even package bees can come with mites, so don't think that sampling is not important. At the last meeting one member did report that they did find surprising mites loads with a new package of bees.

For myself I will be doing more to control nosema and doing more spore counts.

*Ken Ograin*

**Package Bees:** A question was asked of me that I had not been asked before but did make a lot of sense so I felt it important to share it with other members that may have wondered about this themselves.

"I ordered a Carniolan package of bees but they were yellow bees" To answer this question one needs to know a little about how one makes up a package of bees. Package bees are made up from many donor hives without attention to race (or subspecies). Then bees are placed in transporting screen cages called "Packages", these could be 2, 3 or 4 pound sizes. I wonder if anyone has ever counted a pound of bees but there are many estimates. It should be approximately 3500 bees per pound. So if you purchase a 3 pound package you will be getting approx 11,000 bees which should be a mix of different ages from newly hatched to several weeks old, and you will find some drones in there also. It is at this point that a subspecies name is given a package and that is the queen. If an Italian queen is placed in a cage it would be called a package with an Italian queen, or Carniolan, Russian, etc.

So as you hive this package you will not have a queen subspecies hive population for about 4 weeks.

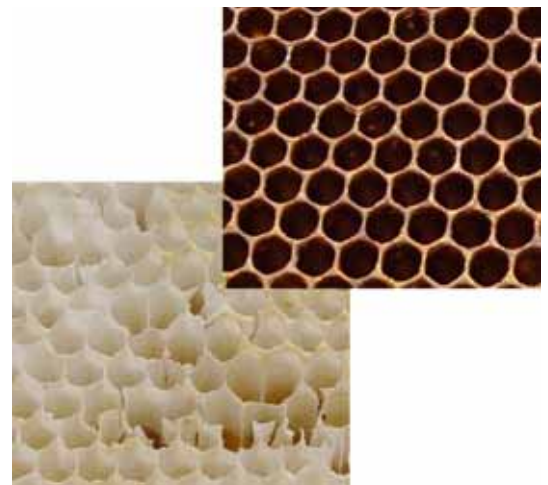
After about 5-6 weeks all of the original worker bees will have died and your hive will have only offspring of your queen. The only thing that may throw a wench in this scenario is the queen and the drones she mated with.

**Great Sunflower Project:** Time to plant your seeds for this year's bee count, last year there were 50 thousand participants. Lemon Yellow Sunflower is the preferred plant again this year, although Bee Balm, Cosmos, Rosemary, Tickseed, and Purple coneflower can be used.

To get more information go to <http://www.greatsunflower.org/>.

### **Member in Need**

LCBA Member Pony Gilbert was seriously injured recently while trying to start a stalled truck. He was pinned between the truck and a wall when it started unexpectedly and in gear. Pony and his family do not have health insurance. There will be a collection at the May meeting for members who wish to make donations to help. It has been suggested that gift cards to help with groceries and other family expenses would be very helpful. More information is available from Ken Ograin or Brandt Weaver.



## Beekeeping Tips—May

Chuck Hunt, LCBA member

1. May is swarm month and the swarming tendency continues into June. Check your hives for swarm cells; remember, swarm cells are constructed at the edges of the frames and between boxes (the bees try to tell us this way that they want to go). A suggestion from club member, Rosie Bishop (from reading Richard Taylor): "try putting some foundation in the brood box". The desire to produce wax may be one of the reasons for swarming and Taylor contends that the bees will draw out the foundation and have less tendency to swarm.
2. Provide room for your bees to avoid the swarming tendency. Add boxes to the hive and reverse hive bodies when the bees have moved out of the lower box. Make sure all entrances are open and all reducers are removed.
3. If you see swarm cells (not just cell cups) the bees have definitely decided to swarm. There are a number of ways to deal with this situation but cutting out swarm cells is usually not successful by itself. Bees will not swarm, if they a) haven't got a queen; b) haven't got their sealed brood; or c) haven't got their field force. Most successful swarm control techniques focus on one or the other of these factors.
4. Control swarming by removing the queen and some brood to another location and another hive body; in other words, split the hive. This can be done by just taking one of the upper boxes and putting it on a new hive stand. Then, in three or four days, check to see which of the two resulting hives has a queen and re-queen the hive that has no queen. Usually the upper hive body (which you removed) will the queen but this is not always the case. Check to make sure before re-queening.
5. All sealed brood can be placed above a queen excluder, giving the queen empty frames in which to lay eggs. Make sure that the queen stays below the excluder. The brood above the excluder will hatch out and the hive should increase in strength but not swarm.
6. Move the strong hive that wants to swarm to another location and replace it with a weak hive. The weak hive will be bolstered by the field force from the strong hive. The strong hive won't swarm because it has lost its field force, and the result should be good for both hives.
7. Remember that frames that have queen cells are your chance to raise new queens. Put them in a western or nuc box (with two or three cells in a box), put in some brood and bees, and in a couple of weeks you are likely to have a new queen, bred and laying eggs!
8. Remember that swarming will take place. Don't let it discourage you but do try to keep it to a minimum!
9. Keep grass and weeds away from your hive and especially clear of the entrance so that the bees have a relatively clear landing approach. If you use a weed eater to do this, remember that it will antagonize the bees and it might be best just to clear the grass and weeds using a hand method.
10. In the Willamette Valley there is a honey or nectar dearth in May. Make sure that your hives have sufficient honey stores to get through the month. About 15 pounds of honey is necessary at all times (about five western or two deep frames of honey).

