



NEBRASKA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

www.nebraskabeekeepers.org



April Beeline 2009

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Classified ads by members free.

All ad material needed print ready by 20th of each month. If purchasing ad for full year ad layout can be changed each issue before the 20th of the month. Acceptable formats PDF, Microsoft Office Word, JPEG, TIFF. All ads must be paid for before they are run. Issues of the newsletter are posted on our association web site @ www.nebraskabeekeepers.org
For more information contact the editor.

More Balance Needed in Coverage of Beekeeping

In the past two years, the Camera has been publishing articles on alternative forms of beekeeping in Boulder County, with particular emphasis on what is termed Top Bar hives. What these articles have failed to report is how these alternative practices differ considerably from the long established beekeeping traditions of Boulder County.

Boulder County is one of the oldest established beekeeping Counties in Colorado, dating back to the mid 1860's, but not actually flourishing until the late 1880's. It was considered one of the premier honey producing areas of the United States, and shipped boxcar loads of honey (primarily in the form of comb honey) to the Mid-West and other areas of the U.S..

All of that changed in the early to mid 1930's when the beekeeping industry and craft in Colorado was decimated by a bee disease called American Foulbrood (AFB). There was no cure for AFB at the time, other than culling and burning the infected hives/colonies. Two items helped to reverse this devastating situation in the late 1930's; the discovery and use of sulfa drugs (later replaced by better antibiotics), and the establishment of bee hive inspections by the state and federal government. By the end of World War II, and primarily due to these two practices, the beekeeping industry rebounded and in fact thrived in the U.S. Unfortunately in Colorado, and in Boulder County in particular, the beekeeping industry never did regain it's former glory and prominence.

The United States is home to what are termed the "Fathers of Modern Beekeeping", L.L. Langstroth, A.I Root, et al. The Reverend Langstroth (1810-1895) applied the principle of "bee space" (the working space in which the bees will not build comb) to his designs, which for the first time, allowed the use of removable frames and combs. This allowed the frames to be removed, harvested of their honey, and replaced in the hive without destroying them; which is vastly more efficient for the bees as well as beekeeper, and then allowed for the commercial production of liquid honey.

Perhaps just as importantly, the development of removable frames and standardized equipment allowed bee inspectors to actually go into the hives to determine if such diseases as AFB were present, and to implement corrective measures *before* they became a problem for the beekeeper as well as stopping the spread of disease to other beekeepers. Unfortunately, the individual bee inspection programs in Colorado were allowed to expire in the early 1980's. Boulder County had *the* last active Bee Inspector in Colorado, Tom Theobald, who's position was allowed to expire in 2000.

As with other areas of agriculture, we now realize that the use of antibiotics and other chemicals are not the best long termed solution to solving disease problems, and beekeepers world wide have been scrambling to find non chemical controls to our problems. We still have many hurdles to overcome, primarily through implementing what is called an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach and, though selective breeding, which is often a slow and tedious process. However when necessary, most beekeepers reserve the option of using the antibiotics to control such things as AFB, not only to preserve our own hives/colonies, but in the effort to be *good beekeeping neighbors* to other beekeepers. IPM uses these products only when necessary (which can only be determined through inspection)..and then only as a last resort. All approved products used by beekeepers are EPA and/or FDA regulated.

During the intervening years of losing our bee inspectors and learning to deal with yet other new and devastating bee diseases (Varroa mites and Nosema ceranae) there has been an increase of people interested in beekeeping but who are apparently unaware of the long and often arduous gains that beekeepers have made over the past 150 years, and particularly in Boulder County. This

seems to have been accentuated in recent years as the general public reads about such things as large scale bee die-offs, and global climate change.

Top Bar hives are generally promoted as being an easier, simpler and less expensive way to start beekeeping. What has not been conveyed however, is that these very attributes tend to contribute more to what is known as "bee having" rather than conscientious beekeeping. *Bee havers* tend to spread their problems unwittingly, or not, to other beekeepers. In fairness to some of the alternative types of beekeepers out there; there is a benefit to doing nothing about bee diseases and letting Mother Nature take her course. Survival of the fittest in other words, which allows for natural selection of survivor stock. However, this is not an undertaking for the beginner, nor is it something that most conscientious beekeepers would knowingly expose other beekeepers to. The wisest and most balanced approach for beginning beekeepers therefore, and one that is advocated by most established beekeepers, is to begin using conventional methods and equipment and then, if desired, transition to alternatives after learning the basics, which includes disease identification and control.

Some very good resources for learning more about conventional beekeeping are through the Boulder County Extension Office (303) 776-4865, the Boulder County Beekeepers Association www.BoulderCountyBeekeepers.org and the Northern Colorado Beekeepers Association www.NorthernColoradoBeekeepers.org.

Allen "Al" Summers

Communications Director,

Colorado State Beekeepers Association

Editor@ColoradoBeekeepers.org

Secretary's Corner:

Sorry no news to present meeting was held before printing newsletter.

Catch the Buzz: by Kim Flotum

An Organic Garden and honey bees move to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue

From the perspective of probably every beekeeper in the U.S., the first day of spring, 2009, should be one of the most memorable in decades. It was on that day that Michelle Obama announced that not only would there be a garden on the White House lawn, the first since FDR's Victory Garden, but there would be, yes, BEE HIVES!

The chefs at the white house are looking forward to cooking with locally grown fresh vegetables (and sharing what they can't use with a soup kitchen near the White House), and being able to use honey in some of their recipes. Honey produced right outside their kitchen door.

Mrs. Obama readied the garden plot on the first day of spring with the help of a couple dozen local fifth graders. They worked to remove the sod and loosen the soil in preparation of planting of the spring crops. The L-shaped plot will contain year-round vegetables once completely established, with vegetables, berries and other tasty edibles. All will be raised organically.

To complete the garden, two bee hives will be moved in early this week. They will be managed by a White House employee who is a beekeeper and lives nearby. The hives belong to the beekeeper.

We found out that the beekeeper was a subscriber to our magazine, so we had a contact and were fortunate to have a phone conversation late last week. But, of course, there has to be some preparation for all this, so everything we discussed had to remain off the record. He is, however, a three year veteran beekeeper and had a strong desire to keep bees and beekeeping in front of the folks who live where he works and to keep reminding them of the importance of the pollination efforts their bees will be performing.

As far as we can tell, there's never been a bee hive at the White House, so this first-ever apiary event is something that beekeepers everywhere are excited about. The calls and contacts received in our office once this

At the ground breaking on Friday the kids, with the help of the First Lady removed sod and started the process. In a couple of weeks the planting will take place. The early spring garden, as with many early spring gardens will be red romaine lettuce, oakleaf lettuce, sugar snap peas, butterhead lettuce, radishes, shallots and shell peas, onions, chard spinach, kale, collards and a host of herbs including sorrel, thyme, oregano, sage, rosemary, marjoram, chives, chamomile, garlic chives and hyssop. There are also carrots, dill, cilantro and parsley. Some mints and rhubarb will be going in too. Later, squash, tomatillos, some berries, and perhaps more, since the garden is to be a year-round source of vegetables.

The L shaped garden is 40' tall, 40' wide at the bottom, and the width at the top of the L is 20'. There are marigolds, nasturtiums and zinnas lining the two walkways through the garden. Several raised beds surround the garden.

An organic garden and beehives at the White House...it doesn't get much better, does it?

CATCH THE BUZZ by Kim Flotum

These comments, submitted by the National Honey Bee Advisory Board to EPA concerning the registration of imidacloprid, a systemic pesticide produced by Bayer Chemical Company, have been edited here because of length. But the stories have not been changed or altered. The NHBAB consists of beekeepers from both the AHPA and the ABF, and represents most of the nation's commercial beekeepers. EPA now must act on these and other comments regarding this compound. At the same time, this group of beekeepers and Bayer are meeting to discuss continued research with this compound. Time will tell if increased regulation, or more precise research improve the situation.

Beekeepers from around the United States, and around the world, have had persistent problems associated with the use of the systemic pesticide imidacloprid. Since the first uses of imidacloprid in France in 1994 on sunflowers beekeepers reported problems. Soon the condition was given a name in France: "mad bee disease." Problems reported by beekeepers, combined with mounting independent scientific data, caused the French Minister of Agriculture to suspend the use of imidacloprid on sunflowers in January of 1999. In February 2004, France extended the suspension to include uses on corn. At the same time they further broadened the ban on systemic insecticides to include the chemical fipronil.

In Europe the debate goes on, important data from toxicity studies is being produced. Conclusions from this data vary. The chemical manufacturers continue to maintain that the systemic compound imidacloprid is safe for use around honeybees, native pollinators, birds, and does not pose an unreasonable risk to the environment. Reports from the field, however, are telling a different story. The recent dramatic increase in use of imidacloprid on a greatly expanded list of cropland, rangeland, forest, residential, and recreational (golf courses and parks), has greatly increased exposure of pollinators to contaminated nectar and pollen expressed from flowering crops and weeds.

Imidacloprid is only one of six product formulations in the broader class of "systemic neonicotinoids." Although only imidacloprid is currently 'up' for public comment, all six of these products in this class are of great concern to beekeepers. Much attention has been given to the seed treatments such as Gaucho, a trade name for a formulation of imidacloprid.

Recent data from Penn State on crabapple trees, although unpublished, and not yet replicated is extremely concerning. Two controls, and two treated trees were used in the experiment. After three weeks no imidacloprid was detected. However the next spring pollen samples from pollen sacs and anthers tested over 900 ppb combined Imidacloprid and 2 principal degradants: 5- hydroxide and olefin. In nectaries the combined number was 1,450 ppb. Although further research is required for this study to be properly concluded, the initial data raises questions about how imidacloprid is stored and translocated in woody plants, like fruit trees.

