



Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association

Volume 29

Number 12

December 2008

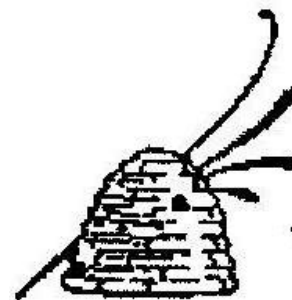
Beekeeping Events in the Area

The fall meeting of **Virginia State Beekeepers Association** was held on the Campus of **Blue Ridge Community College** in Weyers Cave. **Wyatt Mangum** reported on his semi-feral bees in North Carolina that have survived six years without treatment for Varroa. **Dr. Jose Fuentes**, a Professor of Environmental and Atmospheric Science from the University of Virginia, spoke on the Effects of Air Pollution on Foraging by Bees and Butterflies. **Dr. Rick Fell** spoke on Mite Distribution in the Hive. Because of the distribution of mites with brood, there exists the possibility of manipulating colony conditions to keep mite level low. **Keith Tignor** reported there was a lot of early swarming this year, honey production was average to below-average across the state, and small hive beetles are now documented around the state. All his FABIS tests on defensive bees in Virginia thus far are negative. **Dr. Linton**, a Lead Artificial Intelligence Engineer at MITRE, spoke of his vision of creating a colony health monitoring system that would provide early warnings of trouble using an economical, wireless sensor network. **Dr. Wayne Esaias** from the NASA God-

dard Space Center talked about climate change. His data shows that one degree of warming correlates with one week advance in the timing of the nectar flows. The final event of the meeting was a three act play written and performed by **Marc Hoffman** "Bee Man" about **Reverend Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth** (1810-1895), honoring him for inventing the moveable frame beehive.



The Culpeper Farmer's Market ended for 2008 and several members of our club participated. It was prosperous and busy! The demand for fresh local honey was so great almost everyone sold out. We encourage more club members to provide honey for next year's sales. Sales seemed better if buyers were offered honey from at least four different vendors. If there were more honeys to choose from we could rotate what was offered each week. Besides comb, chunk, creamed, and liquid honey, other bee-related products were offered such as goats milk soap, lotion bars, and lip balm. Because of increased expenses, we propose adding an additional 5% fee on all sales at the market for 2009.



**President &
Newsletter
Kathy Miller
434.906.0006
kfrasemiller@gmail.com**

**Vice President
Bob Duxbury
540.937.6026**

**Secretary/Treasurer
Lele Hankins
540.547.4711**

**Regional Inspector
Bob Wellemeyer
540.937.2175**

**NPBA Website
www.npbee.org**

**Webmaster
Mike Wilson**

Bee Management by Dr. George Imirie

Q: How does a Beekeeper help his Bees???

A: With Bee MANAGEMENT, of course!!

The bee is incapable of learning anything from you or knowing who you are, or whether you are gentle or nasty. Its mind was programmed by GOD back before Adam and Eve and it has not changed one iota since. Every action that our bee performs is based on what is NATURE'S way of doing and it does these things NOT by direction from some boss, queen, or older bee, but by the instinct that was given to it at its creation. We don't alter any phase of the normal operation of a bee's action, but we HELP the bee to perform these actions for a longer time period in the same location. This is what BEE MANAGEMENT is all about.

Do you suffer from “eternal swarming”? Are you always short of equipment? Do you procrastinate and wait too long to do the things that need to be done in the hive? Are you content with a yield of 25 to 50 pounds of honey each year? If you answered yes to any or all these questions then your management skills need to be honed.

The number one cause of swarming is a CONGESTED BROOD CHAMBER! Don't I want LOTS of foraging age bees when the nectars start to flow in April? How do I keep the brood chamber from becoming crowded?

