

# The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 39 Number 10 November-December 2014

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# www.orsba.org

Membership Form

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www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org OREGON MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM A Joint Venture of OSBA and the

Oregon State University Extension Service info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org

Image above: One of the long hives described in the front story. The design of this long hive, the design referenced in the Vivaldi Board article (page 8), and the guidelines for keeping bees this time of year (page 11) all speak to means for reducing moisture inside the beehive. May all bees and all their keepers remain dry (and warm) as the passing days now usher us into winter.

# A LONG HIVE DESIGNED FOR VALHALLA APIARIUM

Naomi Price

Accessibility is all about attitude; understand the purpose and function, and the walls creating the barrier become penetrable. My apiary's hive redesign was facilitated from the years I spent doing accessibility site surveys and plan reviews for public and private entities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Oregon Structural Specialty Code. The honey bee colony is sculpted to 3/8-inch increments as my life with paraplegia is empowered by 1/4-inch increments. The honey bee is quite resilient with differences dictated outside their preferred measurements. Yet, could the colony be more vibrant and productive if the bees' preferences were met, as what happens when accessibility is achieved for humans? The goal was to place the colony's needs first, followed by just enough anthropomorphism to allow me to do hive manipulations without needing someone to assist or shadow me.

The redesign process dictated understanding much about the honey bee colony, brood rearing, communications, food storage, ventilation, winter cluster, pests, diseases, and protection from predators. This was not an exhaustive list; add bee biology and becoming a weather watcher. I compared and weighed the history of hive bodies, read authoritative published books and research findings, reviewed the plethora of existing hive designs, and added my handful of beekeeping years at 4200-foot elevation in the Central Oregon high desert.

#### **FRAMES**

15

Simplify. Twenty-four deep Langstroth frames fill the hive servicing all super intentions. The number was determined by the nectar flow within Central

Oregon, the colony's winter cluster needs, and the inclusion of a honey super. This frame allows me to exchange with other Langstroth beekeepers. The end bar of the frame allows me to rest the frame against a hard surface without damaging the comb. A heavy canvas cloth rests across the length and width of the 24 frames to block the bee space designed into Langstroth frames. The honey bees will propolis the cloth, thus adding antibacterial characteristics to their hive.



# **HIVE BOX**

Steadfast. The horizontal hive [photo, upper left] is more stable against windstorms and prying predators like raccoons. A strap is not needed to tie-down the hive unit, less equipment. No more lifting the separate hive components for an inspection or storing those separate boxes. The roof does not need to lifted off of the hive body for an inspection because it is hinged on the front side with a side latch that can secure the roof in an open position. The roof in the open position also protects the colony from solar exposure and air currents.

The hive's interior has a slatted bottom that allows the debris to fall onto the pull-

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



There are times when it seems like nothing goes right, the car unexpectedly has to go into the shop for a few days, the water heater starts leaking and you have to scramble to at least get it under control to minimize the damage. Then you end up spending the better part of a day on the phone with customer support trying to get your new and improved software to work with your new hardware. It seems like these kinds of things happen in three's and four's. It can get frustrating! All this technology was supposed to make our lives easier and more productive, but sometimes I wonder. Maybe that's one of the things that I enjoy about beekeeping: it gets me away from those modern conveniences that seem to consume more and more of our time. An afternoon of inspecting hives can be quite therapeutic, as long as there isn't too much going wrong.

It's not that the bees don't leave me frustrated at times. They definitely have their own problems and many of them are brought on by us. It seems that there are new organizations being established continually to save the bees. The governor has set up his task force, which should be making a final recommendation to the legislature; the president issued a proclamation for the Department of Agriculture to determine a federal strategy for pollinators. The interest and the help it brings to the some of the problems we are facing is more than welcome, and we appreciate that. But in the interest of trying to appear like they are doing something about a problem, sometimes the politicians can actually make it worse. That is why it is important for us to pay attention and let our representatives know if what they are considering doing is helpful or hurtful. One way the OSBA tries to help is to keep you informed through the newsletter, the conference, and the website. Keeping informed and making sure your opinions are heard are one way to keep your frustrations to a minimum.

Enjoy the coming holidays and take care.

Paul

#### A NOTE ABOUT THAT CONFERENCE...

The conference agenda is included in this issue (page 3), even though both mail-in registration and online registration are now closed. You can still register on site. There's a very good chance that if you show up at the door, someone will be there to let you in!

Bring your samples for the OSU Honey Bee Lab, any items you may want to donate to the silent and banquet auctions, and products from your hives along with photographs for the honey show. Dewey Caron's report on last year's honey show at the conference (this page) suggests the many options in this. The same guidelines that applied to this year's state fair are being used for entry categories and judging.

You might also consider packing some kind of protection—just in case of rain!

#### 2013 CONFERENCE HONEY SHOW

Dewey M. Caron

The Honey Show was reorganized with new rules and entry categories in 2013. Sixteen individuals submitted entries. Not all had read the guidelines, but all entries were judged. A hardworking selection of honey judges, Carolyn Breece, Heike Williams, Sarah Red-Laird, Ciera Wilson, and Susan Ellis, had some tough decisions, especially in extracted honey and the photography show. Congratulations to all who entered.

