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> The Bee Buzzer Monthly publication of the

Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers' Association

VOLUME 70, NUMBER 11

EDITOR: JOLI WINER

NOVEMBER 2018

General Meeting Monday, November 19TH 2018 7:00 p.m. Annual Business Meeting Passing of updated Constitution Election of Officers

#### **Annual Auction**

Douglas County Fairgrounds Bldg 21N 2110 Harper St, Lawrence KS This is the month of our annual auction to benefit the association. Members are asked to bring items to auction and money to buy items with! This is always a great time for us to have fun together and raise some money for the club. This auction benefits the clubs general fund with money being used for the administration and educational programs of the club—things like rental of the facilities, beekeeping class, scholarship & mentoring, etc.

**Directions:** The address is 2110 Harper St. It is easily accessible from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, turn north on Harper Street and it is just a few blocks. We are in Building 21 North which will be on your left you turn into the fairgrounds.

# **Election of Officers**

I would like to start off with a Big Thank You for helping me with the nominating committee, spending time, and effort to come up with a winning group of officers for the coming year. Thanks to Al Abts, Chad Gilliland and Jo Patrick for all their hard work and meetings to talk about the goal we set for 2019. The goal is always to bring in new members when terms are completed. That being said it is vitally important that we retain some of our existing officers to carry on the practices we have established and have worked for 70 plus years. A lot of thought went into our selections so we could give you a group that can work together and represent this organization as it should. We as a committee would like to thank those who volunteered and those when asked stepped up and accepted a position to be a part of this association. I also would like to thank the committee that worked on the New Constitution. It has been years since it was updated and as all things we needed to catch up with the times and technologies to better communicate with our club members. Thanks to both committees for a great job and have a cup of coffee and congratulate our new candidates for 2019.

#### 2019 Slate of Officers:

President -Steve Messbarger 1st VP-program chair-Chad Gilliland 2nd VP Librarian-Ed Darlington 3rd VP Honey Plants-Cheryl Burkhead Secretary-Sara Murry Treasurer- Robert Burns Youth Scholarship Chair-Joli Winer Military/Veteran Apprenticeship Liaison -Andy Nowachek Editor-Matthew Merz Special Event Coordinator, Position 1(New Beekeeping Class)-Becky Tipton Special Event Coordinator, Position 2, (Funday) -Jo Patrick

#### **Buzzing Around the Kitchen**



Association cookbooks will make a great gift for your friends and family for the holidays—a cook book and a jar of honey-what could be nicer! We will have them available at each meeting. Cost \$15 each.

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# Beelines By President Steve Messbarger



I think winter is about here with cold weather coming in and the old weather man talking about that four-letter word, snow. I can't believe that Thanksgiving is only about two weeks away and three days after our November meeting. Now that I brought up the November meeting, I would like to let all our members know ahead of time that we have a ton of business to conduct. Plus, we have our auction that night and a short time to do it in. As always, our members are willing to help get all of this done in a timely manner.

First of all, we will be voting on the approval of our Constitution and By-laws. We have had several meetings on the By-laws and Constitution that were in desperate need of overhauling and bringing up-to-date, due to the growth of our association. We, as a Board, went through every word and line to make sure everything was in place. There were some discrepancies on certain areas and after discussion, we as a Board voted on all changes. The majority passed the changes as needed. I would like to thank Chad Gilliland, Becky Tipton, Marlene Pantos and Joli Winer for their hard work and dedication to this project.

The next order of business will be the voting of officers. I would like to thank all the members that stepped up and offered their time and dedication to run for Board positions. We will be taking nominations from the floor at the time of our voting on positions for the board. You will be able to write their names on the ballot. We need to also thank our nominating committee for their work in getting these very capable people together to run for board positions. Please thank Al Abts, Chad Gilliland, Jo Patrick, and Andy Nowachek for working on this project. So, after all that, we will have our auction and we will be pressed to get all this done in a timely manner. Speaking of the auction, please bring some items for the auction. It can be anything. It doesn't necessarily have to be beekeeping items. It's all for a great cause and we appreciate all of your efforts and donations.

