

# The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association

Volume 34, Number 10

November/December 2009



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**Image above:** Dr. Ramesh Sagili (left) with Dr. Dewey Caron (right) sampling honey bees and brood. Dr. Sagili will provide updates on his research at Oregon State University during the fall conference. For the Research Luncheon:

*We are soliciting questions to be answered by Dr. Ramesh Sagili during the Research Luncheon on Friday, November 20th, at the conference. This is your opportunity to get the latest news concerning his work and plans for the program. Let's find out how we can be a part of making them happen. For more information, please contact me at (503) 864-2138 or marjehry@hotmail.com.*

—Marjie Ehry

## ON THE ROAD WITH BEES

*Harry Vanderpool*

I had to chuckle to myself as the passing driver cut in front of me closely to convey his displeasure with my speed. The sign said 55 mph. I was traveling at 55 mph. That is my top prolonged speed since I have learned that my engine lubricates best below 2,000 rpm—which happens around 55 mph.

Funny, the thoughts that goes through one's head when on the road moving bees. Yet, some of my best thinking time occurs while performing the simple tasks.

It was early afternoon, June 4, 2009, and I was headed southbound from Salem on I-5 in the *Killer Bee Truck* to remove my first load of bees from meadowfoam pollination in Harrisburg.

The weather forecast was my favorite for moving bees: cooling with chance of showers. I had headed out early in order to check some colonies and tighten straps.

Droning along at 55, approaching the Highway 34 exit, tractor and trailer in tow, I awoke from my daydreams intrigued at the view ahead of me. What was I looking at?!!

What I saw appeared to be a monster, black wall. This black wall extended from the ground into clouds that were also pitch black.

This was a rather unsettling sight to behold to say the least. I was heading straight for the black wall at 55 mph.

Looking at the northbound lane, traffic was moving along just fine. That's a good sign, right?

I normally try to hold off on coffee in case I decide for a second trip. I poured a cup anyway.

*Wow. That really IS a black wall,* I thought as I drew within a couple of miles of the sight.

As I approached the wall, it became a tunnel that one would enter under a mountain.

Driving into (or was it under?) the wall, I noticed that all of the northbound cars had their headlights on.

Then things became really dark. As I turned on the headlights, I glanced at the clock: 3:00 PM.

*Continued on page 8*

### The Bee Line

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association. The newsletter is published ten times a year, and subscriptions are included with membership in OSBA.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as corrections, letters, comments, photographs and stories (old and new), interviews, and requests for advertising to: Editor, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: [osba.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:osba.newsletter@gmail.com).

#### Advertising Costs Per Issue

Business Ads:	
Business card	\$10.00
Quarter page	\$25.00
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Full page	\$100.00

Classified Ads (30 words):	
Members	\$3.00
Nonmembers	\$5.00

Please submit copy by the 10th of the month prior to publication. The next issue will be the January/February 2010 issue. Contact the Editor if you have any questions or concerns.

Many thanks!

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This should be the last president's column that I will author. It seems that the three years I have been writing this column have passed quickly. But on the other hand, it seems like I have been writing this column forever. Rosanna is always holding *The Bee Line* for my late comments. I can never get my thoughts together until the pressure builds that everyone will know that I am not organized enough to get the job done. The thought of how incompetent I will look always spurs me to come up with a last-minute idea. Not always a good idea, but enough to satisfy my inner fears.

My idea this month is to thank all of the officers and members of the Board of Directors who have served with me during my term in office. It is a little-known fact that the president's position is the easiest job in the structure of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association. The other officers spend much more time and expertise fulfilling their positions.

Each of them served so well that our convention continues to be one of the highlights of the year for beekeepers in the Northwest. Many people have volunteered to help with registration, the silent and oral auctions, advertising, sound, and lighting. Most have helped for more years than my term in office. My thanks to the advice of past officers who helped this organization keep running smoothly and consistently. In addition, thanks to the many extra workers helping the organization stay on course.

The last issue of *The Bee Line* contained information about several members willing to serve as officers during the next few years. Others have also stepped forward to help. If you are interested, please let me know before the annual business meeting Friday afternoon during the convention.

Officers and directors from each of the areas of the state will be voted on during the meeting. A very important constitutional change will also be voted on during the business meeting. See more about this change [on page 6] in this issue of *The Bee Line*.

