

the Forager



June 2008

Newsletter of the Tidewater Beekeepers Association
www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net

Vol.5 No.6

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

A Message from our Vice President, Bob Montcalm

Good day fellow beekeepers,



First of all, I want to say how saddened I am, as well as I'm sure all of you are, about the news that our club President has suffered a set back. After the happy news at the last meeting, that he had returned home and was in good spirits, this is a shock. Please keep Joe and his family in your thoughts and prayers over the next few weeks. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

Well this is the time of the year that makes all beekeepers happy. It's honey extraction time for the next several weeks. I jumped the gun over the warm Memorial Day and Tuesday and extracted the liquid gold from several supers. It is always amazing to me to see what those 'little girls' can do. I guess that's what fascinating about keeping bees.

We're always looking for volunteers to help new beekeeper get started. Everyone should have something to contribute. Even if you're a relatively new beekeeper yourself, you probably know more than some of the new folks. Let's all make it a point to invite a new club member over to our hives and see what we do...even if we do something wrong, it's a learning experience.



Bob Montcalm

Joe Taylor has been moved out of the ICU. To send get-well wishes, please address cards to:
Joe Taylor
Sentara Obici Hospital
Rm. 206
2800 Godwin Blvd.
Suffolk, VA 23434

TIDEWATER BEEKEEPER "YARD NOTES"

For



June

The Tidewater nectar flow is here and going strong!

► Add honey supers ahead of the bees' needs - additional supers should be placed below a partially filled super if possible. You may have two to five supers on by now.

► Prop up the outer cover to improve airflow during the hot weather. Good air circulation improves both honey production and hive health.

► Honey may be removed when more than 3/4 of the cells are capped and liquid doesn't drip from the cells when the frame is held upside down and shaken. This indicates that the nectar has been evaporated to the correct moisture content and is now honey. When in doubt, use a refractometer to measure moisture content. Anything above 18.6% may ferment if extracted.

► Medications may not be used while the bees are making honey for human consumption. Follow all treatment plans in accordance with the manufacturer's application instructions...NO EXCEPTIONS!

► Add an additional brood box or super of foundation when package bees have built comb in seven of the ten frames in the first brood box. Continue to feed the package until they will not take syrup.

► Monitor hives for swarm cells. If a hive swarms, check it after a week to ensure that the new queen is mated and laying. If not, you will need to order and install a new queen or combine the hive with a queenright colony.



Next Meeting: Monday, June 9, 2008 at 7:00pm

Location: Agricultural Extension Trailer on Holt Drive in the Chesapeake Municipal Center

Program: Harvesting Honey: From Bee to Bottle.



Nominations & Elections



The official slate of TBA officers for 2008-2009 is as follows:

President	Joe Taylor
Vice President	Bob Montcalm
Treasurer	Rick Fisher
Secretary	Carol Watkins
Webmaster	Pam Fisher

Elections are normally held in May of each year and the officers hold their positions for the following 12 months. Due to Joe Taylor's hospitalization, elections were postponed until June. Please be prepared to vote for the 2008-2009 officers at the June membership meeting.

Thank you to Floyd Watkins, Steve Black and C.E. Harris for serving on the nominating committee.



May Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the May membership meeting are available to TBA members on our website at: http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/members/meeting_minutes.html



Honey Bear Meets Great Art

The National Honey Board recently produced a series of unique t-shirts and posters featuring the traditional honey bear incorporated into several great works of art. The items feature original works of art commissioned by NHB for an advertising campaign directed toward retail and industrial bakeries. To promote baking with honey, the ads featured the honey bear in unique versions of Michelangelo's *Creation*, Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. The t-shirts, posters and other items are available for purchase at cost on CafePress.com at www.cafepress.com/honeyboard.

Chippokes Steam & Gas Engine Show

TBA has been offered a complimentary space at the Chippokes Steam & Gas Engine Show on Saturday, June 7th and Sunday, June 8th at Chippokes Plantation State Park in Surry, VA. Members may sell honey and hive products while educating the public about the importance of honeybees. The Steam & Gas Engine show features antique gasoline engines, tractors and steam engines on display. There are antique tractor pulls and kids' pedal tractor pulls each day as well as demonstrations of heritage crafts. Other features include farm animals, food and entertainment. The Farm and Forestry Museum and the mansion are open also.

