

## The Nevada County Beekeepers Association ~ August 2012



# Local Buzz

## President's Message

**Ron Slay, President**

Please join us Saturday August 4th at our Bee Booth in the Nevada County Fairgrounds for a clean up and potluck. Thistle is going strong at 1500' and I hope it makes up for the lack of blackberry nectar.

## August 4th Meeting - 5:00 PM at the Fairgrounds

### Booth Clean up and Pot Luck

Please come to the Bar-B-Que and remember to get your FREE tickets for Fair entry and parking for working the Bee Booth. We start the booth clean up at 5:00 PM and the Bar-B- Que starts at 6:00PM. Everyone is welcome!

This is a pot luck, so bring your favorite dish. The club will supply hamburgers, hot dogs and the fixings. Come one come all! Please email Karla and let her know if you will be able to attend the Bar-B-Que. This way she will have enough hamburgers and hot dogs for everyone.

Karla Hanson can be reached at [QueenBeeZ@att.net](mailto:QueenBeeZ@att.net)

## Bee Bits

**Randy Oliver, Contributor**

Despite the witheringly hot weather, to my great amazement, the bees in some of our locations are actually putting on some late honey! Those at lower elevations are still struggling, but we are seeing white wax at the Grass Valley/Nevada City elevations.

At the lower elevations, some colonies actually faced starvation earlier this summer--in one yard on McCourtney road, there are piles of dead bees in front of half the hives.

This year has really separated the colonies into those who were able to perform, and those who couldn't. There are lots of colonies that struggled to stay alive, and I suspect than many of the feral colonies simply starved out. We have been heavily feeding sugar syrup to those colonies which did not produce enough honey reserves for comfort, and will later feed any from which we remove honey. Luckily, there has generally been enough pollen for colony health, but we are watching closely, so that we can start feeding pollen supplement when indicated. The hot, dry weather has also been hard on varroa, and we are pleased with our relatively low mite levels. Now is a good time to check those levels, and knock back mite levels before they start causing problems.

Tim Madiera, Brion Dunbar, and I have finished building and painting the new bee enclosure for the AG exhibit at the Fair. If you want to help set it up, please let me know. Otherwise, please contact Karla if you haven't already signed up for two shifts at the Bee Booth. This is the one time each year that the Association asks its members to step up to the plate and help out!

## Raffle Prizes

**Karla Hanson, Coordinator**

Thank you all for bring some great items for our raffles. Plants, eggs, jewelry, soaps, bee items, jams, beautiful metal garden art, the list goes on and on... Thanks to everyone for also buying raffle tickets! What a GREAT group of people we have in our club! We always need more contributions to the monthly raffle so keep the items coming! Almost everyone loves having more plants. Be creative. For every item you bring, you receive a free raffle ticket (up to 5). The raffle helps with the club's expenses. Thanks!

## **From the Librarian**

**Tynowyn Slattery, Librarian, Reviewing 2 new books**

A new book, old book has arrived.

*The Sacred Bee in Ancient Times and Folklore*

Hilda M. Ransome

This book was first published in England, 1937 by Allen and Unwin, (the first publisher of Tolkien's masterpiece trilogy), and replicated by Dover in 2004.

It is, essentially, an anthropological look at the genus *Apis*, in history and in various geographies, beginning with fossils and rock paintings.

My favorite is the stick-man honey hunter clinging to a tall cliff face with his knees, gathering pouch in one hand, reaching into a hive in a rock with his other and a cloud of, (no doubt, angry), bees flying around his body. I can identify with him, even over the huge span of time.

There is so much material in this work that Ms. Ransome does not dwell for long on any one area, she methodically packs in folk-stories and superstitions, religious rites, customs and bee keeping methods, (pre history and historical), and examines the myths and folklore of Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, India, China, the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans, the Germanic and Slavonic peoples of Central Europe, France, Finland, the British Isles and finally, North America. Once again, my list might suggest a dry read but there are innumerable quotes and probably more poetry about bees than some one might expect, all interspersed with line drawings, magical spells (for the adventurous) and many, many reference notes, thankfully, at the bottom of the pages, so that one doesn't have to keep flipping the pages around.

I love this book and, apparently, so do others, as this is our second replacement, which, hopefully, will be our last.

It seems appropriate to end this review with a quote from the book.

"Now what delight can greater be  
Than secrets for to knowe  
Of Sacred Bees, the Muses' Birds,  
All which this booke doth showe?"

If problems arise with returning material it can be mailed to: Tynowyn Slattery  
20493 Rome Road, Nevada City, CA 95959 265-6318 ~ [swoolman@saber.net](mailto:swoolman@saber.net) ~ 530/265.6318

## **Dusting and Powdered Sugar Shake**

**Submitted by Janet Brisson**

After reading two articles in July's American Bee Journal on the correct way to do a Powdered Sugar Shake, I felt this would be a good thing to follow up on our powdered sugar dusting as we were not seeing any mites.