# **Extracted Honey Light**

1st Mark Johnson

2nd Bonnie & Andy Swanson

# **Extracted Amber**

1st Bev Koch 2nd Todd Bartlem 3rd Mark Johnson

#### **Extracted Dark**

1st Paul Andersen 2nd Mark Johnson

#### **Artisan**

1st Big Woolly Pure Raw Honey (Todd Bartlem) 2nd Cat's Paw (Bonnie & Andy Swanson)

#### **Extracted Honey** (less than 3 jars)

1st Blond Girl (Zach & Renae Williams) + Pam Leavett

2nd Maureen Kelly

3rd Cynthia Wianko & Elbert & Margie Lowry

#### **Cobana Comb honey**

1st Elbert & Marjie Lowry

#### Beeswax

1st Alvalea Fong

# **Photography**

Bees & Flowers: 1st Katharina Davitt JUDGES CHOICE; 2nd

Paul Davitt; 3rd Jen Larsen

Bees & People: 1st Katharina Davitt

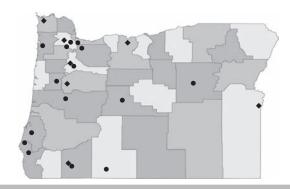
Bees and Hives: 1st Paul Davitt; 2nd Bev Koch; 3rd Katharina Davitt

Bees, special interest: 1st Paul Davitt; 2nd Bev Koch; 3rd Jen Larsen

OSBA FAI	L CONFERENCE PROGRAM
	Thursday, November 6
10:00 AM-5:00 PM	Oregon Master Beekeeper Institute
4:00-5:00 PM	OSBA Executive Committee Meeting
5:00-9:00 рм	Registration
7:00 рм	Social with Light Snacks
	Movie ("More Than Honey") to follow
	FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7
8:00 ам-5:00 рм	Registration
8:30 AM-3:00 PM	Bee School
	THOM TRUSEWICZ, OREGON BEEKEEPER
8:30 ам-4:00 рм	Silent Auction
8:30 ам	Welcome
	Paul Andersen, OSBA President
8:45 AM	Drivers of Bee Colony Declines & Losses
	Dennis vanEngelsdorp, <i>University of Maryland</i>
9:00 AM-4:00 PM	Open Bee Lab, OSU Bring samples OR DROP IN TO VIEW/ASK QUESTIONS
9:30 ам	Break
10:00 AM	Entries to Honey Show Due
10:00 AM	Update on Current Bee Research & Extension Activities at Oregon State University
	RAMESH SAGILI, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
11:00 ам	Resin to Propolis: Plant Sources- Effects on Bee Health
	Marla Spivak, University of Minnesota
11:45 ам	Research Luncheon
	Steve Sheppard, <i>Washington State University</i>
1:15 РМ	10 Rules for Modern Beekeeping
	KIM FLOTTUM, EDITOR, BEE CULTURE
2:00 РМ	How to Become a Millionaire, and Other Beekeeping Secrets
	GEORGE HANSEN, FOOTHILLS HONEY COMPANY
2:45 РМ	Break
3:15 РМ	Predicting and Managing Pesticide Risks to Bees
	Paul Jepson, Oregon State University
4:00 PM	Update on the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program
	CAROLYN BREECE, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
4:15 рм	General Membership Meeting
6:00 РМ	Social Hour/Banquet/Auction

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8			
8:00—11:00 ам	Registration		
	JOINT SESSIONS		
8:15 AM	Washington State University Honey Bee Research & Genetic Repository Update Steve Sheppard, Washington State		
	UNIVERSITY		
8:15 ам	Tree Bee Hives LYNN ROYCE, OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION		
9:00 AM-4:00 PM	Open Bee Lab, OSU BRING SAMPLES OR		
9:00 ам	University of Minnesota Bee Squad Program		
	Marla Spivak, <i>University of Minnesota</i>		
9:00 ам	Old World Honey Bee Populations: A Genetic Resource for US Honey Bee Breeding		
	Megan Taylor, Washington State University		
9:45 ам	Break		
Queen Bee	Informed Partnership Working Directly with Beekeepers		
10:15 ам	BIP: Management Practices that Work and Those that Don't		
	Dennis vanEngelsdorp, <i>University of Maryland</i>		
11:00 ам	Bee Informed Partnership Oregon State University: Update from Bee Informed Pacific Northwest Tech Transfer Team		
	Ellen Topitzhofer & Dan Wyns, <i>Bee Informed</i> Partnership, Oregon State University		
Connecting Bees and People			
10:15 ам	Connecting with Kids & Communities Across the Globe		
11:00 AM	SARAH RED-LAIRD, BEE GIRL		
TT.UU AM	On the Radar Kim Flottum, Editor, Bee Culture Magazine		
11:45 ам	Lunch (IN AND AROUND SEASIDE)		
Queens—The Key to Success			
	onsored by Cascadia Queen Breeders		
1:15 рм	On Our Way—Incorporating Diversity into Queen Stock & Fitness Selection		
	John Jacob, Southern Oregon Beekeeper/ Queen Breeder		
2:00 рм	How to Locally Rear Selected-Stock Queens		
	Dewey Caron, Oregon State University		

# Oregon State Beekeepers Association EXECUTIVE BOARD AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



#### **OSBA OFFICERS**

President: Paul Andersen

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**Vice President**: Dewey Caron 302.353.9914 (April–October) carond@hort.oregonstate.edu

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503.703.8546; dbcramer@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Royce

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Past President: Jan Lohman

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# \* OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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South Coast: Mureen Walker

25055 Pistol River Loop Rd, Gold Beach 97444

541.373.7010; mureen98@gmail.com

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5051 Lost Lake Rd, Hood River 97031 541.354.2223; bfamily@live.com

