

W.V.B.A. Newsletter May 2007

Willamette Valley  Beekeepers Association

Willamette Valley
Beekeeper

Secretary's Corner

Mike Rodia



I. GENERAL MINUTES-APRIL 23, 2007

1. Richard opened the meeting at 7:07pm..
2. Patricia provided an update on AgFest noting that I made an error in the newsletter. Parking is in a special area but it is not free. She sent a sign-up sheet around to help fill the last few open slots.
3. We have a new coffee maker courtesy of Jim Strawn. For the first time we had fresh brewed "gourmet" coffee. The cookies went like crazy -

none left. Do good coffee and cookies just go together?

4. Steve Collins advised some new additions have been made to the library and he is compiling a list of what is available for loan. Donated books, some dating to the 1800's will be evaluated. Consideration will be given to donating them to a historical reference library or possible sales.

5. Marge Ehrey reported that three new entry categories have been added for the State Fair. These include artistic or novelty beeswax creations, dipped candles and beekeeping photos. It is likely marketing and/or pollination themes would be used for the photos.

She is looking into encouraging beekeepers (particularly from Eastern Oregon) to enter their honeys. Nothing wrong with blackberry honey from the valley but what about sage-brush honey from Burns?

The Family Apiary and Bee Pollination entry categories have had few entries so they will be dropped.

Observation hives (more than just one or two) are needed at the Fair. Ideally the hives would have capped brood, emerging new bees, drones and a marked queen.

Consideration is being given to selling honey and maybe sometime in the future an on-site honey extraction house where visitors could view the process and beekeepers can bring their full boxes for extractions.

Some relocating of booths in the Jackman-Long building may impact our site.

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June - Crops in bloom: berries, vetch, spearmint, radish, mustard, meadowfoam, clover. Others: honey locust, poison oak, pyracantha.

- Provide water continuously.
- Examine colonies every ten days and treat as in May, except: toward month's end, reduce the number of empty frames in each super to about ten. Lift off the supers, tilt up the second story and look for queen cells along the bottom of the brood comb. **IF you find** only eggs and larvae in the queen cells and the hive is crowded with bees, remove all cells --- top and bottom. Put the hive body containing mostly worker eggs or larvae on the bottom board, and the other containing mostly sealed brood on top. Add supers to provide 10-18 empty full-depth combs, or their equivalent. **IF you find** sealed or ripe queen cells, or possibly hatched ones, divide the colony. **NOTE:** Queen mating is always dependent on decent mating weather and the supply of drones. **IF you find** eggs and no attempt to rear queens, and the hive is full of bees, examine the supers and add more to provide 10 to 18 empty combs or their equivalent.
- Continue to be on the lookout for American Foulbrood.
- Start moving sealed frames of honey to top supers, or collect to extract.

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II. BEEKEEPING SAFETY - Susan Rauchfuss

There are three major safety components when working with bees - personal safety, effects on bees and effects on the environment.

1. How one approaches and handles bees can have a major impact on how they react. If you are in a hurry, have a body or perfume odor, wear wool, brightly colored clothing, jar or swat them or do a number other things, you may upset the bees.

If stung, scrape the stinger off and apply a poultice to reduce swelling. If allergic, however, get immediate treatment or use an Epi-pen. Be aware using an Epi-pen on someone else may leave you open to liability issues.

2. When a hive is opened for inspection or manipulation bees are often killed. So enter a hive only as necessary. Use smoke to calm the bees and move carefully. Feed bees, as necessary, provide water and medicate as needed and in accordance with approved practices. Failure to do so can have negative effects on your bees.

3. Be concerned about the environment surrounding your beekeeping operations. Whether it be your neighbors and their perceptions, the presence of flammables around the hive that a smoker might ignite or the potential for fires from melting wax on the kitchen stove.

a. Having water available (hose or 5 gallon bucket) can put out a fire in dry grass or used to rinse your eyes if a hard pesticide (formic acid, etc.) gets in them.

b. Lift responsibly and change to eight-frame woodenware or use only western boxes for brood boxes to reduce back injuries. Also remove tripping hazards from around your hives. Falling with a full deep or western will damage you and/or your boxes and bees.

Note: Only untreated burlap should be used in smokers. It may be available free or for minimal charge from plant nurseries or landscaping businesses.

III. HIVE SPLITTING - Richard Farrier

The major reasons to split your hives are to make nucs, increase the number of hives and for swarm control.

1. To split without finding the queen. Remove two or three brood box frames with brood. Shake bees off into brood box. Put brood frames (make sure queen is not on them) into a new box with additional frames and place above excluder on original brood box. Put lid on and leave overnight. Nurse bees will move up into new box. Remove new box, put on bottom board and relocate some distance away. After 36 hours add queen to new box. Leave alone for 10-15 days before removing queen cage.

2. Add peppermint oil or vanilla to sugar feed water (with Fumidil*) to mask old queen odor. The feed will help the new hive get started.

3. Transfer frames with queen swarm cells to nuc box to allow bees to produce new queen and start new hive.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting (at least the formal one) ended at about 9:15pm or so, discussing the state of the universe. Of course, there was also a drawing for queen excluders, a wax ornament and other items.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

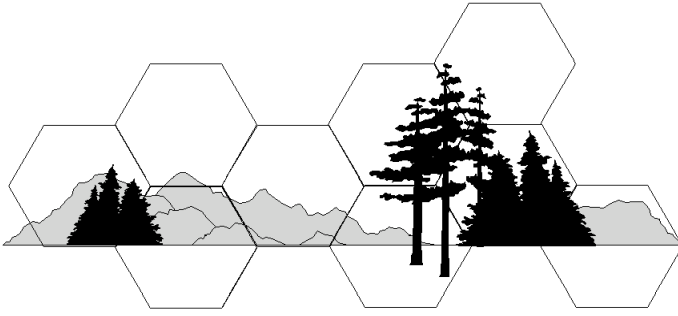
1. Ruben Yelkin (503)585-2962 has some older bee equipment (little used) for sale. Included is a 4-frame extractor, some woodenware, bee brush, smoker and gloves. He is willing to deal (offer \$50 bucks or so) and it might all be yours.

2. Saturday, June 9, 10:00am at OSU's outdoor Bee Lab-Corvallis there will be a Field Seminar on pollination and pollinators. According to Dr. Michael Burgett, the course sponsored by the Master Gardener program is geared primarily towards helping gardeners and others understand the basics of bees and their role in pollination. Call 1-800-365-0201 or 541-766-7650 for more information.

VI. SWARMS AND MONEY TO BE MADE

For every call that I get about wanting someone to pick-up a swarm hanging from a low lying branch or bush, I get a call about removing bees inside walls or eaves or from a height of twelve feet or more. Many of these latter callers will pay for removal (if not too expensive) if they can find someone willing to do it. For the most part, however, there are few beekeepers interesting in doing this. It can be dangerous, time consuming, destroy equipment and can kill lots of bees, if not done carefully.

Most of these callers I simply turn away or provide information on what might be done to destroy the bees if



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The *W.V.B.A. Newsletter* is a publication of the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association. Gordon Kroemer, Editor, solicits all members and interested parties for news, tidbits, recipes, artwork, ads, etc. He may be reached at: kroemer2@verizon.net or Gordon Kroemer 29950 NE Wilsonville Rd. Newberg OR 97132

May 21 -
June 25 -
July 22 - Picnic
August 27 - Sept. 3 - OR State Fair
August 28 -

Upcoming

May Meeting Schedule

This month's meeting will be held on May 21st at 7 PM in Building 34.

Parking permits required.

The topic is: ??

Presenters: ??

SEE YOU THERE!