5 years ago, we began removing the plastic foundation from our hives. By using Honey Super Cell and natural comb, we regressed our bees and natural wax foundation down to 4.7mm brood cell size. This could very well be the reason for not seeing mites. Regressed bees take less time to hatch, 19 days as opposed to 21 day which messes up the mites by not allowing enough time in the capped brood for them to mature. Immature mites cannot go on to breed more mites.

We continued to use powdered sugar dustings on a regular basis, seeing less and less mites in the powdered sugar. We stopped dusting 3 weeks in a row like we usually do in March and July, dusting just the one time to see if we could see any mites in the droppings.

Tracey Stirling from our club wrote that she saw 40 mites in her powdered sugar and wondered if this was an infestation. Our rule of thumb is, if you saw 10 to 20 mites on top of the powdered sugar within 20 to 30 minutes after dusting, then continue dusting once a week for 3 weeks. 30 to 40 mites, you would want to increase that to dusting every 3 days. I wondered what those 30 to 40 mites would compare to a sugar shake and asked Tracey if she would do that test.

The basic idea was to capture 300 bees into a mason jar, add 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar, put on a screened top and shake well. Dr. M. Ellis said if you let the bees sit for a minute or so, they will heat up and more mites will release. Shake the sugar through the 1/8" screen onto a white paper plate, and spray water to dissolve the sugar so you can see and count the mites.

I first sifted some powdered sugar into a Tupper, got a wide mouth jar and a seed spouting lid. I also took a large (8 qt) plastic bowl, a large funnel (larger than a canning funnel) and a 1/2 cup measuring cup down to the bee yard.

After finding the queen and removing that frame to an empty box, I took two of the frames from the brood area and shook those bees into the bowl. I kept sharply hitting the side of the bowl, which made the bees slide into a group. Then I measured a big 1/2 cup and pour them into the funnel which was in the jar. Since the bees were flying out, I took an additional 1/4 cup of bees to add to be on the safe side. Once in the jar, if you keep giving it a sharp shake, they will all fall to the bottom. That sharp shake seems to disorient them enough to give you a few seconds of time to do stuff like putting two tablespoons of sifted powdered sugar in and getting the top on. One of the articles said the economic threshold for the powdered sugar shake is 10 mites. I found only one mite from one of our hives and none in the others.

Tracey wrote that she attempted to do the sugar shake, but most of the bees flew out. She felt there were about 100 bees and she found 4 mites. That would be 12 mites for 300 bees, definitely over the economic threshold. Seems like the powdered sugar shake does correspond with a powdered sugar dusting.

## **April Minutes**

### **Jack Meeks, Secretary**

Vice Pres Jeremiah Farrell opened with Q&A: Vaseline is good for greasing varroa sticky boards--rather than Crisco. Flowers to provide nectar and attract bees include asters, lavender, daisies, basswood. Bees like to build out foundation with 15% drone cells in spring brood rearing. By giving them one frame with empty space below a two inch strip of regular comb at the top induces them to fill with drone cells. After drone cells are capped, examine them for mites, which are concentrated in drone cells. Destroy the hanging drone cells and replace the drone frame.

Finance: Janet Brisson

May begin \$5280.73;

Inc \$104;

Exp: cabinet \$675.72, wireless P.A. system \$151.15;

MayEndBal \$4382.79.

MOTION Oliver: Opt out of bank check imaging expense--Passed

August Meeting: Saturday, Aug 4th cleanup at Fair Booth 5PM, bring cleaning tools, supplies; Pot-luck 6PM, bring salads, desserts, utensils, drinks and your favorite designated driver.

PROGRAM Jeremiah Farrell: "Extracting Frames" Frames should all be capped--shake first--if drops of nectar fall out, danger of spoilage. Extract in August or before while it's hot. Centrifuge method--blow, brush or remove bees with butyric acid vapor, slice off caps, centrifuge balanced frames, replace in same hive or allow robbing if frames to be stored for winter. Slow method--slice off caps, set frames side by side in large tank with cover, frame tops at bottom (upside down) on blocks to drain--bees make cells slanted slightly upward. Single frame method--scrape honey and cells into filter(s), cheesecloth, or paint filter bucket if you just want a little for the Fair--bees will have to remake cells. Wax moth infestation if frames have ever held brood or pollen, and night temperature is in 70s and above.

Fair entry deadline was July 20th.

## Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards

Special NCBA Club Price! Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com)

## Club Membership

Janet Brisson, Treasurer

If you are a new member and want to sign up but can't make it to the meeting, you can sign up on line at NCBEES.net.

You can always mail your dues.

\$20.00 (includes newsletter through mail)

or

\$15.00 (includes newsletter through email)

NCBA

c/o Janet Brisson

2093 Dog Bar Road

Grass Valley, CA 95949

Help us reduce paper and mailing costs, get your newsletters electronically and your family membership fee is reduce from \$20 to \$15.

