

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association



President's Message

Hello again bee people, August and the fair have arrived. I hope I saw you all on Treat Street!

I just wanted to give a big thanks to Burt & Betty Spangler. I had a deal in place with another beekeeper to borrow an electric extractor, but after many calls and for many reasons it did not come to fruition. I, with Janet's help, put out an e-mail looking for an electric extractor, as I had 230 frames to work. The next day Burt offered to let me use his extractor. 40 + gallons later I am very thankful our club has so many great people like the Spanglers, without them my arm would not have survived!

Post Script: treat mites now!

Your President, Rob Slay

September 7th Meeting

Join us for a fun meeting on Labor Day evening, Monday September 7th at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall. In addition to taking nominations for next year's officers, we will have a seed, plant material, and extra equipment swap, AND a gadgets and gizmos sharing. Bring your extra seeds, plant starts, pups, runners, rhizomes, cuttings, and volunteers to trade, barter, or finagle with your fellow beekeepers! If you've got a gadget you made, bought, or found that might be of interest to NCBA members, bring it to demonstrate during the gadgets and gizmos exchange. Need not necessarily be completely related to bees...

New Raffle Policy

Bring your unwanted treasures for the raffle and help support our Bee Club. Remember one person's cast-off is another person's gold.

We have a new raffle policy!!! For every item donated that person will receive one free raffle tickets, up to five free raffle tickets per meeting.

Karla Hanson, VP and Raffle Chair

Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

As I write this, the Fair has just begun. Thanks to all for your help, and I hope that everyone had a good time.

We had an amazing experience this week. We went up to Nevada to check out how our bees were faring at a new pollination contract for 48 colonies in pumpkins. The new yard was out in the desert 40 minutes from Sparks. This was the grower's first year here—he had rented 40 acres in the middle of a sod farm, since irrigation water was cheap there (the sod farm is an interesting story in itself).

When we dropped the bees off in early July, the pumpkins were not yet flowering, and the few surrounding alfalfa fields had just been cut, so there was no forage for the bees. When we checked back on the bees after a month, they were starving—many of the hives felt like robbed out deadouts when we hefted them, but they still contained a hungry cluster of bees!

The strange thing was that there were pumpkins in bloom, and several nearby fields of alfalfa flowering. The wind was blowing steadily both when we had dropped the bees off, and again when we revisited, so we guessed that it must be too windy there for them to forage. So we went home, with plans to return in a day or so with emergency feed in the form of syrup and pollen patties, to see if we could save the colonies. Four days later we returned, with a tank containing 1500 lbs of sugar syrup, a hundred pounds of pollen patties, and a truckload of feeders. When we got there, there was no wind, so I started hefting colonies to confirm their condition. Amazingly, every one was now heavy!



During the three days of flight since the last inspection, the colonies had put on an average of over forty pounds of beautiful light alfalfa honey each! Colonies that had deep supers of foundation had suddenly drawn and filled them. Many colonies had plugged out, and had filled every cell in the broodnest with honey—leaving the queen with no place to lay. We've seen good honeyflows before, but nothing has ever surprised us like this! Not only did we haul the (expensive) syrup back home, but we wished that we had brought more honey supers. We wound up swapping frames out of the few weak colonies that still had foundation, into the heavy ones that needed room. We hope that this will hold them until the alfalfa is cut in a few days, since with the Fair, the WAS convention, and a trial setup that I'm doing with a visiting scientist, I simply didn't have time to return. Bees never cease to amaze me. Their ability to put on honey in a big way when conditions are right simply takes one's breath away. Attention: now is the time to pull your honey to extract (if you haven't already), and to knock your mite levels back if necessary. As I mentioned previously, I will be taking part in a research trial, and could use some volunteer help later this month in equalizing a number of colonies.

It will be a long day of bee work, involving sorting frames from strong colonies, and building 72 identical singles. If you're up for some fun, let me know.

Randy Oliver

Eastern Apicultural Society New York 2009

By Janet Brisson

I was so lucky to be a vendor at the Chemical Free EAS conference at Ellicottville, NY and be able to attend some of

the talks. Larry Connors had a session out in the bee yard that I found really fascinating. He taught us to figure out how many eggs our queens are laying. You need a tape measure or ruler as you go through your brood supers. You are going to measure capped brood in square inches on both sides of each frame and every frame that has capped brood in your hive. If there is capped brood in two areas of the frame, measure those separately. Write down all figures, multiply by 25 (as there are 25 cells per square inch) and then divide by 12 (12 days from the time the egg is laid until it is capped). That gives you the approximate number of eggs the queen is laying a day. Larry divided us into groups and our queen was laying approximately 1400 eggs a day. A good queen.

We had two pallets of screened bottom boards sent out to EAS as our Connecticut distributors, Ted and Becky Jones, were going to take a pallet back with them. The pallet was taken off the truck by the hotel's forklift and loaded right onto the Jones truck. The other pallet went into the Trade Show. The hotel had no storage, so Ted, Becky and I filled the booth and under the table, but we still had almost 30 left. There was a little space of no man's land that the hotel made between booths. Our neighbors from BeeCraft suggested we use that. Perfect.

Our very own John Miller attended the conference; it was so good to see a familiar face so far from

home. He shared his energy candy with me, it really does give you a boost and they taste good.



Janet at EAS

I bought books for our library, 'Natural Beekeeping' by Ross Conrad, one of the speakers, two cookbooks from England and a pamphlet on making a swarm control board.

For Sale: Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards

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August Minutes

No minutes were taken at the August meeting.

Nevada County Beekeepers Association Forum

If you are an up-to-date member and have access to the internet, you will be getting an invitation to join the Nevada Country Beekeepers Association Forum at NCBEES@yahoo.com. Once you get the invite, follow the links and join. Here you can sign up to get communications as they come in, or everything once daily. We can ask questions, answer questions, post club news and get up to the minute information as it's passed on to us. This is going to be a work in progress. If anyone would like to volunteer to be a moderator, please contact Janet at 530-913-2724 rubes@countryrubes.com sincerely, Janet Brisson

Honey, I'm Home

A quick search of internet sites under 'latest in beekeeping' reveals a couple of common themes: people are starting to keep bees in less rural settings, and membership in bee clubs is way up recently.

Those of you who have been coming to NCBA for years can attest to the increase in the number of people attending our meetings. Apparently the phenomenon is not local; the British Beekeeping Society membership has increase to over 14,000 from 5,000 recently.

As development pressures reduce the number of rural places available to keep bees, more people are finding creative ways to keep bees in more populated areas.

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. The deadline for the October 2009 edition is September 21st. 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

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Nevada County Beekeepers Association



c/o Steve Reynolds
PO Box 548
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First Class Mail
September 2009

September 7th Meeting

The September 7th program will be about officer nominations, gadgets & gizmos, seed and plant swap and extra equipment exchange, 7 PM meeting at the Grass Valley Vets Hall.