

# The Nevada County Beekeepers Association

# Local Buzz



July 2009

## President's Message

Hello all! Well, blackberry flow is just about over at 1500' and star thistle is about to start so it's not too late for you to get some honey. Your bees have been working hard, so remember to do a little for them—check for mites and food stores before you put them to bed. Karla our wonderful v.p. will handle the July meeting as I will be out of town. See you at the fair in August.

Your President, Rob Slay

## July 6<sup>th</sup> Program

The July meeting will be a presentation on honey extraction 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall.

## Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

Wow, what a season! This has been the best spring for bees in a long time. If you were able to maintain strong colonies without them all swarming off, you should have made a ton of honey.

Mite levels appear to be up from last year, so you should keep an eye on them. We've had good luck with Apiguard thymol gel, applied right after you pull the blackberry honey. I've got it on hand, but I'll be out of the country until July 10.

Things have been very hectic for me and Stephanie. Due to urgent requests for me to speak, in June, Steph and I flew to both the big Island of Hawai'i and to northwestern Colorado--hosted by beekeepers there. And at the end of June, I'm off again to Australia, to speak in tropical Cairns in the north.

I'm greatly heartened by the enthusiastic signups for our Fair booth staffing--thanks to all who volunteered!

As I mentioned at a previous meeting, I'm going to start some "survivor" yards in the County. I just brought in five queen lines of Russian stock, which are now on Cement Hill, plus lines of New Mexico survivors from Zia Queens, and a survivor instrumentally inseminated queen from the East. This is in addition to the VSH (varroa sensitive hygiene) queens that I've been introducing.

Small queen breeders across the U.S. are beginning a groundswell of efforts to breed from varroa-adapted bees. This is a very exciting development, and indicates to me that we may have reached a tip point in varroa management!

Randy Oliver

## For Sale

For Sale: Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards

Special NCBA Club Price!

Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or email at [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com).

## June Minutes

Pres Rob Slay opened with Q&A. Several swarm lures were described, including sugar water with lemon grass oil, vanilla extract, wintergreen etc. Used comb, even old frames, can aid capturing and keeping swarms.

Finance Janet Brisson: Begin May \$3248.62; Inc \$217; Exp \$294.54; May End \$3170.38

PROGRAM: Christy Tveit, Sierra College instructor soil science & landscape, described UC Davis Honeybee Landscape contest with 32 worldwide entries. Year round nectar sources incl. redbud, rosemary, coleanthus, lavenders, thyme varieties.

Also water source with gentle flow. Large starter plants were displayed, and awarded as raffle prizes. Jack Meeks, sec

quick easy-to-remember domain for the club for us to use. On our webpage we have information on when and where the club is meeting and pass issues of our newsletter, 'The Local Buzz'. You can quickly find the numbers for the Swarm Hot Line or our President to ask questions. Now, whenever you want to pass information about our club or someone needs a swarm removed, it's easy to remember, [NCBEES.ORG](http://NCBEES.ORG) for Nevada County Bees!

Thanks again Bren, this is a valuable addition to our club.

Sincerely,

Janet Brisson

### Sacramento Beekeeping Supplies

- Complete line of all beekeeping supplies
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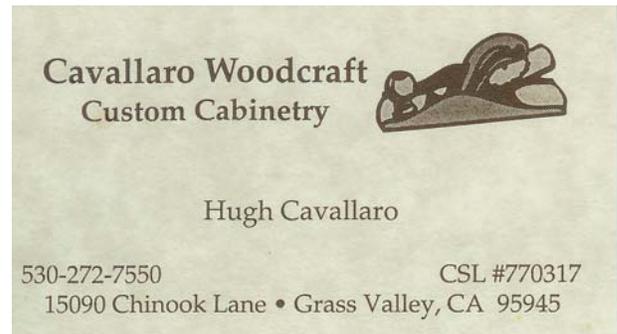
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## NCBEES.ORG

We have a new way to get to our Nevada County Beekeepers Webpage, by typing in [NCBEES.ORG](http://NCBEES.ORG), thanks to member Bren Smith. Bren obtained this



## Horticultural Vinegar and GMOs

By Tynowyn Slattery

Genetically modified sugar beets, engineered by the Monsanto Corporation to be resistant to its herbicide Roundup, were first harvested in fall 2008. By now, sugar from those beets has likely entered the food stream. Critics of genetic engineering have raised concerns that the modified beets could produce food allergies, threaten wildlife and spread herbicide resistance or other modified traits to closely related species, including chard or table beets.

Beekeepers use a substantial amount of sugar and in most cases want the least expensive source available but the unproven and potentially serious environmental hazards of GMO foods is a concern everyone must consider when making accounts. You vote with your dollar. To visit or subscribe to the Non-GMO Report go to: <http://www.non-gmoreport.com>

In the June meeting, biodegradable 30% horticultural vinegar was suggested as a substitute for other non-degradable chemical weed killers. Peaceful Valley Farm Supply is no longer selling 20% vinegar (except in 55 gal. drums?) probably because (the person on the phone couldn't tell me, but after some research I found...) the Environmental Protection Agency won't list it, as people could mistake it for 5% acetic acid, household vinegar and burn themselves, certainly a danger, but....for those who think they can handle the difference in potency, and take proper precautions... Bradfield Horticultural Vinegar is one option. They can't make herbicidal claims, but can be sold, as vinegar has other uses. I couldn't find any around town so I had to order online.

I will print out a fact sheet about horticultural vinegar use for the next meeting.

## Book Review: A Short History of the Honey Bee

(This was sent along by Kathryn Hall, blog author of "plant whatever brings you joy":) Hi. I'm wondering if you or your members might find interesting a review I just did on my gardening blog of a wonderful book called A Short History of the Honey Bee? The book is by **E. Readicker-Henderson**, and her blog is at [www.plantwhateverbringsyoujoy.com](http://www.plantwhateverbringsyoujoy.com) (find this book review blog about half way down the page.)

"Readers, I implore you. Buy this book. Then buy it for others. And teach your children every word. Every one. It would not be too dramatic to say that our very lives could depend on our understanding the honey bee, her role in assuring our food supply (I'm not talking about honey), and it would be one of the worst things we have ever done as human

beings not to save her (and, OK, the drones). If I could I would write a huge long post trying to convey everything I learned in *A Short History of the Honey Bee*. Obviously it would be redundant and impossible. Just avail yourselves, please."

A word about honey best comes from the mouth of E. Readicker-Henderson.

"...honey is memory, the landscape's own memory, as measured as a tree ring, as detailed as the pinfeathers of a just-fledged bird...Once you begin noticing these different tastes, colors, scents, and textures of honey, the landscape becomes more and more alive, personalized in a way previously inaccessible, like a whispered secret. "



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 Leslie Gault at [lesliegault@yahoo.com](mailto:lesliegault@yahoo.com). The deadline for the August 2009 edition is July 22<sup>nd</sup>. 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 [lesliegault@yahoo.com](mailto:lesliegault@yahoo.com)

**Nevada County Beekeepers Association**      **2009 Officers**  
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**Secretary:**      Jack Meeks..... 432-4429  
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**Honey Extractor:**      Karla Hanson.... 265-3756

**Nevada County Beekeepers Association**



c/o Steve Reynolds  
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July 2009

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The July 6<sup>th</sup> program will be all about honey extraction, 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall.