



November 2005

President's Message

Daylight Savings Time is over for 2005

Daylight Savings Time is officially over on October 30, 2005 at 2 am.

On that Sunday we set our clocks back 1 hour, from 2 am to 1 am (possibly we will reset our clocks on Saturday Night)

The Bees don't know anything about this lame procedure; they still start their day when the SUN warms their hive. The interesting thing is that the Queen stops laying and doesn't start again until the Winter Solstice, on December 21, which marks the end of winter, the first day of spring. The SUN has gone as far south as it can and will start back north again. Nights are longest and will begin to shorten. Days are shortest and will start to lengthen. They still add together to 24 hours.

What Should I do for My Bees?

During November 2005

1- Decide now if you want to take hives to Almonds, come to the meeting and talk to Randy.

2- There may be some flower bloom available: per Randy's calendar they include: ROSEMARY, and ORNAMENTALS. In Alta Sierra we still have some Yellow Star THISTLE flowers that are within range of the Bees.

3- Install entrance reducers and do winter prep,

4- Except for the 11/7/2005 meeting and elections, your job is about done for 2005.

Elections

At the October meeting, I asked for volunteers to serve on the elections nominating committee. Randy Oliver was the only one to step forward, therefore Randy Oliver is the Nominating Committee for elections for 2006 NCBA officers and will run the elections portion of the Nov 7 meeting.

Yours in beekeeping,

-Gary Wood, President

Ag Survey

Please take a minute to fill out the agricultural survey on page five of this month's Local Buzz and mail it to Roger Ingram, UC Cooperative Extension (address is on the bottom of the survey).

November Program

Randy Oliver will report on the California Queen Breeders meeting, followed by more of the JZ's BZ's video.

Announcement

We're looking for some new officers for the next year. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Randy Oliver (277-4450).

Reports from the Road, Virtual and Real

In my travels through the Internet and across the country promoting mite control with screen boards, I have picked up tidbits of advice that I want to pass on.

Best internet tip: Make your own entrance reducer by taking a piece of cardboard and cut it so you can staple it to the entrance, and then cut out a 1-1/2 to 2" door in the middle. Voila, instant entrance reducer. If the bees don't want it, they will chew it up.

Best tip I picked up, caging your queen during berry flow season. I talked about it a little at our last meeting, how Harry Vanderpool of Salem, OR told me how he captures his queen for 24 days during berry flow in late June. This procedure puts all of the mites out on the bees (no nearly capped brood for them to hide in) and vulnerable to, you guessed it, powdered sugar. You could use anything safe to use during a honey flow like Sucroside. This is a wonderful knock down treatment for mites at a time that ALL of them are vulnerable to something that you can use when you have honey supers on. I have

noticed when I have treated with powdered sugar and there is honey flow going on, you can see bees removing bits of powdered sugar, they don't want it.

Here's Harry's letter:

"The best queen cage I have seen was made by Ken Kite, WVBA president. He made free standing cages about 4" x 4" x 3/8" out of #8 hardwire cloth.

Make sure that you center the queen cage in the hive! This cannot be over emphasized!

The queen will be caged for a few weeks and if her pheromone does not continue in the hive, and they start emergency cells in time, you'll have a mess in the end.

Also, "push-in cages" only work if you have plastic foundation, and the comb-side is flat. Otherwise they will eventually dig her out.

How long to cage?

Well that is up to the beekeeper and her or his annual schedule. Ideally 24 days, but if only 15 or 20 or whatever still raises the phoretic load some.

Remember that even when you cage the queen, mites are still able to continue infesting cells for 5 days like nothing happened.

The benefit of caging the queen begins on day 6, and from then on. So every additional day really counts. Harry Vanderpool"

I'm still selling our Combo Boards at a discount for members of our own Nevada County Beekeepers Association. Contact me for prices.

~Janet Brisson, Treasurer

Vote on New Officers

After watching our federal government go through the arduous and contentious process of approving its Supreme Court nominees, our Nominating Committee is proud to announce an outstanding and Non-controversial slate of highly qualified and eager new officers to present to the membership for their approval (the Nominating Committee found that finding willing officers was easier than the task of dealing with Hurricane Katrina, but not by much).

After careful screening, we wish to thank Shane Mathias for volunteering to be President, Detlef Osburn to be Vice President, and Janet Brisson and Jack Meeks to be returning as Treasurer and Secretary.

October Minutes

Jack Meeks is out on medical "leave of absence" and I have stepped in to fill his place temporarily.