Farmers, pesticide applicators, and beekeepers all look to EPA to provide guidance on safe and unsafe ways to apply these economic poisons. We will quote the public comment of Roger Haldenby (Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. tracking number 808bfe56, February 23, 2009) on Imidacloprid: "There are reports of imidacloprid toxicity to bees, birds, earthworms, and some fresh water crustaceans. The impact of imidacloprid on these organisms can be mitigated by proper application of the insecticide in accordance with label instructions."

Systemic pesticides, like imidacloprid, work on a different principal. The chemical is taken up into the plant tissue, and becomes systemic. Active chemical is moved throughout the plant including the nectar and pollen of the treated crop plant, or inadvertently treated weed. Once the chemical is in the nectar and pollen of the plant, no protective means can be employed to protect the pollinator who gathers the poisoned food. There is no "label warning" currently to protect pollinators from imidacloprid tainted nectar and pollen. EPA does not have "safe label" instructions for imidacloprid.

In an advertisement for Premise 200 SC, an imidacloprid product for termite control, Bayer states, "Premise 200SC interferes with (the) instinctive social behavior (of termites), contributing to the termites' demise. Low doses of Premise 200SC disorientate the termites and cause them to cease their natural grooming behavior. Grooming is important for termites to protect them against pathogenic soil fungi. When termites stop grooming, the naturally occurring fungi in the soil attack and kill termites. Premise 200SC makes fungi 10,000 times more dangerous to termites. Nature assists Premise in giving unsurpassed control." (Bayer Premise SC Brochure)

Major incidents have been reported by beekeepers linked to imidacloprid. EPA is aware that their incident reporting database of pesticide effects on honeybees is not working. At the December 2, 2008 meeting between US EPA Office of Pesticide Programs and Beekeepers, the beekeepers explained how the incident reporting system, which utilizes state departments of agriculture and chemical manufacturing companies, is not reporting beekeeper field incidents with pesticides. The beekeepers at the meeting presented a wall chart showing all incidents reported to EPA and then detailed how their own personal incidents, as well as incidents of colleagues not there. Providing a mechanism for reporting bee incidents was one of the eight "action items" listed as coming out of that meeting.

Recognizing that EPA is not aware of beekeeper incidents related to pesticides, we would like to provide you with a partial list of our own. Many beekeepers will be reporting their individual incidents independently. The list below by no means should be considered as complete; it only attempts to showcase a few of the most prominent incidents. Many commercial beekeepers have had problems related to the use of imidacloprid.

The largest incident involved seven beekeepers in North Dakota and Minnesota with Gaucho, a product formulation of Imidacloprid **seed treatment on canola**. The seven beekeepers initiated legal action against Bayer Crop Science in Federal Court. Private laboratory tests performed on the beekeepers' wax comb and honey in barrels. "ADPEN analyzed the material for imidacloprid, carbofuran, dichlotvos and coumaphos. They found residues of imidacloprid in all of the samples. The levels of imidacloprid found ranged from 22 to 671 ppb. These levels are much higher than the LD50 and are certainly killing honeybees and causing sub lethal effects" (Mayer sworn and notarized DOC dated 12th January 2007). Chris Charles explained that placing these boxes on top of his hives would cause an immediate die off of the field bees. Concerns about this lethal mix in his wax combs caused him to replace his entire comb with new. He observed that his bees recovered after being given new fresh wax.

Clint Walker relates his experience with imidacloprid and cotton in Texas. "In the summer of 2006 we shipped 500 bee hives to the cotton fields of West Texas. It was a drought year where the only green plants were under irrigation. During the active bloom phase of the cotton it was treated with aerial and ground applications of imidacloprid (Gaucho and Admire) for aphids. All of our 500 hives received sustained exposure to this chemical with no immediate ill effects. Our crop was short due to the drought. As we relocated the bees back to our home territory (Central Texas) in the early fall, the bees were strong and apparently healthy."

By In January of 2007 we began to see a significant portion of our nearly 2000 hives begin to collapse with Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) symptoms. As we searched for an explanation to our losses, a disturbing pattern emerged: All of the collapsing hives had been in West Texas four months earlier. We saw no CCD in the Central Texas bee colonies. This was the only difference in the cultural practice of the bees that collapsed and those that were healthy."

Dave Hackenberg tells his story of CCD on the East coast. In 2004, when our bees were first exposed to imidacloprid, we saw things happen in our bees that we have never seen before. Good colonies of bees run through pollinations and honey crops over the summer that we now know were exposed to Assail in Apple pollination and Admire in pumpkin pollination, by fall when no new food was coming into the hives, began to collapse at a rapid pace, leaving nothing but a queen and a few bees in the boxes. The farmers that I work with are sensitive to using anything that would hurt my bees because they recognize how important good pollination is to the success of their crops. They were told by their chemical suppliers that these 'new' pesticides were 'safer' for honeybees and they could even apply them during bloom without damage to the bees. We did not see any dead bees in front of our hives while they were in these pollinations. In the fall, it was clear that the bees that had been on honey locations were OK with normal mortality of 10 to 15% loss, while the pollination hives had 75 to 80% loss. The 'surviving' pollination hives were not healthy and they failed to build properly in the spring. We saw this same problem with pollination hives in 2005 and 2006. It was in the fall of 2006 that we began to associate these losses with summer pollination exposure. Since then we have communicated to our growers some of our concerns and the losses have gotten better in apple pollination where the grower had 'options' to use other products. In pumpkin pollination, the growers have not had such luck since there are few other 'approved' products available to them.