Ok, enough with all that! I'm exhausted and we haven't even had our meeting, but I'm excited to get rolling on all these long overdue projects. I think you will all be happy with the nomination committee choices of new Board members.

I hope all your bees are set for the winter, as I've had to feed mine too in hopes that they can make it through the winter. I am starting to make my emergency fondant. I want to be prepared for any of my hives that might be short this year on honey, due to the drought. It's always better to be ahead of the game, then scrambling at the last minute. Last year I lost a strong hive to starvation, because they had gone through their emergency food. I didn't get to them in time and I pray it doesn't happen again. It never hurts to have some food on hand if they need it. You can make it up and store in the freezer until you need it. Ok, a really busy next meeting, but I know we can pull it off! I'll see you all there and don't forget to bring some items to the auction. We will have a great time!

# Youth Scholarship Applications for 2019 Due by December 31<sup>st</sup>-

Do you know of someone that might qualify for our youth scholarship program? All information is on our website NEKBA.ORG.



# The Sun Hive Andrew Frederick

This spring, Matthew Burke, a sculpture professor at the University of Kansas, generously gifted me a completed Sun Hive. He and his students, over 20 of them, built the hive over several semesters as part of an eco-art studio course. My friend and I installed it on five acres of organic farmland just outside Lawrence, KS, building a platform and rain shelter for it in the process.

The Sun Hive, or "Haengekorb" which means "hanging basket" in German, is a bee-centric hive designed by German sculptor Gunther Mancke. In this context, a bee-centric hive means a hive whose design elements are all oriented towards the health and full natural expression of the honeybee's life cycle, with wild bees living in tree cavities, their original home, as a guide. The materials and form of this hive embody this orientation, resulting in a hive that is at once a beautiful sculptural gesture towards honeybee health and autonomy, and viable habitat. Though the Sun Hive does have curved top bars that are movable individually, similar to a top bar hive, it is intended to be less a hive for human manipulation of the comb or honey gathering, and more a hive left to the bees themselves to organize and inhabit closer to how they would in the wild.



Composed of two thickly woven grass baskets, an upper and a lower, with a wooden support board connecting them, the Sun Hive has a shape like an egg with the pointy end toward the Earth. The entrance is a circular one at the bottom, often with a woven landing pad that is also an entrance reducer. Bees build comb down from the top bars in deep catenary curves, responding to the Earth's gravitational pull, like a hanging chain. Because the basket's shape directly mimics the catenary, governed by comb width and depth, the bees do not attach comb to the sides. A cloth can go over the top bars to prevent the attaching of comb to the top basket, which allows the opening of the hive from the top, as well as the bottom. The hive's straw baskets, already more effective insulation than thin wood, are additionally covered in a layer of cow dung and earth. The Sun Hive's volume, around 30 - 35 liters, is closer to the 25 -45 liter nests Prof. Tom Seeley of Cornell University has shown bees choose in the wild, (one deep Langstroth box is about 40 liters, for comparison). Because this is a hive which celebrates the full life cycle of the honeybee, the yearly swarming of the colony is encouraged by the smaller size, rather than suppressed by enlarging the hive in the spring.

Woven from native Kansas grasses, our hive has a wooden stand that sets it about 4 feet off the ground. It's possible to hang the hive even higher from the wooden connecting board, hence its name in German. The Sun Hive does need a rain shelter, so my friend and I used reclaimed wood boards and other materials we had on hand to construct one. We dug a hole and poured a concrete footing to make it sturdy and keep the stand's wooden legs away from the ground when it rains. Canvas around the top portion offers more protection during storms with strong wind. We chose a spot with shade from elm and mulberry trees, near the young fruit orchard, and plenty of clover. Scout bees checked out the Sun Hive in June, but the swarm chose to move into another hive we also had out, which had previously been inhabited by bees. After a few modifications, we expect more interest in the Sun Hive from swarming bees next spring, and hope to welcome another colony onto the land.



For more information on sun hives and bee-centric hives in general, one can visit the Natural Beekeeping Trust's website

www.naturalbeekeepingtrust.org, as well as Michael Thiele's videos and honeybee re-wilding work at www.apisarborea.com. Tom Seeley's book on how swarms choose a new home, *Honeybee Democracy*, is a great read, and there is a copy at the Lawrence Public Library. If you are interested in building your own Sun Hive, there is a book detailing the process that can be ordered online from various sites, including Heirloomista.