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North Willamette Valley: Harry Vanderpool

7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem 97306 503.399.3675; shallotman@yahoo.com **South Willamette Valley**: Jason Rowan 80881 Turkey Run Rd, Creswell 97426 541.942.6479; beetanical@q.com

# OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

#### Cascadia Queen Breeders

Meets quarterly; contact the secretary for information

Chair: Paul Maresh

503.283.2060; pmaresh@spiretech.com

Vice Chair: James Hensel Secretary: Alvalea Fong

503.742.0910; mamagoose@mac.com

Treasurer: Rex McIntire

503.720.7958; remcintire 5@msn.com

#### **Central Oregon Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 рм, second Thursday

Partners in Care, 2075 NE Wyatt Ct, Bend

Visit www.orsba.org, Message Board, Central Oregon Branch. For information and meeting details, e-mail:

contact@cobeekeeping.org
Ring Leader: Bindy Beck-Meyer
Bookkeeper: Allen Engle

Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

#### **Coffee Creek Beekeepers**

# **Coos County Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December) Ohlsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Point **President**: John Gardner—541.572.3847 **Vice President**: Shigeo Oku—541.396.4016 **Secretary**: Bobbie Gardner—541.572.3847

Treasurer: Jane Oku

541.396.4016; janeoku1958@gmail.com

# John Day River Beekeepers

Meets quarterly **President**: Matt Allen

541.934.9101; apricotapiaries@gmail.com

**Education Coordinator and Secretary**: Liz Lovelock

# Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday (except Nov/Dec)
OSU Extension, 3328 Vandenberg Rd, Klamath Falls

President: Jim Smith

541.892.5888; tulebee@gmail.com **Vice President**: Doug Youngberg

dyoungberg@e-isco.com Secretary: Cathy Vick

541.884.6274; elliott772@aol.com

Treasurer: Steve Vick

541.884.6274; stevevick@aol.com **Website**: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

#### **Lane County Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene

President: Katharine Hunt

541.607.0106; keehhunt@gmail.com

Vice President: Pam Leavitt—541.344.4228

Secretary: Jodi Wiktorowski Treasurer: Polly Habliston Website: www.lcbaor.org

#### **Linn-Benton Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday, South First Alternative

Co-op Meeting Room, 1007 SE 3rd, Corvallis

President: Linda Zielinski 541.929.4856; Ilz50@peak.org Vice President: Steve Oda

541.745.7227; odafamily1@comcast.net

Secretary: Robert Williams rober2w@gmail.com
Treasurer: Suzi Maresh

541.967.9607; sjomaresh@msn.com

Website: www.lbba.us

#### **Oregon South Coast Beekeepers**

Meets 6:00 PM, third Wednesday, OSU Extension Office

located at the Fairgrounds in Gold Beach

President: Carla Fletcher Vice President: Jim Sorber Secretary: Wayne Berry berrydogs@gmail.com Treasurer: Barbara Fitts

#### **Portland Metro Beekeepers**

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Clackamas Community

College, Clairmont Hall, Room 118, Oregon City

President: Joe Maresh

503.703.5060; joemaresh@bctonline.com

Vice President: Rex McIntire

503.720.7958; remcintire 5@msn.com

Secretary: Patty Anderson

503.887.7057; wiseacrefarms@me.com

Treasurer: Barb Derkacht

503.631.3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com

# **Portland Urban Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, first Wednesday, Calaroga Terrace Rtmt Comm, Terrace Auditorium, 1400 NE Second Ave. Portland. For information, e-mail: officers@

portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

President: Tim Wessels—503.380.9381 president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org Vice President: Bill Catherall—503.572.6467 vice-president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Secretary: Mike Card—971.207.9726 secretary@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org Treasurer: Keith Gilman—503.830.3178 treasurer@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

#### **Southern Oregon Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday, Southern Oregon

(6:30 PM hands-on demo at SOBA hives thru bee season)

Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point

President: John Jacob

541.582.BEES; john@oldsolenterprises.com

Vice President: Ron Padgett

541.592.4678; padgett25@frontiernet.net **Secretary**: Dana Rose—puckamok@yahoo.com **Treasurer**: Cheryl Housden—541.955.5146

chousden@earthlink.net

Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org,

facebook.com/SouthernOregonBeekeepersAssociation

#### **Tillamook County Beekeepers**

Meets 7:00 PM, second Tuesday (except December)

Fresh Cafe, 9120 5th Street, Bay City **President**: Bob Allen—503.322.3819

Vice President: Jim Fanjoy 503.637.5522; jim@fanjoy.com

Secretary: Jeffrey Hall

503.739.0893; jlh434@mac.com

Treasurer: Stan Scotton

503.232.4945; 4scotton@gmail.com

# **Tualatin Valley Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, last Tuesday

Cameron Public Svcs Bldg, 155 N First Ave, Hillsboro

President: Mike Van Dyke

503.642.5338; mvand581@gmail.com Vice President: Andrew Schwab 503.538.7545; beesbuzzin@amail.com

Secretary: Paul Andersen

503.332.5410; paulande@easystreet.net

Treasurer: Jerry Maasdam

503.648.7906; jmaasdam@mac.com

#### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa Community College, Building 34, Room A, Salem **President**: Richard Farrier—541.327.2673 **Vice President**: Bunny Cramer-Carter 503.703.8546; dbcramer@hotmail.com

Secretary: Emily Cross

Treasurer: Patricia Swenson—pkswenson@gmail.com

Website: http://wvbahive.org



# **REGIONAL NEWS**

# **Regional Representatives**

# **South Coast**

It's a wrap! We're clustering for winter. It was a good year for honey, for the few of us who were well established for that, especially the ones upriver and inland. For the rest of us, it was an excellent year for learning.