### Welcome New LCBA Members

Amazon Bee Co-Op	Eugene
Seth San Filippo	Eugene
Lisa Goldstein	Blachly
Kris Neilson	Eugene
Ada McClory	Mapleton
Jesse, Elaine & Lila Pattison	Deadwood
Don Pierce	Junction City
Pam Seaver & Les Leavitt	Eugene
Amy Sierzega	Creswell
Christine Wilson	Eugene
Paul Wilson	Grants Pass

## **2010 FIELD DAY AND PICNIC**

11am-3pm Saturday June  
19, 2010

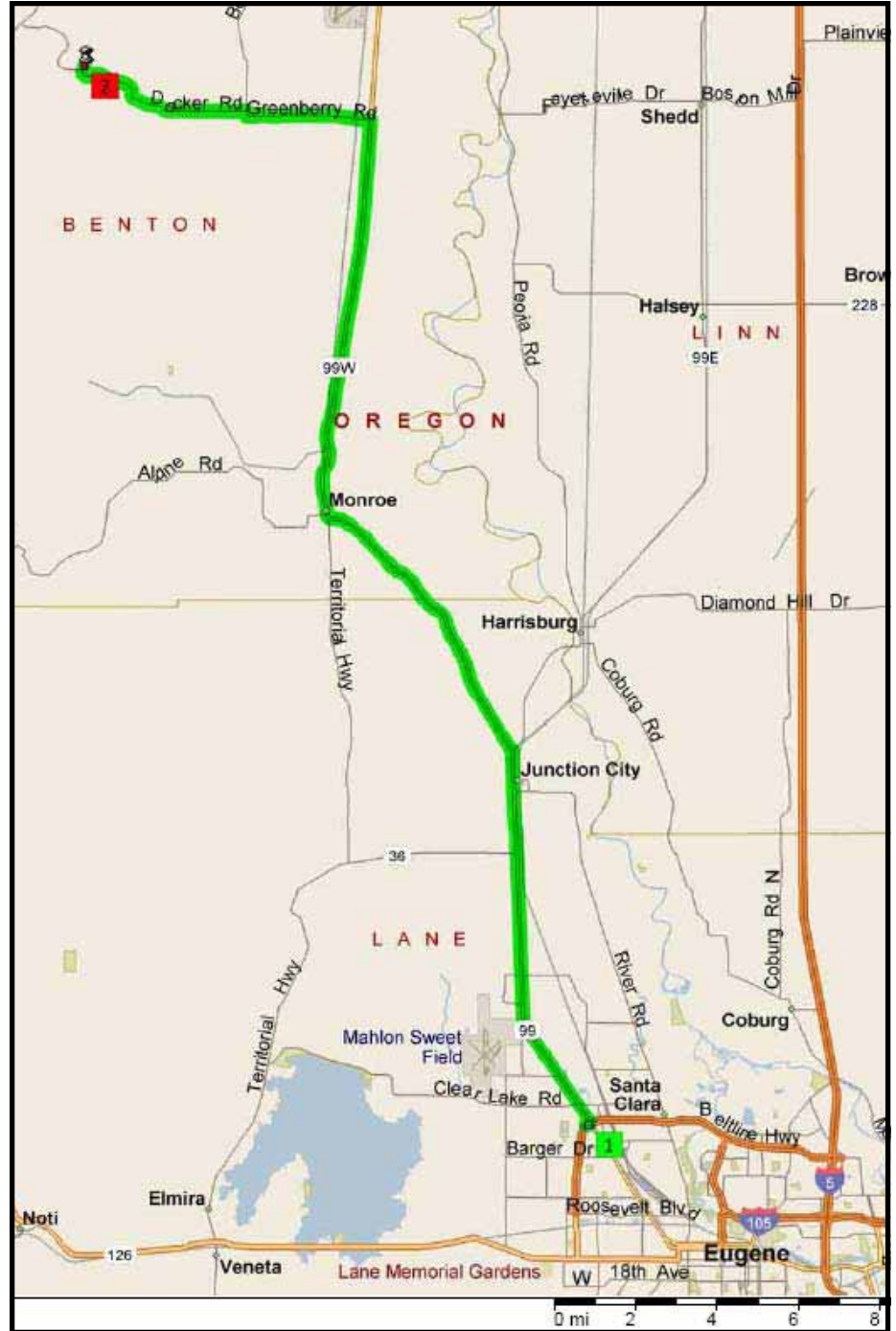
We'll be meeting at Dr. Lynn Royce's apiary near Corvallis. Field Day has been held at Lynn's for the past few years and they are always a lot of fun and a great opportunity to learn and share knowledge. Talking to your bee club friends about beekeeping practices is one thing...working a hive with them is quite another! For the field day activities, **don't forget bring your bee suit and/or veil and gloves**, because we will be doing hands-on.