**Wanted:** I would like some people to share driving and expenses to the American Beekeeping Federation meeting that will be held in Myrtle Beach, SC. Meeting dates are January 9-12, 2019. Contact Norbert Neal at 620-216-0202 or 620-627-2357.

# Renew your membership today at Nekba.org or by mail or at the meeting

# Upcoming Events – Mark your Calendars

American Beekeeping Federation meeting, January 8-12, 2019 Myrtle Beach Convention Center, South Carolina

Sunday's March 3 & 10 2019 NEKBA Beekeeping class for 2019 Dr. Juliana Rangel from Texas A&M will present on March 10<sup>th</sup> Lawrence KS

Friday and Saturday March 8 & 9 2019 Kansas Honey Producers Meeting, Lawrence KS Dr. Juliana Rangel from Texas A&M

Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 Funday Guests include Randy Oliver from Scientific Beekeeping, Katie Lee from the University of MN Bee Squad, Dr. Judy Wu-Smart from the University of Nebraska Extension, Dr. Matthew Smart and Dr. Marion Ellis retired from University of Nebraska Extension.

September 8-12 2019 Apimondia, Montreal Canada. After September 12 there will be tours for those that wish to go on them. This international beekeeping meeting will be excellent. Cecil and I attended the one in Vancouver in 1999 and it was quite an event. If you think you are interested you can go to apimondia2019.com for more information. &

October 18 & 19 2019 Kansas Honey Producers Meeting, Wichita KS





2018 Meeting Dates

Meetings are held at the Douglas County Fairgrounds at 2110 Harper St. It is easily accessible from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, turn north on Harper Street and it is just a few blocks. We are in Building 21 North which will be on your left you turn into the fairgrounds. Unless otherwise stated.

 Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (Flory Meeting Hall) 7 pm

## **November Tips**

• If you used a mite treatment that needs to be removed be sure to do so.

• Check hives regularly—check to see if lids are in place, check for dead-outs.

• Make sure you have a brick or heavy rock on each hive

• Move dead-outs into a storage area, clean out any dead bees, and treat with

paradichlorobenzene moth crystals. Do not store supers in plastic bags as this acts as an incubator for the wax moth. Left in the bee yard, bees will rob out any remaining honey and destroy the combs. Also, mice can destroy your comb. If storing in an area that freezes you will not need to use chemicals to protect the comb.

• Check your hives for honey stores—if you do not have enough now it is probably too late to feed. Your top brood chamber should be full of honey. That is an adequate supply for your bees to make it through the winter.

• Get your entrance reducers on so mice won't get in the hives. They can do a great deal of damage.

• Make sure your hives are tipped forward slightly so water will be able to run out.

• Make sure that if you have left your honey supers on that you took off your queen excluders. If the bees need that honey, they can move up but the queen can't. They will leave her behind.

• Take the time to inventory your equipment

so you can spend the winter putting new equipment together to replace worn out woodware.

• Make beeswax candles and ornaments for holiday gifts

 On a personal note---If you are a woman and you haven't had your mammogram this year –call today to make an appointment-if you are a man make sure that your wife or girlfriend has had hers.

• Renew your membership asap

#### Getting Your Bees Ready for Winter--Feeding

For fall feeding use 8# of sugar to 4# of water.

Candy boards do not take the place of liquid feed. They are only for emergency feeding. Joli found the following recipe in the Encyclopedia of Beekeeping. This is the recipe Cecil uses. It doesn't use corn syrup or cream of tartar. Homemade candy can be produced by boiling 20 lbs. of sugar in 5 pints of water until it reaches a temperature of 243° F after which it is allowed to cool for a while and then beaten until it candies (goes thick and white).

