



Hello Fall!! What's BUZZIN'?!
SEPTEMBER, 2022

The Beekeepers Association of Central Arizona
(azbeekeepers.org)

Next Meeting- September 15

(Always the third Thursday of the month)

7:00pm (Doors open at 6:30)

Valley Garden Center (1809 N 15th Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85007)



Our guest speaker this month will be

Monica King

Past president of the Southern Arizona Beekeepers Association.

who will be helping us with

“Getting Started in Beekeeping”

(You can never know too much!)



It's been a BIZZZY summer-

In the last meeting, we allowed JOC RAWLS to take a break from being our illustrious leader and handed the reins over to DUANE COMBS to lead us forward.

Below are a few words from JOC as he steps down...



JOC; “Thanks to all our wonderful attendees for our meetings and events in the past year. As your outgoing president, I will be stepping down to a Board of Directors position. Duane Combs will be the new incoming president for the upcoming year. I feel certain that he will continue to provide great leadership for our organization, new organizational ideas, and continue to setup BACA for future success. We have a great lineup of speakers for the fall meetings. Please come and checkout our meetings, bring a friend, and share your experiences in the beekeeping journey. Thanks to our wonderful officers, board members, newsletter editor, website coordinator, and Facebook page manager for helping make our organization so great. See you soon at one of our upcoming meetings. Cheers! Joc Rawls”

And just to get to know our new President of all things humming, we present

DUANE COMBS

Duane Combs: “I grew up in Tucson graduating from Tucson High and the University of Arizona, where I met my wife Pat. Pat and I have 3 married sons and 11 grandchildren.

My work life has three phases starting with 15 years in banking followed by 23 years as a United Methodist minister and ending as a beekeeper. I have always wanted to start a monastery and having raised livestock, farmed a two acre vegetable garden, and managed 12 fruit trees, beekeeping was a natural addition. With a problem solving mind I always need a problem to solve and bees are perfect. (Oh yes! BEES and problems! Perfect combination!)

My company, Arizona Beekeepers llc is a family-owned beekeeping operation based in Litchfield Park, Arizona. We started our company with three key goals: 1) We want to save and increase bee populations and help manage the threat of African “killer” bees in our dry desert environment; 2) We want to produce the best pure, raw local honey possible; 3) We want to use sensors and other tools to develop effective management techniques to help all kinds of beekeepers who are facing an increasingly harder environment and business.

In January of 2020, we started with two Italian nucs. Using sensor technology, we can manage our hives and still minimize the disruption of our bees; solving a major problem with absconding African bees. Sensors have become so important to us that we have become the United States distributor for Bee Hive Monitoring, so that we can offer scales and sensors to other beekeepers throughout the United States.

African bees are a real management challenge, and part of our commitment to wild bees was to save urban African bees by re-queening them to reduce their defensiveness and making them compatible with urban beekeeping. As we could not

make the economics work for this model, we have had to abandon this work. We now buy and sell honey, buy and sell bees, sell bee sensors, and teach beekeeping classes.

This fall I have completed my Master Beekeeper Certification through the University of Montana. For 2022, we hope to get to 100 hives and through my intern, Michael Bloom, breed local queens by artificial insemination. I also completed the first round of experiments on overcoming our excessive summer heat. Overcoming excessive heat, bee nutrient, and breeding less aggressive African Queens are my research interests.

At our core, my mission will always be to grow bees and help people become successful beekeepers. That is why I started and that is why I became a master beekeeper.

Well, as we can see, we are in good hands! Thank you, Joc and Duane for your service!! We can all look forward to an exciting year!



So, Where are we exactly?

