
NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS



ASSOCIATION



NEWS

VOL 20 ISSUE 1

DEC 05 / JAN 06

Here come all of those leaves. Can't believe that the spring/summer is already behind us and yes the bees are ready to call it quits for another year. Hope everyone had a good honey season and are ready to relax for a couple of months and enjoy the holidays that will soon be with us.

Had a chance to look at some of my bees over the past few days. I had been getting some reports from up and down the state about how poor the bees looked, so my side kick Ken Adoniz and I took a ride and visited a few yards. We were pleasantly surprised to see how well they looked, the brood supers full of honey and lots of bees. Yes, that is only a few yards and we still have several yards to look at, but if that is a barometer, I feel very good about wintering over.

For those of you that didn't make it to our last state meeting at the Rutgers Eco Complex, you missed a great meeting. Again, thanks to Central Jersey Chapter for a very interesting/ educational day. I found the talk on Formic Acid very interesting and expect to do some further investigation to see how I can fit it in to my program. Sussex Chapter has informed us that they will be sponsoring the year 2006 fall meeting. That leaves the spring meeting slot open for a chapter that might be interested in hosting it. Keep in mind that the N.J.B.A. is willing to help with the planning/financing if the chapter so desires.

At the state meeting we talked about a replacement for Mike at Rutgers and the feeling is that things are going slow and they are still looking.

The short course date has been set for next year and is April 7-9. Now is the time to look for youths that would be interested in being sponsored by the N.J.B.A. The Department of Agriculture also seems very interested in playing a part in getting new people started in bee keeping.

The Ag Convention date has been set for this year. The date is Feb.6-8 2006 and will be held this year at the Tropicana, in Atlantic City. We will be having our honey show as we always do and I ask that everyone try to enter. The rules will not change this year even though there was some discussion about doing so at our last meeting. This is a chance to show the general public that there are beekeepers through out the state and also promote your honey as this is the only show we have in New Jersey where labels are placed on the jars.

Enjoy the holidays and hope to see all of you at our winter mtg, if not before.

Bob Hughes

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START SPREADIN' THE NEWS SOME HELPFUL HINTS IN HONEY BEE PRESENTATIONS

One aspect of beekeeping that I feel passionate about is talking to groups of people about my favorite hobby. This is especially true when it comes to school aged children. But how does one make these arrangements? What do you say during these presentations? What props should I bring? How long should the presentation run?

It is a simple rule of thumb that in order to keep any hobby, organization or club growing, new members are needed. Perhaps one of my biggest regrets, and perhaps one of the most glaring shortcomings of the beekeeping industry, was the termination of the beekeeping merit badge by the Boy Scouts of America. Regardless of who may have been at fault for this loss, we as beekeepers missed a great opportunity to gain support for our hobby, new customers, and perhaps, most important, a new generation of beekeepers to carry on our hobby and interests. Although we may not have enticed a large portion of the BSA membership into becoming beekeepers, I know for a fact, that the short time I worked as a beekeeping merit badge counselor, I did mentor some new beekeepers. Fortunately, the merit badge has recently been reinstated and beekeeper associations all over the United States must take the opportunity afforded us to mentor young men in our hobby.

How do I get this experience? How do I prepare?

First of all, the type or age of the group is an important factor. What you say or do with fourth graders is quite

different from what you say and do with senior citizens. Let's, for now, anticipate the group will be school-aged children. For the most part, they are easier to entertain, although sometimes they ask the most difficult questions.

Next is preparation. It is imperative that you prepare an outline of what you are going to say the day of the talk and practice it or you may sound like a rambling fool! Children have an impeccable sense for those who don't know what they're doing. A good idea is to use 3 X 5 file cards to outline your talk, then, use the cards the day of the talk as a guide. Eventually you will memorize the routine and be able to perform future talks without using the cards.

How do I get my first opportunity? Here in New Jersey, we have several advantages that help us get our foot in the door. The NJ state insect is the honeybee and NJ state symbols are part of the fourth grade curriculum. This makes beekeepers in New Jersey a valuable commodity to fourth grade teachers as an aid in their lesson plan. For those in other states that are not as fortunate, I have also found that talking to elementary school teachers will help you get into their lesson plan. After that, the snowball begins to roll and get larger. One teacher tells another who tells two others who tell three others and so forth. Before you know it you may have to ask others for help. Some beekeepers charge for presentations and that is fine. I don't charge because I really enjoy the presentations, so therefore, I don't know how much they charge. If the organization or school insists on giving a donation, I, like another beekeeper I know, have the check made out to the

local beekeepers association or the NJ Honey Queen program. Free presentations will get you more presentations. But again, it's your time and effort and it's your decision to be compensated or not.