Email Janet at [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com)

## Honey Extraction House

A to Z Supply has a honey extraction house available for rent. Equipment is provided and the room is heated and there's lots of hot water for clean up. For more information: 530.273.6608

<b>A to Z Supply</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		
13396 Ridge Road Grass Valley, CA 95945 530-273-6608/274-3871		
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<b>HOURS:</b> M-F: 730 AM—530 PM SAT: 8 AM—5 PM SUN: 9 AM—4 PM www.atozsupply.com sales@atozsupply.com		

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## Nevada County Fair - Bee Booth

Karla Hanson, Contributor

We still need some slots filled for our Bee Booth at the County Fair.

This year the fair runs from August 8th through the 12th.

Please email Karla Hanson at [queenbeez@att.net](mailto:queenbeez@att.net) with the day or days that you would like to work.

Each shift is 4 hours long and start at 10:00AM and close at 10:00PM.

Each shift will include a ticket to enter the fair grounds. I am hoping to get free parking tickets too but I don't know for sure yet. Be the first to email Karla and pick the time slot best for you and a spouse or friend.

## Goodies Sign-up

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

Please let me know if you can bring a treat for any of the coming meetings. We still need treats for our September, October, and November meetings. Contact Karla Hanson, [queenbeez@att.net](mailto:queenbeez@att.net)

Nevada County Beekeepers Association							Posted: 7/16/2012
Fair Booth Staffing Schedule							
August 8th thru the 12th, 2012							
Time Slot	Wednesday August	Thursday August	Friday August	Saturday August	Sunday August		
10 AM to 2 PM	1 Debbie Cavallara 272-7550 2 Hugh Cavallara 272-7550	Janet Brisson 913-2724 Karla Hanson 265-2234	Jeff Pierson 613-7093 Martha Dixon 273-6562	Tom Harper Phyllis Harper 530 823-9096 Julia Harper	Robin Reamer 265-3967 Leslie Gault 346-7092		
2 PM to 6 PM	1 Jerry Creason 823-9937 2 Jade Goodman 702 475-1487 3 Stu Clancy 305-2048 4	Lynn Williams 675-2924 Debra Morawski 292-3543 Tynowyn Slattery 265-6318 Tom Slattery 265-6318	Jeremiah Farrell 743-2842 Terry Mc Connell 432-7556	Jeremiah Farrell 743-2942 Dan Wheat 272-1061	Diane Benton 271-7180 Jerry Van Heeringen 913-5709		
6 PM to 10 PM	1 John Miller 272-6005 2 Julie Miller 272-6005 & 273-9129 3 Jeremiah Farrell 743-2942 4 Cindy Gilmore 265-6315	Bren Smith 530-559-1000 Steve Borgnis 273-5697 Bruce Mc Donald 273-3231	Randy Oliver 277-4451 Stephanie Hughes 274-0702 Rob & Slay 268-8656 Lynn Slay 268-8656	Rany Oliver 277-4451 Stephanie Hughes 274-0702 Rob & Slay 268-8656 Lynn Slay 268-8656	Dan Hart 823-6799 Pam Hart 823-6799 Pete Bailey 916 206-9317 Emily Bailey 916 206-9317		

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. Donations are welcomed.

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. Use the back entrance.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Contributions should be received by the 20th of the Month to be included into the next issue. Submit to [garyg@newpress.com](mailto:garyg@newpress.com)

Advertising space (3” by 2”) in this newsletter is usually available and need not be bee-related. Advertising rates are \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members.

## Nevada County Beekeepers Association



c/o Steve Reynolds  
10838 Ridge Road  
Nevada City, CA 95959  
First Class Mail

### **August 4th Meeting - 5PM**

At our Bee Booth in the Nevada County Fairground

Booth clean-up at 5pm  
Pot Luck at 6pm

## Nevada County Beekeepers Association

### **Officers**

President: Rob Slay..... 263-5618  
Vice President: Jeremiah Farrell..... 743-2842  
Secretary: Jack Meeks..... 432-4429  
[jackm@nccn.net](mailto:jackm@nccn.net)  
Treasurer: Janet Brisson..... 913-2724

[rubes@countryrubes.com](http://rubes@countryrubes.com)

### **Board Members**

Larry Merritt..... 613-3923  
[lameritt@theunion.net](mailto:lameritt@theunion.net)  
Randy Oliver..... 277-4450  
Charlie Whittlesey.....292-3249  
or 755-0468  
Deborah Morawski...675-2924  
Karla Hanson..... 265-3756

### **Committee Chairs**

Swarm Hotline: Karla Hanson..... 265-3756  
Lynn Williams ..... 675-2924  
Librarian: Tynowyn Slattery..... 265-6318  
Newsletter Mailing: Steve Reynolds..... 268-2133  
Newsletter: Gary Gustafson..... 478-1216  
Honey Extractor: Karla Hanson..... 265-3756