

Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association

Volume 29

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January meeting topic Bee Course Information
New WEBSITE!!! Recent VSBA Meeting

MEETING SCHEDULE 2008

January 17 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
February 21 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
March 20 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
April 17 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
May 15 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
June 8th Picnic at Verdun 2-6 pm
July - no meeting
August - no meeting
September 18 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
October 16 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
November 20 7:30-9 pm @Culpeper Ext.
December - no meeting

DUES ARE DUE

Dues go to pay for mailing out this newsletter to members and to extension services in our area and meeting announcements which are mailed to newspapers in the area, and just stuff.

Please write a check for \$10.00 made to **NPBA** and send to:

Lele Hankins
18182 Pine View Drive
Culpeper, Virginia 22701

President: Kathy Miller
540 923 4772
kfmiller@nexet.net

Vice President: Bob Duxbury
540 937 6026

Secretary/Treasurer: Lele Hankins
540 547 4711

Regional Inspector: Bob Wellemeyer
540 428 0420

JANUARY: Wind breaks and food stores

Make sure that your hives have sufficient wind breaks to the north, and/or the direction of the prevailing winds. A fence can provide this, as can stacked bales of hay or straw. On my windy hilltop location, I have a double layer of shade cloth strung between poles and reinforced in the middle with garden stakes. Natural living vegetation or dead stacked piles of cut trees or branches work also. The ideal apiary location sits on a slope which provides a natural windbreak, with hive fronts facing to the south or southeast for maximum sun exposure. Food stores sufficient to carry a 'normal' colony through the 'normal' winter in our area is said to be 60 pounds of honey. Ideally, this is directly above and to the sides of the cluster, remembering that the bees gradually move up in the hive over the winter. Do you know how to calculate how much honey is stored in your hive? A deep frame of honey weighs about 7 lbs; this means that you must have the equivalent of 12 or so deep frames. Medium frames weigh about 4.5-5 lbs, so you need roughly 18 stored frames.

Speaking of hive weights; there is currently a research project under way to track honey flow over a wide geographical area, and see how it is correlated with climate change. This research project is the brainchild of Dr. Wayne Esaias, oceanographer at NASA Goddard SFC. He started with Maryland beekeepers and is expanding to other areas. If you have a hive on a scale and want to be part of this research project or just learn more, go to:

<http://honeybeenet.gsfc.nasa.gov>

We have a working **website** for the Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association! This is due to the initiative and hard work of Mike Wilson. To view it, go to npbee.org. It has contact information for club officers, meeting locations, schedules, links to other organizations, some photos, and other topics of interest. In time, we hope to expand it to include current and past newsletters, hot topics in beekeeping, and other useful stuff!! Please make sure and thank Mike for his hard work on this project the next time you see him. If you are a web master 'guru', have some ideas for content, or would just like to help, let us know.

We are again offering a **BEEKEEPING COURSE** for all those interested in honey bees. It will be held at Verdun Adventure Bound on Rt. 229 0.4 miles south of Rixeyville on Tuesday evenings (7-9 PM) starting February 12th and going through April 1st, with a snow date of April 8th. (for more complete directions & map, go to Verdunadventurebound.org) Open hive work will be during warm Saturdays or Sundays in April-May. A registration and reception will be held February 10th, same place from 2-4 PM.

Please come and mingle with the new folks who are registering, share your beekeeping stories and your love of beekeeping with them. We need to **post fliers advertising this class**; you can contact me for an e-copy, and we will have paper copies available at the January 17th meeting. Hang them at libraries, farm stores, schools, places which sell plants or attract gardeners, extension service offices, bulletin boards, churches, etc. We would love to have mentors for all these students. Bob Duxbury mentored the lion's share of students last year, other mentors were Mike Wilson, Karen Hunt and myself (apologies if I missed someone). It really makes a difference for new beekeepers to have someone looking over their shoulder, giving them guidance and confidence. If you don't think that you know enough, remember, you know more than these people who are starting! It's fun and good for your ego.