I have seen several advertisements for new methods of controlling mites and *Nosema* in the trade magazines. How expensive, how effective, and how difficult they will be to apply is a good question. You can find the answers; just be sure to attend the Northwest Corner Beekeeping Conference this month in Seaside, Oregon. Many beekeeping experts will be there to answer these and other questions. You can also find old friends and new friends in the hallways to provide additional questions for you to ponder during the next few months.

Thanks to everyone for your support of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association.

—Chuck

## RESEARCH AT OREGON STATE

*Ramesh Sagili*

Greetings!!! I hope all of you are prepared for the winter. It's been almost seven months since I came to Oregon. I have truly enjoyed the company of Oregon beekeepers as well as the gorgeous weather until now. Hope I will survive the rainy winter as well, in anticipation of the beautiful spring and summer of Oregon. As Chuck has been frequently updating on our research program, we have been able to do significant research at OSU—keeping in mind the fact that I came in mid-March and had to start the research program from scratch. I again extend our thanks to the beekeepers and OSBA for their help and support for the research program.

As most of you might know, we started the statewide honey bee health baseline study during the month of August. For this study, we obtained bee samples from commercial as well as hobbyist beekeepers across the state for analyzing for *Varroa*, *Nosema*, tracheal mites, American foulbrood, European foulbrood, and the nutritional status of bees. We would like to thank all the beekeepers for promptly sending their samples back and also urge those who have taken samples but not yet returned them to send them soon.

We have started analyzing the samples and will be posting the results, as they become available, at: [entomology.oregonstate.edu/HBcensus](http://entomology.oregonstate.edu/HBcensus). For a full picture of your results, please check back before the end of November. We plan to analyze the majority of the samples before the meeting in Seaside. I will talk about other research and extension projects during the conference. Hope to see you all in Seaside in November.

## UPCOMING ELECTIONS

As noted in the October issue of the newsletter, at least some of those have served as officers and directors, both regional and association, will soon seek other challenges. Let Chuck Sowers know if you would like to serve! To date, Dr. Lynn Royce has expressed interest in serving as president, and Herb Brasington, as vice president. Their statements appear in the October issue. Bev Koch, whose statement appears here, has written to express

interest in representing the Portland-Metro area. Elections will take place during the business meeting at the conference.

## For Portland-Metro Area Representative

I would be honored to serve as Portland-Metro area regional representative. In my 13 or so years of bee tending, I've learned a lot as I've enjoyed sharing my experiences with others. I've been a member of the Portland-Metro group for many years and helped out with some officer duties. At present, I'm the librarian. I've attended many of the state conferences, attended meetings of other groups in the area, done presentations at elementary schools, and helped in the formation of the Zenger Farm Community Bee Project in Portland. I'm very interested in seeing the next generation get excited about honey bees, as well as other pollinators, and how it all works together in providing food for us. With the growing interest in honey bees, I want to help the state organization support that growth by educating the general public and beekeepers alike about the challenges and rewards of keeping bees.

—Bev Koch

## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

We are looking forward to seeing you at this year's conference! It promises to meet the needs and interests of all Northwest beekeepers, including beginners, semi-commercial, and commercial.

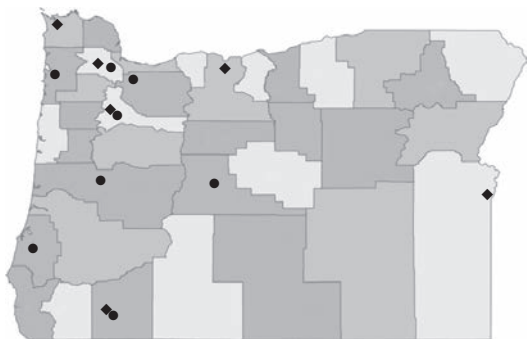
For the novice beekeeper, we have a "Beginning Bee School" which will run simultaneously with the regular program. This will give you the opportunity to decide which program will best meet your individual needs.

This year's speakers include nationally renowned researchers, regional and local beekeepers, and our own researchers—from Oregon State, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, and Washington State, Dr. Steve Sheppard.

We are excited that the convention will be at the Seaside Convention Center. This facility has plenty of room for all of us to meet in one building. One of the benefits of this location is the large lobby, which will hold all the vendors just outside the room where we will meet.

