



The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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Image above: Even as the season is at its height, we cast our eyes toward the successful overwintering of all colonies. So, too, might we consider our own upcoming overwintering and the rich source of learning to be found at the OSBA fall conference in Florence, October 25–27. Details will be posted as they become available. In the meantime, should you come across any items you'd like to donate (bee related or not) for the auctions, they would be very welcome.

AN UNCLEAR CASE OF AMERICAN FOULBROOD (REVISITED)

James E. Tew

A Troublesome Subject

I make no claim to being a trained microbiologist, but I have seen and dealt with American foulbrood many times. The first fundamental problem is that beekeepers generally cannot predict which colony will be resistant and to what degree. I crudely put bee colonies into three broad groups: (1) AFB Resistant, (2) Some resistance, but express symptoms of AFB, (3) Susceptible with clear symptoms. Category #2 is the section that causes me the most problems. No one wants AFB, but if I do have it, I want it to be a clear case. Fact is, sometimes it is not a clear case.

From a Regulatory Standpoint

Yesterday, at the university bookstore, I saw a book entitled (something like), *Things Your Doctor Will Not Tell You*. I quickly wondered exactly how much I wanted to know from my physician. Do I want to always know everything, or do I want to know what I need to know? Recently, I strained an abdominal muscle. After several weeks of low-level gut pain, I went to a specialist, who ironically was also a beekeeper. A thorough check indicated that I was simply 57 years old with concurrent aches and pains. The muscle would ultimately heal. It did. But during the course of the evaluation, my physician commented that I had some noticeable spinal curvature that would significantly limit my backward motion. What?! What do are you talking about? I'm here for my achy gut—not my back. Now, my abdominal muscle is fine, but I now wander around wondering exactly what this (painless) back thing is all about. What will the ultimate effects be? I don't know.

As I again try to address this troublesome AFB topic, I am reminded of my experience with my physician. How much information is proper? From a regulatory stance, it is logical to treat AFB infections as a black & white situation. Common thinking is that either your hive passes the test or it doesn't. Yes and no. Right and wrong. Up and down. Black and white. Apparently there is nothing in the middle. Fact is, there is a middle every time. In the beekeeping world, I agree with the regulatory tenet to burn when detected. The best general rule for AFB suppression is to destroy it—at any level of infection—simply because you can't predict the outcome.

Some of You Are Going to Want Some of This

I have no doubt that some of you are going to want to argue about this direct recommendation. At this point, what kind of specialist do I need? A state regulatory authority? A psychologist? A sociologist? A lawyer? Maybe a biologist? Or some combination of all. Why this mix? Because beekeepers are of diverse personalities who are managing bee colonies having a range of resistance or susceptibility to AFB. That's a lot of variation.

Continued on page 14

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings, fellow beekeepers.

By the time this message reaches you, fire season will be upon us and in many locations it will be prudent to consider other options than a smoker to work our bees. During fire season in dry locations, we rely on an essential oil “spritz” to calm the bees if we need to. The drench formula on Honey B Healthy or Prohealth applied with a basic garden sprayer is sufficient to calm the bees enough to do basic hive manipulations and introduce queens, and you will sleep very well at night knowing that there is no way an errant spark from your smoker started a wildfire.

Here at Old Sol, every truck has a 3-gallon sprayer of our custom spritz formula and at least some modest fire-fighting tools such as a shovel, a bucket of water, and a fire extinguisher. As we have all witnessed the last few years, the fire season seems to be getting longer and more intense. I would hate for it ever to be one of us beekeepers who has gotten the “big one” going. Working all summer in heavy smoke takes a toll on the bees and beekeepers, even with a mask. Please be careful out there and take every precaution possible. I don’t know how many dozens of stories I have heard about a smoker mishap leading to a conflagration.

July is also a magic month for getting assessment and control of your Varroa populations. In the old days, we used to wait until August to pull honey supers and begin our battle with Varroa. Better to sacrifice a little honey flow than to put overwintering your colonies at risk. If mite loads are unacceptably high in July, the bees will really begin to fall apart by August and there is not much time left in the season to bring them around. It is absolutely amazing what that extra month can do to help bees recover from Parasitic Mite Syndrome, so please sample for Varroa early and often. We have learned to never assume any treatment has worked as advertised and to do post-treatment sampling to remove all doubt about efficacy. Even when we have done our job right, we still face substantial risk of reinfection in this crucial season because the bees become more prone to robbing both collapsing wild and unmanaged colonies in the neighborhood. Invariably, they bring something nasty back home.

With each passing day, the hours of daylight will be becoming shorter and the window is rapidly closing to get our bees ready for winter. It may seem counterintuitive to think about winter in July, but our bees have been thinking about it since early spring as they hoard their

precious stores in preparation for winter. As of July 1, there are only 124 days until November 1. This means there are only about six 21-day brood cycles left at the very most until the bees shut down egg laying for the winter. As these brood cycles progress, the amount of eggs laid in each one will be less and less as the days shorten and flows diminish, so try to not let Varroa devour your bees for half of the remaining brood cycles before we start raising clean, healthy, long-lived winter bees. We will be well served to be like the bee and plan for next year now.

Speaking of being like a bee and planning for the future, please consider registering your apiary. The 50 cents per colony fee will really help fund honey bee research at Oregon State University and help us meet the current and future challenges our industry faces. If we all do our little part and collaborate with our resources, we can achieve great things together, just like the bees do. The beehive is like an intensive information-gathering machine. It is accurate information that the colony depends on for its very survival.