The OSCBA Treasurer, Barbara Fitts, not only did the Journey-level course through the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program and prepared to be a mentor but also took an online beekeeping course through University of Montana. Only a few members continue to have one of the specially developed survival queens or daughter queens from NW Queens in Washington.

Myrna and Del Barber, founders of OSCBA, were in the area briefly and visited with club members at a gathering with pizza. Carla Fletcher, OSCBA president, gave out taste samples of cranberry honey. Interesting to experience once was the general opinion. She also brought in a jar of ailing bees that she passed around asking people to each figure out what was wrong. The bees were behaving frantically, as if desperate, crawling partway up the jar and falling onto their backs and curling up as if in pain or spasm. Barbara was the first to notice that the wings were all deformed and for some were completely missing. For those of us distracted by the behavior, Carla asked, can they fly?

Blackberry season came early and finished early. The road department began spraying herbicide along the ditches in mid-September and those of us who checked our areas at the time of the spraying, found no blossoms of any kind along the roads near our bees. While Roadmaster, before retiring at the end of this summer, Dan Crumley became a beekeeper and a club member. He helped set up a communication system to notify the club members of the specific spray schedules of each of the areas as soon as they were available so that beekeepers could close up their hives for that day, and if blossoms, then for three days, until enough wilting to be unappealing to bees.

Carla says that this year it was exceptionally clear when honey bee mating season ended. On the evening of the autumnal equinox, the sky, heavy with mammatus clouds, broke open and dumped a 4.28-inch rainfall on my hives (not quite so much in other areas), and the drones ceased to be welcome in the hives. No more chance for producing a fertile queen in our area until next spring.

Bear scares in both my beeyards in early October. Those attending the conference may see some of us wearing our new logo.

Bee about your overwintering now. Happy Holidays! Best wishes for the New Year!

—Mureen Walker

# **Eastern Oregon**

The bees are looking good. We're getting ready to extract honey, just finishing up getting yards ready for winter. Colonies in yards with rabbitbrush are doing well. Although we have needed to feed a second round of pollen and double-feed syrup to some of the colonies because floral sources are reduced in other places, the honey crop is good this year. The dry year with fewer rotations of alfalfa—which made for longer bloom—has helped. Even so, what we need now is *rain*.

—Jordan Dímock

# **South Willamette Valley**

Winter months in the south valley can be defined as unpredictable. Last year we had virtually no rain. Then we get a few days of sub-zero temps and a few weeks of below freezing. The year before that was dry as well, and we had many days in January to get the bees ready for the almonds. So, what to expect this year? Cover your bees for rain. Use plastic, tar paper, metal roofing, or whatever else to keep the water out. Winter is a great time for cleaning, painting, and planning for the next season. It's always a good idea to remove old drone and broken frames from your dead outs. In our operation, we try to straighten our bottlenecks so we can be more efficient in our movements. We also try and spend as much time as possible with our families because the season of rest seems to shrink every year. One last thing to remember: when it warms up, check the hives for food by lifting or checking manually. Starvation can be avoided. There are products sold commercially, such as sugar patties—and we can make fondant. Doing nothing ensures nothing in return.

Happy Holidays. Spring is around the bend.

-Jason Rowan

# **Regional Associations**

# Cascadia Queen Breeders

Congratulations to Cascadia Queen Breeders member Tim Wydronex for winning the free individual OSBA fall conference registration. It is being held in Seaside, Oregon, on November 6-8, 2014. We hope you have a wonderful time there.

—Alvalea Fong

# **Coffee Creek Beekeepers**

The three hives at Coffee Creek are being well prepared for winter by the crew and volunteers. The new beekeepers have done so much this season, from dealing with queenless hives to making educational materials for the bee booth at the state fair. They have started taking tests for their apprenticeship certification and are excited to continue.

Call for volunteers: Powder River Correctional Facility in Baker City would love to participate in a beekeeping program. There are some beekeepers already involved in the planning process, equipment has been purchased, and there is funding for bees. All we need are people willing to help! Please contact Chad at Chad.E.Naugle@doc.state. or.us if you would like to participate.

-Coffee Creek Crew

# John Day River Beekeepers

October has been warm and we still haven't had any fall rain. The rabbitbrush bloom is still pretty thick and the bees are bringing in beautiful bright orange pollen.

We had great weather for our September 20 "open hive day," but attendance was low, with only four people. Still, we worked one of our home bee yards and everyone attending got to heft heavy and light hives, talk about management strategies, do an alcohol wash, and combine two weak hives; overall, a great success. Another openhive workshop is scheduled for October 11 at the first ever Rural-Frontier Homestead Festival in Fossil, Oregon.

We are also starting to plan a meeting for around November/December.

—Matt Allew

# **Lane County Beekeepers**

Dr. Ramesh Sagili, Department of Horticulture at Oregon State University, gave a very informative talk at our September meeting. The title of his presentation was: "Current and Future Management Strategies for Varroa Mites." We are fortunate to have him at OSU and willing to share the latest in bee research that he is doing with us.

Also in September, we had a drawing for the free registration that OSBA gave us for the fall conference. Francis Rothauge, one of our board members, was the lucky winner. The LCBA board decided to do a club drawing to cover a second conference registration fee at the October meeting.