*Continued on page 8*

## OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION RESOURCES



### ◆OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

**Columbia Basin:** Deb Morgan  
3800 Benson Rd, The Dalles; (541) 298-5719

**Eastern Oregon:** Jordan Dimock  
2635 Mitchell Butte Rd, Nyssa; (541) 372-2726

**Portland-Metro Area:** Herb Brasington  
1881 NE Ashberry Dr, Hillsboro; (503) 701-4180  
herb@hwbsystems.com

**North Coast:** Thom Trusewicz  
90041 Logan Rd, Astoria; (503) 325-7966  
ccbees@gmail.com

**South Coast:** Open

**Southern Oregon:** Floyd Pawlowski  
415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; (541) 482-4797

**Willamette Valley:** Harry Vanderpool  
7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem; (503) 399-3675  
shallotman@yahoo.com

### ◆OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

**Central Oregon Beekeepers**  
Meets 6:30 PM, third Tuesday, Bend  
Deschutes Public Library, Hutch Rm  
**President:** Dennis Gallagher  
(541) 389-4776  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Glenda Galaba  
(541) 383-1775

**Coos County Beekeepers**  
Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December)  
Olsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Pt  
**President:** Shigeo Oku; (541) 396-4016  
**Vice President:** John Gardner; (541) 572-3847  
**Secretary:** Bobbi Gardner; (541) 572-3847  
**Treasurer:** Jane Oku; (541) 396-4016  
jane\_oku@hotmail.com

**Lane County Beekeepers**  
Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Eugene  
Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd  
**President:** Katharine Hunt; (541) 607-0106  
cwhunt@uoregon.edu

**Vice President:** Judy Scher; (541) 344-2114  
judy\_scher@catdreams.com  
**Secretary:** Chuck and Katharine Hunt  
(541) 607-0106; cwhunt@uoregon.edu  
**Treasurer:** Nancy Ograin; (541) 935-7065  
woodrt@pacinfo.com  
**Web site:** www.lcbaor.org

### Portland-Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7 PM, second Thursday, Oregon City  
Clackamas Comm College, Clairmont Hall, Room 118  
**President:** Kerry Haskins  
(503) 632-8448; kh251@aol.com  
**Vice President:** Jim Mellis; (503) 631-4622  
**Secretary:** Paul Hardzinski; (503) 631-3927  
**Treasurer:** Barbara Derkacht; (503) 631-3063  
bderkacht@yahoo.com

### Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday, Central Pt  
So Or Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd  
**President:** John Jacob; (541) 582-BEES  
john@oldsolenterprises.com  
**Vice President:** Floyd Pawlowski  
415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; (541) 482-4797  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Julian Lewis  
(541) 535-5817; lewis\_adams\_00@yahoo.com  
**Web site:** www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org

### Tillamook County Beekeepers

For meeting and other information about the  
group, please contact:  
**President:** Bob Allen; (503) 322-3819

### Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, last Friday, Beaverton  
OSU Ext, #1400, 18640 SW Walker Rd  
**President:** Herb Brasington; (503) 701-4180  
herb@hwbsystems.com  
**Vice President:** Paul Anderson  
paulanderson@tritektsolutions.com  
**Secretary:** Jerry Maasdam; jmaasdam@mac.com  
**Co-Treasurers:** Brigitte and Michael Hendrickson  
mdhendri@gmail.com

### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7 PM, fourth Monday, Salem  
Chemeketa Comm College, Bldg 34, Rm A  
**President:** Richard Farrier; (541) 327-2673  
**Vice President:** Harry Vanderpool; (503) 399-3675  
shallotman@yahoo.com  
**Secretary:** Mike Rodia; (503) 364-3275  
drodia@yahoo.com  
**Treasurer:** Gordon Kroemer; (503) 538-2307  
kroemer2@verizon.net

## REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

### Portland-Metro Beekeepers

At the October meeting, recommended changes to the constitution and bylaws were distributed to members. Additional suggestions are invited and will be discussed at the November meeting. This is an effort to bring more clarity to these documents and to make changes reflective of the current needs of the club.

Congratulations to the winners of the three conference registrations donated by the club and the fourth registration supported by OSBA. Winners of the club registrations were Alva Lea Fong, Bernard Newland, and Cindy Mason. Bill Zuber won the OSBA registration. An alternate winner was also chosen in case one of the winners should be unable to attend. Congratulations to all—enjoy the conference! As there were many interested in being included in the drawing, there should be good representation from our group at this important Northwest Corner conference.