Bees can detect the slightest differences in sugar concentration of various nectars available in their forage radius and allocate foragers accordingly to increase the odds of storing enough honey to overwinter. There is also a constant flow of information going on about the various exact locations of forage options. Information is also gathered and disseminated about where to swarm to, including nest-cavity location and size. This has been well studied, and it is known that the “about to swarm” colony will commonly review a dozen or more options and compare information about each option and eventually build consensus around the best option. According to Dr Seeley’s work, the bees seem to naturally prefer about a 40-liter cavity, with a 12.5-square-centimeter entrance facing south, at the bottom of the cavity about 5 meters off the ground. Interestingly, disruption of this flow of information is a great way to cool off a colony on the verge of swarming by moving the colony while the scout bees are flying and placing a split or small colony in its place.

For us beekeepers, accurate information is also crucial to our success. Whether it is timely and accurate, mite counts or state-of-the-art research, both can provide essential information that increases our success rates. Please consider donating to the OSU Honey Bee Lab and registering your apiary. Working together like this, we can have profound effects on outcomes.

Happy Beekeeping and stay cool.

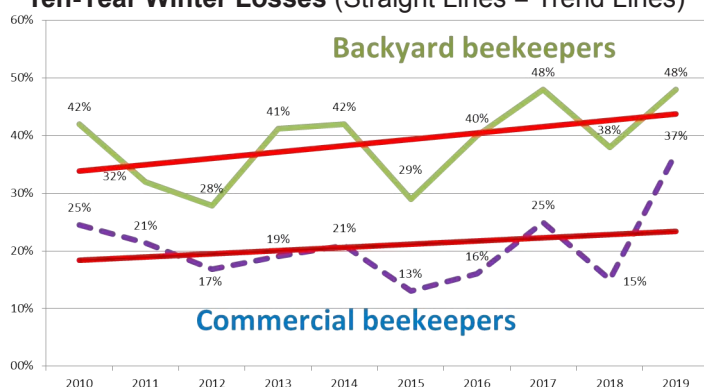
John Jacob

2018–2019 OVERWINTER COLONY LOSSES

Dewey M. Caron

The backyard and commercial colony losses of Oregon and Washington beekeepers over this past winter were the heaviest witnessed in ten years. Backyard losses for 416 Oregon beekeepers with from one to 38 colonies was 48 percent (www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com). For commercial Oregon beekeepers, representing about one-third of the estimated total, Oregon colony number loss was 37 percent. For the BeeInformed national survey, overwinter losses (40.7%) were the heaviest of record in the past thirteen survey years.

Backyard and Commercial Oregon Beekeeper Ten-Year Winter Losses (Straight Lines = Trend Lines)



The graph above illustrates the ten-year record of average winter losses from the Pacific Northwest survey. Losses in spring 2019 were well above the nine year previous year-level averages (37.8% for backyarders and 19.1% for Oregon commercial and semi-commercial beekeepers). Loss trend level is annually increasing.

Why losses were so heavy is not immediately evident from survey results. In the backyard survey, management responses are compared with losses for individuals doing a particular management. Details for the most recent overwinter period (2018–2019) and the record of last 3–5 years are on the report website (www.honeybeesurvey.com) under survey results for both the state respondents and for associations where more than 18 individuals participated.

The survey questions on feeding management ask about use of sugar syrup, honey, dry sugars, and supplemental protein feeding. Response is a check box; none and other are response options. It does not specifically ask for details such as when bees were fed or how. For the last three years, feeding sugar syrup has shown a slight improvement in survival as has feeding frames of honey. Feeding a pollen patty likewise has shown a slight increase in survival. The feeding of dry sugar, practically hard sugar candy and fondant, has consistently demonstrated the best survival rates.

Over the past three years, no single winterizing management improved survival each of the survey years. However six managements have marginally improved survival in two of the three years. Those managements are: equalizing colonies in the fall, use of a quilt box/Vivaldi board/moisture trap at top of colony, an upper entrance (most Vivaldi boards have an upper entrance built into the equipment), wrapping colonies, wind/weather protection, and finally the other selection (the other items are a large mixture from reduced bottom entrance, reducing number of boxes, and some means of reducing moisture). In all three years, those doing no winterizing had heavier losses than overall.

Under sanitation options, providing hives with distinctive “address” by spacing hives and/or use of hive colors has improved survival two of the three years. In two years, individuals saying they did none of the managements also demonstrated better survival. Screen bottom boards do not measurably improve winter survival—a 3 percent advantage. However, individuals who close (partially or fully) the screen during winter do show a 10 percent improvement over those who leave screen bottoms open over the winter.

Individual backyard beekeepers performing mite monitoring and practicing mite controls show the greatest improvement over the overall loss level. Individuals who monitor for mites (52% use sticky board, less than 20% use alcohol wash, 35% use powder sugar shake or a visual monitoring method) receive about a 10 percentage point better survival over those who report no monitoring (last year, 18% of respondents said they did no monitoring).

Three of the nonchemical alternatives have demonstrated reduced losses over past three years. Reducing drifting such as spreading colonies and/or painting colonies different colors in apiary has demonstrated a 13 percent better survival. Brood cycle interruption has demonstrated an 11 percent better survival rate and drone brood removal a minor 3 percent advantage. Four chemical control options show the greatest potential for better survival examining Pacific Northwest survey results for the past four seasons. Essential oils Apiguard and ApiLifeVar use show about a 30 percent greater survival, and use of Apivar, about a 29 percent better survival. Oxalic acid vaporization use demonstrated an 11 percent better survival over past three years but survival improvement of oxalic acid drizzle was minor and in only one of the last three seasons.

The survey reports correlations of what some beekeepers do and the loss level related only to that single factor. If you do or adopt one or more of these options does not guarantee you will reduce overwintering losses. It is a report of what some of our beekeeping neighbors do and their subsequent levels of loss.

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KEEPING BEES IN JULY

Todd Balsiger

The ongoing battle with Varroa continues. This is always on my mind, and 2018 was a watershed year for hive losses.

