

the Forager



December 2007

Newsletter of the Tidewater Beekeepers Association
www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net

Vol.4 No.10

**President: Joe Taylor, Vice President: Bob Montcalm, Treasurer: Judy Ferguson, Recording Secretary: Carol Watkins
Newsletter Editor: Pam Fisher. Deadline for the newsletter is the 25th of each month**

A Message from our President, Joe Taylor

Hello Fellow Beekeepers,



I hope to see each of you at the Christmas Party!

Joe Taylor

Next Meeting: **Tuesday**, December 11,
2007 at 6:00pm

Location: Old Country Buffet, 1412
Greenbrier Parkway, Chesapeake, VA
23320.

Program: **HOLIDAY SOCIAL** in lieu of
regular meeting.



Holiday Social

Our annual Holiday Social will be held in lieu of the December monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 11th. The Holiday Social is open to beekeepers, their families and guests. We will meet at the Greenbrier Old Country Buffet from 6:00 to 9:00pm in a separate banquet room. The restaurant is located at 1412 Greenbrier Parkway, Chesapeake, VA 23320. The buffet runs approximately \$11.00 per person, no alcohol available. Checks and tips will be handled individually. Please RSVP to Steve Black at 757-255-4176 or sblack@exis.net to ensure adequate space.

TIDEWATER BEEKEEPER "YARD NOTES"

For



December

Hopefully you took advantage of the long fall season and fed your bees since the prolonged drought limited forage. Check the weight of a hive by trying to lift it from the rear... it should feel very heavy. If you have any light colonies, it's not too late to get some sugar syrup on them – use 1 cup of water to 1 pound of sugar at this time of year.

Check under the telescoping top for condensation. If you find moisture, provide ventilation by propping up the telescoping top. Moisture is a bigger concern than the cold for colonies during the winter. Make sure that your hives slope toward the front so that any precipitation rolls off the front and not into the hive entrance.

Do not open the hive on cold days. Wait until you see bees flying on a warm day before quickly checking to ascertain the strength of the hive. Don't try to find the queen; you will only do damage to your colony from the cold.

Now is the time of year to take inventory of your equipment, repair the old and order new. Talk to other club members before you order so you can combine orders and take advantage of volume discounts. It's also time to plan and place your package bee and queen orders.





Chesapeake Farm Days

On November 2nd Carol & Floyd Watkins spoke to approximately 400 Chesapeake school children about the agricultural significance of honeybees. The emphasis was on the importance of honeybee pollination for crop production. With only 15 minutes per school group, it was a quick presentation, but each child received a TBA coloring book, a honey stick and a *Bee Movie* sticker as a reminder. Next year, Chesapeake Farm Days will be held in September and extended over two days with the objective of reaching 800 school children. Please consider helping with this worthwhile project in the future.



The Gift of Bees

A \$60 gift of two hives complete with bees and beekeeping classes was approved as a TBA holiday charitable contribution. The colonies will be donated through Heifer International. Honeybees from Heifer International help struggling families worldwide earn income through the sale of honey, beeswax and pollen.

For more information, visit the Heifer International web site at:

<http://www.heifer.org/>



National Beekeeping Conference

*All National Bee and Honey Groups Together
In the Same Place -- At the Same Time*

The 2008 National Beekeeping Conference is set for Jan. 8-12 at the Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento, Calif. In addition to the joint conventions of American Beekeeping Federation and American Honey Producers Association, the Conference will host the meetings of American Bee Research Conference, American Association of Professional Apiculturists, Apiary Inspectors of America, and National Honey Packers and Dealers Association. More information is available at:

<http://www.americanhoneyproducers.org/08Conv.pdf>

TBA Life Memberships

Judy Ferguson requested comments from the membership regarding the proposed TBA Honorary Life Memberships. Honorary Life Membership would be a way of recognizing those individuals who have given of their time to the club over the years. Please contact any committee member with suggestions or concerns. Committee members are:

Kerry Bass, kjbass@cox.net or 421-3269

Judy Ferguson, mulemad@earthlink.net or 547-2338

Pam Fisher, bgrrl@cox.net or 620-0945

Sonny Tilley, 484-3010

Comments will be compiled and reported back to the membership for discussion and a vote.



VSBA Spring Meeting

The Virginia State Beekeepers Association will hold their next meeting on April 11-12, 2008, in Loudoun, VA.

November Meeting Minutes

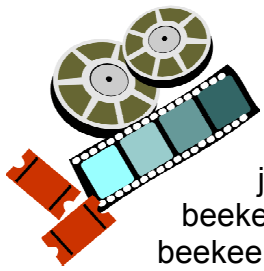
The minutes of the November membership meeting are available to TBA members on our website at:

http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/members/meeting_minutes.html

TBA Hospitality

Rose Nichols has graciously volunteered to coordinate the hospitality for TBA monthly membership meetings. Thank you, Rose, for agreeing to help out. Members, don't forget to contribute to the purchase of supplies as you visit the hospitality table. Or call Rose and ask if you can assist her by bringing some snacks to a meeting. We have all enjoyed Denise's past culinary delights and are now eagerly anticipating some of Rose's specialties. Hats off to both of you!