The highlight of the meeting was a presentation by Dewey Caron on raising your own queens. After a brief outline of the ways bees naturally replace failing queens or swarm to take pressure off a crowded hive, Dr. Caron outlined ways we beekeepers often replace our queens. He pointed out that, when queens die or have been removed suddenly from the hive, the bees will quickly begin making emergency replacement cells. The issue here is that these cells often produce inferior queens. Dr. Caron suggested that we beekeepers engage in one of the controlled queen-rearing methods. He briefly outlined the Miller and Alley methods as well as the egg-transfer method. Most of the discussion centered around the Doolittle or grafting method of queen rearing. Dr. Caron stressed that starting with larvae from our BEST colony was crucial. This method takes some (or a lot of) practice as transferring the day-old larva from colony cells into the queen-rearing egg cups is a learned skill, and we novices can expect a limited success rate at first; however, we should persevere.

Dr. Caron gave a detailed explanation of starting the grafts in a started colony: a closed and queenless cell-started colony containing lots of young nurse bees, a frame of pollen, a frame of honey, and a sponge or towel soaked in water to provide moisture for the box. This colony with the newly grafted larvae in cups is kept closed for 24 hours. Now the cells are transferred to a finishing colony. At last, after about 14 days from the beginning of the process, the queen cells are ready to be moved to mating nucs or colonies needing requeening. Be sure the old queen has been killed! Dr. Caron reminded us not to forget the drones, and, again, to encourage drone production from the best hives. His final take-away message: to produce the best, start with the best. Hopefully, next summer will find PMBA members experimenting with rearing our own queens. Much thanks to Dewey Caron for his instructive lecture at the meeting!

—*Barbara Derkacht*

### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

After covering the general business required we set Sunday evening the 6th of December for our annual Christmas party. It was decided that we would do a potluck to provide more opportunity for socialization. After the business meeting, a roundtable discussion was held addressing questions and issues people had, most of which were under the subject of preparing for winter: what can go wrong, what to watch for, and how to recover.

The September meeting was also our annual honey tasting; therefore, there was no time for a formal presentation. The club supplied hot biscuits, which were baked during the business portion of the meeting. Once the group discussions were wrapped up, we all had the opportunity to sample each other's honey crop. Many varieties were available as we had about 18 different samples to put on the biscuits. Of course, there were a few purists who used toothpicks instead of biscuits as the carrier for their honey. A good 45 minutes were spent by the attendees tasting and discussing the merits of each offering. We know that an enjoyable time was had by all because this is always one of our highest-attended events!!

—*Paul Anderson*

## **KEEPING BEES IN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER**

*Todd Balsiger*

November and December are two months to enjoy the lack of bee work. That being said, I will still make you think that there is a lot to do by what I write below:

- ❖ Excessive moisture in our hives is one of our biggest concerns—lids should be water tight, hives tilted so water drains away, and adequate ventilation provided (a small nail between the lid and upper box works). Hive ventilation is even more important come January, when hive moisture increases because of brood rearing and increased metabolism in the colony.
- ❖ Periodic warm spells afford the opportunity to visually assess the health of our colonies when bees are active doing cleansing flights and such, and to do emergency manipulations if necessary. As a rule, never open a hive in winter unless there's a good reason and the temperature is at least 45°F, and work around the cluster rather than through it.
- ❖ Take note of colonies that are flying little or not at all during periodic warm spells. Do cursory checks for weight, and determine if the colonies are alive (place your ear against the wall, thump the wall with your hand, and listen for the *buzz*).
- ❖ For colonies low on stores, feed fondant or frames of honey. Other options are to retire the colony or let Darwinism run its course. We do not feed syrup at this time as the bees cannot remove the extra moisture, and too much moisture can cause dysentery and exacerbate *Nosema*.
- ❖ An ideal way to feed fondant is to use lids with rims and to pour the fondant directly into the void. These fondant lids can last for a few weeks. Make sure to follow the recipe, and avoid over-heating the fondant.
- ❖ Drivert has been discussed as an alternative to regular fondant. Drivert is 92 percent finely pulverized sucrose plus 8 percent invert sugar. According to C&H, it is “a dry fondant sugar used in icings and pan-coated confections.”
- ❖ For dead-outs, determine why the colony succumbed: queenlessness, starvation, disease?

Always check for scale in the brood frames for the presence of American foulbrood. You may want to cull some of the frames because of their age and condition; return the balance to storage.