A BEEKEEPER will stimulate production of foraging age bees (40 days old) to catch the flow by feeding 1:1 syrup in early February. The beekeeper can HELP his bees by providing laying space for the queen and her normal UPWARD movement of the brood nest by REVERSING the position of the brood chambers as necessary (3-5 times between January and May). REVERSING is simply moving the top brood chamber which has center frames of brood and the queen into the lower brood chamber position, so that now the upper brood chamber is empty and is warmed because heat moves upward so

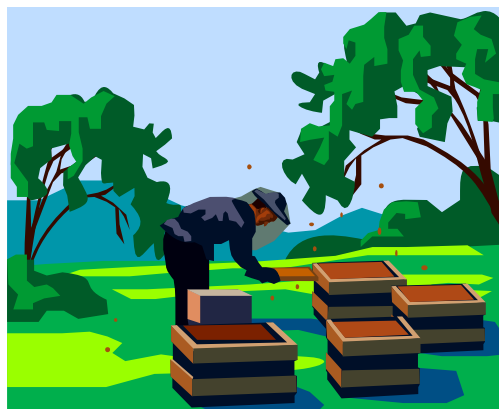
the worker bees ready these upper cells for the queen to move up there to lay, leaving the capped brood in the lower body to emerge and then REVERSE again. Reversing is a system that always provides laying space for the queen, space for nectar or sugar syrup close by, and warmth for the larva. Lots of empty drawn comb must be in place at the start of the nectar flow to store the thin watery nectar until it is ripened into honey. By doing this you can have both a large workforce and keep the brood chamber relatively not crowded.

Around April 1 you can entice the foraging workers out of the brood chamber (helping to prevent swarming) by placing a super of drawn comb, perhaps with a little nectar and a few brood, over the brood chamber and put a queen excluder under that super. Ensure there is an upper opening to prevent the foragers from having to move through the congested brood chamber. Put ALL of your supers of drawn comb (no foundation) in place about April 15th surely before May 1st.

As I see it, all a beekeeper must do to successfully manage his colonies is keep them healthy and comfortable with their surroundings. This often EASIER SAID THAN DONE! I strongly recommend that you read **Dr. Norman Gary's** Chapter 8 in the Revised Edition of *The Hive and The Honey Bee* about BEE BEHAVIOR..

“paraphrased and plagiarized”

by **Joe Miller**



Hive Works

By Ann W. Harman

Check your hives. If you went into winter with plenty of bees and stores, then just make sure the tops are on and held down with a rock or brick.

When the weather is good and chilly you can clean the wax off the queen excluders. Put them where they will be nice and cold. The wax will just knock off.

Don't worry about snow on your hives—it is good insulation. You will find that the snow melts away from the entrance so that bees can fly. Having an upper entrance is a benefit for air flow and for an exit route for bees when the landing board entrance is totally covered with snow.

If you see bees flying on a sunny day that is a good sign. Our winter weather is such that really cold

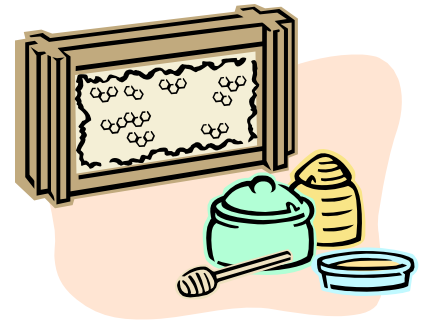
spells are followed by a warmish sunny day or two. Your bees will take advantage of that for cleansing flights. They will also gather bird seed and sawdust. The hive bees will toss the stuff right back out of the hives. So do not be alarmed if you see bird seed on the entrance board.

Subscribe to one of the bee magazines and enjoy reading during the winter months.

Start your repairs and paint work.

Ask Santa for some good bee books!

Cook something with honey!



NPBA 2009 Officers

Elections were held for the NPBA offices at the November 20, 2008, meeting. Below are the **NPBA Officers for 2009**:

President - Bob Duxbury-
Vice President - Mike King
Secretary/Treasurer -
Lele Hankins



NPBA Membership Dues

Membership Dues are Due!

Dues are to pay for mailing the newsletter to its members, to extension services, and for meeting announcements in newspapers around the area. Please send a check for \$10 made to **NPBA** and mail to:

Lele Hankins
18182 Pine View Drive
Culpeper, VA 22701

NPBA 2008 Meeting Schedule



Culpeper County Extension
101 South West St.
Culpeper, VA

December No meeting

What's Blooming this Month?

