

The Official Newsletter of the Kansas Honey Producers Association www.KansasHoneyProducers.org

Norbert Neal attended the American Beekeeping Federation Convention in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in early January. He entered four color classes of extracted honey in the American Honey Show. His intent was to do well in order to possibly procure sponsorship to Apimondia which is the international bee conference to be held in Montreal in September. At Apimondia he would be competing for a trophy that says "Best Honey in the World". Although he placed second in two classes, first in two classes and missed Best In Show by only one point, he was unable to convince anyone to sponsor him.

While at the convention Norbert volunteered to present a program that had been prepared by Kristi Sanderson about "Making Creamed Honey". Sadly, Kristi was not able to attend due to critical family issues. With the excellent Power Point presentation from Kristi he was able to convince the audience that they should all start producing creamed honey as soon as they arrived back home. He even convinced himself because there is always a first time for everything! Norbert would like to thank Steve and Becky Tipton for giving him a ride to the convention!

Kansas State Fair
2019
September 6-15



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Next Capping's
May 2019

Editor
Stephanie L. Brown



OUR PRESIDENT JIM KELLIE

We just returned from the American Beekeeping Federation Convention. There were a few of us Kansans' at the meeting. Norbert Neal entered his honey in the national contest and ended up winning two classes and second in two others. He came shy of one single point of being the grand Champion. Congratulations to Norbert for such great work. Steve and Becky Tipton did a presentation in one of the Saturday workshops on lotions, soaps and lip balms while Norbert did a presentation on making Creamed honey.

Throughout the convention a theme began to form that I heard over and over again on four issues. That is, Mites, Queens, Honey and Habitat. The first of course is mites. I had the privilege of hearing Dr. Sammy Ramsey twice before and then again at the Convention. Dr. Ramsey is the scientist who discovered that the mites were not eating the blood of the bee but instead feeding of the fat body organs in the body of bee. The mites are not eating the fat of the bee but are sucking the proteins from the organ called fat bodies. They are something like pituitary glands that we have. There are 7 or so through out the body. (I don't seem to remember the exact number). This organ or organs are the ones that produce proteins to fight toxins from pesticides, promoting a healthy bee that can do its job, such as producing healthy nurse bees to feed the larvae. When we think about this, we have bees that are easily affected by pesticides, our larvae seem to be stunted in growth affecting the entire colony with bees that seem to die sooner. He also talked about a new mite so far has not reached the US, but his dire prediction is that soon the *Tropilaelaps* (yes, that is the correct spelling. Try pronouncing it.) Mite will make its way to us. This mite, makes our *Varoa Destructor* look like a playful kitten compared to it.

Mites entered the picture as well when it came to Queens. This subject was common in most of our speakers talking about queens. This however, to me began to ring a little hope. Most if not all large queen producers, Universities and USDA are working toward mite resistance in Queens, whether it by Hygienic or ankle biter behavior. Finally, we are headed into genetics that will at least have the entire hive mite tolerant. Most agreed that mite resistant isn't what we are looking for. Mites are here to stay and the colony along with mites must learn how to coexist with each other. *Apis Cerana* were the original hosts and had developed different behaviors and genetics that kept the mite count low and tolerable. When the mites jumped hosts, our *Apis Mellifera* had not developed any genetics to counteract the *Varoa Destructor* and eventually co exist. Nor did the mites figure it out either, with the result of killing entire hive, mites, bees and all. However, the mites did learn to jump ship once the pheromones of the hive indicated it was dying rapidly. Mites learned to ride on a honey bee that was absconding, headed to another colony or landing on a plant with pollen where the mite could wait and hop on to another bee from another colony. Our scientists could not emphasize enough that we as beekeepers when buying queens, nucs or packages, begin asking for VSH stock. This will help keep the mite count low as possible in a natural way, allowing our scientist to proceed toward the mite tolerance of the hive with the *Varoa*. There are already signs that hygienic behaviors are helping. At the meeting we listened to a commercial operator who has the "Bee Informed" team check his queens in their colony for hygienic behaviors. Then he selects from those that passed the test. With this practice along with very good beekeeping practices he told our audience that his winter kill was 1 1/2 percent this year. I can't help but think that VSH and working toward best practices has something to do with his success.