- ❖ Occasionally check your apiary to make sure everything is okay (especially after a wind storm). Check to make sure the lids are secure and verify that animals (e.g., mice, bears, and humans) have not been bothering (e.g., chewing, eating, or vandalizing) the hives.
- ❖ Give honey and/or candles to family, friends, farmers, growers, and others for the holidays.
- ❖ Attend the Northwest Corner conference in Seaside in November.

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## **NORTH VALLEY/SOUTH VALLEY**

It has been proposed that representation of the Willamette Valley as a whole be split into north and south regions. This change is necessary because the area involved is too large for full, adequate representation throughout. The split would require a change in Article V, Section 1, of the OSBA Constitution to add one additional regional director as an officer. In addition, the split would require alteration of the OSBA Bylaws, Article II, Section 4, for consistency in making this change. The proposed new wording of the sections would appear as:

### **OSBA Constitution**

#### **ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

##### **Section 1. Officers**

The officers of Oregon State Beekeepers' Association shall consist of president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, and eight regional directors. These officers plus the outgoing president and all qualified directors shall constitute the executive committee.

(A) The eight regional directors shall be known as regional directors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Each shall have full voting privileges on the executive committee. All regional directors shall be current members of Oregon State Beekeepers' Association. The eight regional directors shall be elected from eight different areas over the state, as follows:

1. Southern Oregon (including Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Klamath, and Lake Counties).
2. Eastern Oregon (all other counties east of the Cascades, except the Columbia Basin).

3. Columbia Basin (including the city of Bend north to Hood River and The Dalles).
4. South Coast (including the city of Florence and southward).
5. North Coast (northward of the city of Florence).
6. North Willamette Valley (northward of Albany).
7. South Willamette Valley (southward of Corvallis).
8. Portland-Metro Area (Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties).

**OSBA Bylaws**

**ARTICLE II – DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**Section 4. Regional Directors**

Regional directors shall serve on the executive committee. The eight regional directors shall be elected from different areas of the state and will be expected to be aware of the problems facing beekeeping in those areas and be responsible for bringing these problems to the attention of the executive committee and the members.

These proposed changes in the Constitution and Bylaws are to be voted on during the **business meeting at the annual conference**, November 20, 2009. Send any comments or considerations prior to the meeting to Herb Brasington at (503) 701-4180 or herb@hwbsystems.com.

**VP Message—Continued from page 3**

If this is your first time participating in a beekeepers' convention, this will be an experience you'll never forget! This is a great opportunity to make new friends from all over the Northwest and meet some great people who share a love for beekeeping. For those who have attended before, you already may be aware that our conferences draw repeat beekeepers from Washington, Idaho, California, and British Columbia. Personally, I find the social part of the conference is equally as good as the information. Look forward to seeing you in Seaside.