Also in October the club had their second annual demonstration of products of the hive. This year Judy Scher discussed the uses of propolis; Katharine Hunt, candles; and Scott Timms (of Falling Sky Brewshop), mead.

A big thank goes out to those people who staffed our club table at The Lane County Master Gardener Association Annual Fall Festival which took place on September 27 at the Emerald Park Recreation Center. Members who helped included: Maggie Matoba, Frank Feville, Jenny Buckley, Ray Krass, Max Kuhn, and Rebecca Hale.

-Katharine Hunt

# **Portland Metro Beekeepers**

Our October meeting was another great turnout! It is great to see many first timers at our monthly meetings.

Our featured speaker was John Jacob of Old Sol Apiaries in Rogue River and president of the Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association. He walked us through his basic principles of winterizing hives. He stressed the need for checking mite loads on a regular basis and treating if necessary. It is critical to determine when dearth takes place in your area and feed accordingly. He also covers his hives from side to side with roofing paper that not only helps with moisture but insulates as well. If you haven't had the opportunity to hear John, he will be a speaker at the OSBA conference in November.

PMBA will be holding a bee school in mid-February 2015 on basics of beekeeping. We will have more specific details at the next meeting. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, at 7 PM. —Patty Anderson

# **Portland Urban Beekeepers**

Portland Urban beekeepers have spent the last several meetings focused on learning to measure, understand, and in some cases, treat for Varroa mites. Our members are largely made up of hobbyists who may consider raising honey bees with minimal intervention. With Dewey Caron's citizen mite control project: www.portlandurbanbeekeepers.org/ resources, many PUB members have been getting their first comprehensive exposure to measuring mite loads and learning about or implementing productive intervention methods. Dewey has also been providing a multi-meeting presentation focused on preparing colonies for overwintering in hopes of reducing PUB winter loss rates. At the October meeting, George Hansen gave a great presentation on wintering honey bees that was full of practical information and great humor. These presentations have been loaded with good practical basic knowledge for the new beekeeper but loaded with plenty of information for the intermediate and advanced beekeeper.

The group has been building a large comprehensive library of books, videos, and equipment available for members to check out at no cost. Contact our PUB librarian through PUB's website for a list of available materials. We have developed a new logo and will soon have a re-built website. We are looking into a creating a variety of merchandise, including t-shirts, hats, and other items for purchase to help create a new look for the organization. Meeting presentations are now available on PUB's own YouTube channel for those who missed a meeting or want to review previous presentations. Search for *Portland Urban Beekeepers* on YouTube for those videos.

The PUB board is about to embark on its first strategic planning session to be held in conjunction with its October open board meeting. This will help to guide the organization into the foreseeable future in an organized and purposeful manner. With the exponential growth of urban beekeeping,



A Vivaldi Board, with screen in place.

Note: A submission for the Question of the Month included the question: What is a Vivaldi Board? The answer, as it turns out, does involve a board—though the reference to Vivaldi involves a bit more explanation.

It is not uncommon for customers visiting Ruhl Bee Supply to ask about a ventilation board that has a funny name starting with a V. We immediately steer them to the Vivaldi Board section of the store. When we first developed this product in 2007, we should have found a better name for it, but we don't regret the product development. We use Vivaldi Boards extensively in our own apiaries where we field test our products. While we love this product, its benefits can be achieved by other means, and I will discuss this, too. So, let's talk about those benefits: moisture management, insulation, feeding, population checks, and bee access.

# **MOISTURE MANAGEMENT**

A common problem west of the Cascade Range in the Northwest is hive moisture. This problem can be so bad that you might find the inner cover and telescoping cover of your hive covered with mold, or even puddles of moisture. It is rarely due to a leak in the hive roof. Far more commonly, it is from condensation generated by the colony. The detrimental effects of this moisture are extensive. It rots the inner cover and telescoping cover, and it harbors mold and bacteria. Ventilation is the obvious solution, but this is trickier than it seems in the cooler months. The ambient humidity is high enough that it takes a lot of ventilation to have much effect. But too much ventilation requires the colony to burn through its winter stores faster. And if you don't ventilate enough, the moisture does not dissipate. Experience tells us that ventilation works for moderate amounts of moisture, but in the relatively high humidity of the Willamette Valley that it is not enough.

The Vivaldi Board manages moisture by two mechanisms. One is ventilation, and the second is moisture absorption. This combination is very effective, as we discuss here.

**Ventilation**: Northwest beekeepers have been ventilating their hives for a long time, but the vent is often an ad-hoc arrangement such as a lollipop stick under the lid. These

methods do help, but are often too small, are exposed to weather, and are unscreened. Ventilation in the Vivaldi Board is through two sizeable screened horizontal slots at each end of the board. These slots are positioned so that when a telescoping cover is placed over the Vivaldi Board, the slots are protected from driving rain and wind, but still allow passive air flow through the board. This setup alone significantly improves the moisture problem, but in our experience, it is not always enough; in some conditions, moisture can still build up in the corners.

