



February 2007

Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

A Newsletter of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association, PO Box 8880, Warwick, RI 02888

The Presidents' Report

Welcome to winter everyone! We knew it was coming, but didn't want to believe it would. Oh well, might as well settle in and enjoy the upcoming winter events. Winter events you ask? Well, how about the upcoming Flower and Garden Show at the Providence Convention Center. We (R.I.B.A.) have a nice booth at the flower show and we are always looking for "A Few Good Men", and of course Women, to volunteer at our booth. The dates of the show are February 22nd through the 25th. Anyone who volunteers gets to attend (sans admission) the event. Work at the booth and then take a break and check out the rest of the vendors and displays. What a good deal!

We also have our Bee School coming up in March. Betty Mencucci does a great job organizing and instructing this course and is primed for action. Anyone that wants to catch up on the latest beekeeping techniques should sign up soon. This year we have a limited number of seats available and they are going fast.

In April (only two months to go!) we will have our annual Election Dinner. Once again it will be held at Chelo's in Warwick. There will be a guest speaker (Larry Connor) and our silent raffle, not to mention the great meal and the chance to sit down and relax with friends. Coming to the dinner is a great way to meet and get to know fellow beekeepers and their spouses. I always look forward to the dinner and I have yet to be disappointed.

Winter is here, but it won't keep me away from my beekeeping. Well, at least not from the craft, if not the bees themselves. And I won't let it keep me away from my beekeeping friends and family either.

Next Meeting

Sunday, February 11th @ 2 PM
Home of Vivian and Stan Peasley
64 Division Road
West Greenwich, RI
884-4210
Subject: 8 frame hives
Bring Chairs, Desserts or Entrées
Directions on back

I hope to see you all soon, Bee Well!
Kit Mayers,
President, R. I. B. A

PS- We will keep you posted on any local sources for package bees, queens and nucs as soon as we have information on availability, cost, etc. Kit

-ITHACA, N.Y. -- Cornell University will be the home for a new Honeybee Genetics and Integrated Pest Management Center that will study the continuing threat from deadly parasitic mites and Africanized honeybees. The center is funded by a \$1.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems. The grant will establish the largest university-based, honeybee research and extension infrastructure in the country.

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Why did the bee cross the road?
Because it was the chicken's day off.

The Secretary's Report

Minutes of the RIBA meeting January 14, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Bernie Bieder, Secretary, at approximately 2 pm. The meeting was held at Vivian and Stan Peasley's house.

Discussed items:

We would like to offer our humble apologies to Tony and Janice Marro for not acknowledging their support and generosity. They were host to the last RIBA meeting in November 2005.

Bernie brought out a sample of the new, silicon-valve, plastic honey jars. They are similar to the new jam/mustard/ ketchup jars that look "upside down" and can dispense more easily. He has done some investigation of the prices for quantities, and the price ends up at \$157.00 per case of 360 jars. That works out to around 51 cents a jar including shipping. David Clay mentioned that a manufacturing facility for this type of jar was located near Harrisburg PA, and he might be able to arrange a quantity pickup when he goes to the EAS executive council meeting in February. It was also discussed that some members occasionally go to Betterbee in NY, and that perhaps a group order could be made up to save shipping. More to follow!

The Rhode Island Flower Show will be February 22nd -25th. Help is needed running our booth (with sales and helping to inform the public about our beekeeping craft). Please contact Bernie to take a shift. Helping at the booth gets you into the show for free.

Betty Mencucci announced the dates for our annual Bee School. The school will start Wednesday, March 7 and continue for 5 consecutive Wednesdays. The price has been raised to \$45 per person, with a \$5 surcharge

for each extra family member. These limits have to be put into place to comply with fire codes in Davies Tech. Slots for school will be first come, first served. Pre-registration is STRONGLY recommended. Discussion was held about the possibility of an additional school if the numbers support it, somewhere in the southern end of the state. This was referred to the executive committee.

A number of initiatives on quality queens were discussed. Dana Stallman in Barnstable County Ohio is developing a strain of Northern Queens. This led to a general discussion of queen raising, other sources of queens and developing communication with producers to assist our association with supply.

Mark Robar followed with an extensive discussion of his activities in developing New England strains/supplies of bees for production. Main points:

- We need to develop dependable supplies of bees for/from New England. A grant has been requested to assist in the development of "greenhouse-based" winter management of bees to produce/propagate locally raised packages, nucs, and queens.

- Part of the experimentation in this plan includes development of 7 frame supers, a minimum of three-up. This would appear to better support the natural patterns the bees follow in building comb and storing honey, brood patterns, etc.

- Mark has been in communication with John Moore for survivor, proven queens. Moore has done some promising work in queen development and supply.

- A general discussion of R.I.B.A. sponsoring EAS 2009 followed. The Alton Jones campus of URI was discussed. It would appear to fit the requirements, but there are some reservations about accessibility, air conditioning, etc.

A steering committee was formed to support the process. Members: Mark Robar, Paul Whewell, David Clay. ALL VOLUNTEERS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED. Don't Hesitate to Get Involved!!!