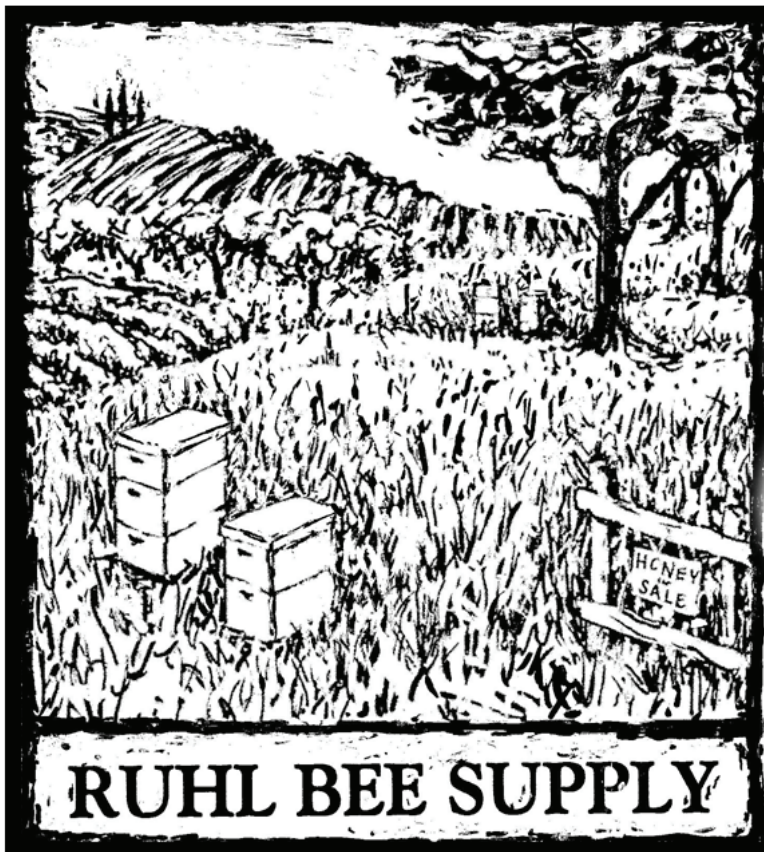
—Mark Johnson

**ANNUAL HONEY SHOW**

The entry form and rules for the Honey Show that will take place at the fall conference are the same as last year. They will be posted on the OSBA Web site at: www.orsba.org. Guidelines for preparations are given in the September 2008 issue of the newsletter.

—Marjie Ehry

**Next issue:** For beekeepers who have put bees out for pollination, the closing of the year brings time to review records as well as practices. The form for the annual pollination survey will appear in the January/February issue.



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**Trucking Bees—Continued from page 1**

It was 3:00 in the afternoon and dark as night. The cruise control maintained 55 mph.

Then, a snap and a pop on the windshield—pea-sized hail!

Within seconds, both hail and rain were falling at such intensity I could see nothing beyond the hood of the truck.

The roar of the hail became deafening. I had exactly zero visibility.

I dropped out of cruise. Getting off of the freeway became the goal.

Problem was, I could not see in front of the truck and the roar of the hail was getting only louder.

I turned on the emergency flashers and slowly started to move over to the shoulder. I was sure that, as I left the pavement, I would feel the truck lean toward the ditch—well out of the way of traffic.

Instead, a white glow came into view to the right. It was a guardrail. Then a red glow appeared in the darkness ahead—the taillights of the semi I had been trailing.

We were at a dead stop in the slow lane on I-5 with our flashers blinking at 3:00 PM in June.

The roar of hail continued in total darkness, then noticeably tapered until it ceased as suddenly as it had started.

I could see!

It was a parking lot on I-5. All lanes were covered with parked cars. Cars were parked in the median and on the shoulders. Hail carpeted the ground in shallow waves.

Turning on the radio made sense as my next step. The first sounds I heard were those familiar tones of the Emergency Broadcast System, the tones that normally precede a test of the system.

This was not a test.

“The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning for the following areas...” were the words spoken in the familiar canned, scratchy transmission. Thankfully, I learned that the storm was moving in the opposite direction.

Then the warnings were soon retracted with no injuries reported.

Once back underway, I took the first exit so I could check binders and straps. Well, that was my excuse for getting out and walking around a bit.

The next time I approach a weather event such as this, I will either floor it in the other direction or tuck the truck safely under an overpass.

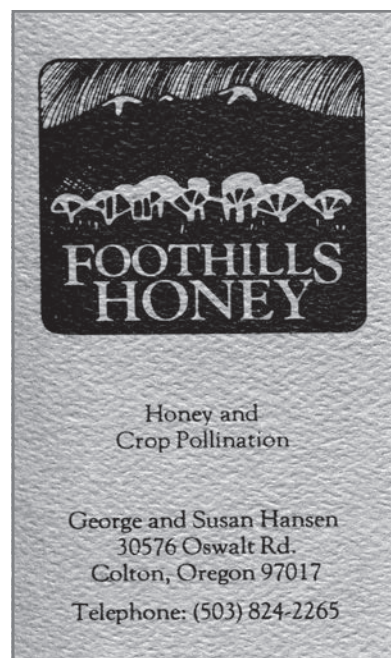
On the upside, I am grateful for the continual adventure of beekeeping.

**FOR DONATIONS TO THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE  
FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION  
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- Make your check out to: **OSU FOUNDATION**
- On the memo line, take care to write:  
**THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY  
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If you have any questions regarding details of the fund or how to donate, please contact Kenny Williams, Chairman of the OSBA's Endowment Fund, at (541) 456-2631.

**IMPORTANT:** Making your check out only as described above ensures that your donation is correctly applied to the appropriate Endowment and not to any other program.





**Note:** As recorded in the minutes printed in the October issue, the Executive Board has voted that OSBA members are to place and renew subscriptions to the *American Bee Journal*, *Bee Culture*, and *The Speedy Bee* on their own. The OSBA Co-Secretary/Treasurer will no longer place these orders for members. When placing your order, take care to renew your subscription before it expires to avoid lapses. In addition, please use the forms provided here to subscribe to magazines at the discounted rates offered to members. In the past, OSBA has paid the additional cost when occasionally members have used "older" forms with lower advertised rates. This "making up the difference" will no longer be possible.

**AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL** For OSBA New Subscriptions and Renewals during November/December 2009 **SAVE 25%**  
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Return to: American Bee Journal  
 51 S. 2nd St., Hamilton, IL 62341

**ROOT PUBLICATIONS** ASSOCIATION MEMBER SUBSCRIPTION  
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

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## POWDERED SUGAR GETS ANOTHER SHAKE

**Note:** The following comments from Morris Ostrofsky of the Lane County association, Dr. Dewey Caron in reply to Morris, and California beekeeper, Janet Brisson, are in response to the article "Powder Sugaring Bees?" on the use of powdered sugar for *Varroa* control by Dewey Caron in the September 2009 issue of *The Bee Line*.

**Morris Ostrofsky:** I wanted to share some my experiences with powdered sugar dusting. I strongly agree with Dr. Caron's concluding statement in the May 1999 issue of the *American Bee Journal* in which he states, "It is still possible to forsake the 'pesticide treadmill' of more and more, stronger and stronger chemicals..." To that end, I have successfully used powdered sugar to control mites. To give you an example of the efficacy of the powdered sugar treatment, I am listing the results of my treatment of one of my colonies, #9-6, this year. This colony has two full-depth brood boxes.



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Date	Treatment/Finding
8/27	200 mites, 24-hour drop
8/28	powdered sugar dusted
8/31	144 mites, 24-hour drop
9/3 & 9/7	powdered sugar dusted
9/10	48 mites, 24-hour drop
9/11 & 9/15	powdered sugar dusted
9/20	4 mites, 24-hour drop

The 24-hour counts of mites were done on a sticky board placed beneath the screened bottom board.

Please note that I would NOT normally treat this often; however, it was late in the season, and I wanted to get the mite count down before fall. I know this was awfully invasive, and I don't like to BUG colonies unnecessarily; however, I felt that the alternatives were worse. I have used this strategy to reduce mite loads in other problem colonies this year and in previous years. The fact that I did not lose any colonies last winter and had used powdered sugar to reduce mite counts in fall is an indication that dusting is effective.

**Dewey Caron:** Morris, I appreciated your comment... and your careful observations. You will note in the article I did say that mites are knocked off bees with powdered sugar...but in the Florida study I referred to, over a year-long period there was no difference in mites. The observation you had of knocking mite numbers down was also seen by the authors in this year-long study. I also said in article that a different powdered sugar use (or a different method of application such as the powder sugaring device at GloryBee) might prove useful. Using powdered sugar in the fall to knock mites off the adults would seem to be one of those instances of selective use of powdered sugar—when you can reduce mite numbers in the short run—a pretty important short-run period since fewer mites going into fall should mean fewer mites in the spring. In the October 2009 *American Bee Journal* article, Jerry Hayes, one of the authors of the Florida study, in his monthly Q&A column answered a letter from Janet Brisson of California on whether powdered sugar works or not as follows: “Yes...research results showed that varroa was not significantly controlled by dusting with powdered sugar. Within the parameters of their research, powdered sugar didn't work great. But, that does not mean that if the research trial were

re-structured to treat more often or in a different way that results would not be different.... Research shows it doesn't work long-term. But, in real world situations it does. What to do? I'd treat with powdered sugar until research catches up with reality.”

Certainly an initial count of 200 mites in a 24-hour drop would trigger a decision to “do something” (50 or more mites is the threshold number). Your sampling demonstrates that powdered sugar did reduce the number on adults to a more “reasonable” load. I urge you (and other beekeepers using powdered sugar) to continue use, and continue to document and report effectiveness.

**Janet Brisson:** I just read the article, “Powder Sugaring Bees?” by Dewey Caron in the September 2909 issue of *The Bee Line*. I wanted to respond to the editor's request about beekeepers powdered sugaring bees on a regular basis. Since March of 2005, almost five years, we have used nothing but powdered sugar to reduce and control *Varroa* mites in our colonies. This year, we had seven colonies and by September, even though we dusted the colonies in mid-July, the mite counts were over the threshold (50 mites in 24 hours) in several of the colonies. We did five applications of powdered sugar in four weeks, and now our high counts are cut in half and the other colonies are very low. Although we do not dust every week, we have someone in our club who dusts weekly and has no *Varroa*. We tend to dust our bees several times a year three times, one week apart, mostly in March, May, and July. In September, with the really high counts, we could dust 4–6 times in three weeks. From November through February, we dust once a month. Here in California, we do get a week of nice weather each winter month, and it is a great time to get rid of the phoretic mites. August and September, we always have had high mite counts, and, with regular dustings, we have always been able to get them down.