John E Because the Vivaldi I component of a beehi seasons, we thought it u it after a famous set of called The Four Sea. Italian composer, Anton

listened to his intense

might agree that if he

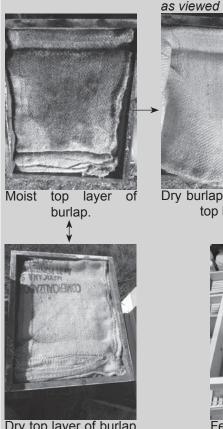
reincarnated as a honey

Burlap sac twice folded and p

Moisture **Absorption:** The second mechanism, a moisture absorbing quilt, greatly improves the moisture management. A moisture absorbing material, such as folded burlap sack, is placed in the cavity of the Vivaldi Board, somewhat similar to a quilt in a Warré hive. This sack absorbs the moisture that flows up through the center hole of the Vivaldi Board. Other quilt material, such as cedar shavings or dried oak leaves, can be used, but folded burlap sacks are simple, inexpensive, and absorb moisture well. And it turns out they are good thermal insulators.

However, we found two issues with the folded burlap quilt. First, bees tended to crawl around in the burlap and inevitably get stuck and die up there, especially after a sudden cold snap. Second, the moisture absorption is limited to just the surface area of the center hole.

solved both these problems with a wonderful little device: the Vivaldi Screen. It is really just a square frame with screen attached to it. Placed over the hole of the Vivaldi Board, it prevents the bees from getting caught up in the burlap, and it creates a much larger surface area for moisture absorption in the burlap, making moisture extraction efficient. How do we know Dry top layer of burlap this? When we install the burlap, we fold it twice to



on deadout.



# DI BOARD

'dwards

Board is such a useful ve throughout all four ould be fitting to name of four violin concertos sons, composed by the rio Vivaldi. If you have ly energetic music, you could, Vivaldi would be bee.

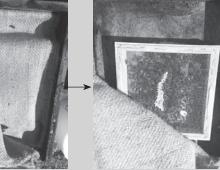
create eight layers. When we inspect the Vivaldi Board during a wet cool period, we find the top layer is often damp or slightly wet in the square area directly above the screen, but the bottom layer next to the screen is warm and dry. Generally, we find it unnecessary to change out the burlap, but if there is excessive moisture on the burlap, it can be changed like a diaper and saved as smoker fuel once it has dried.

In the summer months, when the Vivaldi Board is acting primarily as a ventilator, we keep on the Vivaldi Screen to prevent the bees from building comb up in the cavity.

#### **FEEDING**

It is not unusual in a Northwest winter and early spring for bees to need supplementary feeding, but if it is cold enough they won't break cluster to take liquid feed. You can force the bees to feed by pouring drivert sugar directly on the frames, but this risks overstimulating them at the wrong time of year. An alternative solution is to pour some fondant sugar such as drivert through the Vivaldi Screen so it forms a doughnut around the center hole of the Vivaldi Board. The frame of the screen forms a container for the

placed on top of Vivaldi Board, from above:



layer below

bottom burlap Dry Vivaldi Screen.



eding drivert with the ard, without placing directly on the bees.

drivert. When you lay back down the burlap after pouring in the sugar, the burlap traps heat in the food area, so bees are more inclined to seek the food, which, by mid-winter, is likely to be immediately above them. A candy board operates in a similar way: it traps heat, and the food is softened by absorbing moisture from the hive. The benefit of drivert is layer folded back from that it doesn't need softening, and it is extremely easy to refill with minimal disruption to the colony if an emergency feeding is needed in cold weather.

> For liquid feeding with a Vivaldi Board, tray feeders are available that fit exactly inside the Vivaldi Board cavity. Many of our customers like this set-up. However, with a tray feeder filling the cavity, the burlap no longer fits, so

the benefits of the burlap quilt are lost temporarily.

### **ACCESS**

A recent development of the Vivaldi Board is the entrance slot. We have been testing these in our own apiaries for a couple of years and really like them. The slot sits immediately below the panel at the front center to allow the bees to enter the top of the hive without going up into the Vivaldi Board cavity. Going into the cavity would encourage the bees to treat the cavity as part of their hive space and start to build brood comb in it. The concept of a second entrance is certainly not new. Beekeepers are well practiced at drilling holes in hive boxes for secondary access. The Vivaldi Board entrance slot removes the need to make these holes. Further, since the Vivaldi Board is always on top, and the slot is always nearest the top super, which is generally the one the bees are working on filling.

We find that most colonies use the Vivaldi Board's entrance slot extensively in flying season. Interestingly, they also use it for winter cleansing flights and often prefer it to the bottom entrance. We speculate the reason for this is that the entrance is usually nearer the winter cluster, and that the bottom board in winter can be cluttered with nasty winter detritus that the bees are unable to remove in bad weather. (A good reason to clean out the bottom board with a coat hanger.) In summer, most colonies use the slot extensively. Experimenting with different slot sizes, we found that the bees prefer a small slot, and they will reduce a large one with propolis.

Another use for the Vivaldi entrance is a simple robbing screen. It is small enough and far enough distance from the main entrance that if the main entrance is blocked off, the Vivaldi entrance slot is highly defensible. In the new slotted version, we have now added a gate to enable the entrance slot to be closed or opened as desired.

**POPULATION CHECKS** In colder weather, flight activity is generally minimal, so it is not so obvious whether a colony is strong. A residual benefit of the burlap quilt is that it can be used to indicate colony strength in winter. Our experience is that the dampness of the square area of burlap directly above the Vivaldi Screen is a useful indicator of population size. A strong active colony creates more moisture than a small one. The damper the square, the bigger the colony population. With the Vivaldi Board, it is easy to check a row of colonies by just going down the row and flipping the telescoping covers to check for burlap dampness, and thus bee population.