Rose Nichols will be coordinating volunteers. Please call her with the day and time that you can help staff the booth. If you have products to sell, please let Rose know so that she can ensure space on the table. You can reach her at 757-539-2036. Members assisting with the display will receive free parking and admission to the show.





2008 Chesapeake Jubilee Review



This year our TBA booth was included within the fence with the Jubilee midway. The 4-H animals were on display the entire weekend and activities were scheduled inside the tent for both Saturday and Sunday, resulting in an increase of visitors to our exhibit.

The Jubilee started off on a drizzly Friday morning with a beekeeping presentation for approximately 200 school children. Eight classes of children were introduced to honeybees and their vital role as pollinators for our food crops. The equipment used by beekeepers was also demonstrated and each student received a honey straw and a TBA coloring book to reinforce the lesson.

Both Saturday and Sunday had fabulous weather and enough volunteers that anybody who wanted to could take a break and tour the fairgrounds. We had fun offering samples of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake honey and sold out of both each day. Concerned visitors asked about the health of honeybees and the future of our bee-pollinated foods. Many TBA members went home tired and temporarily 'tattooed' with 4-H logos, but we distributed all of our beekeeping catalogs and talked to several potential new members, including a few young people who expressed an interest in beginning beekeeping.

Thank you to all the TBA members who participated in this year's Jubilee: Floyd & Carol Watkins (who brought most of the Jubilee display packed into their truck-including the bees!), Art Halstead, Bob Montcalm, Kerry Bass, Lisa Wiggins, Jim Doubler, Barbara Hickey, Nick Delphia, Nina & Nick Calvano, Gene Richley, Frank Walker and Rick & Pam Fisher. We couldn't have done it without you!



Strawberry Festival Review

By Carol Watkins

Even though the skies were gray Saturday morning and the rain was coming down when we left Knotts Island with all our "stuff" in tow, it still proved to be the busiest I had ever seen it Saturday. I did not really do any work until Saturday afternoon; during the time I was there we were constantly packed. Hugh Taylor and I both sold out of honey before 4 p.m. It was rough having to tell people we had no honey - especially those that thought they would buy it on their way back to their car. The one person I said, "you'll be sorry" to, decided she did not want to take that chance.

We had many people talking about taking it for allergies and how much it has helped them. It is always nice to hear those kinds of testimonies. Better yet, they don't realize just how much they help us because of other people around actually hearing it from the "horses mouth."

The turnout of help from the club overwhelmed me this year. I want to thank each and every one of you that helped in making this year a very special one of support.

I made some special strawberry candles this year. They were received quite well. I just had to remind people not to eat them. Hugh Taylor ran out of his famous "Strawberry Creamed Honey" on Saturday so he sold "Peanut Butter Creamed Honey" which went over just as well.

We all had a good time working together. I enjoyed being there, but was pretty glad to see 5:00 p.m. roll around on Sunday evening. Thank you once again from the bottom of my heart for all of you that came and supported our club as well as supporting me. Thank you!



Take Me Out to the Ball Game - with Honey!

This year, in a first-time promotion, the National Honey Board is sharing America's passion for baseball by sponsoring several Minor League Baseball™ teams for the 2008 season. The teams are: the Durham Bulls, Raleigh/Durham Area, N.C., (affiliate of the Tampa Bay Rays); the Iowa Cubs, Des Moines, Iowa, (affiliate of the Chicago Cubs); and the Stockton Ports, Stockton, Calif., (affiliate of the Oakland A's). Former Major League player Turk Wendell is the honey promotion's spokesperson.



The promotion will involve a myriad of activities, including official "Honey Nights," "Honey Sampling Nights," survey nights, team samplings, ballpark signage and a "Sweet Play of the Game" at home games. When announcers call out the "Sweet Play of the Game," NHB will

donate \$100 to the Ronald McDonald House in Des Moines, Raleigh Durham or Sacramento (near Stockton). Honey also will be the official natural energy booster for the three teams and will have a position of honor on all training tables!

NHB's honey baseball promotion also includes an NHB Minor League Micro-site at www.honey.com/milb. Check out the website each week for baseball club news, team standings, exclusive interviews with team mascots, great summertime honey recipes and more!



Germany Bans Pesticide Linked to Honeybee Deaths

Germany has banned a family of pesticides that are blamed for the deaths of millions of honeybees. The move follows reports from German beekeepers in the Baden-Württemberg region that two thirds of their bees died earlier this month following the application of a pesticide called clothianidin.