Randy Oliver suggests that, contrary to our wishful thinking, it may be the Varroa mite that outflanks our bees and becomes more virulent over time. I hadn't considered this scenario—I guess I'm guilty of having a pollyannaish viewpoint regarding this matter.

Something else to consider. If you recall from my January tips, I shared Russell Heitkam's 2018 loss prediction at 50 percent. For 2019, he predicts a 75 percent loss. Why? He ranks exceeding the carrying capacity as the #1 reason, followed closely by the Varroa mite. I think these two factors are interchangeable and related. It is interesting to note that the Heitkams are reducing their hive numbers by about 25 percent. The kernel of wisdom here is that fewer may be better, and to be a good neighbor. Mite bombs are definitely not appropriate. Regarding carrying capacity, it may not necessarily be more bees but dwindling habitat.

What To Do in July

I will be forthright and share with you exactly what I am doing this year, followed by typical suggestions.

What I'm Doing: I've had mediocre success with thymol and formic, to put it mildly. (I haven't used thymol in over a decade; really bad first experience, may be better now, not qualified to make inputs on thymol products.) I have not used Amitraz in years. I've been using oxalic a lot more, in part because, unlike thymol and formic, it has never hurt my bees. During the winter, I vaporized oxalic. Beginning this spring, I again started using the glycerin/oxalic shop towels. Incidentally, they seem to make good queen excluders, for a while anyway. I still believe you want bees that chew up the towels. I think this is how the oxalic is disseminated. (Carolyn Breece said OSU is going to do an oxalic study this summer, hurrah!) I told Jordan Dimock that my litmus test for a breeder queen is: Do they shred the towels up? It seems to be a measure of hive productivity, too. When I walk up to my most productive and voluminous hives, I see pieces of blue shop towels at the entrances.

I'm also raising queens again—now in the month of June. My plan is in part to requeen undesirables and to have backup queens available if I use treatments that are notorious for causing queen losses, e.g., formic. Incidentally, an hypothesis I have heard as to why formic

is so hard on queens is that formic masks queen pheromone, and then the workers kill her. It fits.



I used Formic Pro last fall, perfect conditions, and it knocked off way too many hives—some of my best. My most severe losses have always been from mite treatments! Plan to requeen if necessary if you use formic, or remove the queen prior to its application.

Here's an idea for people with just a few hives if you plan to use formic. Remove the queen prior to application. Place her in a nuc box, no capped brood—just honey, pollen, and drawn comb mostly. Shake a bunch of bees from frames with brood if you leave the nuc box at the location (very similar procedure to making a queen cell starter). Apply formic to the main hive with all that capped brood, and oxalic (dribble, vaporization, etc.) to the nuc to kill the phoretic mites. Reunite the nuc and the main after the formic treatment is done and removed.

Boiler Plate July Tips: July brings the end of the nectar flow and the beginning of dearth.

- ❖ Extra supers should be removed. By the end of July/beginning of August, all supers should be off; hives configured for winter.

- ❖ It is important to do mite sampling to get an idea of your infestation rate. This is the time of year when the rate of bee reproduction declines and the rate of Varroa reproduction increases. This underscores the importance of knowing whether or not you need to treat. It may be important to treat in July and not wait until August.

- ❖ I believe it is recommended to treat at only a 1 percent infestation rate, which would correspond to three mites out of a 300 bee sample. Don't rely on my info, read next sentence. The Honey Bee Health Coalition website has a "Tools for Varroa Management" section. It covers sampling, treatment thresholds, pros and cons of different treatment options for the time of the year. This would be a good resource to use to plan your mite attack.

- ❖ When the nectar dries up in your area, robbing season begins. Try to prevent robbing—don't let it start. Reduce entrances on weaker hives; this is absolutely necessary if you're feeding to build still.

- ❖ Ensure your hives are queenright while queens are still available.

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BEE EVENTS

July 8–10: Heartland Apicultural Society Annual Conference. Bowling Green, Kentucky. *Registration and Information:* heartlandbees.org.

July 12–14: 2019 Western Apicultural Society Conference. Ashland. *Information:* westernapiculturalsociety.org.

July 15–19: 2019 Eastern Apicultural Society Conference. Honey Bee Health. Greenville, SC. *Information:* www.easternapiculture.org.

July 17–20: 2019 International Conference on Pollinator Biology, Health and Policy. UC Davis. *Information:* honey.ucdavis.edu/pollinatorconference2019.

August 23–September 2: 2019 Oregon State Fair, 2330 17th Street NE, Salem. *Information:* oregonstatefair.org. See also article, page 5.

September 8–12: 46th Apimondia. Montreal. *Information and Registration:* www.apimondia2019.com.

September 21: Northwest District Beekeepers Association Conference. Snohomish PUD Auditorium. Limited seating. *Registration:* www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4248173.

October 25–27: Oregon State Beekeepers Association Fall Conference. Florence Event Center. Florence, Oregon. *Information as it becomes available:* orsba.org.

November 12–14: 2019 California State Beekeepers Association Annual Convention. Pechanga Resort & Casino.

January 8–11, 2020: American Beekeeping Federation Conference & Expo, Schaumburg, Illinois. *Information:* www.abfnet.org.

January 8–11, 2020: American Honey Producers Association Conference. *Information:* www.ahpanet.com.

REGIONAL NEWS

Note: All affiliated associations invite and welcome visitors to join them at meetings. See page 16 for meeting time, website, and/or contact information.

Many regional associations also offer additional opportunities for learning; take care to check their websites as well as postings under *Events* at orsba.org.

Regional Representatives

North Coast

I don't think anyone here on the central and north coasts can complain too much about the weather lately . . . quite a bit of sun, a little rain, breeziness without getting really windy. Everything is growing, and my small yard looks like a jungle. I let it all go for the pollinators! Hives are growing, too, and every bit of this forage will be needed by the honey bees and other foragers to make strong colonies throughout the summer.