Ann Harman's list of plants blooming in December:

Witch hazel
Maybe some icicles

Since it is the holiday season we'll put aside the discussion on labels and instead consider Christmas gifts. Although the shops are offering everything ON SALE, you have the perfect gift. YOUR HONEY. Just think – it's unisex, good for all ages, no chance of wrong color or size, will keep until after the holiday sweets have been eaten, useful, and is pretty to look at.



Squeeze bears look very nice with a bow tie of Christmas ribbon. No need to wrap him up. You can buy some small pieces of Christmas fabric—the fabric shops have a huge selection. Now you can cut circles as a cap cover and tie on with a narrow ribbon. Again – no need to wrap.

If you know someone who likes to cook with honey you might wish to give a 2-pound size. You can get the queenline-type jar or even bears in that size. If you know a tea-lover, a packet of their favorite tea with a squeeze bear sitting on top and tied on with ribbon is a super gift.

You can create your own hangtags. Please don't use red or dark green paper. Black print cannot be read. You can make a template on your computer. Figure on about a 4-inch square. This, when folded twice makes a nice hangtag. Punch a hole in the corner and tie on with ribbon. To decorate, go to a shop that has a big selection of decorative stickers (the kind kids like) and select some suitable for Christmas. A sticker can be on the front of your hangtag.

What to put in the hangtag? Suggestions for using honey: drizzle on toast and then sprinkle with a bit of cinnamon; a small squeeze in vegetables while cooking enhances the flavor; perk up sliced fruits with a drizzle of honey; squeeze some on a breakfast grapefruit. You can put recipes in a hangtag but they will need to be short and simple: salad

dressing, BBQ sauce, pancake syrup, honey butter, honey mustard, baked apples, fruit sauce, ice cream toppings. Once you get a template set up in your computer you can use it again next year. Just remember to change the recipes.

If you are fortunate to have two colors/flavors of honey, use two squeeze bears as a gift. The little mugs available from equipment suppliers can be tied together with ribbon for a nice gift.

Who gets a honey gift? Everyone! Your mailman, UPS driver, postmaster, veterinarian, teacher, doctor, auto repairman, plumber. Does someone cut your grass? Did someone do a great job remodeling your kitchen? Think about the people you contact throughout the year. Honey is the perfect way to say thanks.

Honey Hot Chocolate



- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups hot low-fat milk

Directions: In small saucepan, combine honey, cocoa powder and water; mix well. Cook over low heat 5 minutes or until mixture is slightly thickened. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Set aside until ready to serve. To Serve, stir chocolate mixture into hot milk. **Tips:** Chocolate syrup may be prepared in advance and stored, covered, at room temperature for up to 2 weeks. For single serving of hot chocolate, stir 1/4 cup chocolate syrup into 3/4 hot milk.





Asparagus with Honey Garlic Sauce

- 1 pound fresh asparagus
- ½ cup Dijon mustard
- ½ cup dark ale or dark beer
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp salt
- ½ tsp crushed dried thyme leaves

Directions for Honey Garlic Sauce:

Add asparagus to boiling salt water (about 1 inch) and cook, covered about two minutes or until barely tender. Drain. Combine mustard, ale, honey, garlic, thyme, and salt, mix well. Pour over cooked asparagus.



Chunky Apple Cranberry Sauce

- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 2 tart apples, peeled, if desired, cut in ¼ inch slices
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup oil
- 1/3 cup honey
- 4 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- Freshly ground black pepper

Directions for Apple Cranberry Sauce:

In a medium saucepan stir all ingredients. Heat to a boil. Lower heat, cover and simmer 15 minutes; stirring occasionally. Cool and refrigerate.

Pumpkin Honey Bread

- 1 cup honey
- ½ cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 can (16 oz) solid-pack pumpkin
- 4 eggs
- 4 cups flour
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg

Directions for Pumpkin Honey Bread:

In a large bowl, cream honey with butter until light and fluffy. Stir in pumpkin. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until thoroughly incorporated. Sift together remaining ingredients. Stir into pumpkin mixture. Divide batter equally between two well-greased 9x5x3 inch loaf pans. Bake at 350 degrees F for one hour or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Let loaves cool in pans for 10 minutes, invert pans to remove loaves and allow to finishing cooling on racks.



Source: all recipes and pictures on both pages are from the **National Honey Board**