Minutes were not read due to his absence. We all hope for your quick recovery, Jack! Nominations are due for next year's offices. The job is not too hard, and we are all enriched by each other's insights and experiences. Please consider an office to fill this year, if you haven't served before. We will be voting the first part of December, which is right around the corner! The bees are still collecting food, heaven knows from where. There is a yellow and dark red small flower blooming, along with the star thistle. There is also a tiny lavender flower on a very tall stem that they are attracted to. However, that still isn't enough to keep a hive alive, so what else? Only the bees know for sure. John Miller is doing a scientific study with oxalic acid. He is testing safe ratios now, but wanted the honey board to get involved this year. His theory is that if a uniform program could be instituted, then we could have a leg up for next year, and have all of the beekeepers using it in time for next year. By the time the Honey Board became interested, he had already made his own for mula. Once again we find ourselves in a race against varroa. Refer to Randy's Silver Bullet formula that he gave us this past spring for more info. If you want some Oxalic Acid mixture, contact Randy. Janet Brisson is having good success with powdered sugar. Just pour 1/2C evenly between the bars. [Per box] She only puts 1/4C on honey supers. She has been able to have tremendous mite fall, and feeds the bees to. This treatment can be repeated biweekly if you have a serious mite problem. She has even had a bumper crop of brood this fall! Way to go Janet!

~Debbie Cavallaro, substitute Secretary

Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

If the hobby beekeeper is worried about Varroa mite these days, he is in good company. Last Wednesday I attended the California Bee Breeders conference in Ord Bend. It turned out to be a sobering look into the state of our industry. I've rarely been in a roomful of people as unsure of their immediate future.

Out of about 50 people, only about five have committed to pollination contracts. The prevailing

sentiment was that they were afraid to commit until they saw if they were going to have bees alive. The old adage "Once bitten twice shy" applies-many of us had colonies unexpectedly crash prior to almond pollination last year. This year we're afraid to commit to contracts we may not be able to fulfill.

The commercial beekeepers I spoke with are using a variety of treatments for Varroa mite, but most appear to be using oxalic acid at various concentrations and timing. Only one sounded confident about having low mite levels.

Because of this lack of confidence, almond pollination rental prices are sky high, as growers try to lock in bees for the February almond bloom.

Almond pollination prices in the South Valley are rock hard at \$150. North Valley is a little softer-in the \$125-\$150 range. Growers are expecting to cut a fat hog next year, and don't want to be left without bees. Candid growers are saying they'd be willing to go to \$200. Some growers are even increasing the number of colonies rented per acre, even at these higher prices.

Some beekeepers are purchasing Australian 4-lb packages, to be put into singles and rented for \$150! We don't know how many colonies will be brought out from the East Coast. In other words, nobody has a clue as to how many healthy colonies there will be available for pollination, nor what the average rental rate will be. What exciting beekeeping times we live in!

On the subject of queen breeding, there was strong sentiment to raise queen and cell prices. However, I was surprised that no one except for me expressed any excitement about his or her breeding programs for mite resistance. Sue Cobey, developer of the New World Carniolan bee, is thinking of returning to California. She spoke of the need for us to import bee semen from elsewhere in the world.

Regarding my mysterious pesticide kills in Nevada this summer, I met another beekeeper who lost about 2000 colonies to spraying in the same area I did. I've called the mosquito abatement districts, the farmers, and the aerial applicator, and all deny responsibility. But I finally got the mosquito people to admit to fogging Pyrocidide and Dibrome some distance from my yards. I've told my pumpkin farmer that I lose money on his pollination contract when my bees come out weaker than they go in.

On the subject of the pumpkin farm, yesterday afternoon Stephanie and I drove up to Sparks to pick up the last colonies from the farm. Halfway there, the truck suddenly went dead on the freeway, and I was barely able to pull over to the shoulder. After half an hour of troubleshooting we were able to locate an electrical connection that had worked loose. Arriving late at the pumpkin field, the farmer had left for dinner in town, with the gate locked. Luckily, we were able to disassemble the chain-link gate hinge with a pair of pliers to let ourselves in. Then we found a pallet of pumpkins blocking the road, and had to lift them out of the way one at a time. Finally, loading the bees went smoothly, we reassembled the gate hinge, and drove home. Just another evening of beekeeping for us!

<h2>Sacramento Beekeeping Supplies</h2>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete line of all beekeeping supplies • Candle making supplies (molds, wicks, dyes, scents) • Glycerine soap making supplies (soap base, molds, scents, and dyes) • Honeycomb sheets for rolling candles (50 colors and in smooth) • Beeswax and paraffin, special container candle wax • Gifts, books, ready made candles
<p>2110 X Street, Sacramento, CA 95818 (916) 451 – 2337 fax (916) 451 – 7008 email:sacbeek@cwnet.com Open Tuesday through Saturday 9:30 – 5:30 Mail orders receive quick service.</p>

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Nevada County Agricultural Survey

The U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council, and the Nevada County Farm Bureau are conducting a survey to determine the size, scope, and nature of agriculture in Nevada County.

Background

Nevada County is undergoing dramatic changes in population and land use. Agriculture is also changing. For example, although the average number of acres per person has decreased significantly in the past 25 years, the number of farms has increased.