The Tillamook association is celebrating their new honey house/extraction facility. Rich Little will be speaking at their next meeting about the Oregon Bee Project and the Bee Atlas. The Central Coast association is getting



2018 Lincoln County Fair

ready for the Lincoln County Fair, which is being held July 4–7. I really appreciate that we have access to fine speakers and volunteers who are willing to step forward for activities that help get us out into the community. *Kathy Cope*

Regional Associations

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Here in Central Oregon, June (and late May) started out with a several weeks of cool wet weather. (We had conversations about the Willamette Valley in the winter.) It made for a dreary spring, but then WOW! By mid-June, it cleared up and got warm. The trees, flowers, and weeds just exploded. Many of our members had a plethora of unexpected swarms (I suppose all swarms are unexpected). This would have been fine, except that, with the cold weather, there weren't very many good flight days for the new queens to mate, which led to lots of emergency queen requests on our message board. I suppose many of the queen suppliers had a similar issue with mating flight days—there weren't very many queens to be had.

We've started collecting entries for our second annual Photograph contest. We were really impressed by the creativity and artistic ability of the entries last year. The winners will be presented at our July potluck dinner. One of the big issues we're currently discussing is how to reduce the overwinter losses for we hobbyists. Please consider yourself invited to attend any of our meetings. *Allen Engle*

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

June finally brought improved weather to the Columbia Gorge region. The entire month of February was snow, followed by months of cold, rainy weather. Bee colonies in our region suffered starvation as they ramped up activities pre-February only to be locked in with horrendous cold, damp, windy issues. This has also delayed our annual nectar flow. The number of swarms seems far less than in previous years. As to our association, we continue to grow in numbers while being blessed with great speakers dedicated to sharing their expertise. The Hood River Extension, in part, is funded by Hood River County, which has suffered a loss of revenue from federal monies associated with timberland. Reserves are depleted with threats of ceasing to fund several departments—to include the Extension Service (Master Gardener, SNAP, Small Farms, and so forth). In conjunction with the Master



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Our Beekeeping family wishes all of you the best in 2019!



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Gardeners, our association has three hives at the location. They offer significant teaching opportunities for each of our association meetings, the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program here in Hood River, and a few other groups. We look forward to a resolution of this financial issue. In June, Dr. Dewey Caron provided a demonstration of Varroa mite testing on the extension hives and discussed treatment options, followed by a great presentation incorporating the Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Survey and colony management issues for summer and fall. July brings Jennifer Harty, Master Gardener, presenting on pollination in our community. *Jerry Frazier*

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Winter released its grip long enough for the association to receive the bees that we ordered from California. John Wilda drove down to Lincoln, California, to pick up 110 packages and 67 nucs from A&D Bees. With assistance from various association members, the leadership was able to issue all the bees with a minimum of confusion. This first Saturday in May was the first great weekend in months and was not a precursor of weather to come. The association had an educational booth scheduled the following Saturday outdoors at Veterans Park that was rained/blown out. Our monthly meeting was supposed to be a field day, but between the snow the previous day and a low 40 of degrees in the morning, the field day was rescheduled for June. Paul and Katharina are still teaching 3rd and 4th graders about bees in various Klamath Basin elementary schools. So far, they have educated over 50 classes. *Paul Davitt*



Flawless distribution with Lee Putman (left) and Steve France.

Lane County Beekeepers

Lane County beekeepers are as busy this summer as our honey bees are. We had our table at the first annual Bee City USA/Eugene event

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Pam Leavitt

Lynn Royce, Janine Piercey, Katharine Hunt, and Brian McGinley staff the LCBA booth at the inaugural Bee City USA Celebration.

Bee City USA partner. In addition, the U of O is now a Bee Campus partner as well. The event was well attended, fun, and informative for event attendees.

Our association is looking forward to our joint field day with the beekeepers of Linn Benton Beekeepers Association. Every attendee has the opportunity to get up close and personal with a hive that is not their own. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from experienced beekeepers and mentors from the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program. The field day is June 23 from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM at the OSU Apiary, located at the Oak Creek Center for Urban Horticulture.

We have some interesting premeeting and general meeting talks coming up, including extracting in June, queen rearing in August, and Andony Melathopoulos of The Oregon Bee Project in September. Please feel free to come to our meetings and say hi to our friendly beekeepers. *Mike France*

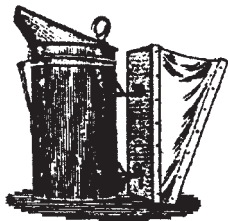
Linn Benton Beekeepers

Hopefully by now, you have had the opportunity to add a second super to your hives. Colony populations should also be at their peak, which means mite populations are at their peak, too. Many beekeepers in this area are conflicted with whether to treat for mites with supers on or wait until they are taken off. Either way, a mite control needs to be applied by August 1 with possibly a follow-up treatment in order to have a healthy population going into winter. It is hard to think about winter right now, but it is best to have your mite control supplies on hand before time sneaks up on you.

Speaking of mites and winter, this month's speaker is Morris Ostrofsky. He will be presenting, "Preparing your bees for winter in summer." What's happening post-nectar flow with your bees focuses on what the mites are doing at this time of year and the impact of Varroa mites on how the bees overwinter. Additional topics covered include protein and carbohydrate feeding, transitioning to fall, what happened to my sweet bees, yellow jackets,