(Please note that recipes with cream of tartar are not the best ones to use—the cream of tartar may be harmful to your bees)

You pour this hard-thick candy into a rim that is the same size as the top of your hive body and about 2" tall with a bottom. Pour the candy in, let it harden. And then put it on top of your hive, under the inner cover. John Speckman states that he cuts the bottom 2" off of a 5-gallon bucket and sets that inside of a 2" rim on the top of hive and then puts his lid on the hive—this round container fits over the top of the bees so that there isn't as much wasted candy board—the bees eat more of the candy. If you don't understand this rim part --call Cecil and or ask at the meeting.



# Ask Quinby



**Dear Quinby**, last month you answered some questions about moving bees will you answer another please? I was thinking that it would be a great idea to move my bees when it is really cold and the bees are clustered. That way I could move them during the day and not have to worry about them flying around.

**Quinby Answers**: Actually, while that seems really logical, moving bees in frigid weather can lead to their demise. Here's why. When bees are clustered, they are around their food source. If you move the bees while they are clustered, they could get jarred and fall to the bottom board. If it's too cold they are not able to reorient back up onto the honey in the hive. It is really best to wait until the bees are still moving around in the hive.

**Dear Quinby**, do you have any tips to make sure I did everything right to get them ready for winter.

**Quinby Answers**, I've been curled up in front of the fire reading Keith Delaplane's, **Honey Bees and Beekeeping** and he makes the following suggestions:

Overwintering colonies need upper ventilation for 2 reasons. As bees consume honey a great deal of metabolic water is released. As the warm moist air rises, moisture condenses on the hive lid and rains on the winter cluster with harmful effects. Secondly, heavy snow covering the bottom entrance could conceivably suffocate bees if that is the only difference. Prop up the lid slightly by using a small block of week. Make sure your lid is protected from the wind by making sure there is a heavy brick or rock on top. Overwintering colonies must be queenright. The queen's presence increases worker survival.

When your colonies are well fed, well configured, ventilated, healthy and queen right, you have a good chance of survival.

Location of wintering hives is also very important. Year-round colonies should face south to southeast to maximize sun exposure; they should be on high ground to allow drainage of cold air, and they should be shielded from direct wind. Reduce lower entrances to minimize drafts and to exclude mice from the hives.

**On a separate note**-at the Kansas Honey Producers meeting we had the pleasure of hearing commercial beekeeper, John Miller from North Dakota. They have a whole system of wintering their bees indoors! It was fascinating.

Quinby (named after Moses Quinby who invented the bee smoker) would like to take this opportunity to invite you to send your stories or questions to him c/o Joli at the address on the back of *The Buzzer* or via email at joli@heartlandhoney.com.

## **Library News**

We are astounded at the number of books from the library that have been out for a very long period of time—Members, please, the library belongs to everyone please check at home to make sure that you do not have any books checked out. We hope to send out emails or postcards before the December meeting to those that have books out.



## **Honey Plants**



Our growing season is over and nectar sources are done for the year. The recent wintery weather has made that very clear. You wouldn't think that there would be any pollen available, but on those few days, in winter, when there is a break in the cold and the honey bees can fly, sometimes they can be seen carrying in pollen during late fall and winter. The resourceful honey bee can manage to find sunflowers, asters, or other sources still standing and collect pollen. Honey bees prefer freshly collected pollen even though they have stored pollen in the brood frame cells.

One can never have too much education, and now is a good time to read all those beekeeping books you have put off. I recommend brushing up on your nectar and pollen sources. One of the best books is *Garden Plants for Honey Bees* by Peter Lindtner. Lindtner rates each plant species according to how attractive the nectar and pollen are to honey bees. The book is organized by months, so you have a rough idea of what blooms when.

If you farm, garden, or live in a rural area you might be interested in *Insect Pollination of Crop Plants* by S.E. MacGregor. This is a USDA publication and even includes suggestions for writing crop pollination contracts. MacGregor gives detailed information about vegetable and row crop pollination. There is no other book available in print that can compare to this publication. The book can be found through Amazon.com and some beekeeping supply dealers. It can also be accessed for free online at <u>https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/20220500</u> /OnlinePollinationHandbook.pdf

The Xerces Society also has a book that is a great reference tool; 100 Plants to Feed the Bees: Provide a Healthy Habitat for Pollinators to Thrive. This book and Garden Plants for Honey Bees can be found on Amazon's website. Amazon also sells *Feed the Bees* for \$10.00, which is the best price available.

