

W.V.B.A. Newsletter November 2007

Willamette Valley  Beekeepers Association

Willamette Valley
Beekeeper

Secretary's Corner

Mike Rodia

I. GENERAL MINUTES - OCTOBER 24, 2007



1. Richard Farrier opened the meeting by apologizing if members were confused about the date for the meeting. When the calendar was submitted to Chemeketa last fall, October 29, the fifth Monday, rather than October 22, the fourth Monday, was listed as the meeting date.

Consequently Chemeketa scheduled the room and issued parking permits for the 29th. Several members noticed the error and after calls to association officers who subsequently called Chemeketa, the college rescheduled the room and advised they would honor the issued permits for the meeting on October 22.

2. Members Richard Farrier, Harry Vanderpool, Fred VanNatta and Mike Rodia, along with several beekeepers from the Albany area attended the October 24 meeting of the Albany City Council in opposition to the city's proposal to essentially ban honeybees on city lots less than one-quarter acre. Although the council opened the hearing with a suggested proposal to drop the "ban" and handle honey bee complaints on a case-by-case basis, both verbal and written testimony with supporting articles were presented by members of WVBA in an effort to educate the council and staff about honeybees and to help them more fully understand that beekeeping should be regulated only so far as to ensure good practices.

3. Several members brought door prizes for the drawing at the end of the meeting. These included a couple of copies of the updated version of "Bee Diseases and Pests" from Richard Farrier, queen excluders from Harry Vanderpool and Mike Rodia, frames from Jack Rowland with help from Phil Clites and internal feeders from Steve Coffman.

4. The Bee Movie is now playing at

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December/January

- Order supplies for next year, verifying prices by phone before ordering.
- Disturb the bees as little as possible. Don't break the cluster, but move stores closer to brood area, if necessary.
- Check apiary occasionally for blowovers or vandalism.
- Continue the repair and/or assembly of next year's equipment.
- Tally costs for the past year.
- Record yields. Do book research on weak areas.
- Design and build better beekeeping equipment: pollen traps, hive tools, hive boxes, smokers, equipment caddies, etc.
- Mentor a young or inexperienced beekeeper. Donate equipment, scholarship money or expertise to the 4-H Beekeepers Club.
- Pay your dues to your State and local beekeeper's associations.
- Lift the hives to find any light ones. Give these emergency feed of dry sugar or sugar candy on top of the brood frames.
- By the end of January or *early* February, treat hives for varroa mites. Read instructions. Mark your calendar, so you can remove the strips. Be sure to read all directions on the label.

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first-run movie houses. It is entertaining and provides a fair representation of honeybees and beekeeping except that beekeepers are portrayed somewhat as "heavies" for "stealing" the honeybee's honey.

5. Mike Rodia advised (via Fritz Skirvin) that PBS (channel 10 in Salem) would be airing a documentary on Collapsed Colony Disease (CCD) on Sunday, October 28 at 8:00 PM. Members were encouraged to watch it.

II. BEE FACT - One teaspoon of pollen contains about 1200 pellets or about 2.5 billion grains of pollen.

III. TOPIC OF THE MONTH - WHAT WORKED/WHAT FAILED?

Harry led the group in a round-robin of things that did or did not work during the last year. Included were suggestions about what other beekeepers might do.

1. It doesn't make much sense to treat without knowing whether the treatments are successful. For Varrora Mites the drop count after treatment should be about 20 times higher the count before treatment.

2. The bees should be fed immediately after pulling supers to make-up for a dearth in nectar flow and to help raise "fat" winter bees. Pollen substitutes should also be fed but only if the bees are still bringing in some natural pollen.

3. To help with queen acceptance put package queens into nucs for awhile. The queens will have better acceptance and the beekeeper can better evaluate her quality before transfer.

4. Jim Strand tried a top entrance (top shimmed) only hive with an excluder to keep drones down. Operated as a top bar hive (frames without added foundation) it did well. Debris accumulated on the bottom and the frames had to be moved about to encourage the bees to add foundation uniformly.

5. Curt Swenson had some problems with swarm control. Harry advised that the use of nucs to reduce congestion in the parent hive would help. He will bring back cardboard nucs from California that would lessen the costs for making nucs.

6. If bottom boards are thoroughly sealed they will stay dry and minimize growth of mold, fungus, rot, etc. To do this seal, prime and use the best paint on bottom boards prior to adding rails. Then paint the completed assembly with three coat of gloss enamel.