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Brandon Hopkins, *Washington State University*
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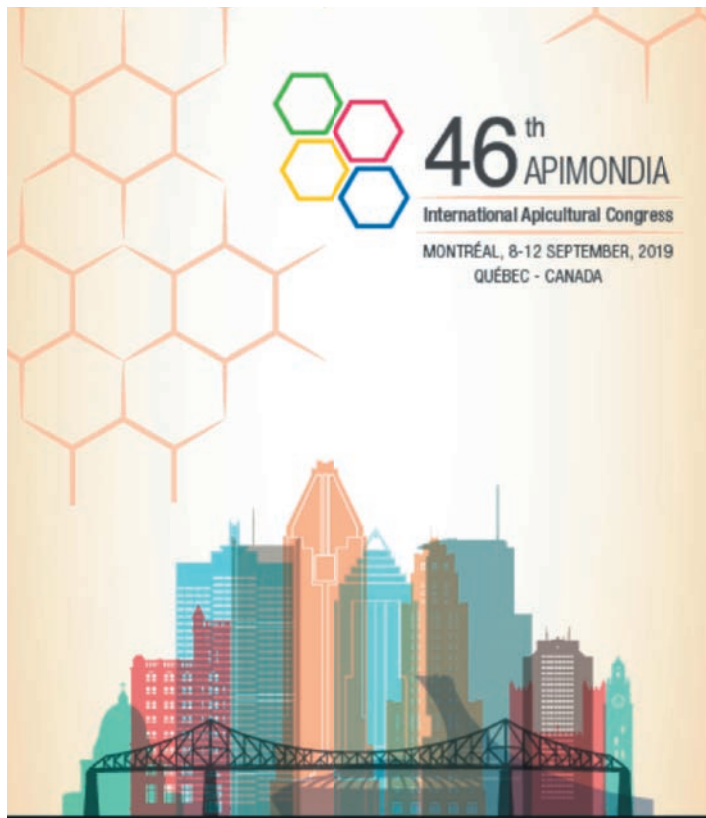
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and assessing colony strength.

Our association hosted an informational table on June 22 at the Corvallis Farmer's Market to help celebrate Pollinator Week. It was well attended, and we look forward to participating next year. This month we anticipate loaning out our association's honey extracting equipment. All paid LBBA association members are able to borrow the equipment as a benefit of membership. *Amber Reese*

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

Apis mellifera

A spoiled plump Queen
holed up in her dark cedar den
conducting a cacophonous harmony
of manic motion,
sowing the seed
of the next generation.

Thousands of subjects
busily buzzing about
amassing valuable gold
from flourishing flowers,
returning their plunder
after slaving laborious hours.

Navigating home like explorers
with tools of sense and orientation
passing by vigilant guards
at the great cedar gates,
a burgeoning brood-nest
of ravenous larvae awaits.

At the end of the day
deep in a dark cedar den
bees orchestrate for tomorrow,
and to do it all over again.

Patrick Gazeley-Romney, beekeeper in program at
Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers

Guest Speaker: Vice President Maarty Van Otterloo arranged to have Charlie Vanden Heuvel, from BG Bees, Hood River, a Journey Master Beekeeper, come down to Gold Beach to present on "Queen-Rearing" during the May meeting. Charlie made an excellent presentation, and coupled it with solid, easy-to-follow instructions for raising queens. He perfectly blended both humor and information into his presentation. For other associations, Charlie may be a good choice to invite as a guest speaker: charlie.bgbees@gmail.com.

County Fair: We're starting to think about our display booth for the upcoming Curry County Fair (24–27 July) held in Gold Beach. The observation hive is always of interest to the kids and adults alike. We've purchased some items for display that will hopefully make the booth more educational and generate interest in beekeeping. We'll be asking for volunteers to work the booth during the fair.

Honey Flow: Blackberries are here! Despite some (relished) light rainfall, the days have been mostly fair, thus allowing the bees ample opportunity to forage. Honey production should be "up" for our area this year. We can't compare to the inland areas, but for our coastal area things look good for honey this year.

Swarms: No calls via "the system" so far. Several individuals have either received independent calls about swarms and/or have been successful in trapping swarms. Recent "hot" weather may spur some additional swarming activity.

Jesse Fletcher

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Okay, a little rain, with a few heavy showers here and there; bees and their keepers can handle that. The sun takes over again, with blossoms from clover, vetch, California poppies, nasturtiums, in abundance. Blackberries, of course, are flourishing! Lavender in the Portland Metro area is ready to burst open. In addition, I see lots of honey bees scrambling for the pollen on the old-fashioned roses in the yard. Several honey supers are nearly full in my yard. In addition, with the warm (or even hot) weather arriving, now is a good time to recycle beeswax with a solar oven, for example. The last *Bee Line* included a recipe for wood finishes for your favorite woodworker.

Joe Maresh continues to mentor beekeepers, both new and more experienced, on Tuesdays in his apiary. These past couple of Tuesdays, we gained some hands-on knowledge with queen rearing, from confining the queen to a cell-grid where she will lay eggs, moving them to queen-rearing cells on a frame, and ultimately providing a resource for a queenless hive or to build a nuc.

We are renovating our website to streamline and better serve not only members but also new beekeepers. Please do check out the new and improved site once it is completed. Our June member meeting will cover extraction with Kerry Haskins, who has a well-designed honey house and extraction business; with sufficient time allowing, we will also conduct a round-robin discussion of questions and/or concerns of members.

Nancy Winston

Portland Urban Beekeepers

The warm days of summer are here, and our bees are happy! Our members have been chasing swarms and trying to keep our bees where they belong.

Our last meeting was well attended with about sixty in attendance, and, of those, about ten were new beekeepers. Our first speaker of the evening, Rebeka Golden, from Bee & Bloom, reviewed diseases and pests that plague the honey bee. It was a good review of American and European foulbrood, chalkbrood, stonebrood, bee dysentery, small hive beetle, and a special focus on *Varroa destructor*. It was sobering to realize all the symptoms bee keepers need to watch for, but we were grateful that we have great teachers to show us what to watch for and how to treat.

Later that evening, Dewey Caron reviewed PUB's results from the Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Survey, which gave PUB the ignominious reputation of worst-in-state overwinter losses at 62 percent. There were five fewer responses this year, which makes one wonder if they just gave up. After reviewing losses, Dewey took questions from the audience, and he recapped some of Rebeka's points about honey bee diseases and management. One interesting point was when Dewey asked the audience how many of us had been in attendance two years ago. About ten people raised their hands.