"It's a real bee emergency," said Manfred Hederer, president of the German Professional Beekeepers' Association. "50-60% of the bees have died on average and some beekeepers have lost all their hives."

Clothianidin, like the other neonicotinoid pesticides that have been temporarily suspended in Germany, is a systemic chemical that works its way through a plant and attacks the nervous system of any insect it comes into contact with. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency it is "highly toxic" to honeybees.

Imidacloprid, sold under the name Gaucho in France, has been banned as a seed dressing for sunflowers in that country since 1999, after a third of French honeybees died following its widespread use. Five years later it was also banned as a sweetcorn treatment in France.

Bayer has always maintained that imidacloprid is safe for bees if correctly applied. "Extensive internal and international scientific studies have confirmed that Gaucho does not present a hazard to bees," said Utz Klages, a spokesman for Bayer CropScience.

Last year, the European Parliament considered an emergency motion calling for this family of pesticides to be banned across Europe while their role in killing honeybees were thoroughly investigated. The action was the result of calls for a ban from beekeeping associations and environmental organizations across Europe.

Philipp Mimkes, spokesman for the German-based Coalition Against Bayer Dangers, said: "We have been pointing out the risks of neonicotinoids for almost 10 years now. This proves without a doubt that the chemicals can come into contact with bees and kill them. These pesticides shouldn't be on the market."

New Nosema – New Treatment

Nosema ceranae, which has been associated with CCD, appears to be increasing in U.S. hives. This disease progresses differently from Nosema apis. Dr. Higes presented a pattern he noticed in the hives infected with N. ceranae at the MegaMeeting in Sacramento a few months ago. He stated that the nurse bees would appear to be uninfected during the spring and summer, but as late summer and fall approached, the bees inside the hive would start to build up spore levels, as well as the foragers. When nearly all the “house bees” were infected, the adult population would abandon the hive. Is this what we call CCD?

As our beekeepers try to resolve this nosema disease problem, they have to consider three important factors. The first is that worker honey bees infected with Nosema ceranae apparently will not take feed, either syrup or patty. Thus, the bees have to have the medicated syrup applied onto their bodies to force them to clean themselves off and take their medicine. Since you can only apply a small amount of syrup per treatment, the researchers in Spain suggest four treatments at one-week intervals.

The second difference between treating Nosema apis and N. ceranae concerns the dosage of the medication. The Spanish have decided that the dosage should be about 2.5-3.0 times higher than that used for N. apis.

The third interesting factor is the formulation of the fumagillin that now is available to us. Fumagilin-B® is imported into the United States from a Canadian company, Medivet. The product is not “registered” as such, but the FDA has worked out a type of memorandum of understanding so that the product can be imported and used in the U.S.

The instructions say to feed “at a rate of 30 mg fumagillin activity per colony, 4 times at 1 week intervals.” For our purposes, the next set of instructions is better. “Dissolve 454 g Fumagilin-B (one large bottle) in 40 US gallons of sugar syrup and feed each colony 1 pint (treats 320 colonies). Repeat 3 times at 1 week intervals.” Schedule to complete treatment at least 4 weeks before adding honey supers.”

Yes, this means that the dosage is about 2.5 times stronger than we used for Nosema apis. Yes, this means many additional visits to the bee yards. And, if you notice that the bees in the colony just are not taking up medicated syrup, you may have to pour it on the bees. That is the procedure used by the Spanish researchers. Medivet is currently testing spraying the applications on the bees.



Beeswax Art

The Courthouse Galleries, located at the corner of High Street and Court Street in Portsmouth, are hosting an exhibit of encaustic paintings. *The Seduction of Hot Wax* has no admission fee and runs through August 3, 2008. Encaustic painting, also known as hot wax painting, involves using heated beeswax to which colored pigments are added. The liquid/paste is then applied to a surface, usually prepared wood, though canvas and other materials are often used. Because wax is used as the pigment binder, encaustics can be sculpted as well as painted. Encaustic painting originated in Ancient Greece and is perhaps the earliest method of easel painting. Its visual and physical properties and range of textural and color possibilities have attracted contemporary artists. From paintings to prints, this exhibition offers a range of working methods in works by Michele Barnes, Andi Helfant Frye, Jean Peacock, and Martine Strohmeyer. For more information call the Courthouse Galleries at 757-393-8543.