Gene Brandi tells his story of watermelon pollination in California. "Another route of imidacloprid exposure to which my bees have been subjected is by chemigation with Admire on watermelons. Growers who chemigate with pesticides highly toxic to bees are not required to notify registered beekeepers in California, so I was not aware until after the fact that this practice was occurring. In the summer of 2007 I pollinated watermelons with nearly one thousand colonies of my bees. After approximately 50% of these colonies died during the following winter (compared to an 18% winter loss in my colonies that did not pollinate watermelons), I contacted the grower and discovered that the watermelons had been chemigated with Admire. My colonies that were not in watermelon pollination were exposed to other products, and yet did not sustain the same magnitude of winter loss. Although I do not have conclusive proof that exposure to imidacloprid was the cause of this bee loss, the correlation of this loss to watermelon pollination was enough for me to stop pollinating watermelons.

Dave Mendes tells his story of orange orchards in Florida. "I am a commercial beekeeper operating 7500 hives for honey production and crop pollination in the states of Florida, California, Maine, and Massachusetts. I participated in a research project organized through Penn State from March 2007 until January 2008 to follow a group of beehives through a complete season to monitor several different conditions in these hives to determine what factors may contribute to hive mortality. I was one of three beekeepers in this study who each selected 18 to 24 hives that would be sampled each time they were moved to a new location. My hives were sampled 7 times during the test period. I started the study with 18 hives and ended with 4 hives total and only one of these was in good enough shape to produce honey or pollinate an agricultural crop. The first samples taken while the bees were in Florida citrus showed levels of 14 to 17 ppb of imidacloprid in the pollen inside the hives. I spoke to the grove manager and found out that Admire Pro had been applied to the younger trees in his grove (40,000 trees in a grove of 600,000 trees) in February as a ground application as the trees began to bloom. The research on imidacloprid that I could find showed levels of 3 to 5 ppb as the highest recorded levels in citrus nectar or pollen. I inquired to Bayer Crop Science and the Florida pesticide regulatory people to find out more

about what effect these levels of imidacloprid could cause in my beehives. I found very little information that addressed my concerns.

Imidacloprid, a systemic insecticide, moves through the treated plant to the nectar and pollen. The chemical remains persistent in soils for several years, can be taken up by subsequent plantings and weeds, and expressed in their pollen and nectar. No mechanism exists to protect honeybees from this exposure. Due to the vitally important nature of pollinators we recommend that imidacloprid be removed from use in the United States. Simply stated there is just no way to protect bees from this danger.

The reader may ask how did we find ourselves at the point where an extremely dangerous chemical compound has come into such widespread use, threatening the very existence and viability of the pollination framework of the country. The answer is simple. Deregulation, the same concept which precipitated our financial collapse, has precipitated an environmental collapse no less serious. At the same time that financial institutions were being given a free reign to regulate themselves on the naive assumption that industry knew best, pesticide regulation was being turned over from EPA to industry on the same assumption.

US EPA used to do pesticide screening in honeybees, do pesticide toxicity study themselves, but today industry directs and funds the critical toxicity studies to determine product safety themselves. The studies are shown to EPA for registration purposes, then filed away as "proprietary information" far from the scrutiny of the public eye. Enforcement actions are not taken by EPA; instead these critically important functions are delegated to individual state departments of agriculture, under an arrangement ironically called a "primacy agreement."

The problems faced by the beekeeping industry are not limited to one single chemical compound. They are in fact linked to a pervasive regulatory failure. When the EPA was first set up, it was in response to environmental challenges of an unprecedented nature. At that time the country was using 200,000,000 pounds of active ingredient chemical pesticides. Today that number is over 5,000,000,000 pounds of active ingredient. Simply put, the country is drowning in chemicals. These very "economic poisons" are doing their job too well, and because of the deregulation process we are faced with a perfect storm today capable of destroying our countries pollinator base which will carry with it agricultural and environmental catastrophe.

The fundamental change which is necessary is to return to a system at EPA which independently tests chemical compounds before they are released for widespread use. Precaution and prevention are words which need to return to environmental protection. Massive field experiments, such as what has occurred with the neonicotinoid class of systemic insecticides is just too high risk of a behavior. Environmental catastrophe such as global warming, and our current pollinator crisis are big flashing warning lights. These warning lights are there to tell us something, they are telling us to take action before it is too late.