Honey also was a topic. That constant problem of adulterated honey, people who knowingly use foreign honey that is contaminated or has rice syrup in it, wild claims of what honey can do, and the practice of putting all sorts of non-approved chemicals or ingredients into the hive. We are finding that honey coming from specific countries have rice syrup in them. Others have Neonicotinoids and other unapproved pesticides in them. That said, let us be honest here, there are foreign countries that have very good honey and very clean honey. So blasting that every container on the shelf of a grocery store is fake or contaminated is only hurting yourself. We all remember the story going around on Facebook that 70% of the honey on the shelf was fake honey. A reporter not being familiar with honey set out to produce a story. He used the term ultra-filtered, his own word and what he believed was that all honey has pollen in it. However, what he did not understand was the regular filtering being used by the industry will take out most or all pollen. By the way did you know that to receive the Grade A honey stamp from the USDA on your bottle is that all or most of the pollen must be filtered out. (yes, I agree with you that it might be time to set new standards and there is a national committee working on that this year.) So with his misinformed knowledge he of course found that 70 percent of the honey had either very little or no pollen in it. However in his or her mind it naturally had to be fake. Thus the story came out. We as beekeepers did not help the situation by grabbing on to this news and quickly proclaiming that our honey was not fake and buy from us.

I learned a long time ago to be honest about what my honey is, what it will do and what it will not and where the flavor came from. I am

sure most of us are able promote our honey as a good healthy product without going overboard. We want people to know that we have a good, wholesome healthy product that can be expected from Kansas Honey.

The last was Habitat. This was echoed from Dr. Marla Spivak talking about what can be done to improve habitat within the city areas, road sides and corners of idle fields. With our ever-increasing monoculture farming practices that must be done to continue to feed everyone, there is very little left for natural pollinators and honey bees. We must continue to spread the word about the many programs that will help grow the flowers and plants, all helping increase the pollinators diet to stay healthy.

Joli will be attempting to get some of these speakers throughout this year to come to our spring and fall Programs. She has a pretty good start already. These are designed to help you as beekeeper become more informed. For me, this year I am including these four important issues into my operation and hope that it will help my business and just as importantly help all our fellow beekeepers in their pursuit of beekeeping.

Hopefully I will see you at our meetings or other beekeeping clubs around the state. I am always interested in what is happening in your area. We also have a new Governor this year, which means new people to work with and educate about beekeeping and the honeybee's affects on Agriculture. Wish me luck on that one. We are getting more and more county extension agents involved in beekeeping and will continue our program of education with them. Hope you all have a great year working with your bees.

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OPEN

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INSTALLING NEW QUEENS



First inspect the queen in her cage and mark sure she is healthy looking. No missing legs or antenna. Depending on the type of cage she is in there may or may not be a plug of sugar candy with her and the attendants in the cage with her. If you need to keep her more than 24 hours water her by sticking your clean finger in a cup of water and then touch your finger to the screen of the cage leaving behind a droplet of water. Store your caged queens in a room temperature environment out of direct sunlight. If you are requeening a hive you must first find the old queen and remove her from hive you are requeening.

Once this is done you are now ready to introduce your new queen to your hive. It's best to remove any attendants from the cage so the queen is all by herself inside the cage. You may simply take an empty cage and line up the holes where the corks are and let the workers or the

queen walk over into the empty cage. If it's a worker shake it out of the cage and repeat. If the queen walks over put your finger over the whole of the cage she is in and shake the attendants out of the other cage. Keep repeating this process until you have the queen by herself in the original cage she was in. Next put the cage in between two frames that have some emerging brood on them. Do not remove any corks from the cage. Yes you heard me right **DO NOT REMOVE ANY CORKS**. Make sure the screen on the cage is accessible by the bees in the hive and not smashed up against the comb. They will need to be able to stick there tongues through the screen to feed her. Immediately start feeding the bees sugar syrup at a 1 to 1 ratio by weight. (4 lbs of water to 1 gallon) Wait 3-4 days then go back to release your queen. Do this on a sunny day when most of the field force will be out foraging. Wait 6-7 days then go back and make sure your new queen has started laying. You should be seeing new eggs and small

Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers' Association

Beginning Beekeeping Class 2019

Part 1—Sunday, March 3rd, Part 2—Sunday, March 10th

Starting beekeeping in 2019 or want to be a better beekeeper? Local beekeepers will teach best-practice beekeeping for NE KS with science-based instruction. Master and experienced beekeepers available to answer your questions and help you understand mankind's most beneficial insect.