Dr. Lynn Royce before retiring was an entomologist at OSU and is a beekeeper. She has a beautiful place and deep reserves of knowledge she is happy to share. Field Day is a great learning opportunity so bring your family, a side dish and **lawn chair**. The LCBA will be providing Subway sandwiches and bottled water.

The address is 30807 SW Decker Ridge Road, Corvallis (actually between Corvallis and Monroe). It's a beautiful drive from the Eugene/Springfield area. See map for directions. Lynn's phone is 541-929-5337 in case you get lost.

If you plan on attending please RSVP so we know how much food to order: Nancy Ograin at [woodrt@pacinfo.com](mailto:woodrt@pacinfo.com)

## **Map to Field Day from Jerry's in Eugene**



9:00 AM 0.0 mi 1 Depart Jerry's Eugene  
 9:00 AM 0.2 mi Turn LEFT (North) onto SR-99 for 9.7 mi  
 9:11 AM 9.9 mi Turn LEFT (North-West) onto SR-99W [Pacific Hwy W] for 17.6 mi  
 9:33 AM 27.5 mi Turn LEFT (West) onto Greenberry Rd for 3.1 mi  
 9:38 AM 30.5 mi Turn RIGHT (North) onto Bellfountain Rd for 0.1 mi  
 9:39 AM 30.6 mi Turn LEFT (West) onto Decker Rd for 4.5 mi  
 9:46 AM 35.2 mi Turn RIGHT onto SW Decker Ridge Rd for 0.2 mi  
 9:47 AM 35.3 mi 2 Arrive 30807 SW Decker Ridge Rd, Corvallis, OR 97333

Turn at Banks Rd for additional parking

## 2010 LCBA MENTOR LIST

Please contact a mentor in your area with your questions. It will be less confusing for you and the mentor to call the same one with all your questions, if you are not able to contact the same person and call another, please let them know who you have been working with.