RENEWAL TIME NOTICE

Membership is up for renewal in April: *Jan Bergt, Austin Gabriel, Jim Keen, Mike & Deb Kennedy, Nealy Branting, Granada Dooley, and Emil Pierson*

Membership up for renewal in May: Kent Rasmussen, Richard Cornelius, Brad Hansen, Jim Holterman, Ryan & Kim Tramp, Marva Wasser, Shari Pratt, Kevin Meysenburg, & Richard Fish

Membership Past Due in February: *Joe Strecker, Mike Brahms, Tom & Linda Schwarz, John Cidlik, Bill & Judy Lillie, Ralph Tate. This mailing will be last issue of the Beeline if dues are not paid.*

Membership Past Due in March: *Nancy Meyer*

The association is trying to get all memberships due on in January of the current year. Also we are trying to be Eco-friendly by delivering the newsletter via e-mail to reduce paper cost. Members who receive their newsletter via e-mail receive it at least 2 days earlier than those by United States Postal Service.

Classified Advertisements

For Sale:

Dadant stainless steel settling tank with baffle 31 inches diameter and 28 inches high, Maxant electric Chain Uncapper model 1700, Walter T. Kelley wax melter with stand and bucket. Dadant Mini Melter with stand, steel food grade 55 gallon barrels for honey storage. Contact Warren Nelson at 402-466-8173 or email wnelson193@neb.rr.com.

Equipment for Sale: Ron Cowden was a beekeeper in Lincoln, NE. He recently passed away and his family has donated all of his beekeeping equipment to the University of Nebraska - Lincoln Department of Entomology. The University does not need the equipment so they are selling everything with the money going to the Department of Entomology. The equipment list is as follows:

Dadant 25 gallon water jacketed bottling tank with electric stir system

2" Metal Honey Gate

Woodman style Galvanized 45 frame Radial Electric Extractor

2-55 gallon Steel Barrels with gates (could be used for mixing and dispensing syrup)

Should you have an interest in any of these please contact Warren Nelson at 402-466-8173 or e-mail

wnelson193@neb.rr.com. Warren has agreed to sell the items for the University with the proceeds going to the Department of Entomology.

For Sale:

Five frame nuc's or 3 lb bee packages first come first serve basis expected delivery date May 15th. Also available bulk honey for more information contact Pat Chandler 308-880-1733 or e-mail Chandlers Sandhill Honey chandlerscloverhoney@yahoo.com

Better Way Wax Melter, Leon Schuette, 26143 County Rd 8 Herman, NE 68029 ph. 402-654-3525

New Screened bottom boards complete with board to calculate mite populations, total clear screened opening below brood chambers and 3/8 inch opening to prevent mice getting into your hive. Contact Keith Nielson, phone 402-765-2391 or email kl Nielson@windstream.net.

Wanted Equipment

Used eight frame bee equipment, contact Pat Chandler 308-880-1733 or e-mail Chandlers Sandhill Honey chandlerscloverhoney@yahoo.com

Wanted Bees

We live right next to Lake Cunningham in North Omaha. We live on 10 acres of ground. I have approximately 3 acres of rear property backing up to the lake that can be replanted into clover or whatever a person would like to flavor the honey. I'm willing to lease the ground for a nominal fee for someone to house their bee hives. I can do some minor maintenance on them but they would be responsible for the major upkeep and harvesting. Very flexible and willing to work out a deal that will be beneficial to both parties. Any additional information I can provide, I will be happy to supply. Again thanks for all your help. Michelle McCaulley, 8707 N 96th St, Omaha NE 68812, h) 402-572-7972, c) 703-405-5769

Upcoming Events:

April 11, 2009: Association Meeting & Youth and Other Beginners Beekeeping Workshop, Part 2, ARDC at Mead, Nebraska, practical exercises in beekeeping, presented by Dr. Marion Ellis UNL Entomology.

May 3, 2009: Monthly Meeting at Bill and Judy Lillie near Beatrice. Topic TBA

June 12-13, 2009: Nebraska Value-Added Products Workshop: The University of Nebraska will offer a Value-Added Products Workshop. The first day will cover techniques for managing bees for comb honey production and techniques for producing creamed honey. Day 2 will be devoted to mead making. Presenters will include Ken Schramm, Marion Ellis, Joli Winer and Cecil Sweeney. Registration is \$25 per day or \$45 for both days and includes lunch and a workbook. Program details and registration information can be requested from jcunningham@unl.edu or by calling Jeri Cunningham at 402-472-2123.

July 9-11, 2009: Heartland Apiculture Society, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH.

July 15, 2009: Monthly Meeting at Jack Eagers, near Ashland. Topic TBA

July 31-August 2, 2009 Northeast Treatment Free Beekeeping Conference, The Doyle Conservation Center, Leominster, Massachusetts

August 3-7, 2009: Eastern Apiculture Society- The Brethren Beekeeping, Without Chemicals, Holiday Valley, Ellicottville, New York

August 12, 2009: Monthly Meeting at Mike Terneus near Bellevue, NE. Topic TBA.