Special Guest: Juliana Rangel, Ph.D. from Cornell University, working under Dr. Tom Seeley. Dr. Rangel is an assistant professor at Texas A & M in College Station, TX. She has been recognized across the country for her work in honey bee reproductive health.

Topics you'll hear at the new beekeeper class:

- *Applying bee biology
- *Equipment needs woodenware (how to assemble), feeders, smoker, protective clothing
- *How to acquire bees, care and feeding of new colonies
- *What does healthy look like?
- *Beekeeper safety tips
- *Seasonal management throughout the year
- *Understanding swarm biology
- *Diseases and pests and how to treat them
- * Opportunities for continued learning

Register @ www.nekba.org

Youth Grant Update

"You'll never know everything about anything, especially something you love." ~ Julia Child

I didn't appreciate Julia Child when I was young but as I have matured (HA!) I find her wit and wisdom charming and more relevant than ever. So, the above quote is for our new scholarship group. Beekeeping is like an expanding bubble and the more you learn the more you will realize you have to learn. Occasionally we have a person who has had bees for a year or two and decides they don't need their local club, association, or mentoring group. They, obviously, have not been paying attention! The Kansas Honey Producer meetings are a little about conducting the business of the association and a lot about taking care of our bees and helping us each become the best bee stewards we can be. Our group will provide many opportunities for learning. We will share our individual knowledge and provide a mentor to answers questions. But as with all things, the ultimate understand of your new endeavor is up to you. You are responsible for your own learning but we will try to teach you everything you need to be successful. The learning is fascinating and compelling and there is always something new to learn about our bees. Please invest in your bees by investing your time in Kansas Honey Producers.

It is with great pleasure we welcome two new groups to the Youth Grant Program. From Hutchinson, we will be providing hives for the first time to a Unified School District. Prairie Hills Middle School will now have bee hives to include in their study of pollinators, habitat, and food. Mr. Victor Wilkinson is the 7th and 8th grade science teacher who applied for the grant. The school has a wild-life area owned by Westar situated adjoining their school. The hives will be located there. Stephanie Brown and Mark Mounce will be mentoring this group. I am so excited to have a public school embrace this opportunity for a real world learning experience. I hope we have other schools see the success of this program.

We will also be offering a Youth Grant to the Argonia Hilltopper 4-H Club in Argonia, KS. This group seems very excited about the opportunity to add honey bees to their youth programs. They will be led by: Jenni Carr, Harper County Extension Agent, Kathy Lamb and Nathan Coleman, Project Leaders. Brian Withrow has volunteered to mentor this group and is happy to be involved with a 4-H group again. The energy this group exudes is infectious. Let's help make the newbee's welcome when we see them at our March meeting.

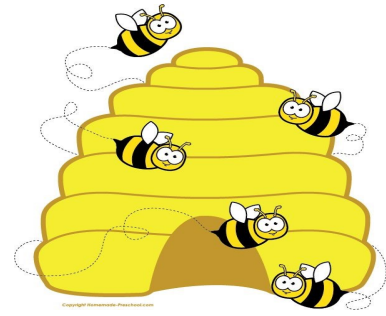
Both of our scholarship groups who began hives in 2018 have done very well. Thank you! Each of you has face special challenges. This year's drought made this a particularly difficult year to begin beekeeping. As you begin year two, your mentors can help you make decisions for the health of your hives. We'll look forward to catching up with you all in March.

Please remember—each grant group is expected to attend every KHPA meeting. The meeting fees are included in the grant. Please submit your registration information to Treasurer, Robert Burns as soon as you know who will be attending. Although the youth you serve are always welcome and encouraged to attend as they are available, their attendance is not mandatory. New groups will receive equipment (to assemble) and safety gear at the March meeting, too. Spring is an exciting time! We'll see you soon. Becky

The next American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow will be held in Schaumburg, IL (Chicago area) January 7-11, 2020. This will be one of the closest (Midwest) conference locations in YEARS! Start planning NOW! Let's take some Kansas Pride to ABF in 2020. What does ABF have to offer?

- *Fantastic range! Beekeepers from all over the USA/world with one focus, honey bee health.
- *Fantastic depth! Programs to help novice beekeepers and commercial beekeepers and everyone in between.
- *Cutting edge science. What might be the next best thing in beekeeping? You can hear about it first at ABF.
- *Awesome trade show with necessities, gadgets, new ideas, and old favorites.
- *Amazing people willing to share their knowledge with others in the industry.
- *Inspiring honey show with sensational wax art, beautifully designed labels and clever gift baskets.
- *Bring home enthusiasm for your hobby, sideline, or career.
- *It's a really fun event!