7. Richard recommends having at least one nuc for every two colonies to upgrade or replace colonies as they weaken and/or fail.

8. Ken Vial reports that a Dept. of Agriculture weather expert who has correctly predicted the severe storms over the last 20 years now predicts a severe winter for 2007-2008 with above normal rain, snow and lower temperatures.

9. There are different grades of synthetic strapping used to tie hives together and/or on pallets. The best comes from a supplier in Portland while the cheaper yellow strapping deteriorates and falls apart after sun exposures.

10. Andy Anderson has successfully shifted to the use of queen excluders in his several hundred hives. He has found Terramycin* resistance and is now using Tylosin* in a three week three treatment process.

11. Rodia reported that he kills fewer queens by not disturbing the brood cluster during honey flows but this also delayed him finding out that his three hives had gone queen-less until at least one had several laying workers.

12. Gordon used the screened (Rube) bottom boards and found the hives cleaner and in better shape than others. Unfortunately, the swarms, he caught, didn't make it.

13. Alan Ehrey said that feeding bees in the Fall is necessary in part because medications weaken the bees. Winter bees produced in August and September differ from summer bees in how they store reserves.

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Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association

Official Dues Form for 2008

Membership in the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association is open to anyone who has an interest in honeybees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. W.V.B.A. annual membership is \$20.00* per person and includes a vote in W.V.B.A. elections, eleven issues of the *Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association Newsletter*, and discounts on other publications. Membership in the Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association and Bee School tuition, including all materials, is \$25.00* per person.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____

E-Mail: _____

Send a check payable to W.V.B.A. to Treasurer, Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association, P.O. Box 13245, Salem, Oregon 97301
or better yet, deliver your dues to the treasurer at the next monthly meeting.

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14. John Sekevac is using screened bottom boards with success but reports that trying to requeen a laying worker hive is futile.

Andy suggests that rather than requeen the laying worker hive, one should transfer the queen with frames from a strong hive and then requeen the strong hive.

15. Besides buying failing queens from Harry, Ken reported bad luck with swarms that did not do well. In the future (if Mike ever calls him) he will use swarms only for drawing out foundation.

If pollen patties are coated with sugar syrup it will encourage the bees to take them.

16. If the upper box of a two box brood chamber becomes filled with honey the bees will not place brood there. Steve Coffman recommends replacing a couple of the filled combs with open foundation to encourage the move up.

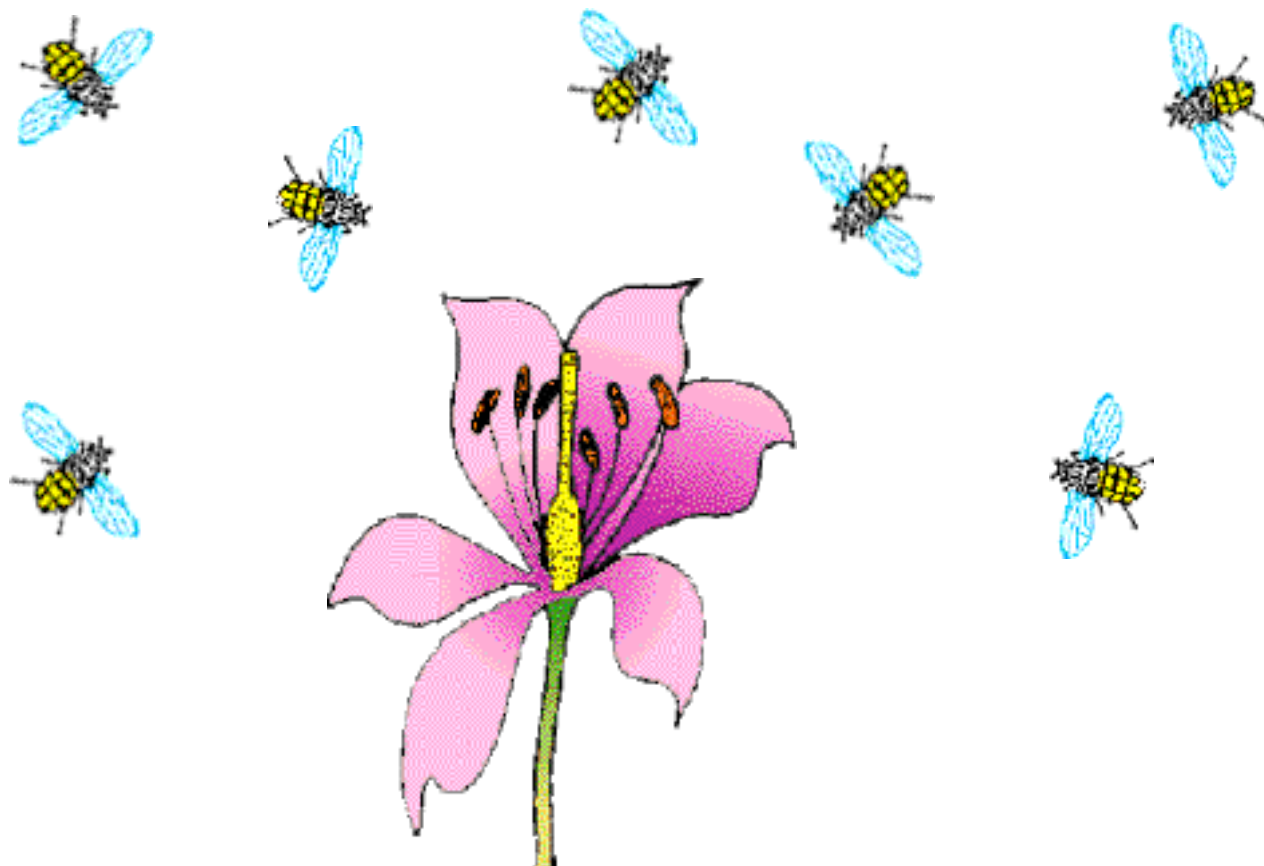
With all the other tasks necessary for beekeeping, queen failures with the consequent need for replacements can result in a time crunch for beekeepers.

