

February, 2005

The Next Meeting Will Be

Monday, Feb. 7th



The Norfolk County Beekeeper's Association (NCBA), is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculture and the general public. This is a "Not for Profit" organization, meeting the first Monday of every month, at 7:30 PM (second Monday if the first Monday is a holiday). The meetings are held at the Norfolk Agricultural High School (Media Ctr. Cafeteria) in Walpole, MA. Meetings in June-August will be held at members' bee yards as announced.

Notes From The Editor:

Just so you know, I personally tried that microwave bee candy recipe that I published last month and it came out just great!! Each batch gave me one 9" paper plate worth of very clear, very hard candy, about a half inch thick. It'll take the bees awhile to lick through this stuff!! And the best part is you don't have to break your arm stirring the sugar mixture for hours on the stove. I worked with two microwave-safe dishes and I cleaned each one before each new batch. That took a little time and I don't know if you have to do this or not, but I didn't want to take a chance of ruining a batch because the leftover candy scorched. Try it!!

Don't forget to sign up for this year's social at FENGs 88. Cut-off date is February 7th, and you can bring your selection and check to this month's meeting and turn them in then. I hope to see many of you folks there!

A couple of things cooking on the back burners for now, but I'll mention them so you can think about them. Tom and Karen Kerr, the folks that graciously run off the hard copies of this newsletter for free, are going to approach the Aggie School about using one of the school's parking lots for a future Farmers' Market. If the school agrees, there's going to be a great need for members to step forward and help with the many committees that will explore all the questions that need to be answered before the Market can open. Target date is 2006. Stay tuned! Also simmering is the possibility of club participation in the new Mass Audubon at Moose Hill/Ward's Berry Farm community farm venture that is being formed this year. The idea behind community farms is pre-payment by the public for fresh produce from the farm. This gives the farmer upfront cash flow each spring and a guaranteed market for the produce as it ripens. I have initiated some discussion with sanctuary director Christine Turnbull, with details to follow this month.

Happy Birthday this month to George, Abe, and Attila! Maple sap is starting to run! Can spring be far behind?

Irene Gorczyca

Norfolk County - Massachusetts
THE NORFOLK BEE
Online at: www.norfolkbees.org

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Minutes from the January Meeting

Mike Miconi

The meeting was called to order at 7:40; there were 27 people in attendance. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as published and the treasurer's report, as given by Tim Sullivan were also accepted.

It was noted that the Second Annual Social will be held at the Feng's 88 restaurant in Walpole on Sunday February 13. Final reservations must be made by Feb. 7, so make sure you contact Miguel Lessing by then if you wish to attend.

Andy Reseska reported that he will be receiving bee packages from Wilbanks on April 7th. Expected price is \$63.00/3lbs of bees (and queen). Andy will not be selling nucs this year.

Starting at 8:00 there was a presentation of two CD's. The first, from Penn State, was 'Bee Aware', an impressive amount of information on virtually any 'bee' subject, management, diseases etc. Just click the easy to use menus. The second was on Apitherapy, containing information on the different medical uses of bee's and their byproducts.

During the break between the two presentations the door prizes were raffled off. Phil Barber won some chunk honey which was donated by Howard Crawford. Russ Barre won a cotton throw rug which had a bee theme.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tim Sullivan

At last month's meeting, there was a lot of interest shown in the two CD's that were demonstrated. For those wishing more information on the BeeAware CD, which is a program to help diagnose hive problems, type "MAAREC" into your search engine and follow a few links to the BeeAware page. If the Apitherapy CD intrigued you, use "APISERVICES" for the search. If you do not have internet access, contact me and I will get alternate ordering information to you.

For February's meeting we will be talking about small scale queen rearing and introduction methods aided by a short film and a Powerpoint demo. If you have experience (positive or negative) in these areas please come and share your knowledge with us. A couple of hand outs and a queen rearing timing wheel will be available to those members present. The door prize will be the film on queen rearing shown at the meeting along with its attendant text book.

AFB Irradiation Program

Sponsored by Reseska Apiaries, Inc.

In an effort to control AFB contamination statewide, Reseska Apiaries, Inc. of Holliston will organize the drop off point for boxed material to be irradiated and transportation to and from the Steris Isomedix facility in Northboro.