In 1995, the NJ Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the NJ Beekeepers Association produced a movie called, "A Bee-Movie". This video, while being entertaining to both young and old, is an important educational tool. It covers most aspects of beekeeping including hiving a swarm, extracting, transportation of bees and all three types of honeybees. I utilize this tool by sending the video to the teacher of the fourth grade class about one week prior to my talk. This covers several purposes. It gives the children some background into beekeeping, prepares them for my visit by making them think of more intelligent questions and really gets them excited about my presentation. Also, prior to arriving at the school I ask the teacher for a six-foot table for my teaching aides and I ask the teacher to bring in a box of crackers, preferably Wheat Thins ®.

What should I bring to the school the day of the talk?

Without going overboard, I try to bring the basics. I use a standard size bottom board, full depth super, honey super, inner cover and outer cover. I know some beekeepers that bring miniature models of a colony for convenience sake and that's all right too. I prefer the real thing. Sometimes children have trouble relating to a model and how big the real thing should be. The hive is an old one but, in relatively good shape, colorfully painted and clean. I left a (Continued on page 5)

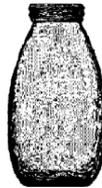
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little bit of propolis and burr comb inside for demonstration purposes.

If I ever stop giving beekeeping presentations, I could use it to start a new colony, and, for that reason, I make sure I set it aside in my shed so that it is not mistaken for excess equipment. I take an empty frame, a frame with foundation only and a frame with comb. This allows the young audience to understand how we help the bees build their homes.

Next, I take the basic tools. I use a hive tool that is again clean but shows some signs of use. I take a smoker that has been used and has been wire brushed on the outside to make it more eye catching and I bring a veil, helmet and gloves. Another effective teaching aide is the 13 X 18 study cards depicting various types of honeybees performing different functions. They are particularly helpful when reviewing the three types of honeybees in a colony and their related jobs. Finally, I bring what I consider the icing on the cake, the observation hive. This is truly the biggest hit of the day and must be concealed under a towel; otherwise the children will never hear a word you say!

One other item I bring is a children's sized bee suit. Towards the end of the demonstration, I dress one of the young people up in a complete outfit, then have the other children give the youngster a round of applause. I also reward the individual with some honey sticks, honey candy or a wax ornament. The draw back to this is some teachers fear the spread of head lice when you place the helmet on the child. You can judge how the teacher feels before hand and eliminate this part of the exhibit if s/he feels uncomfortable with it. Otherwise, the children love it and the volunteer is the envy of all when they receive their reward.

I spread the equipment out on the six-foot table starting with the mock colony, the tools and on the other end a place for the observation hive. In between I place some of the over-sized study cards. During the presentation I pass around a piece of foundation for the children to touch and smell. Make sure it's not a good piece because I guarantee it will come back broken. I once got a thank you note from one young lady who offered the name of the young man who broke my sheet of foundation. Funny though, she never asked for a reward for divulging the information.

What do I say?

I try to incorporate all five senses when doing beekeeping presentations: sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste. I feel this is an important factor when talking to young children. Make sure your talk flows from one topic to another in a logical sense. Use this approach every time you do presentations making minor changes for improvement. It is a good idea to ask the teacher how long they want the presentation to last. That way you can prepare your talk, leaving enough room (about 15 minutes) at the end for the question and answer period. Considering you have approximately 30 minutes to talk I suggest you spend some time preparing otherwise 30 minutes will seem more like 30 days.

Everyone has a different approach on how he or she makes his or her presentations. There are as many different ways to present the material, as there are beekeepers. I prefer to begin by introducing my self and then presenting several questions to youthful

group in terms they relate to. I ask them, “How many of you have ever eaten an apple or an orange?” “Do you know that without honeybees, you couldn’t eat apples or oranges?” “How many here have ever tasted honey?” If the response to that question comes back with objectionable looks on their faces or if I don’t get at least 90% of the children raising their hands, I ask, “Did you ever eat Honey Nut Cheerios?” “If you did, then you’ve tasted honey!” This breaks the ice and gets the children at ease with you and you, at ease with them. I go on to describe the hive on the table and its components explaining that the full depth super is the bees’ year round home. I tell them how you wouldn’t go into the hive on a rainy or cloudy/cold day because, “If someone came to your house on a cold or rainy day and opened all the doors and windows you wouldn’t be too happy either.”