A strong colony also creates more heat, so the temperature difference between the top damp layer and the warm dry bottom layer of burlap is greater in a strong colony. We have found this also correlates well to temperature readings taken with an infra-red heat gun. (We will save the details of our heat gun activities for another article.) Briefly, we use the gun to measure heat difference at the top layer of the burlap compared to the heat at the bottom layer. We have found that the larger the population, the greater the measured temperature difference. However, we have found that the burlap dampness correlation has been so good that measuring temperature differentials with an infrared gun is hardly necessary. It is easier just to look at the burlap square.

# **ALTERNATIVE METHOD**

While we love the Vivaldi Board, similar benefits can be achieved with the combination of a Vivaldi Screen, an inner cover, a honey super, and a burlap sack. The reason we tend to favor the Vivaldi Board is that it is a single piece of equipment that is all ready to use.

Conference Agenda—Continued from page 3		
CONCURRENT SESSION		
1:15 РМ	Colony-Level Prevalence and Intensity of Gut Parasite, <i>Nosema ceranae</i>   Investigating Effects of Colony Nutrition on Nosema Infection Persistence	
	CAMERON JACK, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY	
2:00 РМ	Making Sense of Honey Bee Pheromones	
	JUDY SCHER, <i>Eugene Beekeeper</i>	
2:45 РМ	Break	
3:15 РМ	Honey Bee Expert Panel (TOPIC TO BE ANNOUNCED)	
	Moderated by Dewey Caron, Oregon State University	
4:00 РМ	Closing	

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# Regional News—Continued from page 7

the PUB Board has realized the need for a purpose-driven focus rather than a reactionary one.

Our first bee school is being developed for late winter, just in time for the 2015 bee season. We are currently lining up educators and curriculum, so stay tuned for this opportunity.

Multnomah County enforcement of the Portland city code is being adapted from a permission-orientated process to a notification-focused process. While some would prefer there be little-to-no regulations for keeping honey bees in Portland, others see compliance with the permitting process as an opportunity to understand who is keeping bees, where apiaries are located, and how to use this information to advance education, monitor for disease, and reduce colony losses.

-Michael Carlson

# **KEEPING BEES IN November-December**

# Morris Ostrofsky

The most frequent question I get in fall is, "Should I put the collection board in place under my screened bottom board?" It seems reasonable to want to protect the bees from cold weather by covering the screened bottom board. Yet, the cold weather isn't the greatest threat.

What isn't as obvious is that moisture is a much greater problem than cold weather. The answer I give is, "Only leave the collection board in place when taking mite counts." If you are using solid bottom boards, then you must provide an upper entrance.

What can be done to deal with moisture? First, if you are using a solid bottom board, tilt the hive slightly forward.

I have found use of an insulation box that contains hay or other absorbent material to be very effective. Use a box with the same footprint as a standard box; add some ½-inch ventilation holes to it, and cover the bottom with hardware cloth to keep the absorbent materials in place. Place the box just under the outer cover. Venting moisture out of the hive can also be accomplished by adding an upper entrance.

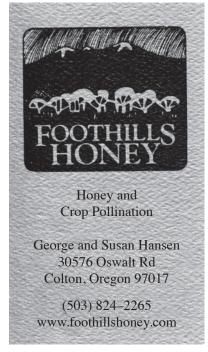
If you have not done so already, remove queen excluders and add mouse guards.

- ❖ Going into the coldest season of the year means monitoring the bees' honey supplies. This is easily done by lifting the back of your hive just a few inches. Ideally, the bees should have stored from 40 to 60 pounds of honey.
- ❖ If your colony is light, November is the time to start feeding fondant. Note that we switch from

- a liquid feed to a solid feed now because at the lower temperatures the bees have a harder time metabolizing the sugar and evaporating off excess moisture in the syrup. A frame of honey from a known, healthy hive is also an excellent source of food. Leftover candy canes make a sweet holiday gift for your bees. Continue to check stores periodically.
- ❖ Light colonies can be fed saturated syrup until daily temperatures drop into the 40°s.
- ❖ Occasionally the temperature hits 50°F, and the bees should be out doing cleansing flights. With weeks between cleansing flights, it must be a great relief for them to get out. On these days, if you notice that a hive is inactive, it bears closer examination. If you find that the hive is a deadout, examine the combs for scales of American foulbrood. If you have any doubt, send a sample to the lab in Beltsville for confirmation.
- ❖ It is usually a waste of time and resources to try to keep weak colonies going through fall and winter. It is easier just to unite them.
- ❖ Entrances should be reduced to prevent robbing. They should also be checked periodically to make sure they are not plugged with dead bees.

This is a good time to put down your hive tool, pick up a pen, and go to a conference. This time of year is also an opportunity to build bee equipment and gizmos and gadgets for next year. And on those cold winter days when your bees are clustered and content, it is your turn to take a well-earned break and read that latest bee book.

From: The Bee Line, November-December 2012.



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What do you get when you cross a sheep and a honey bee?

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Why do bees have sticky hair?

What do you get when you cross a walrus with a bee?

Why did the bee go to the doctor? Possible answers, page 15

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# Long Hive—Continued from page 1

out boards. It also gives the foragers room to cluster when the brood increases.

A viewing window gives a nonintrusive glimpse into the hive. I have noticed the anxiety level drop in a spectator's first look at a colony through the window before opening the hive.



# **ENTRANCE**

More desirable. The only entrance is placed on the southeast corner of the hive's south side. This opening is ¾-inch high and 3-inches long, which serves as a built-in mouse guard. The entrance has no landing board. My observation between Langstroth and long hives says that the honey bees prefer no landing, less landing mishaps and bumping into nest mates, less intruders, and easier to defend colony. I have observed the returning foraging honey bees fly into their hive nonstop with amazing accuracy.

