



February 2008

Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

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

The Presidents' Report

Can you believe it, I'm already thinking about spring! It will be here soon enough, even though we are now in the deepest part of winter. But as they say- "this too shall pass", and spring will be upon us sooner than you expect. Just look at the signs, they're all around us. I've gotten several new seed and bulb catalogs recently, and I was thrilled to receive all the new bee catalogs at my door step as well! We are statically in the worst part of winter (during the writing of this) and around late February we will be seeing the spring thaw at the end of the tunnel.

During down time at home go through your woodenware and spruce it up, also keep an eye on any stored drawn comb- don't let those nasty wax worms get a hold of it! I don't like to use any chemicals on my equipment, but I do use paradichlorobenzene (PDB) to control the little buggers! Your best defense against wax moth larva is to never let brood get into your honey supers, which is often easier said than done! If you notice any wax moth in your stored suppers you can kill them by exposing the supers to freezing temperatures (I believe the time suggested is 24 hours). It will kill all stages of wax moth. Wax moths migrate from the south but can survive the winter up north by hanging out in warm homes (cellars are big wax moth magnets, being often warm and dark).

Be sure to keep an eye on your colonies food stores. If they are getting light you can help them with some emergency food supplements. Hard candy and fondant are two ways to feed in the winter. Don't feed syrup it will lead to problems. The bees can't evaporate it or convert the sugars and this will cause

digestive problems for the bees and excess moisture in the colony.

Next Meeting

Sunday, February 10 at 2:00 PM
Home of Vivian and Stan Peasley
64 Division Road
West Greenwich, RI
884-4210

Bring Chairs * Dessert or Entree
Directions on back

There are several sources for the candy recipe (on line as well as in books) and several local sites to purchase fondant. If you need a recipe or an address give me a call or send me an email.

So get out your spring honey (bee) do list as well as your bee wish list. Start now on your projects and get ahead of spring. It will be here sooner than you know! (Please!)

Kit Mayers,
President, R I Beekeepers Association

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The Secretary's Report

Members called the January 13 meeting to order at 2:30 PM with a strong attendance. Kit reported about flower show. Ed Lafferty and Jim Lawson will set up display. The jar label only will read Rhode Island Beekeepers and Pure (or Natural) Honey.

Betty Mencucci reported that she would like the names of local newspapers to publicize the bee school. There are still some papers catering to a small concentrated area. She said that future school attendees send money to build Jones and designate which school to attend.

Kit suggested that a committee be formed to nominate a list of officers to present to the membership at our annual dinner in April. Kit Mayers is retiring and Bernie Bieder would like to leave the position of secretary due to his hearing problems. He will continue to be newsletter editor only in the event someone comes forward for the position and he will give 100% assistance to that person.

There have been conflicting opinions regarding our attendance at the flower show. Some members thought it was voted to be out, and some thought that if there was a reduction in rates that we would have a booth. There was no formal vote. There was a reduction in rent, and at our January meeting where pros and cons were detailed, membership voted to attend.

The executive board decided that the menu for the annual dinner would be the same as last year. A list of prospective speakers was mentioned and will be contacted.

Julie Summersquash won the raffle prize of a division board feeder donated by Lou Chasse. The raffle netted \$42.00

Bee School

The Davies Career and Technical school location will start March 5 to April 2 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM with Betty Mencucci instructing. The East Farms School at URI will start February 27 to March 26. Time is 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM with ½

hour break. Mark Robar and or Lou Chasse will be teaching the course at the East Farm.

Charge is \$45.00 and \$5.00 extra for each immediate family member. Those wishing to attend should send money to Bill Jones 61 Kennedy Road, Foster, Rhode Island 02825, and advise which school to attend.

Nominating Committee

Ann Richardson would like some help in preparing a slate of officers to be presented April 2nd to membership. She can be reached at 331-3239 or Ann-Fred1@cox .net.

Flower Show Workers

At this time we need workers for all shifts, especially the 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM shift on Thursday and Friday and Sunday 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM or whatever hours available on these days. Contact Bernie at 463-8654 or email at beeman704@verizon .net

Burt's Bees

Go into any drugstore chain and we'll see on a counter or stand a selection of lip balms and lotions made by Burt's Bees. Is there a Burt? Who is behind this multi-million dollar business? Yes, bee business is a big business.

In the summer of 1984 Burt Shavitz, a beekeeper in Maine, and who looks like the person on the products, picked up Roxanne Quimby, a 33-year-old single mother as she hitchhiked to the post office in Dexter Maine. He was called the "Bee-Man" and sold honey in pickle jars from the back of his pickup truck. Burt lived in a turkey coop. She offered to help tend the bees, make candles, and balms. The two became lovers and started Burt's Bees

However there was a falling out around 1993 and Mrs. Quimby bought out Burt by purchasing a house for \$130,000 for him. She later sold 80% interest for \$141.6 million in 2003 and in November 2007 Clorox paid \$943 million whereby she gathered another \$183 million.