Next, I explain the three types of honeybees and their function in the hive. I generally give approximate numbers during the summer and winter. This is where the large study cards help out. The children can visualize the different bees and this helps them develop better questions for later. I start off with the largest number of bees, the workers going next to the drones and ending with the queen.

I move down the table and describe the tools of the trade, the hive tool, smoker and veil set up. I explain their functions and when the presentation is finished and the children pass by the table, I let them touch the tools and smell the smoker. It really adds to their memories of the day the beekeeper came to school.

Now I change gears a little and ask for a volunteer. Here is a little secret. I watch the children when they come in and pick one out, by gut feeling alone. This is the child I select as the volunteer. Once I selected a young man because he had tomato sauce down the front of his shirt! I ask the volunteer to come up by me and with assistance from the person who came with me or one of the teachers, I dress the young person up again reviewing the different pieces of the outfit and how we put them on and wear them. This is when the giggling begins. When completely outfitted, I hand them a hive tool and the smoker and say, “Now you’re already to go out and work bees! Let’s give Johnny a nice round of applause.” If the volunteer felt the least bit uneasy when the giggling started, the rousing round of applause their peers give them, (and it always is very loud) makes them smile and feel very proud.

Finally, I place the observation hive on the table and ask them, “Do you know what I have here?” Without hesitation and mostly in unison they shout out, “BEES!” Now you definitely have their attention. While they are gazing glassy eyed at the honeybees in the observation hive, I field questions. The observation hive does not deter them from asking question and most of the time they ask some very intelligent questions. After about 15 minutes of Q & A, I ask them to return to their classrooms and write down any questions they didn’t get a chance to ask and give them to their teacher. I make arrangements with the teacher to give me the questions and I reply to them all. It’s a little extra work but who knows, maybe some day one of these little people will be the next beekeepers.

Lastly, I have a teacher or teacher's aides prepare a tray of Wheat Thins® with a dab of honey that I supply in a honey bear. As the children exit the room they come to the table and get one last look at the equipment and the observation hive and they take a

cracker with honey. By the way, I usually leave the unfinished honey bear with the teacher for the teacher's lounge, which improves already good relations with the teaching staff. Coincidentally they still try to get one last question in as they pass the table.

I find this part of beekeeping very satisfying. But then I've often told my wife that perhaps I missed my calling to become a teacher. If you have never given a talk on the subject and need additional suggestions on content, I suggest you contact another beekeeper that has had the experience. It takes an intermediate knowledge of beekeeping to give these talks, but a novice with some assistance can be successful. Whatever you do, if you have some time get out there and watch their faces glow and start spreadin' the news!
Jim Puvel

The Chester County Beekeepers Association again hosts its Annual Beekeeper Seminars on Saturday, February 25, 2006, at Westtown School, Westtown Road, PO Box 1799, Westtown, PA 19395. The program, which runs from 9:00AM until 5:00PM, will include two sessions: 1) the Beginning Beekeepers Program, presented by Jim Bobb, President of the PA State Beekeepers Association, and 2) the Masters Session, which will feature several interesting speakers including Dave Hackenberg, a professional beekeeper and crop pollinator who will not only share some of his experiences with bees "on the road", but also will be discussing the beekeeping industry from a national perspective while sharing some time-honored tips and tricks regarding bee management. Bill Mondjack, VP of the PA State Beekeepers Association will speak on making splits, managing swarms, and the Irish Beekeepers of County Ulster. There will be a panel discussion, opportunities for Q&A, catalogues, door prizes, and lots of fellowship. The \$30 fee will cover the basic program, an all-you-can-eat sit-down lunch in the Westtown Dining Room, as well as morning and afternoon snacks. For more information, for directions to Westtown School, and to register, please visit our website, <http://www.ChescoBees.org>. Hope to see you there.