Beekeeping Movie

Pollen Nation follows the journey of one commercial beekeeper - third generation beekeeper Jeff Anderson - from the honey harvest on the High Plains to the warm winter-feeding grounds of California. It also explores the history of human interaction with bees, a story that reflects the development of agriculture. In ancient Egypt beekeepers floated their clay hives down the Nile to some of the first irrigated fields; in the 21st century, professional bee brokers help balance the rising costs of maintaining hives with increasing demand from big agriculture. The film is a science documentary disguised as an American road movie, and also the first film to take a look at the phenomenon of industrialized pollination, and the way it is beginning to unravel with dire consequences for all of us. Visit the website for more information: www.pollenationthemovie.com

Club Extractor

Art Halstead gave an interim report on the proposed purchase of a club honey extractor at the November TBA meeting. Art reported that club members are divided into two groups: those that oppose the purchase of a club honey extractor, and those that are in favor of its purchase along with all the supporting equipment such as an uncapping tank, filters, cappings scratcher, etc. Art encouraged TBA members to contact the following extractor committee members with comments:

Kerry Bass, kjbass@cox.net or 421-3269

Art Halstead, artthebeekpr@yahoo.com or 488-7617

Paul Kist, paulkist@juno.com or 672-8865

Joe Taylor, doodlebug2@juno.com or 255-4097

Nelson Woodhouse, nwoodhouse@cox.net or 512-6350

The committee will collect input, research different equipment and submit proposals to the membership for discussion and a vote.



Honeybee Health Project

The North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), a tri-national coalition dedicated to promoting the health of all pollinators and a project of the Pollinator Partnership, is teaming up with bee-friendly, natural personal care company Burt's Bees to address Colony Collapse Disorder. Together, they are spearheading a campaign led by Burt's Bees co-founder Burt Shavitz that will raise consumer awareness through public service announcements, online marketing and consumer sampling efforts.

The new public service announcement highlights the fact that every third bite of food we eat depends on bees for pollination, and features Shavitz talking about the important role bees play in agriculture. "We believe the bees' survival depends on how we manage and protect our world," he says. "Burt's Bees is funding research to help find a solution and you can help too." The spot also urges audiences to visit www.burtsbees.com to sign up to receive a free packet of seeds to grow bee-friendly flowers and learn more about Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). The Burt's bees website recommends visiting NAPPC's website www.pollinator.org for additional information about CCD.

NAPPC and Burt's Bees will continue their partnership through research funding and a heightened awareness push later this year.



Poinsettias & Bees

White's Old Mill Garden Center invited TBA to participate in their annual Poinsettia tour on November 17th and 18th. TBA members enjoyed the Deep Creek String Symphony on Saturday and the Hurrah Players on Sunday amid gorgeous holiday decorations. It was steadily busy both days with folks sampling various local honeys and inquiring about the bees in the observation hive. Thank you to TBA members Kerry Bass, Art Halstead, Paul Kist and Bob Montcalm for assisting Rick Fisher with the exhibit. Art's "Dismal Swamp Special" extra dark honey was the talk of the show!

VA Master Beekeeper Program

A new Master Beekeeper Program is being initiated in Virginia. Beekeepers will receive training to improve the management and productivity of their beehives. The Master Beekeepers in turn will provide an enlarged pool of experts to recruit and train beekeepers. Education is a key element of the Master Beekeeper program. Improving a beekeeper's knowledge of apiculture improves successful management of honeybees. The Virginia plan proposes a three-level program: Certified, Journeyman and Master Beekeeper. The Master Level would be equivalent to the EAS Master Beekeeper with an added emphasis on practical beekeeping experience and service.

The Master Beekeeper program will be administered by Virginia Cooperative Extension with input from the beekeeping specialist at Virginia Tech, the State Apiarist, and the VSBA. Beekeeper input is being sought to finalize the requirements for the Master Beekeeper program. Draft copies of the proposed requirements are available at: <http://www.virginiabeekeepers.org/Master/masterbeekeeperprogram.htm> Comments should be sent to Dr. Rick Fell of Virginia Tech at rfell@vt.edu.



TBA Cookbook

Nina Calvano & Rose Nichols collaborated and came up with an idea for an expanded TBA cookbook. Rose suggested that we also include health and beauty recipes such as lotions and soaps using beeswax as well as culinary favorites featuring honey. Please send Nina your favorite hive-product inspired recipes, bee trivia and especially some original artwork (by adults & children). If you have items to submit, you can e-mail them to Nina at philandnina@verizon.net. If you wish to mail your entries, you may access her mailing address on the club roster at: <http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/members/roster.html> or call her at 757-482-0851. Cookbook entries will also be collected at TBA meetings. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will be used to purchase educational materials for the club.



Scale Hive Research

NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center has started an ambitious project using scale hives to track the flowering of plants and their interaction with pollinators. Colonies of honey bees in central Maryland are currently being used to monitor changes in the timing of this plant-pollinator interaction - the spring honey bee nectar flow - by the simple, yet careful, daily weighing of hives to track incremental changes.

Ecologists are concerned that crucial plant-pollinator relationships could be disrupted as a result of climate and land use changes, to the detriment of both partners and the organisms that depend upon them, including humans. The Maryland data indicate that the peak nectar flow now occurs about 4 weeks earlier than in 1970's.

Scientists hope to link nectar flow data to satellite images of vegetative cover and weather, giving them a more accurate reading of how climate change affects plants and pollinators.

In Maryland and Delaware, over 25 beekeepers have volunteered to collect scale hive records in 2007 in order to document the current status of the regional nectar flows. These volunteers recognize the need for the observations and have obtained their own scales to monitor their own hives. If you are interested in participating in this project, please visit the website at:

<http://honeybeenet.gsfc.nasa.gov/index.htm>.

This "Honey Bee Net" web interface, for collection and sharing of such records by volunteers, is designed to enable easy comparison with satellite and other climate records, and provide a useful insight into how climate change and land use/land cover changes affect nectar flows.



Happy Holidays!