The floor was opened up for beekeeping questions. Some of the items:

- If you can, put candy on the hives right now.

-It won't hurt the bees to open up for a quick look on a mild day. If you open the hives, try to put them back together as nearly to the original setup as possible.

- Granulation of honey is generally dependent upon the source of the nectar. Higher fructose contents will not granulate as easily. If you sell your honey, especially to a vendor, make sure they understand that granulated honey is not "bad." Explain storage and methods of reheating. Perhaps you can offer to rotate stock as needed.

The meeting adjourned for refreshments around 4 PM.

As submitted by David Clay

Bee School

School will be held each Wednesday starting March 7 and running through April 4. Charge is \$45.00. Due to all overflow last year we will charge \$5.00 for each extra family member. Due to limited space at Davies Vocational school it will be on a first come first serve basis. Payment is required to be made in advance.

Nominations

The slate of officers is voted on at our April dinner. At present the office of president is open. All nominations for president, or any other office, must be presented to our secretary before April 12.

Flower Show

The dates are February 22nd - 25th. A few people have signed up for manning our

display and sales both for 4 to 6 hour shifts. At present we need afternoon and evening volunteers. To register and for information call Bernie Bieder at 463-8654

Annual Dinner

We will return to Chelos restaurant on April 15 at 5:30 PM. Please set the date on your calendars. Food is good and abundant. We will also have a good speaker. The price is \$25.00 per person. Watch for the invitation in our March newsletter!

-For all of us chocolate lovers this is important stuff! First, take a piece of comb honey and freeze it, and then cut it into half inch squares when frozen and dip in melted semi-sweet chocolate.

Then take a piece in one bite and let the flavors meld together. You'll know why people say that chocolate and honey are made for each other!

Did you know that cacao is dependant on honey bees for pollination?

Bon Appetite!

Dinner Raffle

Our annual dinner is always enlivened by our raffle tables. Ruffled items are generously donated by our members. If you have any bee related items in good condition, or any other items of interest in good condition please bring them to the dinner, or to the February or March meetings.

Winter Feeding

With the unseasonable warm weather that we had been experiencing, the bees had been flying more than usual. They need food in the form of candy or fondant to replenish used stores. At this writing the weather has turned much colder.

You might be reluctant to open your hives because of the temperature, but an interesting fact came out at our January meeting. You can open the hive at any time, as long as you don't disturb the frames according to John Le Ferrier, a beekeeper that we hold in high

respect. So check your hives, feed if necessary, and use the recipes in previous newsletter or call Bernie for recipes.

Hosts

Our outdoor meetings are held from May through September. All we need are a few hives to inspect, space to meet, and cover in case of rain. We (the members) bring food and cold drinks and clean up afterwards. It offers a chance to inspect and assess your hives.

Dates this year are May 20, June 10, July 8, August 12, and September 9. If you are interested our would like more information call Bernie at 463-8654

New This Year

Scientists at the University of Guelph in Canada have developed a pollen substitute called FeedBee, formulated to meet bee's nutritional needs. When fed to bees it was consumed rapidly, faster than pollen patties. Colonies that are fed FeedBee have produced twice as many bees and have doubled honey production. It was sold in 200 lb. amounts. At present it is in 44lb. lots. Your board may consider buying 44lbs. or more and repackaging it in 11lb. blocks if there is enough interest. One hive will require 1 ½ lbs.

Directions to the Peasley's

From the North - take route 95 south to exit #7, then turn left.

From the South - take route 95 north to exit #7, then turn right. Go to the stop sign, turn left, first house on right. There is a V.S. P. Plumbing sign at driveway.

Knock knock- Who's there? Honey bee- Honey bee who? Honey bee nice and answer the door!

The average hive temperature is 93.5 degrees

Bees belong to the third largest insect order which also includes wasps and ants

Beeswax production in most hives is about 1 1/2% to 2% of the total honey yield.

RI Beekeepers Association

OFFICERS

President

Kit Mayers
103 Prospect Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
(401) 769-1675
kickingcrow@cox.net

Exec. Vice President

Louis J. Chasse II
420 Congdon Hill Road
Saunderstown, RI 02874
(401) 295-0888

Librarian

Tom Dalton
3108 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
(401) 658-1000

Secy. And Newsletter Editor

Bernard Bieder
140 Coldbrook Road
Warwick, RI 02888
(401) 463-8654
beeman704@cox.net

Treasurer

William Jones
61 Kennedy Road
Foster, RI 02825
(401) 397-3269
billjones61@yahoo.com

E.A.S. Rep. Board of Dir.

David Clay
1 Luther Road
Foster, RI 02825
(401) 397-2692
dclay10985@aol.com

Bee School Director

Betty Mencucci
1777 Victory Highway
Glendale, RI 02826
(401) 568-8449
bmencucci@earthlink.net

Membership Chairman

Paul Whewell
9 Breakneck Hill Road
Lincoln, RI 02865
(401) 724-9679
pwhewell@cox.net

Bee Inspector

Jim Lawson
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908
(401) 222-2781 x4519
james.lawson@dem.ri.gov