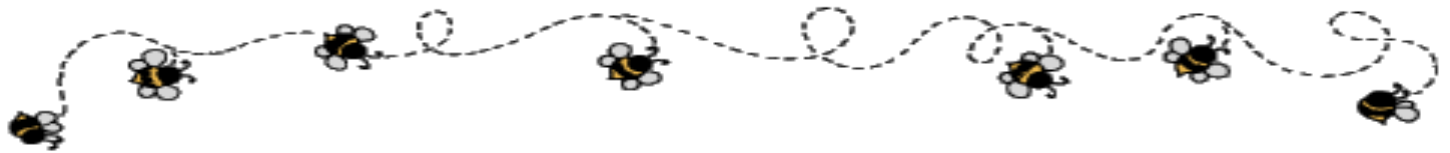
Chad Gilliland



With Winter holding a firm grip on the northeast corner of the state, we have been hard at work preparing for NEKBA's Beginning Beekeepers Class and revisions to our organization's constitution. March 3rd and 10th are the scheduled dates for our Beginning Beekeepers Class with Dr. Juliana Rangel from Texas A&M University the keynote speaker. For several months our constitution committee met and reviewed the constitution and bylaws. Joli Winer, Becky Tipton, Marlene Pantos, and Chad Gilliland (members of the Constitution Committee) reviewed and revised multiple items that required updating and brought the document up to date and current. The revised and updated constitution was voted on and approved unanimously by our membership.

The end of 2018 saw several new faces elected to our board of directors. We welcome the following new and returning board members into the fold for 2019 and look forward to the many benefits that they will offer to NEKBA.

Steve Messbarger - President
Chad Gilliland - 1st Vice President/
Program Chair
Edward Darlington - 2nd Vice President/
Librarian
Cheryl Burkhead - 3rd Vice President/
Honey Plants
Sara Murry - Secretary
Treasurer - Robert Burns
Matthew Mertz - Newsletter Editor
Joli Winer - Youth Scholarship Chair
Military/Veteran Apprenticeship Liaison -
Andy Nowachek
Becky Tipton - Beginning Beekeeper Class
Coordinator
Jo Patrick - Fun Day Coordinator



Got Bees? Honey Bee Packages available late March and late April 2019.

If you are a beginning bee keeper or want to expand your hobby, we can help with healthy and competitively priced package bees.

Packages consist of –3 Lbs. Bees + Mated Queen + can of syrup feed + transport cage.

Bees to be placed in your prepared Hive. No cage deposit or return needed.

Final Cost will be known late Dec. 2018 or Jan. 2019

Swobee Honey Farm - Great Bend & Hays, Ks.

For more details and pre order:

Greg Swob 785-639-7766

Bruce Swob 620-923-5291

gswob@mwenergy.com

Kansas Honey Producers Spring 2019 Meeting Friday and Saturday March 8 & 9, 2019

Meeting Space: Douglas County Fairgrounds Building 21 N & S 2110 Harper St., Lawrence KS 66046

Hotel: Country Inn and Suites by Radisson, Lawrence KS 2176 E 23rd ST. Lawrence KS 785-749-6010

Questions? Please call or email Joli Winer at 913-593-3562 or joli@heartlandhoney.com

We have a great meeting planned for this spring. We will meet at the Douglas County Fairgrounds at 2110 Harper St. Building 21 North and South. We will have sleeping rooms at the Country Inn and Suites at 2176 E 23rd St., Lawrence KD 66046. The hotel is only a few blocks from the fairgrounds. Please make reservations by February 15th to get our great rate of \$99 plus tax. The code for this meeting is Kansas Honey Producers. You can make your reservation by calling 785-749-6010 or by using the following link: [http://www.countryinn.com/reservation/itineraryEntrance.do?](http://www.countryinn.com/reservation/itineraryEntrance.do?hotelCode=USALAKA&promotionalCode=LANSTI)

[hotelCode=USALAKA&promotionalCode=LANSTI](http://www.countryinn.com/reservation/itineraryEntrance.do?hotelCode=USALAKA&promotionalCode=LANSTI)