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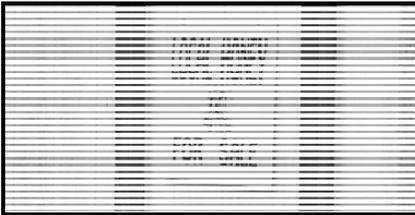
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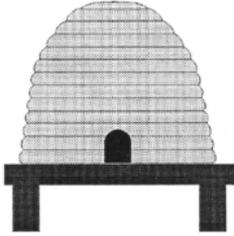
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QUESTIONS FOR THE EXPERTS

We are starting a new column in the newsletter that will accept questions from the readers and replies from any of the NJBA "EXPERTS" who would like to help out a fellow beekeeper. Cynthia Werts had the honor of submitting the first question. Submit questions to the editor via email or in writing. See the "Who's Who" page for addresses. If you would like to submit a question, but do not want your name to appear, simply ask for your name to be withheld. Annonomous questions will not be printed because the editor cannot confirm it is a valid request.

The first question – "Will my bees produce more honey if I remove frames of honey as the bees cap them in May, June and July? Would waiting to extract all at once produce the same amount?"

If you have ample empty supers to give the bees as we progress into the honey flow, removing the full ones will not cause the bees to collect more. You can add supers as required and they don't have to be under the full ones as some people suggest. If you are short on honey supers and you have a good honey flow then yes it would pay to remove the full frames, extract the honey and put the empty frames back, but this must be done quickly or the bees could start building burr comb, which could cause you problems when it comes time to do your main extracting.

Answered by Bob Hughes

WINTER MEETING

The winter meeting will be held again this year at the Columbus Grange in Columbus, N.J. on Feb 11 2006.

The meeting will start with Registration & Coffee/Donuts at 9 - 9:30 AM, followed by a business meeting, lunch, desert and speakers.

Costs will be the same as last year; \$18.00 adults 12 years and older, \$11.00 children 11 years of age and younger.

Details will be spelled out in the newsletter and on our web site prior to the actual meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Reservations can be made by calling Bob Hughes at 609-585-4359 or by email at bobsbuzzybees@aol.com. Please make reservations no later than Feb 7, 2006.

Bees Learning Smell of Bombs With Backing From Pentagon

By **ANDREW C. REVKIN**

Scientists working for the Pentagon have trained ordinary honeybees to ignore flowers and home in on minute traces of explosives, a preliminary step toward creating a buzzing, swarming detection system that could be used to find truck bombs, land mines and other hidden explosives. The research, under way for three years, initially focused on using bees to help clear minefields. But the effort has broadened, the scientists say. In two tests last summer, before the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, trained bees picked out a truck tainted with traces of explosives. The work is in its early stages, and bees, like bomb- (Continued on page 13)

NJBA MEETING DATES

Annual Honey Show - February 6-8, 2006
at the Tropicana in Atlantic City

Feb 11, NJBA Winter Meeting at
Columbus Grange.

CENTRAL JERSEY

Dec 17, 2005 Christmas Party – Captains
Inn, Forked River, NJ

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County Environmental Center. Contact
Landi Simone for dates and topics.

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sniffing dogs, have limitations. They do not work at night or in storms or cold weather, and it is hard to imagine deploying a swarm to sniff luggage in an airport. But they also have extraordinary attributes, including extreme sensitivity to scant molecular trails and the ability to cover every nook around the colony as they weave about in search of food. Pentagon officials acknowledge that the idea of bomb-sniffing bees has a public relations problem, a "giggle factor,"

as one official put it. But that official and scientists working on the project insist the idea shows great potential.

"It appears that bees are at least as sensitive as or more sensitive to odors than dogs," said Dr. Alan S. Rudolph, program manager for the Defense Sciences Office of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which is overseeing the experimentation.

The Air Force Research Laboratory at Brooks Air Force Base has just completed analysis of a round of tests of bees' bomb-sniffing ability and confirmed that they found the explosive chemical more than 99 percent of the time, project scientists said.

In coming weeks, the team plans the first field tests of a new radio transmitter, the size of a grain of salt, to allow individual bees to be tracked as they follow diffuse trails of bomb ingredients to a source. This system would help if bees were used to search a wide area for hidden explosives.

But such sophisticated technology would not be necessary at, say, a truck stop, where the clustering of alerted bees would be apparent.