The Nevada County Farm Bureau hosted a public meeting of the agricultural community on April 7, 2005, to address the status of agriculture in Nevada County. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a decision to conduct a survey of Nevada County agriculture. The U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service and the Nevada County Economic Resource Council joined the Nevada County Farm Bureau in carrying out the project. The data will be used to assess the best ways to serve agriculture in Nevada County and to identify issues that are felt to be important by the agricultural community.

The survey will be mailed out to the agricultural community during the month of November. All surveys are returned directly to the U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service for tabulation and kept confidential. Only aggregate data will be distributed to others. A public meeting to review the results will occur in the spring.

Sponsors

The following organizations have agreed to promote and distribute the survey:

- Nevada County Farm Bureau
- U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension
- Nevada County Economic Resource Council
- Sierra Grape Growers Association
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Nevada County Certified Grower's Market
- Tahoe Cattleman Association
- Nevada County Resource Conservation District
- Nevada County Beekeepers Association

Contact

For information about the survey and sponsorship contact:

- John Powers
- Hopeful Hill Ranch
- john@hopefulhill.com
- 530-477-1937

To take the survey contact:

- Roger Ingram, Farm Advisor
- U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service
- 11477 E Ave.
- Auburn CA 95603
- rsingram@ucdavis.edu
- 530-889-7385

Nevada County Agricultural Survey

The U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service, the Nevada County Economic Resource Council, and the Nevada County Farm Bureau are conducting this survey to determine the size, scope, and nature of agriculture in Nevada County. Your responses are kept private and confidential.

Please complete the survey and mail it today. Thank you.

What is your product? (Check all that apply)

- Fruit Vegetables Christmas Trees Timber
 Livestock Field crops Nursery Products Fiber
 Nuts Eggs Ag Tourism Honey
 Grapes Other (specify) _____

When are your products available? (Check all that apply)

- Spring Summer Fall Winter

Where do you sell your products? (Check all that apply)

- Auction Restaurant On-farm sales Local grocery outlet
 Internet Contracts Grower's Market Roadside stand
 Wholesale Other (specify) _____

Where do your products go? (Enter the percentage for each. The total should be 100%.)

- % Personal use on farm % Nevada County % California outside Nevada County % U.S. outside California % Outside U.S.

How many acres do you use for production? (Check one)

- less than 10 acres 10-49 acres 50-99 acres 100 acres or more

What are your gross annual sales? (Check one)

- \$0 \$1 to \$999 \$1,000 to \$9,999 \$10,000 or more

Is agriculture your primary source of income? (Check one) Yes No

How do you market your products? (Check all that apply)

- Advertising Word of mouth Public events Brochures and flyers
 Internet Other (specify) _____

What are the issues you are dealing with? (Check all that apply)

- Regulation Water Marketing Land costs
 Expansion Labor Other (specify) _____

May we include you on a map of Nevada County agricultural products? Yes

Are you interested in learning about government cost-sharing programs? Yes

Optional - Contact information:

Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please return the completed survey to: Roger Ingram, Farm Advisor
U.C. Davis Cooperative Extension Service
11477 E Ave.
Auburn CA 95603

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculturists, and the general public. This is a "not for profit" organization.

Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building at 255 South Auburn Street in Grass Valley. All visitors are welcome.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Submission by email is encouraged. Please submit to Bonnie Bagwell at arwg@infostations.com. The deadline for the December 2005 edition is November 15th. A limited amount of advertising space (business card size 3" by 2") is accepted and need not be bee-related. Rates are \$1 per issue or \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members. All revenue from advertising goes to the Association treasury and helps offset the cost of producing and distributing this newsletter.

To receive the *Local Buzz* via email: please email your request to arwg@infostations.com.

Nevada County Beekeepers Association



C/o Gary Wood
10396 Mountain Lion Lane
Grass Valley, CA 95949

First Class Mail

November 2005

Next meeting: Monday, November 7, 2005, 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building. Randy Oliver will report on the California Queen Breeders meeting, followed by more of the JZ's BZ's video.

Nevada County Beekeepers Association

2005 Officers

President: Gary Wood.....477-9202
grw@usamedia.tv

Vice President: Merrill Grant.....432-0725
mgrant@williams.k12.ca.us

Secretary: Jack Meeks.....432-4429
jackm@nccn.net

Treasurer: Janet Brisson.....346-6439
rubes@infostations.com

Board Members

Past President Merrill Grant.....432-0725
Leslie Gault.....346-7092
Randy Oliver.....272-4450
John Miller.....823-1369

Committee Chairs

Swarm Hotline: Leigh Johnson.....273-1382
Lynn Williams.....675-2924

Library: Tynowyn Slattery..265-6318

Newsletter Dist. Gary Wood.....477-9202

Newsletter: Bonnie Bagwell.....878-3622

Honey Extractor Karla Hanson.....265-3756