One of our guest speakers is Dr. Juliana Rangel. She was born in Colombia, South America, Juliana obtained a BS degree in 2004 from the program of Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution at the University of California, San Diego. In 2010 she then obtained a Ph. D. from the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, working under the supervision of Dr. Thomas D. Seeley. Her dissertation explored the mechanisms and functional organization of reproductive swarming in the honey bee *Apis mellifera*. From 2010-2013 she worked as an NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow with Dr. David R. Tarpay at North Carolina State University. In January 2013, Juliana became Assistant Professor of Apiculture in the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX. Her research program focuses on the biological and environmental factors that influence the reproductive quality of honey bee queens and drones, the health and population genetics of feral honey bees, and the quality and diversity of floral sources collected by honey bees in developed areas across the country. She is also an active member of the Texas Beekeepers Association and has spoken to numerous beekeeping associations in Texas and across the USA. She teaches two undergraduate courses, Honey Bee Biology and Introduction to Beekeeping, and also Professional Grant Writing for graduate students. She is the co-advisor of the Undergraduate Entomology Student Organization and the coach of Texas A&M University's undergraduate and graduate teams of the Linnaean Games, a quiz bowl-style competition that tests students on their knowledge of entomology at the regional and national games of the Entomological Society of America (ESA). She is the elected chair of the ESA's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and also serves in the Department of Entomology's Graduate Student Forum Committee, and the Graduate Admissions Committee. She was the 2014 President of the American Association of Professional Apiculturists.

Jerry Hayes is the VP for Vita North America, supplier, and manufacturer of natural and near-natural honey bee health products. Jerry was the honeybee RNAi/Varroa control commercial lead for Monsanto previously. He was Apiary Chief for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, responsible for the regulatory health of 350,000 colonies. For 30+ years, Hayes has written a monthly column in American Bee Journal called The Classroom; he wrote a book by the same name. He is a founding member of the Colony Collapse Working Group and a science advisory board member for Project Apis mellifera (PAm) and the Bee Informed Partnership. He has authored multiple research papers on understanding and preserving honeybee health. His topics are all "Confirmation Bias..." I had to look it up to see what confirmation bias means.

Break out for Kansas Senior Farmers Market Program (KSMNP)

More guest speakers—like our new Kansas Pollinator People from K-State-come hear them on Saturday!

KHPA Spring Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 7th 2019 Executive Board meeting 8:00 pm

Country Inn and Suites by Radisson, Lawrence KS, 2176 E 23rd ST. Lawrence KS.

It will be in their meeting room

Friday, March 8, 2019 Douglas County Fairgrounds Building 21 N & S, 2110 Harper St., Lawrence KS 66046

7:30-8:30 Registration

8:30-8:45 President, Jim Kellie, Call to order

8:45-9:40 The Biology of Swarming, Dr. Juliana Rangel presents

9:40-10:35 Confirmation Bias-Nutrition, Jerry Hayes presents

10:35-10:50 Break

10:50-11:45 What's in Your Hive? 2017 Honey Bee Survey Results, Sharon Dobesh Presents

11:45-12:30 Lunch (included in Registration-see details on registration form) 1

2:30-1:25 Splitting your Hives and Requeening, Cecil Sweeney presents

1:25-2:20 Confirmation Bias-Varroa, Jerry Hayes Presents

2:20-2:40 Break

2:40-3:35 Age Polyethism, Julian Rangel Presents

3:35-4:30 Getting Entries Ready for Competitions, speaker to be determined

4:30-5:00 Meeting of beekeepers with the area directors

5:30 Dinner and Program-program to be determined (included in Registration- details on form)

Saturday, March 9, 2019 Douglas County Fairgrounds Building 21 N & S, 2110 Harper St., Lawrence KS 66046

8:00-8:30 Registration

8:30-8:40 Jim Kellie President, call to order

8:40-9:35 Factors that Affect the Reproductive Health of Honey Bee Queens and Drones, Dr. Juliana Rangel Presents

9:35-10:30 Confirmation Bias-Beekeepers, Jerry Hayes Presents

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-11:40 Experiences with Wild Bees and Other Beneficial Insects in Wisconsin Grasslands, Dr. Tania Kim Department of Entomology, K-State and Dr. Brian Spiesman, Research Assistant Professor at K-State—these are our new Pollinator People at K-State!

