

W.V.B.A. Newsletter February 2007

Willamette Valley  Beekeepers Association

Willamette Valley
Beekeeper

Secretary's Corner

Mike Rodia



SETTING IT STRAIGHT

As that great philosopher Jack Webb may have said, "Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent." As you can see the name of this column and my role in the WVBA has changed somewhat. I'm still me (unfortunately) and the column continues but now I get to act as Secretary and at least try to provide the semblance of minutes for the meetings. However, I've enjoyed and had fun writing the Vice-President's column and the, too numerous to count, admirers have insisted (begged) that I continue. So I will by morphing my ramblings into the Secretary's Corner.

The rules are the same. I get to write about pretty much whatever I want as long as it pertains to beekeeping and is, hopefully, timely and of interest. My opinions and ideas are mine and sometimes run counter to anyone or everyone else's. They are colored by my hobbyist's background and may be hopelessly ignorant of commercial beekeeping practices, issues, interests or opinions.

There is, as least one, potential downside to this change and that is a reduction in the space allowed in the newsletter for my rambling. With new officers (I'll get to that in a bit) they may want (demand) space in the newsletter. This last year or so I've had the luxury (and you the indulgence) to use as much space as I wanted. Gordon (our editor) could pretty much fit it in and still have some room for recipes or other "fillers." That could well change if we have a President's and/or Vice-President's column in addition to mine. Of course if the others keep their musings short and sweet there shouldn't be a problem. But knowing Harry I don't know if that is possible. We'll see. Now on with it.

ELECTIONS - NEW SENIOR OFFICERS

Richard Farrier and Fritz Skirvin were listed for President, myself (Rodia) for Vice-President, Susan Rauchfuss to continue as Treasurer and the Secretary's position was open. After the announcements of the slate of candidates, Susan requested that Richard and Fritz provide members an idea of what each had in mind for the future of the association. Both provided excellent overviews of their intentions. A secret ballot followed with members marking or circling the nominee's name of choice. The order of the nominee's names were switched on every other ballot to eliminate a bias towards

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- March:** Fruit tree bloom starts mid-March through April, although this can vary about two weeks
- Swarming season starts; be observant on each inspection. Queen cell construction on the frame bottom can be seen from congested brood area, hive confinement, low quality stores, predators or queen over a year old. Remove each queen cell found on the bottom of the frames. Queen cells in the brood area (sides of frames) indicate a failing queen. Requeen.
 - Dust your colonies three times at seven day intervals with a 2 Tablespoon portion of Terramycin (TM25) mixed with eight parts of powdered sugar. Sprinkle on top of the brood frames, towards the end bars, being sure not to douse the brood.
 - Don't let colony stores get below 15 lbs. (3 full frames on honey). Feed light colonies sugar syrup (1:1).
 - To equalize stores between the colonies, rob combs of honey from colonies with excessive stores. (Put the empty replacement frames back in the strong colony next to the brood nest, to expand egg laying). When equalizing brood, do not remove over 20% of the sealed brood per colony. Give special attention to the feeding needs of colonies that donated brood and stores.
 - A strong colony can also be placed over a weak colony by placing a double screen between them. Use a separate entrance for each hive.
 - Unit queenless colonies with those needing bees, unless there are laying workers. If so, smoke well and shake all

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View From the

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Secretary's Corner *continued*

voting for the nominees name that appears first. Each person handed a ballot was checked to ensure that they were members.

After the ballots had been counted by two volunteers, members were advised that Farrier had won but Fritz would continue to the end of the nights meeting.

The elections continued with Rodia (acting as election chairperson) surprised the members by withdrawing as the nominee for Vice-President and putting forth Harry Vanderpool for the position. Rodia then said he would seek the Secretary's position and Susan would continue as Treasurer, if the members agreed. Harry allowed his name to be put forth and the members, by voice vote, elected Harry as Vice-President, Susan as Treasurer and Rodia as Secretary. Although most members were surprised by the turn of events, others wondered if there had been some kind of inside deal since Farrier and Harry are close friends. Well, for the record, there wasn't any deal. I am the one who made the decision to switch and I did it because I wanted to give Farrier every opportunity to succeed. I didn't know if he would win the Presidency. If he hadn't I would have stayed on as Vice-President since I have known Fritz going on 20 years and work well with him. However, if Farrier won the Presidency, I reasoned that his close relationship with Harry would provide him with additional strength to carry out his agenda.

There is another advantage to my switch. Being a little further away from the center of power, I can tweak the leaders and offer loyal opposition. And if you have seen or heard me in action you know how much I enjoy doing that. Fritz understands me, in that regard, and doesn't take it personally when I pull his chain. Hopefully Richard, Harry and you the members, will also understand, enjoy and sometimes learn from the banter. Ken agreed to keep on as our extractor and equipment lending person and Steve Collins will become our librarian.