August 17-20, 2009: Western Apiculture Society-Dry Creek Best Western Inn, 198 Dry Creek Road, Healdsburg, California, USA 95448

January 12-16, 2010: North American Beekeeping Conference, Wyndham Orlando Resort, Orlando FL. Hosted by ABF

Treasurers Reports

Starting Balance	\$12,282.60	<p><u>Book review by Mike Terneus</u> Book: <u>The Keeper of the Bees</u> Author: Gene Stratton-Porter (also wrote <u>Laddie</u> and other books).</p> <p>This is a thoroughly enjoyable fictional work centered around a wounded WWI veteran who finds himself caring for the apiary of an ailing master bee keeper. The storyline keeps your attention and reveals how much the author appreciates the hobby which captivates us. My wife and teenage son also picked up the book and loved it. Weaving throughout the book are fine examples of virtuous living and what today could be called heroic gentry</p> <p>Gene Stratton-Porter grew up in the Midwest during the late 19th century, experiencing life in a cabin on a farm. She died in an automobile accident in 1924 before seeing Keeper of the Bees, her last book, published. I encourage each of you to pick up the book at the library or local book store and get to know James, the mysterious storm woman, the Little Scout, and of course life lived among the bees.</p>
Income		
Interest	.94	
Steiner	24.00	
Powell	24.00	
Cook & Beals	12.00	
Back Yard Beekeepers (Bee Cards)	324.06	
Nelson	10.00	
Total income	395.00	
Expenses		
Forever Stamps for Newsletter	252.00	
Postage	1.21	
Trevor Koger, 1st Place 4H Essay	50.00	
Diedre Freitas, 2nd Place 4H Essay	25.00	
Total expenses	328.21	
Ending Balance	\$12,349.39	

Letters to Editor



1 Sydney VanDiest presenting a program to high school students at North Platte High School using equipment she received from the NBA scholarship

Sydney Van Deist along with Pat Chandler came to North Platte High School and presented the ins and outs of bees. There were near 400 students that attended the presentation. Greatly appreciated, both worked great with all students. I have included photos. Sydney used her equipment provided by NBA in the presentation. Thanks for your support in this project. Tammy Menghini, Biology Teacher, NPHS



2 Pat Chandler and Sydney VanDiest presenting to a class of high schoolers at North Platte High School.

Dear Ms. Osterloh and Mr. Nielson,

I am very involved in the planning of Lincoln Earth Day 2009, April 19, 2009, 1:00-5:00 p.m., centered on the UNL City Campus near 12th and "R" Streets.

We are promoting the idea of Good, Fresh, and Local foods and were wondering if you think any beekeepers and honey producers would like to participate in the festivities by setting up a booth. Honey is a great sweetener. I always buy local honey at Open Harvest here in Lincoln.

Please go to <http://www.lincolnearthday.org> for more details on registration forms and updates of events. Perhaps you might consider putting a notice in your monthly online newsletter about the event.

Thank you in advance for reading this and considering spreading the word about Lincoln Earth Day 2009. Barbara van den Berg, Food Committee, Lincoln Earth Day 2009, 7510 Otoe Place, Lincoln, NE 68506-3636, Phone:402-488-6926

National Honey Bee Awareness Day

For some time now, I have been throwing around the idea of something to promote and further advance the education and public awareness of bees, beekeepers, and the benefits of the bee industry. The past couple of years, CCD has allowed many in the public to read about problems, hear our concerns, and for some, actually get involved. But for as many side benefits that CCD has created, what will happen when that same chatter goes

away? Will we wait for the next tragic circumstances to unfold and hope we benefit from that also? Or is it time to perhaps do something ourselves to further those benefits?

Ever hear about the “Great American Smoke Out”? Can you imagine that same recognition or effort from the bee industry?

I am hoping to gain support for a day where county clubs across the country will all hold events targeted at education and connecting with the public. A day where some event such as an open house can allow the public to come in contact with the beekeeping industry.

Can you imagine all county clubs holding an event all on the same day? The marketing benefits, advertisement, and public awareness would be multiplied as compared to any stand alone single event. Can you further envision county and state associations all across the country coming together to support such efforts?

Many clubs already are active in supporting environmental centers, school programs, etc. This day could be centered around opening up an apiary or honey house, to allow the public an opportunity to get involved in bees. Perhaps a honey tasting can be set up. Or information on making the public aware of the impact that homeowners have with pesticides and chemicals. The possibilities are many.

What I am hoping to do is to get every county club to participate this year in a coordinated effort to hold a “National Honey Bee Awareness Day” event, all at the same time. **Saturday, August 22, 2009 has been selected for the first organized event.**

This can be a day where county and individual clubs can set aside their individual goals, and take part in an event designed to promote bees on a larger scale unattainable by a single group. There are many events tailored at bringing the bee community together. There are county bee association meetings, state association meetings, and national conferences. But they get beekeepers together, and do little from the public's viewpoint. A day where the public takes priority can benefit everyone involved. A National Honey Bee Awareness Day event, can be tailored at opening the doors of the beekeeping community and centered around getting more involved. A day where we give back to the community.

I am hoping to get a commitment from each and every county club. Will yours be willing to get involved?

Some ideas for the day's event....