Cheryl Wright

Tillamook Beekeepers

The Tillamook Beekeepers Association is excited to announce that we have a new Honey House extraction facility that will be fully operational by July 2019 for use by members on a time-reserved basis.

The TBA Honey House is a room about 240 square feet within the old Officer's Mess Hall located on the WWII Naval Air Station—home of blimp squadron, now under management of the Port of Tillamook Bay (POTB). The space was donated for our use by the POTB, and we are extremely grateful for their generous gift.

We are currently in the midst of fixing up the room with a new tiled floor and a fresh coat of paint. We are also installing the plumbing, including stainless-steel sinks, necessary for cleanup functions.

Available equipment will include a Lyson W230 electric motorized extractor (capable of extracting eight deep frames, or 20 medium or shallow frames), a Mann Lake 24-inch uncapping tank, uncapping tools, a small shop vacuum to capture stray bees, and an 8-foot-long kitchen style counter top with large stainless steel sinks with hot and cold water for all cleanup needs. We will supply soaps, shop towels, mop and bucket, trash bags, and other necessary supplies to make extraction efforts pleasant for all our members.

The POTB also gave us an old WWII era warming oven. The oven guts have been removed, but the insulated stainless-steel body and door seals are all in great shape and we hope to retrofit it with a heat lamp and fan to use as a honey warmer. It's the perfect size for 10-frame (and smaller) hive boxes.

In May, we collectively installed upwards of 100 new nucs or packages and are all busy keeping these new hives alive and healthy. Several of our new hives were formed with Carniolans and/or Caucasians bees. We are anxiously looking forward to witnessing if these bees have a better chance of survival in our Pacific Northwest climate—or if, as advertised, they will fight off viruses better than our Italian bees.

Lastly, we are preparing for our annual participation at the Tillamook County Fair to be held August 7–10. This is always a great opportunity for us to get the word out about beekeeping and saving the bees. Thousands of folks, both young and old, will visit us, taste our honey, gaze for hours at our observation hives, and learn fun things about the magnificent honey bee.

Brad York

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Tualatin Valley Beekeeper Association members enjoyed Morris Ostrofsky's informative and engaging "Don't Bug Me" presentation at the May membership meeting. At the June membership meeting, Dr. Dewey Caron will discuss the Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Survey results as they fit a best management practice toward reducing overwintering losses. We currently have a membership of about 175, and the board works to support members on their beekeeping learning curves. Reports indicate that May was a fairly active swarm month for many. We are preparing for our yearly picnic and field day on July 20, offering hive inspections, introductions to our shared honey extraction facility, good company, and beekeeping advice. All are welcome to attend the potluck picnic event. Some members are active with community outreach activities to promote pollinator education and best practices in beekeeping. As a result of work by a local task force, the Hillsboro City Council will review a staff-drafted resolution to become a Bee City USA on June 18, and TVBA is tabling with other groups at a local "Pollinator Palooza" event on June 22 in honor of National Pollinator Week.

Debby Garman & Eddie Frie

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Willamette Valley Beekeepers have been busy equalizing and splitting their hives to keep them from swarming. There have been some swarm calls from the community, although not as many as in past years—at least not so far. The wild blackberry has begun to bloom. The bees are busy making honey now.

The association made a group purchase of nucleus hives from Foothills Honey this spring. We decided to assess a ten dollar fee per hive to go to Oregon State University. We will be sending OSU a thousand dollars.

We will be having our annual picnic this month, held at Salem's Riverfront Park on the 24th.

Richard Farrier

The Oregon State Fair BUZZ Is Getting Louder!



Bonnie King

The Oregon State Fair is getting closer every day, so it's time to get ready! Please add August 23–September 2, 2019, to your calendar . . . we need you! The OSBA has always had a strong, enthusiastic showing, and this year will be even sweeter.

The Fair is a great opportunity to help enlighten the general public, promoting the importance of beekeeping and pollinator health, while doing what most of us do

best, chatting about bees!

Please VOLUNTEER!

We hope to have OSBA members as well as members from all of our Oregon associations hosting the booth at some point throughout the eleven days of the fair.

❖ Sign up for a 4-hour shift. There will be 3–4 people per shift, so there is plenty of coverage for breaks. We need people of all levels of experience to interact with the public every day. Consider coming together as a group! The 4-hour shifts are: 10 AM–2 PM, 2 PM–6 PM, and 6 PM–10 PM (11 PM on Friday/Saturday).

Volunteers get a free pass to the fair for the day & free parking very close to our building.

❖ We need nucs for observation hives to display on a two-day rotational basis. Be part of a critical role to manage this important component of our exhibit.

❖ We will have the Oregon Honey Bear walk around a couple of hours a day. It's a full costume, for a medium-size adult. If you're interested in spending two hours in the Honey Bear suit, please say so!

❖ If you have construction or exhibit experience, we could use your assistance to set up our exhibit on August 20–21 and/or tear down the booth on Tuesday, September 3.

Please COMPETE!

Show your honey and products from the hive. Competition is broken into Youth and Adult divisions, though youth can also choose to compete with the adults.

You can find the 2019 *Honey and Products of the Hive Handbook* with guidelines for the competition in the

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Creative Living section on the state fair website: oregonstatefair.org/competitions/creative-living/agriculture-horticulture.

Competition honey and other entries will be displayed within the booth.

Sign Up Today!

The beautiful honey, creative displays, fun kid activities, and live bee exhibits are show-stoppers, but the informative hosts of the booth are what really keep the crowd interested.

You, beekeepers, are the true spirit of Oregon. Please join us at the Fair.