#### INSPECTION

More efficient. There are two white pull-out boards under the hive making it easy to monitor mites and for debris removal. They give a good picture of what is happening within the hive without opening it since one board is in the brood area and the other is under the honey surplus.

The inner cloth allows me to uncover one or several frames at a given moment. The cloth also helps to preserve brood temperature, discourages robbing exposed frames, and has eliminated the smoker.

Compared to Langstroth, the long hive colonies have shown themselves to be calmer, with fewer honey bees injured and frames easier to relocate within the colony or remove to provision another hive.

#### WINTER PROTECTION

The gable roof and its overhang protect the colony against winddriven inclement weather. The space above the frames' top

bars and the inner cloth allows for a moisture wicking and insulate material. The Valhalla design is entering a second winter and has never shown moisture to be a concern. A wool



blanket is placed in the "attic" space as hive insulate.

## A Special Thank You

Richard Nichols, Prineville resident, used his passion for beekeeping and an extensive knowledge and experience with wood species to bring an idea to full fruition. He is a master in designing convenience and woodworking which pushed the Valhalla hive design into its fourth generation of construction. Most of his thirty-plus constructed Valhalla hives are in Central Oregon helping other beekeepers continue with their beekeeping passion and helping newbies start their apiaries.

# STATE FAIR WRAP-UP

Dewey M. Caron

It is a wrap! The 2014 State Fair Bee Booth was an expanded four spaces and over 110 volunteers were utilized to interact and talk about bees with the fair goers, some doing more than one shift. Two special features were the Brood Zone, a special attraction for youngsters, and Buzz & Flora's apiary. Seven bee associations each volunteered to cover a day of the eleven-day fair. Our orsba.org website has an acknowledgement listing all the volunteers. Also some photos have been posted. Thank you to all who volunteered.

Thanks to all the individuals who helped design the booth (especially Trevor Riches, Todd Bartlem, and Bunny Cramer-Carter), leant their artistic ability, assembled the display, provided/constructed materials (especially Fred Mann and Trevor Riches), and to those taking it down. All OSBA materials are now in a storage site in Salem—other groups that wish to use the materials for upcoming shows should contact OSBA events coordinator Trevor Riches to borrow items.

Congratulations to the winners of the State Fair Honey & Products of the Hive winners. Rosette winners were Zane Minzlaff, Clackamas, of the Youth Division (amber extracted honey entry) and Max Kuhn (Lane County) of the Beekeeper Division (light extracted honey). There were twenty total entries in the revised show (new entry rules, new judging standards). First- through third-place winners are listed on the OSBA website. Attractive new display cabinets were donated for show display by Trevor Riches. Richard Farrier, Willamette Valley, contributed his honey color variation display.

Judging workshop held in conjunction with the fair entries was presented to ten individuals by myself and Trevor. Next honey show will be at OSBA meeting in Seaside (entries due by 10 AM Friday, November 7) using same judging standards; it will include another workshop for judges. Trevor Riches will again be show steward as he works toward Welsh Honey Judge Certification.

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# **UPCOMING EVENTS**

November 6-8: OSBA Fall Conference. Seaside Civic and Convention Center, Seaside OR. Information: www.orsba. org along with newsletter.

November 15: Oregon Honey Festival/Celebrating Bees, Honey and Almonds. Ashland Springs Hotel, Ashland OR. Information: www.oregonhoneyfestival.com.

November 17, 7:30 PM: Mark Winston reading/signing Bee Time: Lessons From the Hive. Powell's Books on Hawthorne, Portland OR. Information: http://winstonhive. com/?page id=164.

November 18–20: California State Beekeepers Association Convention. Hyatt Regency, Valencia CA. Information: www.californiastatebeekeepers.com.

December 4-5. Idaho Honey Association Meeting, Boise ID. Information: Rick Waitley, 208.888.0988, rick@ amgidaho.com.

December 9-11: Almond Board Conference. Convention Center, Sacramento CA, Information: almondconference.com.

January 6-10, 2015: North American Beekeeping Conference and Tradeshow. Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim CA. Information: www.abfnet.org.

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**January 6–10, 2015**: American Honey Producers Convention & Tradeshow. Manhattan Beach Marriott Hotel, Manhattan Beach CA. Information: americanhoneyproducers.org.

## Possible Answers to Bee Quiz, page 12:



- ~ By school buzz ~ Bah hum bug
- ~ Dan num buy
- ~ Because they use honeycombs
- ~ A wallaby
- ~ Because she had hives



# Oregon State Beekeepers Association Membership Form

The **Oregon State Beekeepers Association** is a nonprofit organization representing and supporting all who have an interest in honey bees and beekeeping. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. Membership includes the ongoing work of the organization on behalf of the honey bee and beekeeping, a vote in OSBA elections, discounts on publications, placement on the swarm call list, three free ads on the website, and an annual directory and subscription to *The Bee Line*. For new memberships and renewals, please send check made payable to *OSBA* with this *completed* form to:

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**Reminder**: The date on the mailing label is the expiration date for membership. If the date is November or December 2014, this is your friendly renewal notice!

# Very best wishes of the season!

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The next issue to be printed will be the January/ February issue, 2015. The deadline for submitting copy is December 10, 2014. Please call or e-mail if you find difficulties with the deadline so we can work out the space and timing.

Thank you!

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