Yes, it's intensive, but not hard on the bees or brood at all. One of the things I noticed is, at first, the bees almost sounded angry when you dusted them. Now, almost a curious buzzing, they no longer seem upset. I feel it's important to know that dusting with powdered sugar is a wonderful option to keep the mite load down.

## Northwest Corner Beekeeping Conference

### Tentative Agenda

**Thursday: November 19, 2009**

7:00 PM Kick-Off Wine and Cheese Social

7:00 PM Banquet

Keynote: George Hansen—TBA

Benefit Auction

**Friday: November 20, 2009**

7:30 AM Registration

8:00 AM Silent Auction Begins

8:15 AM Chuck Sowers, OSBA President  
*Welcome and Announcements*

**Saturday: November 21, 2009**

7:30 AM Registration

8:15 AM Chuck Sowers, President OSBA  
*Welcome and Announcements*

*Concurrent Session*

8:30 AM— Thom Trusewicz, Astoria Beekeeper  
NOON *Bee School*



*Concurrent Session*

8:30 AM— Thom Trusewicz, Astoria Beekeeper  
NOON *Bee School*



*General Session*

8:30 AM Dr. Frank Eischen, USDA ARS  
*Comparing Protein Feeding with Feed Products on the Market*

9:15 AM Dr. Ramesh Sagili, OSU  
*Honey Bee Research and Extension*

10:00 AM Break

10:15 AM Dr. Steve Sheppard, WSU  
*Germplasm Research Report*

11:00 AM Dr. Dewey Caron, OSU  
*Regional Bee Loss Epidemic Update*

NOON Research Luncheon  
Keynote: Dr. Ramesh Sagili—TBA

1:15 PM Visit Vendor Booths  
Latest News on CCD

2:00 PM Dirk Olsen, Albany Beekeeper  
*Wintering Bees Indoors in the Valley*

2:45 PM Break

3:00 PM Dr. Michael Burgett, OSU  
*Apis cerana, The Eastern Honey Bee*

3:45 PM John Borden, Pherotech  
*Treating Colonies with SuperBoost*

4:00 PM Silent Auction Ends

4:30 PM State Business Meeting

6:00 PM Social Hour

*General Session*

8:30 PM Frank Pendell, CA Queen Breeder  
*Commercial Queen Rearing in CA*

9:15 AM Dr. Frank Eischen, USDA ARS  
*Feeding Overwintered Colonies in Preparation for Almond Pollination*

10:00 AM Break

10:15 AM Pat Heitkam, Heitkams' Honey Bees  
*Panel Discussion: Almond Pollination*

11:00 AM Judy Wu, MS Student, WSU  
*Sublethal Effects of Pesticides in Honey Bee Brood Combs*

NOON Lunch on your own: Explore Seaside

1:30 PM George Hansen, Colton Beekeeper  
*Encaustic Painting Demonstration*

2:15 PM Matthew Smart, MS Student, WSU  
*Nosema ceranae: Pathogen and Parasite Interactions in the PNW*

3:00 PM Break

3:15 PM Dr. Dewey Caron—TBA

4:00 PM Chuck Sowers, OSBA President  
*Final Comments*

**Northwest Corner Beekeeping Conference**  
**Oregon State Beekeepers' Association**



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<b>Saturday Conference Only:</b> Individual @ \$65, Family @ \$80 (Before October 15, deduct \$25 discount <sup>1</sup> )	\$
<b>Full Conference:</b> Individual @ \$100, Family @ \$125 (Before October 15, deduct \$25 discount <sup>1</sup> )	\$
<b>Friday Research Luncheon @ \$20</b>	\$
<b>Friday Evening Banquet @ \$32</b>	\$
<b>OSBA Membership</b> (includes <i>The Bee Line</i> ) @ \$20	\$
<b>TOTAL<sup>2</sup></b>	\$

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*May everyone find much to be thankful for as well as time for reflection as we—and the bees—respond to the chill in the air and shortening days. May all celebrations be warm and bright.*

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