- * Hold an open house at an apiary, education center, or county environmental center.
- * Select topics focused on introducing honey bees to the general public, the importance of bees in the food industry, pesticides and what homeowners can do to help keep bees healthy, etc.
- * Provide refreshments. Invite people to come out and have a hotdog and a coke while learning about bees. (Donations from a market sponsoring the event is something to consider.)
- * Advertise in at least one newspaper in your county. This is great for the community events page and great exposure for the club or association. A press release will be distributed to help get this accomplished.
- * This can be used as an introduction for many people in helping them get into beekeeping. County club membership would no doubt benefit from such an event.
- * Consider a “honey tasting” for the public.

The idea is to get as many groups involved doing something that day to promote the bee industry. What each club does is up to them. The point is to harness the energy, advertisement, marketing, and goodwill of the bee industry coming together all at the same time.

We celebrate a day to plant a tree every year (Arbor Day). We have national news and get all excited about pulling out a groundhog every year. It is about time we have a day dedicated to bees.

Please see www.nhbad.com for updates and a list with those making a commitment to the event. This is a grassroots effort. We are asking for your support. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Mike@ptd.net

717-938-0444

Mike Thomas

For the good of the Association

Welcome to new members of the association! Ernest and Jodi Hahne II, Atkinson; Janet Bish, Giltner; Kurtis & Denise Kobza, Seward

For more on the story of our scholarship winner Sydney VanDiest and Pat Chandlers visit to North Platte Public School go to <http://www.nptelegraph.com/articles/2009/03/27/news/50001839.txt> on the North Platte Telegraph website.

Missouri/Kansas Beekeepers Annual Meeting

Several members of the Nebraska Beekeepers were in attendance at Missouri/Kansas Beekeepers annual meeting, which included Warren and Jane Nelson, Michael O'Hara, Ken Voorhes and Keith and Linda Nielson. Warren presented a workshop on creating craft items out of beeswax. Some of the creations that Warren talked about during his workshop were candles, Christmas ornaments, and table decorations.

Warren explained the process that he uses to prepare wax before he uses it in any of his molds. This process is to let the cappings drain over a screen for at least 24 hours to remove excess honey.

Then he washes the wax with warm water to remove the remainder of the honey on the cappings making sure that the water is not over 140° F since this will melt the wax. He then places it in a freezer for storage for at least 24 hours this is to kill any wax moth eggs that may be in the wax. He then melts the wax in a wax melter or a double boiler. Once the wax is melted he will pour it through an old sweatshirt, fleece side up, into a block mold and let it cool. He then removes the slum gum from the wax by carefully scraping it off the bottom of the block of wax.

The sweatshirt that he used to filter the wax is then squeezed out to remove any wax that is left. He then cuts up the area that he filtered the wax through and uses those pieces for fire starters.



3 Warren Nelson explaining using sweat shirt material as a wax filter.

Warren will then prepare his molds by spraying with a silicone mold release. He then takes the prepared wax and melts it again in a container that he can pour the hot wax out into his molds. Warren explained about the different types of molds that can be used for candles and decorations.

Dr. Tom Collison presented several topics which included: swarm prevention, queen rearing, what we know about CCD and spring management.

Jerry Brown of Hillsboro, KS who is the Executive Secretary of the American Honey Producers Association presented information on the state of pollination in California. Since the weather conditions in California have not been conducive for the almond crop 130,000 acres were taken out of production because of their drought. Also many acres of trees were destroyed since they were at the end of their useful life and this is being done because of the glut of almonds on the market, and droughty conditions. Lower almond prices have also contributed to the number of bees required as well. Many producers that normally use 3 hives per acre cut back to 2 hives. He also explained that this made for a surplus of bees for pollination which lowered the income of beekeepers, with them being paid anywhere from \$85-\$140 for a colony that had 8-10 frames of bees.

Jerry also presented information on the EPA registration process of imidacloprid which is the active ingredient in pesticides that are produced by Bayer Chemical. Products containing imidacloprid include Admire, Assail, Bayer Advanced, Condifor, Gaucho, Premier, Premise, Premise 200SC, Provado, and Marathon, and Merit 0.5G. This is not an all inclusive list of products that contain imidacloprid. You will need to check the label of any insecticide you use to determine if it contains imidacloprid.

Part of Jerry Brown's presentation also dealt with the import restrictions that have been place on Australian packages and importation of honey into the United States. In December 2008 the import of bees from Australia was ceased due to the fact that Apis Cerana swarms were found in Australia. Later in that same month the borders were reopened since the Apis Cerana were more than 300 kilometers from the source of bees being shipped to the US. Then in February 2009 small hive beetles (SHB) were found in shipments to northern California.

Jerry explained to the audience that the American Honey Producers Association (APHA) are addressing issues of the trans-shipment, undervaluation, and packers blend of honey into the US. Because of the undervaluation of honey by the Chinese, APHA pushed to have all Chinese honey valued at \$1.65/lb for tariff purposes; this took affect with the US Customs on Jan 8, 2009. A problem still exists with importation of honey that comes into the US as packer blends of honey which are from several different countries of origin. China values its honey at \$0.20/lb. ships it to India, which blends it with their honey, then ships to Argentina to be blended again before being shipped to the US. Chinese honey is being dumped into the US market via transshipment from other countries. Jerry also projected the price of white honey to top at \$2.00/lb in the summer of 2009.