These books are available to check out of the club library as well.

For most of us identifying sources of nectar and pollen isn't easy to do in the winter. It's easier to do when there are leaves and blooms present. Exploring the foraging area surrounding your colonies, during the spring, summer, and fall is recommended to know what is available for your bees to collect. I strongly recommend doing this several times during the growing season as landscapes, row crops, and gardens change from month to month. Take notes of what you see. If you can't identify what you are seeing, try taking a picture of it, with your cell phone, so that you can research it. Just look at everyone under 30. They already do this.

Your local K State extension office can be helpful to identify plant species. They have numerous publications and during the spring, summer, and early fall Master Gardeners volunteer their time to answer questions and can identify plants.

For help with plant identification one can walk in with a sample, a picture on your cell phone, or a description of the species you would like identified. Calling, emailing, and texting can be done as well. Attaching a picture of the plant can be done if you email or text.

To identify prairie plants, I have used Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers: A Field Guide to Common Wildflowers and Plants of the Prairie Midwest, 2nd Edition, by Doug Ladd. This book contains wonderful, color pictures and detailed descriptions and can be carried in the car or in hand if you explore wild areas.

Frequently nectar and pollen sources are classified as "weeds". I have found *Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds*, by Michael John Haddock, Craig C. Freeman, and Janet E. Bare. It is a useful reference book to help identify mystery weeds. *Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds* is published by the University Press of Kansas. This book can be ordered through the University Press online book store at <u>https://kansaspress.ku.edu/</u>. You can also purchase this in their bookstore which is in the Student Union Building on the Kansas University campus. This large but interesting book includes color pictures along with the usual information about growing conditions, bloom time, pollen, invasive nature, etc. When applicable, information is given about how the species is beneficial to wildlife. Native American Historical uses is also included. It does not include information regarding honey bee foraging. I found it most useful in plant identification. If you see honey bees working a "weed", so much the better.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, or NRCS, has a file available with pictures and descriptions of seedlings of native plants found in the central states, that are helpful with plant ID. <u>https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\_PLANTM</u> <u>ATERIALS/publications/mopmcpu6313.pdf</u>

These are a few resources that I have found beneficial in my beekeeping journey. I would encourage you to learn what is available for your honey bees to forage on. This will help you to have a better understanding of what is happening in your colonies throughout the year.

Have you have ever asked yourself, "My honey supers were full, and now it's all down in the brood chamber! Why?" or "Two weeks ago I did the heft test and my hives were heavy. Now they're light? What happened?" or "My colonies aren't growing like they should. Is the reason a bad queen?" These situations are all linked to available quality food sources. Anticipating changes in available nectar and pollen will help you to make decide how you will manage your bees. This will help to make you a better beekeeper.

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#### **MENTORING-SWEET PRAIRIE HONEY**

Have a Master Beekeeper come help you at your bee hive. I have an EAS and a Mid-West Master Beekeeper certificate. Evaluating your hives after winter, installing package bees, requeening, making splits, or a one on one lesson at your bee hive are just some of the things we can do. After each visit I will leave you with a written evaluation sheet from each hive we go through. Call or text Kristi Sanderson at 913-768-4961 or email sandersonk09@gmail.com for pricing and appointment times.

#### **HEARTLAND HONEY & BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES**

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#### JORDY'S HONEY

We carry a full line of beekeeping supplies. Bee Hives, Supers, Frames, Foundation, Honey Containers, Smokers, Beekeeping Books, Queens, Packaged Bees and much more. Our hours are 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday-Friday and weekends by appointment. Please call in advance so we can have your supplies ready when you arrive. Robert Hughes, 12333 Wedd Street, Overland Park, KS 66213 PHONE: 913-681-5777