11:40-12:00 Reports from Grant Groups

12:00-12:45 Lunch ((included in Registration-see details on registration form)

12:45-2:15 Mini Queen-Rearing Workshop, Dr. Julian Rangel Presents

2:15-2:30 Break

2:30-3:25 Confirmation Bias-Small Hive Beetle, Jerry Hayes Presents

3:25-4:05 Tips for Installing a Package Successfully and Treating it with Oxalic Acid, Joli Winer Presents

4:05 General Business Meeting

Upcoming Events:

Sat. June 1st 2019 NEKBA Funday, at Douglas County, Guests include: Randy Oliver (Scientific American), Dr. Judy Wu-Smart (Assistant Professor & Extension Specialist, Department of Entomology, University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Dr. Matthew Smart, (Assistant Professor University of Nebraska Department of Entomology Lincoln, NE), Dr. Marion Ellis, (retired professor of entomology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Katie Lee; (Spivak Honey Bee Lab, Dept. of Entomology, University of Minnesota & Bee Informed Partnership)

October 18 & 19, 2019 Next KHPA Fall Meeting Wichita KS Best Western North .

March 6 & 7, 2020 Spring 2020 KHPA Meeting



Registration Form for Spring 2019 KHPA Meeting

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____

COUNTY _____ PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____ write email address clearly

Check here if you would like to receive your newsletter by email

List names of those registered for name tags _____

Meeting Registration For members: Children under 18 free registration

Fee includes lunch and dinner Friday and lunch Saturday

Per Person 2- day registration-Friday and Saturday \$ 35.00 X _____ = _____

Per Person 1- day only _____ Friday only _____ Saturday only \$ 15.00 X _____ = _____

Meeting Registration For Non-members: (Includes a 1 year membership and lunch and dinner Friday and lunch Saturday) Per Person 2- Day registration-Friday & Saturday \$50.00 X _____ = _____

Per Person Per Person 1- Day _____ Friday only _____ Saturday only \$30.00 X _____ = _____

Meals only Children under 18 2-day \$10.00 X _____ = _____

Children under 18-1 day _____ Friday _____ Saturday \$ 5.00 X _____ = _____

Please note: Meals and snacks are included in the registration for this meeting. All of the meals will be home cooked. It is Lent so all of Friday's meals will have a meatless option and we will do our best to have a gluten free option at each meal.

Tentative menus: Friday lunch: Egg Salad and Tuna Salad Sandwiches, chips, veggie tray, cookies

Friday dinner & Program: Lasagna & Veggie Lasagna, Salad, dessert

Saturday Lunch: Sloppy Joe's, Baked Beans, Salad, Dessert (and left overs)

Membership for Kansas Honey Producers Association: Renewal New \$15.00 _____

Youth Membership 2019 (18 years of age or under) Renewal New \$7.50 _____

Donation for Grant Project \$ _____

Northeastern KS Beekeepers Assn. Membership \$15.00 _____

Total \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Kansas Honey Producers Assn or KHPA and mail to Robert Burns, 7601 W. 54th Terr., Shawnee Mission KS 66202 913-481-3504 or email rburnshoney@gmail.com

Registration & payment now accepted with PayPal at www.kansashoneyproducers.org Note: No Receipts will be sent.

Kansas Honey Producer's Association
Robert Burns
7601 W. 54th Terrace Shawnee Mission, KS 66202
Address Service Requested



Kansas Honey Producer's Association Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone# _____ Email Address _____

Renew On Line
www.kansashoneyproducers.org

Membership Kansas Honey Producer's Association per year (Jan.-Dec.) \$15.00 _____

Additional family members wanting voting rights \$1.00 per person \$1.00 _____

Additional family names: _____

Youth Membership (18 years of age or under) \$7.50 _____ American Bee Journal 1 year subscription \$24.00 _____

Bee Culture Magazine (formerly "Gleanings") 1 year subscription \$25.00 _____

Donation Amount _____ Total Due _____

Make checks payable to: KHPA or Kansas Honey Producer's Association. Email: rburnshoney@gmail.com

Mail to: Robert Burns, 7601 W 54th Terrace, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66202 Phone# 913-831-6096

The Kansas Honey Producer's Association is a nonprofit IRC 501(c)5 agricultural educational organization, run by dedicated volunteers, and supported primarily by membership dues (subscriptions).

The IRC status means that the association is a tax-exempt organization.

While donations are always welcome, they are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

However, membership dues and subscriptions may be deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.