Nancy Gentry from the Florida Beekeepers Association talked about their work on the standards for honey in Florida. Nancy called for a state by state adoption of the revised US Codex standard for honey. Nancy explained that in 1996 we had honey being dumped into the US from Argentina and China with a 150% tariff being placed on the imported honey. With the short supply of honey and increased tariffs some packers began to cut honey with syrups. This was also happening in the transshipments of honey into the US. During 1996 ABF addresses the issue with US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with no response. Then in March of 2006 Sue Bee Honey, ABF, AHPA petitioned the FDA for application of the US revised Codex be implemented for the standard of honey. This action was tabled by FDA in August of 2006 because of lack of resources to enforce Codex.

Nancy stated that the best way to get standard enforce was by placing the revised US Codex into current state agricultural regulations that define honey. Many of the definitions of honey were written in the 1920's if they were placed into any state regulation at all. By placing the US revised Codex into state regulation it will give beekeepers a chance to pursue actions in civil court against packers who cut our product.

Author of the books "The Hibernation Diet" and the "Honey Revolution", Dr. Ron Fessenden MD spoke on the use of honey in the diet. Dr. Fessenden stated that honey is nature's miracle food because it not only provided energy in the form of fructose and glucose but also provides essential amino acid, and vitamins. He continued to explain the difference between honey, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) and table sugar (sucrose). Currently Americans consume an average of 160 pound of HFCS annually. This could be replaced with just 19 pound of honey a year. Dr. Fessenden stated that 2 teaspoon of honey before going to bed at night would help with being restless at night because it feeds the brain.

Dr. Clarence Collison presentations were on swarm management, spring management and what we know about CCD. Dr. Collison explained the process that bees use before they swarm stating that it is about a 4-6 week process before the swarm flies. Bees make queen cells from old wax, deposit new wax, lay eggs in the cups, queen is put on a diet to lose 1/3 - 1/2 of her body weight for flight, worker bees engorge on honey which in turn causes less foraging and congestion in the hive. Once the queen cell is capped the colony will swarm within 24 hours. Dr. Collison noted several methods that can be used to prevent swarms, those being; reversing brood chambers, create more space by adding boxes, make increases or splits.

There were other presentations that include comb honey, making mead, communications with beekeepers, wax products, scholarship programs, installing packages, making creamed honey, food safety and licensing, making soaps and lip balms.

This was a meeting that if you missed it, you missed out on a lot of good information.



4 Sharon Gibbons and Missouri Honey Queen Tara Fisher demonstrating lip balms and soaps

Nebraska Beekeepers Association Membership and Membership Renewal Form

Please fill out the following information completely and legibly by printing the information

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Editorial: This month's issue is packed with several articles of information from Kim Flotum, editor of the Bee Culture magazine, a report on the Missouri/Kansas Beekeepers Association meeting that was held March 5-6th, book review by Mike Terneus, National Honeybee Awareness Day, and some a piece on one our scholarship winners.

Linda and I have traveled several places this last month uniting with old friends and making new ones along our travels. We started our travels by attending the Missouri/Kansas Beekeepers meeting in Overland Park, KS. It was good to see Steve and Becky Tipton, Joli Winer and Cecil Sweeny again. We also had a chance to visit with our friends in Olathe and relation of Linda's in Overland Park. Come to find out her brother in-law and nephew are hobby beekeepers. During the meeting with Nancy Gentry Michael O'Hara and myself got a chance to work on some strategies for the honey definition for the state of Nebraska. Mike is doing the research to find where honey is defined in Nebraska law or regulation.

Our second trip for the month was to O'Neil on March 22, to which we presented a beginning beekeepers workshop to 18 people at the O'Neil extension office. Thank you to Barb and Sheldon Otto and other attendees for lining up a meeting site and unload and load our equipment. From this meeting I believe this group is starting the Nebraska North Central Beekeepers Association under the umbrella of the Nebraska Beekeepers Association.

From O'Neil we made our way to Mark Keck's at Plainview to deliver his hive as one of our scholarship winners. Word to the wise do not always trust MapQuest for directions even when you have all of the address information correct when you do the search. This is the second time it has had me off by more than four miles.

On the 21st I went to Chandlers Sandhill Honey in Anselmo to get some supplies for my apiary and discuss bees in general. Sydney VanDiest is employed by Pat and his wife in their bottling facility. I was told that she will also be managing one of their beeyards this next season.

Our last trip of the month will be to Mark and Deb Swirmicky for the March meeting.

I have been in my beeyards several time this last month and have had to start feeding the colonies even with some stores left. I lost to colonies over winter due to premature rearing of brood and the temperature turning cold again. I am finally getting equipment made and reworked and should be ready for the nectar flows.

Congratulations go out to Rudy and Joann Vasko on their 50th anniversary on March 28th and to Dr. Marion Ellis and Susan on the arrival of twin grandbabies which are their first.

Keith E. Nielson

Editor, Nebraska Beekeepers Association