For this program to be cost effective, we must meet or exceed the minimum amount of material to be irradiated. Price will be based on the total quantity of boxes irradiated, estimated at \$ 6.00 to \$ 7.00 per box. The dimension of the box is 10"h x 24"L x 18" w .A box will hold (1) deep super with frames and inner cover or (1) medium super w/frames, inner cover, outer cover, bottom-board, or anything else that will fit in the box without distorting it. We will supply the boxes to clubs and individuals. **If we do not meet the minimum the program will be postponed.** County Clubs will be asked to help with the distribution of the corrugated boxes to individual members, and to establish a central drop off and pick-up location before and after Irradiation of boxed material . Reseska Apiaries will pick-up at those locations.

All parties who are interested in this program, please call **Reseska Apiaries (508) 429-6872, leave your name, phone number, and estimated quantity of boxes to be irradiated.** We will compile a list with your name and box quantity. When we meet the minimum(192 boxes), we will call you with all the information needed to get this program going.

Hive equipment contaminated by American Foulbrood can be treated by radiation and reused without any chance of re-infecting bees after treatment. Gamma radiation using Cobalt-60 at a dose of 1.5-2.0 Mrad is highly effective in destroying AFB spores.

Ask your county club to get involved in helping to pass the word on to other club members, who may benefit from this program. A colony infected with AFB scale becomes a problem for all beekeepers within a 2-3 mile radius of that colony. We would like to make this an annual program. Please, **if you have diseased equipment do not delay - call now.** If you have any questions please call **Andy Reseska at (508) 429-6872.**

Reminder!

The second annual social will be held at the FENG'S 88 Chinese Restaurant on Sunday, February 13th, at 1 PM. The restaurant is only a mile south of the Aggie School on Rt. 1A (Main Street) in the Main Street Shopping Center. The shopping center is located at the intersection of Rt. 1A and Rt. 27 in Walpole Center.

FENG'S 88 is a favorite of mine. It is refreshingly bright and clean, and the food is excellent and plentiful. The dining room is ours for the afternoon and there is a cash bar for those preferring something stronger than tea or a soft drink. The price is \$12.60 per person, all taxes and gratuities included. Reservations need to be received by February 7th ... you can either mail them in or hand-carry them to the club meeting that night.

Varroa Fungus News

(Copied from the Dec, 04 Edition of Essex County Beeline,
Essex County Beekeepers' Association, MA)

USDA 's Agricultural Research Service. Since 2000, scientists at the ARS Beneficial Insects Research Unit (BIRU) at Weslaco, Texas, have been looking for a disease-causing agent, or pathogen, that can stop *Varroa* mites. The mite has developed resistance to the only approved chemicals— fluralinate and coumaphos—now used for control, and coumaphos is on the Environmental Protection Agency's "hit list" for possible removal from the market. So the researchers have looked at various disease agents, tried different dosages and application methods, and conducted toxicity tests. Finally, they selected a strain of fungus *Metarhizium anisopliae* that was highly pathogenic to *Varroa* mites.

This potent fungus, which also kills termites, doesn't harm bees or affect their queen's production. To test it, the scientists coated plastic strips with dry fungal spores and placed them inside the hives. Since bees naturally attack anything entering their hives, they tried to chew up the strips, spreading the spores throughout the colony.

In field trials, once the strips were inside the hives, several bees quickly made contact with the spores. Within 5 to 10 minutes, all the bees in the hive were exposed to the fungus, and most of the mites on them died within 3 to 5 days. The fungus provided excellent control of the *Varroa* without impeding colony development or population size.

"We tried to find a pathogen of *Varroa*, and we did it!" says ARS entomologist Walker A. Jones, research leader of the BIRU. Tests showed that *Metarhizium* was as effective as fluralinate, even 42 days after application. "Commercial beekeepers are very edgy about using fluralinate and coumaphos and are eager to see this natural control get to the market," Jones says.

This research was begun by Rosalind James, formerly with the Weslaco unit. Lambert H.B. Kanga, former BIRU research associate and now chair of the Entomology Department at Florida A&M University at Tallahassee, continues to collaborate on the project. "While *Metarhizium* doesn't kill as fast as fluralinate and coumaphos, the result is the same," Kanga says. "*Metarhizium* gets the job done, and we won't have to worry about *Varroa* becoming resistant to the fungus."

The scientific team is now fine-tuning the strategy for transfer to producers.

Bee School Starts February 15

Classes start Tuesday, February 15. The classes begin at 7:00 PM at the Norfolk County Agricultural High School cafeteria, in

(continued in next column)

Walpole. The course is approximately seven weeks long, ending with a field demonstration in April where students will watch a beekeeper installing bees into a new hive. Registration fee is \$45.00, which includes the textbook and handout materials. For more information, call Tim Sullivan at 781-326-2834.

Races of Bees

(Copied from Feb, 05 Edition of Buzz Words,
Barnstable County Beekeepers' Association)

It's that time of year again to think about ordering bees! Trying to remember which bee is which? Outlined below are characteristics of the various races of bees you will see available in current journals.