Barbara Bajec	Cottage Grove	541-767-9086	
Jason Rowan	Cottage Grove	541-942-6479	
Kev Ashley	Cottage Grove	541-767-0761	
Ken Anthony	Corvallis	541-754-0455	
Julie Pierzina	Dexter	541-937-2577	
Judy Scher	Downtown Eugene	541-344-2114 <a href="mailto:judy_scher@catdreams.com">judy_scher@catdreams.com</a>	
Arthur Jones	River Rd Eugene	541-689-5608	
Bob Morrell	River Rd. Eugene	541-689-4281	
Chuck Hunt	River Rd Eugene	541-206-0106	
Ione Hass	River Rd Eugene	541-688-6983	
Mike Harrington	Roosevelt Blvd Eugene	541-689-8705	
Bridget Drobac	Southeast Eugene	541-342-7003	
Jared Pruch	Southeast Eugene	541-359-8987	
Morris Ostrofsky	Southwest Eugene	541-685-2875 <a href="mailto:ostrofsky@pacinfo.com">ostrofsky@pacinfo.com</a>	
Toni Goldenberg	Pine Grove Area Eugene	541-683-3503	
Jerry Carter	Barger Rd Eugene	541-689-3320	
Floyd Thompson	Elmira	541-935-1371	
Ken Ograin	Elmira	541-935-7065 <a href="mailto:woodrt@pacinfo.com">woodrt@pacinfo.com</a>	
Jack Olson	Fall Creek	541-988-9133	
Willard Wisegarver	Junction City	541-998-3025	
Jonathan Loftin	Walterville	541-736-1870	

**WAS**

A reminder: Western Apiculture Society meets this summer Aug 29-Sept 2 at Red Lion Inn SALEM, OREGON. To read about this big bee event check out the February 2010 issue of the Western Apicultural Society Journal posted on website <http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS/>, click on "WAS Journal" and then on the Feb 2010 issue. You can access this without charge. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW and PLAN TO ATTEND** - we promise you will not BEE disappointed.

*-Dewey Caron*

**Cascade Raptor Center Basket**

Thank you everyone for the amazing response last month to fill the club's basket of goodies for the Cascades Raptor Center fund raiser. Our basket was overflowing with honey, candles and other bee related products. Your generosity will help ensure that the many Raptor Center projects and programs continue. Thank you.

*--Katharine Hunt LCBA Past President*

**LCBA MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Lane County Beekeepers Association now costs \$15.00 yearly. Dues are prorated after March for new members ONLY! Bring your dues to the meeting or remit to LCBA Treasurer Nancy Ograin, (address in box at bottom of p 7).



**LCBA Calendar-at-a-  
Glance**

May 18—Beekeepers' Q & A

June 15—Pests & Disease—  
Morris Ostrofsky

**June 19—LCBA FIELD DAY**

July 20—Honey Extraction—  
Ken Ograin

August 17—Fall Manage-  
ment—Judy Scher

Sept 21—Sticky Boards for  
Mite Monitoring—Heike  
Williams

October 19—Candles and  
Wax

November 16—Honey Tast-  
ing and Elections

January 18 2011—Supper  
Meeting—Topic TBA

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

Bee-related classified ads cost \$5.00 for non-members, and are free to members. Classified ads run for three issues and may be renewed by contacting the editor. Business ads cost \$35 a year. To place an ad contact the editor by the 1st of the month. (541-736-1870) or e-mail [lcbanewslettereditor@hotmail.com](mailto:lcbanewslettereditor@hotmail.com).

**Honeybee packages for sale:** Italian/Carniolian mix from Northern California. Projected date of arrival April 1-3. 50% deposit due by March 15th. 3#'s \$78 4#'s \$88; \$5 deposit on cages, refunded if returned undamaged.

**Country Rubes screened bottoms:**No. 1's (bottom grid for mite count) \$35—No. 2's \$32 **Locally made screen bottoms** from cedar \$22 **Pierco plastic inserts** coated with excellent local wax: 9 5/8 \$1.25 each; 6 5/8 \$1.20 each. Unwaxed Pierco's substract \$.30 each. **Used deep, medium and shallow boxes** \$7-\$14.

Soon will have **wax foundations from local wax**, and **pollen traps** for sale. **CALL FOR QUESTIONS:** Joe 541-683-4281

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PLEASE CALL KAREN FINLEY CORVALLIS OREGON 541-760-6528

Or contact [finleykk@yahoo.com](mailto:finleykk@yahoo.com) \$ 12,000

### T-shirts and Hats!

LCBA t-shirts are available in a variety of sizes and colors. There are also two spiffy designs now! New style shirts are \$20, and the familiar club logo t-shirts are a bargain at \$12. We also have caps with the club logo. Club shirts (and hats) are a great way to start conversations about bees and beekeeping. Show your club spirit!

FOR SALE: Established beehive. Western supers. Call for details.

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