To volunteer, please email Bonnie King at: bonjking@gmail.com or text/call **503.864.2100**. Thank you!

Note: The call for both staffing the booth and entering the honey show will no doubt lead all to *Find Your Fun* and share it with others! For convenience, the state fair guidelines are also posted on the OSBA website under “State Fair” along with Bonnie’s sign-up sheet. The competition guide gives registration and entry instructions (**online entry deadline: 10 AM, August 14**) as well. Results from the 2018 competition—which the state fair has provided this year—are posted there, too. Congratulations to all who entered in 2018. Enjoy all preparations for 2019.

American Foulbrood—Continued from page 1

True, some of you would do whatever it takes to help an AFB-diseased colony recover. You would monitor every aspect of the pathological problem. Others of you would have the best intentions to monitor, but, for many of life’s reasons, get off schedule and increasingly the AFB infected colony would be left to fend for itself. Still others of you are totally intolerant of the disease and immediately destroy everything anywhere close to the disease source.

The second fundamental problem is that it is difficult to tell which beekeepers will always control existing cases of AFB and which beekeepers have good intentions of controlling the problem, but will fall short; therefore, the safest and simplest recommendation is to destroy the afflicted colony or colonies. Before you decide to attempt to bring a colony back from the American foulbrood brink, consider some important factors.

Before You Attempt to Help American Foulbrood-Infected Colonies

Your commitment. At first, every one of us who starts an AFB medication program fully intends to treat the afflicted colony as if it were a family member. Then it rains or the weather gets cold. Maybe my curved back starts to give me problems. My house needs painting. For whatever reason, my commitment wanes and the disease source sits there—exposing my remaining colonies and that of my beekeeping neighbors. Treating a colony for American foulbrood is a lot like becoming physically fit. You have to always work at it.

Your Beekeeping Neighbors. Some beekeepers are

tolerant while others are highly intolerant—even superstitious. If the word gets out that some of your colonies have the AFB scourge and that you are “treating” it, there is a good chance your name will be considerably worse than Mudd. There is a chance that your operation becomes the suspected source for subsequent outbreaks in the colonies of other beekeepers. True, you can try to keep the situation secret, but, if it should become public, your (apparent) sin will appear to be even worse. Be sure your colony is worth the societal price you will probably have to pay.

Your State Beekeeping Regulations. You may not have the option of treating. The regulations of individual states vary. Obviously, you will need to adhere to state regulations or go about having them changed in proper ways. As I wrote earlier, the easiest path and the simplest recommendation is to destroy the colony as most state regulations require.

So, if you are truly committed to long-term treatment and if you sense that your beekeeping neighbors would support your treatment program and if your state regulations allow you to do something other than destroy the colony, you have other options. These are serious commitments. Don’t take them lightly.

So, Where Do American Foulbrood Outbreaks Come From?

My slightly sarcastic answer to this common question is that my outbreaks come from the colonies of someone else; hence, my concerns expressed above about irate beekeeping neighbors. Even outbreaks that occur years later are sometimes attributed to disease sources long gone. It’s common human nature. So, if I just found AFB in one of my colonies, my bees must have been visiting somewhere dirty. Short of having access to technology seen only on innumerable TV crime scene shows, the source of the current outbreak will normally remain unknown. But, it’s always easier to blame someone else.

Importantly, we don’t know how often AFB symptoms are expressed within a colony and whether or not the colony deals with it before we ever see it. Due to the need for general, simplistic recommendations, we assume: (1) if a colony shows symptoms, it’s going to die, (2) the infection came from somewhere specific, (3) destroying the colonies in question prevents subsequent infections. Maybe and maybe not. I don’t know what percentage of colonies die upon getting an AFB infection. It is suspected that AFB infections are lessened during a nectar flow—probably due to the incoming nectar diluting the bacteria causing AFB. If we rarely know—for sure—where the



James Tew presented "American Foulbrood—Not Gone and Not Forgotten" to us during the 2018 fall conference.

blame such spontaneous infections on dirty neighbors, on bees foraging in dumpsters, or on wild cases of AFB. Once in my beekeeping life, I clearly got a serious outbreak of AFB from the bees of a friend as our colonies shared a yard. Otherwise, I have no specific instances of bees foraging on discarded diseased honey, and I have never seen a case of AFB in a wild colony. The question is begged, "To what extent is AFB always in my colonies and nurse bees are suppressing it?" Another question of the same genre is, "Within the same colony, when is it a new outbreak and when is it an old outbreak that is simply re-expressing itself?" Researchers have reported that the activities of house cleaning bees may frequently limit the infection; however, spores can remain active for 35–65 years and may resurface at later times.

Individual AFB scales can produce millions of spores. Larvae up to twenty-four hours old can be infected by as few as 10–35 spores. Yet, millions of spores are required to infect larvae that are two days old. Nurse bees are able to detect infected larvae and, in some tests, removed 10–40 percent of the infected larvae before they were sealed over. In other studies, about 50 percent were removed before spores began to form in the infected larvae. In general, when the disease kills a "few hundred larvae" the disease overruns the colony and it dies. In my observational experience, I have seen colonies with more than a few hundred cells recover, but clearly there is a point at which the colony is overrun.

So, It Would Appear . . .

- (1) There may be instances when the foulbrood outbreak within a specific colony is from previous AFB inoculums within the same colony—possibly even years earlier.
- (2) American foulbrood can occur at low levels and bees restrict or even eradicate it (or possibly mask it).
- (3) Robbing and beekeeper equipment exchange are still primary methods of disseminating the disease.
- (4) There is only a small window for infection of very young larvae; otherwise, older larvae are resistant.

infection is from, how can we be sure that the surviving colonies won't get in trouble, too? Would not the surviving colonies also send foragers to the same forbidden source that is unknown

to us? Historically, we

blame such spontaneous infections on dirty neighbors, on bees foraging in dumpsters, or on wild cases of AFB. Once in my beekeeping life, I clearly got a serious outbreak of AFB from the bees of a friend as our colonies shared a yard. Otherwise, I have no specific instances of bees foraging on discarded diseased honey, and I have never seen a case of AFB in a wild colony. The question is begged, "To what extent is AFB always in my colonies and nurse bees are suppressing it?" Another question of the same genre is, "Within the same colony, when is it a new outbreak and when is it an old outbreak that is simply re-expressing itself?" Researchers have reported that the activities of house cleaning bees may frequently limit the infection; however, spores can remain active for 35–65 years and may resurface at later times.