To her credit she has purchased 100,000 acres in Maine for \$50 million and restored it to its natural beauty ...no hunting, closed roads, dismantled bridges. She is 57 years old traveling and refurbishing fancy houses in Florida What about Burt? He sold the house a few months later because he missed the turkey coop.

He enlarged the coop to 12 feet by 20 feet. Still has no running water or electricity. Burt is 72 years old and has \$4 million in the bank which he got when he complained about not getting enough money in 2003 when Mrs. Quimby sold part to a financial group and gets an undisclosed amount for the use of his likeness on the packages.

Quoting from Burt Shavits "the magic of living life for me is and always has been in the magic of living on the land, not in the magic of money".

Gathered from the New York Times
Written by Louise Story

Plastic Comb

Advantages of plastic foundation are that they are easy to construct and strong but did hinder comb building and lowered honey production. The study consisted of 24 Colonies in which plastic comb did hinder comb building. It hindered the colonies weight, and honey production in some of the colonies. The study had to find what promoted comb building. Middle age bees built comb, and the trigger for the bees to build comb was when the bees ran out of storage space (80% full) and then they built new comb.

Report of Dr. Thomas Seeley
New Jersey Association News

NB If you have used plastic foundation with good results please advise Bernie for future discussion.

Future Events

March 8 - This is a Saturday meeting. Our guest speaker will be Mary Ann Frazier of Penn State. Subjects will be the Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and Nutrition in the beehive. Time is 2:00 PM.

April 20 - Annual Dinner at Cellos in Warwick. Nomination and election of officers and a featured speaker

Raw Honey

A while back I had a call from a woman wanted raw honey. This request conjured up a picture in my mind of honey right from the extractor, with wax, debris, and bee parts.

I told her that from the extractor I filter out the residue into bottling buckets and then into jars. I have had this question asked at farmers markets, and by using the word filter may have turned these people off. Instead of "filter" I now use the word "strained".

The question of raw honey popped up at a recent executive meeting and so I decided to check some sources. I mailed the National Honey Board (obvious) and Kim Flottum, editor of Bee Culture Magazine,

From Charlotte Jordan
National Honey Board –

There is no government approved or regulated definition of "raw honey". In the industry, raw honey is generally accepted to mean any honey that isn't heated more than 100 degrees F. Most raw honeys will crystallize faster than heated honeys because the seed crystals that cause crystallization are not removed by the heating process. Some raw honeys aren't filtered either, which increases the chances of early crystallization.

For reference, here is a fact sheet on crystallization:

<http://www.honey.com/downloads/crystallization.pdf>

From Kim Flottum:
Editor, Bee Culture Magazine
Kim@BeeCulture.com

Raw honey has several definitions, but basically it is honey directly from the extractor.... Some use a course filter to strain it, one of the larger screen filters, just to get out whole dead bees, and end bars from the honey. Others don't screen it at all. Commercial raw honey is not heated over 120 degrees, regular raw honey only to 100 (the temp of a honey super in the desert). Of course the

reason raw honey crystallizes is that it has all the pollen, junk, wax, etc. in it from at best a coarse filter. The really raw honey will have wax, dead bees, bubbles, bee parts, etc. floating on top when you open the jar.... To each his own I guess. Hope all is well in RI... Keep in touch.

Directions to the Peasley's

From the North - take route 95 south to exit #7, and 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.

Fondant Recipe

Fondant bee candy can be fed directly to the bees once cooled. It is also common to use this recipe in small quantities to plug the hole on a Queen Cage.

- 4 parts (by volume) white sugar
- 4 parts (by volume) 2:1 Syrup or High Fructose Corn Syrup
- 3 parts (by volume) water

Boil water and slowly add the syrup and sugar until dissolved. Continue heating until the mixture reaches 238°F (114°C). Allow the solution to cool (without mixing) until it is slightly warm to the touch, and begin to mix and aerate the solution, the color should lighten. Pour into shallow dishes or mold and save for later use.

Quick Fondant Recipe

In a pinch quick candy can be used in place of Fondant Bee Candy, it is easier to prepare, but may not be as easily workable.

1 part (by volume) confectioner's sugar

1 part (by volume) 1:2 Syrup or High Fructose Corn Syrup or Clean Honey

Simply knead the two ingredients together like bread dough until completely integrated.

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@verizon.net

Treasurer

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

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

Ed Lafferty
423 Fruit Hill Ave
North Providence, RI 02911
(401) 353-6644
fruithillapiaries@verizon.net

Bee School Director

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

RIBA WebSite

www.ribeekeeper.org