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## GOLDEN PRAIRIE HONEY FARMS & SAVE FARM AGRICULTURAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Our active duty & veteran students learn skills in woodworking & metal work by building beekeeping equipment, while learning beekeeping & honey production in our apiaries and extracting kitchen. We sell beekeeping supplies, containers, bottled & bulk honey. A Charitable, Educational Non-Profit, 501C3, Proceeds go back into the training program. Hours Mon - Fri, 9-4, closed Fridays in Winter. Please call ahead. Golden Prairie Honey Farms, 8859 Green Valley Dr., Ste 4, Manhattan, KS 66502 Phone: (785) 370-3642 Email <u>gphfarms@gmail.com</u>. Or order online at <u>goldenprairiehoney.com</u>

#### THE BEE STORE

We carry a complete line of bee supplies, along with honey and honey related products that we produce here in the store. We also offer beginning beekeeping classes, queens, bees, and feed. Located in Lawrence at 23rd and Louisiana in The Malls shopping center (a few doors west of Westlake Ace Hardware). We are open Tuesday to Saturday, 1 pm to 6 pm, Sundays, 2 pm-5 pm and 4:30-6:30 on Mondays when there is a NEKBA meeting in Lawrence. Phone 762-BEE-HIVE. website: www.AnthonysBeehive.com.

This Association does not endorse nor evaluate the advertisements, products or services offered in the Buzzer

Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers Association Robert Burns, Treasurer 7601 W 54<sup>th</sup> Terr Shawnee Mission KS 66202

# **Address Service Requested**

Meeting Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup> 2018 Auction!!

#### The Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers' Association

Membership is open to anyone who is interested in bees or bee culture. Dues are \$15.00 per calendar year (December 31-December 31) for the first in the family joining. Those joining in July or later in the year may pay \$7.50 for ½ year. Additional members of that family wanting voting privileges shall be assessed dues at \$1.00 per year. Youth memberships (18 years of age and younger) are \$7.50 per year. New memberships and renewals should be submitted to the treasurer.

The *Bee Buzzer* is the official publication of the Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers' Association, Inc. and is published monthly. Commercial ads are accepted in the newsletter for a fee, non-commercial ads by paid members are accepted & are free.

The library of the association is free to all members. Books may be checked out at the meetings and kept for a period of 30 days. The bee publications, *The American Bee Journal and Bee Culture* can be subscribed for through the treasurer.

The Association meets each month on the third Monday at 7:00 p.m. except during the month of January. A beekeeping class is held in March. This is a nonprofit organization; elected officers serve without pay. Everyone is invited to attend the meeting. Check *The Buzzer* or our website at NEKBA.ORG each month for the actual date, time and location. If the weather is bad call an officer or check the <u>www.NEKBA.org</u> website to find out if the meeting will be held.

#### 2018 Officers

President: Steve Messbarger, 9802 S Burr Oak Circle, De Soto KS 66018 Smessbarger55@gmail.com	913-226-2849
1st VP: (youth scholarship) Terry Collins, 35295 W 311 <sup>th</sup> , Paola KS 66071 <u>youthscholarships@nekba.org</u>	913-937-7980
2nd VP (Librarian): Cecil Sweeney, 19201 S Clare Rd, Spring Hill KS 66083 joli@heartlandhoney.com	913-593-3851
3rd VP (Honey Plants): Jo Patrick, 611 E Sheridan, Olathe KS 66061 <u>brian-patrick@sbcglobal.net</u>	913-645-8947
Secretary: Marlene Pantos, 2920 Stubbs Rd., Tecumseh KS 66542 MarlenePantos@yahoo.com	785-633-6283
Treasurer: Robert Burns, 7601 W 54 <sup>th</sup> Terr., Shawnee Mission KS 66202 <u>rburnshoney@gmail.com</u>	913-481-3504
Program Chair: Chad Gilliland, 23338 Kissinger Rd, Leavenworth, KS 66028 nexttonaturefarm@gmail.com	<u>n</u> 785 491-1978
Military/Veteran Chair: Andy Nowachek, 10921 W 91st Terr, Shawnee Mission KS awn@everestkc.net	913-438-5397
Editor: Joli Winer, 19201 S. Clare Rd. Spring Hill KS 66083 joli@heartlandhoney.com	913-593-3562
Webmaster: Robert Burns, 7601 W 54 <sup>th</sup> Terr., Shawnee Mission KS 66202 <u>rburnshoney@gmail.com</u>	913-481-3504

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