(5) AFB has a remarkably low spread rate—probably due to bee hygienic behavior and the fact that only very young larvae are affected. Things like gloves, hive tools, smokers, and the tires on the inspector's vehicle are not significant sources of infection.

(6) Hygienic behavior, either physiological or behavioral, is important in the colony's resistance to AFB.

(7) Periodic comb replacement would seem to be a helpful management procedure. Not only would acquired AFB spores be removed but also accumulation of various mite control chemicals contained within the wax would be eliminated. However, this will be a lot of extra work for both the bees and the beekeeper.

Are our colonies up to their ears in American foulbrood? Several of you corresponded with me wondering if we should all be paranoid about AFB being everywhere all the time. I don't think so, but I have many, many more questions than I have answers. I only suggest, based on the observations of bee researchers, that AFB is present, at varying levels, more often than we realize.

Is that Good or Bad News?

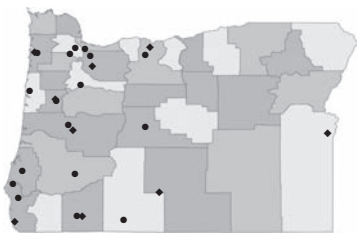
I'm not sure it's even news of any kind. From the view of a beekeeper and not that of a scientist, let's look at a hypothetical example. A beekeeper opens a hive for the first time in months and sees all the symptoms of AFB. The time-honored recommendation is to burn it. Nothing new there. Second scenario: A beekeeper opens a hive and overlooks a few cells of AFB which the bees remove within a few hours of the opening. A full year passes before the disease shows itself again.

Why now? I don't know—a change in queen stock, increasing robbing behavior, or colony stress—whatever. The point is that the colony now shows symptoms of AFB. Now enter the beekeeper asking all the old questions—where did it come from? A neighboring beekeeper has contaminated me. Whatever. My point is that you—the beekeeper—do the same thing as in scenario #1—destroy the colony.

AFB Is Still AFB

I keep hammering on this subject because it troubles me as much as it troubles you. American foulbrood can seem to come out of thin air, while at other times we blame our beekeeping neighbors or some unknown mystical source. AFB is still AFB, but it is not particularly mysterious and, interestingly, not particularly infectious, but once this disease gets beyond the control of the bees, you had better be able to recognize it or else you become the problem as you unintentionally spread it throughout your operation. AFB is not a mystery, but it still merits your close attention.

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Meets 6:30 PM, fourth Wednesday, Newport
President: Jon Sumpter—jonsmptr@msn.com
Website: www.ccbaor.org

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Meets 6:00–7:30 PM, fourth Tuesday, Bend
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Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

Meets 6:15–8:15 PM, third Wednesday, Hood River
President: Jerry Frazier—jerry1.frazier@gmail.com
Website: gorgebeekeepers.org

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Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday, Myrtle Point
President: Randy Sturgill—541.430.4095; randys@rfpco.com

Douglas County Bees

Meets 7:00–8:30 PM, first Wednesday, Roseburg
President: Ivory LosBanos—ivohart@gmail.com
Website: www.douglascountybees.org

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday, Klamath Falls
President: Paul Davitt—president@klamathbeekeepers.org
Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Eugene
President: Mike France—michaelj62@gmail.com
Website: www.lcbaor.org

Linn Benton Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday, Corvallis
President: Everett Kaser—everett@lbba.us
Website: www.lbba.us

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

Program Manager: Chad.E.Naugle@doc.state.or.us

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, third Tuesday, Gold Beach
President: Jesse Fletcher—jesse.l.fletcher@gmail.com

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Gladstone
President: Rex McIntire—503.720.7958
Website: portlandmetro.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers

Meets 7:00–9:00 PM, first Wednesday, Portland
President: Mandy Shaw—president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30–9:00 PM, first Monday, Central Point
President: Risa Halpin—303.807.1830; rhalpin906@aol.com
Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook Beekeepers

Meets 6:30–8:00 PM, second Tuesday, Tillamook
President: Brad York—dbradleyyork@gmail.com
Website: www.tillamookbeekeepers.org.

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 6:00–8:00 PM, last Tuesday, North Plains
President: Eddie Frie—ejfrie@frontier.com
Website: tvba.weebly.com

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Salem
President: Richard Farrier—rfarrierfarms@gmail.com
Website: wvbahive.org



Oregon State Beekeepers Association Membership Application

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, and an annual directory and subscription to *The Bee Line*.

*Please send check made payable to OSBA with a **completed form for each individual** to:*

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Membership dues: \$40 per person (\$50 per person outside the US) \$ _____

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Note: To renew or join online, please visit:
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Thank you!



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— If the date on the mailing label is July 2019 (or earlier), this is your friendly renewal notice. —

The Bee Line

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. Annual subscriptions to the newsletter are included with membership.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as events, corrections, comments, questions, photographs and stories, interviews, recipes, points of view—and ads/ advertising—to: Rosanna Mattingly, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: osba.newsletter@gmail.com. It's *your* newsletter—we want to hear from you!

The next issue to be printed will be the **August** issue, 2019. The deadline for submitting copy is **July 10, 2019**. Please let me know if you find difficulties with the deadline so we can work out the space and timing for the material.

Be well!

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