During the last VSBA state meeting, we were reminded that Dr. Rick Fell is performing a survey of Virginia honey. The plan is to analyze samples of bottled honey for bacteria. Initial findings suggest the presence of clostridium spores in about 10% of honey samples, paenibacillus larvae in about 10% of the samples and P. alvei and brevibacillus laterosporus in 2 samples. If you'd like to send him a sample, mail to Dr. Rick Fell at 324 Price Hall, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061. Both Dr. Fell and Keith Tignor, our state apiarist, spoke about the using some of the funds allotted to beekeepers by the State Legislature, for setting up apiaries for research and teaching around the state. Current thoughts are for one in Northern Virginia, one in

Southside and one somewhere else. These two also spoke about plans for a Master Beekeeper Plan in Virginia. It will have three levels; Certified Beekeeper, Journeyman, and Master Beekeeper. All this will be on state beekeeper website by the first of the year. The program will be run through VA cooperative extension service and be similar to the master gardener program. The plan is to administer tests at local associations for Certified level. Testing can also be done through extension offices. Several of our members made and donated a lovely gift basket as one of the door prizes for the state meeting. A photo will be included in next month's newsletter.

January's meeting will include a discussion of what we beekeepers should be doing at this time of year, future plans for this club, and a DVD presentation of "Killer Bees" courtesy of Karen Hunt. The title of this movie is an unfortunate example of media hype, but actually, the film contains some factual stuff about the Africanized Honey Bee. At the March meeting, Ann Harman will follow up with a talk and slide show about 'Living with Africanized Bees'.

Honey Recipe for the month

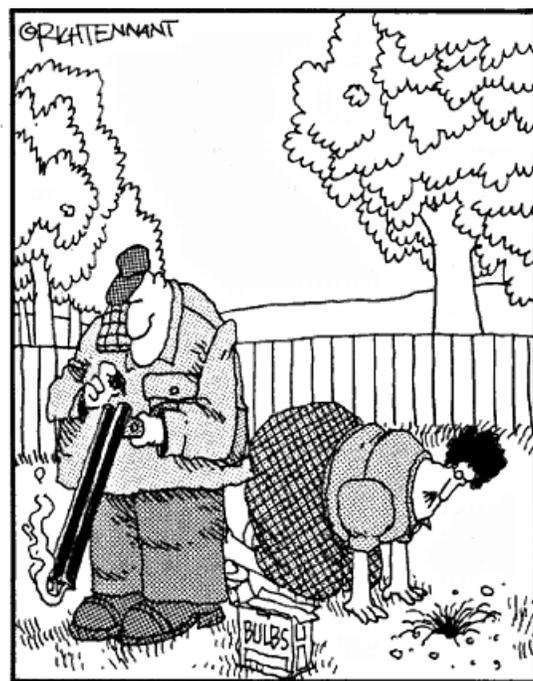
4 Bosc Pears
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup honey
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1/4 tsp cinnamon

Slice and core pears. Place cut side down in a corningware dish, and pour in the water. Drizzle the honey over the pears, sprinkle the ground ginger, then the cinnamon. Bake in 350F oven for 45

minutes or until tender. Serve warm with the juice drizzled over them.

Beekeeping Pearls and Fun Facts

- In olden days, a common practice was for newlyweds to drink mead (honey wine) for one month (one phase of the moon) to assure the birth of a son. Thus the term, "honeymoon".
- Now is a great time to gather dry fallen pine needles for next year's smoker fuel.
- Honey can be all different colors. Hundreds of unique kinds and colors of honey range from water-white to black-amber, and every hue inbetween. Even a 'blue' honey is derived from sourwood blossoms in eastern North Carolina. The source of the nectar determines the color and flavor of the honey. Usually the darker the color, the stronger and more intricate the flavor and aroma.



"Use less powder. You're planting them too deep."