Scientists involved in the project said bees were also being considered for sniffing out illicit drugs, which release more volatile chemicals into the air and are easier to trace than explosives.

For many years, biologists at the University of Montana, have been training bees to prefer different scents, using sugar as a reward. After one bee learns the new cue, it somehow transfers that knowledge to others. Within hours, an entire hive, and sometimes adjacent hives, switch to searching for the new scent.

Scientists have found that it takes less than two hours to use sugar-water rewards to condition a hive of honeybees to eschew

flowers and instead hunt for dinitrotoluene, or DNT, a residue in TNT and other explosives, in concentrations as tiny as a few thousandths of a part per trillion.

In tests of 12 trained bee colonies last summer at the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, one to two bees an hour were seen flying around uncontaminated controls, while "we were getting 1,200 bees an hour on the targets," said Philip J. Rodacy, a chemist in the explosives technology group at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. Sandia, the Southwest institute and the University of Montana are among many institutions contributing to the research.

One idea is to place a hive of trained bees near important security checkpoints to guard against potential terrorists, Dr. Rudolph of the defense research agency said. But he added that much more work had to be done before that could happen.

"It's not straightforward to move from watching bees hovering around a box to watching trucks parking in a weigh station for a minute. This is not a capability until we know how predictable it is" he said..

The work is a facet of a much broader effort overseen by Dr. Rudolph to exploit the chemical sensitivity and mobility of bees, as well as moths and other insects, so they can scour broad areas for a whiff of a chemical. Over all, the Pentagon has spent \$25 million since 1998 on researching what it calls controlled biological systems, traits of animals that might be turned into war-fighting technologies.

Scientists are also exploring whether insect hairs can be used to screen the air for releases of biological or chemical weapons. Early tests have shown that bees are an efficient sampling mechanism for airborne bacterial spores, including those

of a close cousin of the anthrax bacteria, said Dr. Jerry J. Bromenshenk, an entomologist at the University of Montana.

He and other researchers there have developed "smart hives" that monitor the comings and goings of insects and, with equipment developed at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, sip the air as bees return, to test for explosives.

IMPORTANT NEW INFO

New information is going to be available on your mailing label on the outside page of the newsletter. If your email address is on file, and is active, there will not be any change. But, if there is no email address on file for a member, his or her address label will have an "*E" following the membership expiration and type. For example:

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John is paid through 2005, has a Family membership, and we have no active email address for him on file. If the "*E" does not appear then there is an email address on file. Emails which we find to be incorrect will be deleted, and the next newsletter mailing will contain the *E code. Emails are sent out to members in the case of last minute changes to schedules or locations and as a reminder for upcoming events. These are not frequent, so there is no worry about NJBA clogging up your email.

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Make checks payable to the local branch and
mail you dues to **your** Branch Secretary/Treasurer listed below

Junior, \$ 8

Individual, \$15

Family, \$20

Central Jersey - Curtis Crowell - 152 Borad St, Hightstown, NJ 08520

Essex County - Marian Chandler - 85 Deerfield Rd., West Caldwell, NJ 07006

Jersey Cape - Bill Eisele - 310 Old Tuckahoe Rd, Petersburg, NJ 08270

Morris County - Janet Katz - 460 Route 24, Chester, NJ 07930

North East - Karl Schoenknecht - 683 Summit Ave, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

North West Jersey - Karin Weinberg - 337 Tunnel Rd, Asbury, NJ 08802-1120

South Jersey - Patty Schuler - PO Box 228, Richland, NJ 08350

Sussex County - Marion Stickle - 12 Crystal Spring Rd. Hamburg, NJ 07419

When it's not beekeeping but bee removal.....consider calling

The Beeman

Your customers like to talk about bees and honey, nectar and flowers, but when it comes to ladders and second story soffits, sheetrock, crawl space, old insulation, attic knee-walls and the like, you can easily spend a lot of time at bee removal with no time to either talk about or even sell bee products.

Let me do the work

I charge reasonable rates, and if you make the referral I will give you the swarm if at all possible.



Robert "Beeman" Simonofsky
(member of the North West Branch of NJBA)

(908)-730-0830

Pager: (908) 707-7894—*after the bees enter
your phone number followed by the # sign*

New Jersey Beekeepers Association
Victor Ammann
685 Montgomery Rd
Lindenborough, NJ 08544

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