Buckfast -originated at Buckfast Abbey in England. -brought to the US in 1967 by Weaver Apiaries, Navasota, TX. -not a true race, but a hybrid of several races— good honey producer, with little propolis and burr comb -demonstrated disease and tracheal mite resistance -low incidence of chalk brood - small winter clusters, using moderate amounts of stores -slow spring buildup with resultant swarm activity -do well in cool, wet spring -supersedure queens become very aggressive

Carniolan -true race originated in Austria/Yugoslavia -rapid spring buildup from small over-wintered cluster -most gentle race -produces little propolis or brace comb -heavy swarmers due to rapid spring buildup -forage in cool, rainy weather, and at long distances - some SMR properties

New World -developed at Ohio State Univ, by Sue Cobey -has increased mite resistance

Caucasian -Originated in the Caucas Mtns in the Black Sea area -true race -very gentle -longest tongue of any race -slow spring buildup, low tendency to swarm -able to fly in unfavorable weather, cool temps, and even rain -produce excessive amounts of propolis -susceptible to Nosema -shut down brood production in mid-October

Italian -most common in US, coming from Northern Italy in 1861 -short distance foragers -greater tendency to rob -slow spring buildup, low swarming tendency (given enough room) -late brood rearing and high over-winter food consumption -produce more propolis than Carniolans

Minnesota Hygienics -remove diseased brood -clean mites with better grooming habits

Russians -result of breeding program fostered by USDA Lab, Baton Rouge, LA -color ranges from light to dark -gentle, excellent honey producers -difficult to introduce into non-Russian hive -egg production shuts down during nectar dearth -more resistant to mites and disease -require constant feeding for spring buildup -do not expand well on un-drawn foundation -most promising for drug-free apiary

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From:

Irene Gorczyca
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TO:

Swap N' Sell

Here's a column where you can sell, swap, or giveaway just about anything. If you are a paid member, advertising is free for as many issues as you wish. If you are not a member, the cost is \$8.00/ad/issue (so, it pays to become a member for just \$15!)

FOR SALE: Honey, 60 lb. pails. Please call Merrimack Valley Apiaries, (978) 667-5380 for prices.

FOR SALE: Claire Desilets from BCBA has taken on a dealership for Honey B Healthy. A feeding stimulant made up of spearmint and lemongrass oils; it promotes healthy, vigorous bees, aids in re-queening, and calms bees when used as a spray. 8 oz./\$13.00. Please call, (508) 888-2304, or email <beekeeper@qis.net>

3 lb bee packages w/Italian queens .from Wilbank's Apiaries, available for pick-up in Holliston April 7 (date is subject to change), \$ 63.00 each or 10+ \$ 60.00 each. Orders can be combined to get discount. Call Reseska Apiaries, Inc. (508) 429-6872

(Races of Bees, continued from page 3)

Accompanying this newsletter will be several scanned letters and other advertisements from different bee suppliers.

- Andy Reseska of Reseska Apiaries will work with the club and deliver any orders placed with him to the Aggie School for pickup. Andy's bees are coming from Wilbanks.
- Orders from Hardeman Apiaries , Mt. Vernon, GA, will be shipped via the U.S Post Office, and you will get a call from your local post office to pick up your bees when they arrive.
- David Hayden will be offering bees from Wilbanks, and you will have to pickup your bees from him at a designated location within Plymouth County.
- Crystal Card of Merrimack Valley Apiaries will be shipping packages of bees from her own apiaries in Louisiana. I will work with Crystal to pick up any club orders placed with Merrimack and drop them off for pickup at the Aggie.

Mail all orders and checks directly to the distributors above. **IMPORTANT!** Unless you want to pick up your own orders, notify me if you are ordering from either Reseska Apiaries or Merrimack Apiaries so I can consolidate those orders for them. <ikgorczyca@comcast.net> or 508-668-0547.

2004-2005 Meeting Schedules:

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

MON, 13 SEP 2004	MON, 07 MAR 2005
MON, 04 OCT 2004	MON, 04 APR 2005
MON, 01 NOV 2004	MON, 02 MAY 2005
MON, 06 DEC 2004	JUN 05, TBD
MON, 03 JAN 2005	JUL 05, TBD
MON, 07 FEB 2005	AUG 05, TBD

BEE SCHOOL MEETINGS

Bee School will resume Tuesday, February 15, 2005 at 7 PM. For more information, call Tim Sullivan (781) 326-2834, or Howard Crawford (508) 528-9117.