BEE SOCIAL - I WON A LOT

We had lots to munch on, unusual honey's to taste, equipment to look at, some new members and a lot (about 40) other members to ask questions of, just talk to, brag or impress. There was a give away of some beekeeping equipment donated by Jack Rowland (93 years old and slowing down just a bit) that included queen excluders, screened entrance blockers and adjustable rope ties for fastening hive boxes together for movement. Gordon got a queen cell frame, cups, custom queen cell introducing cages and some other things. He will need to keep us informed on his queen rearing efforts. Thanks Jack!

Those that attended meetings last year and participated in Ag Fest and/or the State Fair had tickets with their names on them for the drawings. The more the participation, the more the number of tickets. There were plenty of prizes including Tracheal mite treatment kits (3 pound coffee can, half-roll of blue paper shop towels and a bottle of canola oil) a 12 (?) pound box of wired wax foundation, Bee Go*, sting kits, queen-line bottles, frame cleaning tools, Terramycin*, frame rests and much more. I won several things including the Bee Go*, that no one seemed much interested in since the bottle was leaking. One advantage, I guess, of having been an organic chemist is that I can't smell some things and/or even if I do, they don't smell that bad.

There was a hint in the last newsletter that an observation hive might be included in the drawings. It was there, but after several comments and suggestions, it was decided that it should be donated to the Oregon State Beekeeper's Association for inclusion in the silent or preferably verbal auction that raise moneys for bee research. The six frame design with built-in queen excluder and bottom entrance is somewhat unique and might fetch a couple hundred dollars or more for the associations efforts.

DUES

Don't forget it's dues time. Last month there was a dues form in the newsletter. If you can find it bring it and \$20 to the meeting on Monday, February 26. If you also want to go to the Bee School (March 12,19,26) make that \$25. If you can't make the meeting, send it to the address in the newsletter.

We would like to update the association's roster; it's going on two years old; but we can't do that until you pay your dues and inform us of any changes or additions to your listings. Please do both. It is very frustrating to try to contact someone if their listing is out of date, incomplete or wrong.

BEE SCHOOL

Harry is once again heading up our annual Bee School. He distributed flyers during the Bee Social and reminds those that took them to post them on bulletin boards in stores, schools, offices and wherever else interested persons might see them. Also encourage your friends, relatives, doctors, bosses, significant others and anyone else to attend. Get the word out. It's bad enough that we have some who are beehavers and not beekeepers, but it's worse if we don't have beekeepers at all. And we won't have many unless we encourage and help others to become beekeepers.

There will be some changes in the Bee School. It is likely we will have one or more outside expert presenters and, in any case, less discussions on the myriad of ways to raise and treat bees. Although of interest to long-time beekeepers, these sometimes off the main topic sidebars can confuse and leave new-bees wondering what they should or should not do. Both of these changes are ones that Fritz has an interest in and hoped would be implemented.

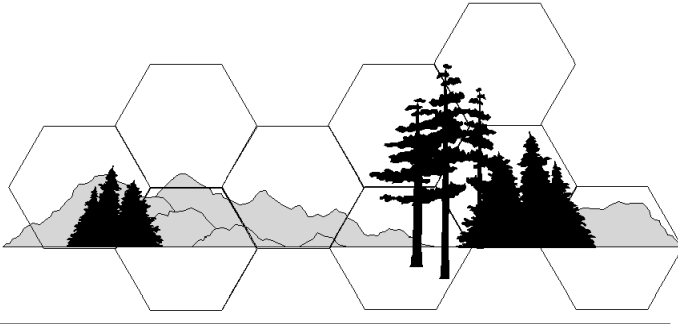
STATE FAIR and SWARM LISTINGS

It's way too early to be thinking about the State Fair and putting your name on the list of those who want to pick up swarms. Not so! Marv Rosette has already requested that he be given two day shifts during the fair. Several have already asked that I not forget to put their names on the 2007 swarm list.

With bees costing \$60 or more per package it's less expensive to re-queen a swarm for starting or replacing a colony. Moreover, sometimes, as recently reported by Craig Nunn, the swarm hives may survive the winter in better condition even though they may not have been treated for mites.

YELLOW JACKETS

I miss those guys. Every time I see those hundreds of dead bees on the concrete pad in front of my hives, I feel a twinge. If they weren't there I'd feel better. Maybe I should just sweep them off or use the leaf blower. But where are the yellow jackets when you need them? I know they're in my wood pile and sometimes in the house after I bring the wood into dry and burn. But why aren't the yellow jackets out there removing the dead bees and eliminating my twinge?



Willamette Valley  Beekeepers Association

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Last issue without 2007 membership!

The *W.V.B.A. Newsletter* is a publication of the
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 and interested parties for news, tidbits, recipes,
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January 29 - Bee Social / Election
 February 26 -Feeding the Bees/Pollination 2006
 March 12 - Bee School
 March 19 - Bee School
 March 26 - Bee School
 April 23 -
 April 28/29 - Ag Fest

Upcoming

**February Meeting
Schedule**

This month's meeting will be held on
 February 26th at 7 PM in Building 34.

Parking permits required.

The topic is: **Feeding the Bees /
 Pollination 2006**

Presenters: Rich Farrier / Harry
 Vanderpool & Chuck Sowers

SEE YOU THERE!