17. Ken Vial reports his two greatest successes were finding and joining the WVBA and his experience with top bar hives which are easy to make and whose products garnered him two ribbons at the State Fair.

18. If two rows of sunflowers are planted several feet from the front of hives, the bees will fly up and over them. According to Art Martinak this "hides" the bees from neighbors and helps ensure they are well elevated as they fly over adjacent properties.

IV. LAST MINUTE REMINDER - OSBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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Harry reminded everyone to seriously consider going to the conference in Newport. An excellent slate of speakers was scheduled and contacts with other beekeepers are invaluable. (NOTE: Fourteen members and eight significant others from the WVBA attended the conference)

V. OBSERVATIONS FROM THE BEE YARD

Other than cleaning up fallen leaves and dead bees from around my hives, I have done little with my bees. There is always some die off as evidenced by the bee bodies on the concrete slabs in front of the hives. Normally I clean the bodies up once or twice and then there are a few more as winter progresses. It seems there are more bodies and I have already cleaned them up three or four times.

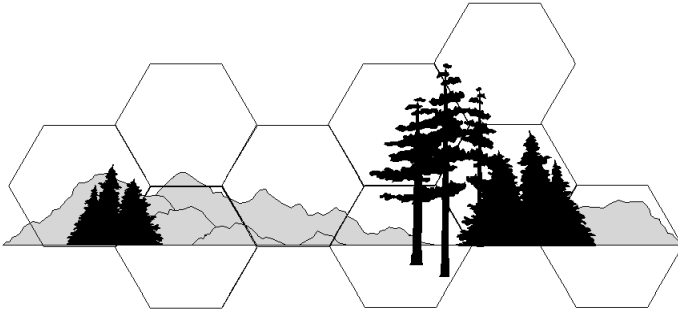
It's time to check further, I see a few bees flying in and out and very few at the top of the frames. Are my bees gone, going or what? I'll let you know in my next report.

CONSIDER - AS THE BEES CLUSTER FOR THE WINTER AHEAD, THEY AWAIT ONLY TO BURST FORWARD WHEN SPRING DRAWS NEAR.

Bee Facts

There are five species of honeybees known: *Apis mellifera* (common honeybee); *Apis dorsata* (giant honeybee); *Apis laboriosa* (giant honeybee); *Apis cerana* (Indian honeybee) and *Apis florea* (dwarf honeybee).

The common honeybee is found worldwide and consists of a number of races or subspecies. There are four subspecies of the common honeybee occurring in Europe, three oriental subspecies and 12 African subspecies.



Willamette Valley  Beekeepers Association

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CHEMEKETA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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

November 26

Upcoming

November Meeting

Schedule

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

Parking permits are required.

The topic is:
Presenter:

SEE YOU THERE!