



The Diablo Bee



Newsletter of the Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association

March 2007

2007 BOARD

www.diablobees.org

President

Stan Thomas
(925) 228-3209

honeymanstan1@netzero.net

First Vice President

Tom Lewis
(925) 348-4470

Past President

Stan Thomas

VP- Community Education

Judy Casale
(510) 881-4939

jmcasale@comcast.net

VP-Member Education

Richard Coleman
925 685-6849

rich6849@yahoo.com

Secretary

Lois Kail

Membership:

Gary Eubanks
(925) 875-1871

beedad94568@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter

Ersten Imaoka and Kieran Mone

(925) 408-0498

ersten3@yahoo.com

Kieran@usmones.com



Next meeting:

7:30 pm – 03/08/07

Heather Farm Garden
Center

1540 Marchbanks
Walnut Creek

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE

Larry Wadler.....	1
What's the Buzz	2
Honey Bees Dying.....	3
Classifieds.....	4
MDBA Calendar.....	4

This month we experienced the sad loss of Treasurer Larry Wadler. Our condolences go out to his family.



Larry Wadler, our late Treasurer

In Memory of Larry

It was, until recent times, quite normal, for people with a small amount of land to keep bees. A very interesting folk custom grew out of this. When a member of the family died, the first thing you had to do was tell the bees about it. The procedure was simple. The head of the

family would, together with a younger relative, head down to the beehives, whisper the name of the dead person to them, and then tie a piece of ribbon around the hives. The belief was that if you did not do so, the bees would leave.

The origin of the custom is unknown, but it was in vogue until fairly recently. Some of the senior citizens I know remember it being done when their grandparents died. However, as with many other things, it started *dying out in the 1940s*.

TELLING THE BEES

*Tell it to the bees, lest they
Umbrage take and fly away,
That the dearest boy is dead,
Who went singing, blithe and dear,
By the golden hives last year.
Curly-head, ah, curly-head!*

*Tell them that the summer's over,
Over mignonette and clover;
Oh, speak low and very low!
Say that he was blithe and bonny,
Good as gold and sweet as honey,
All too late the roses blow!*

*Say he will not come again,
Not in any sun or rain,
Heart's delight, ah, heart's
delight!
Tell them that the boy they knew
Sleeps out under rain and dew
In the night, ah, in the night!*

Herb o' Grace: Katharine Tynan

Remembering Larry Wadler

By: Tom Lewis, First Vice President

As most of you know, our good friend Larry Wadler passed away Thursday, February 15th. Larry's services were held on Tuesday, the 20th. It was a beautiful brisk day on a Richmond hillside. The graveside service was very personal, many friends and family were there, including about a dozen of us from MDBA. The officiating Rabbi, and family, made many references to Larry's love of beekeeping and his generosity with his honey. None of us should expect a finer eulogy. A beautiful poem/song was read which referred to the "sting and the sweet".

Larry's brother Arnie, and many other family members, expressed thanks for the attendance of Larry's beekeeping friends. They have also been concerned about the transition to the next Treasurer. Larry had only stepped down as treasurer the week of the February General Meeting because he realized that he wasn't healthy enough to continue.

Larry was a cheerful guy with a big smile. Everyone loved the guy, and appreciated his opinions. Even when he disagreed with me, he smiled, was polite, and didn't judge. Larry didn't hesitate to speak his mind, particularly on the direction of the club's energy and resources. He was a very dedicated Treasurer. Larry took over from Marilyn Mangle with nary a blip in the business. Larry felt a responsibility to serve us the best way he could. He took the financial health of the club to heart, and urged us to raise money, be generous, and also to be good stewards of the club. Larry was the first to thank us for donations of both time and money, although he seldom received credit for his own considerable contributions. At Larry's urging we started acknowledging the folks who go to the schools and organizations, and others who generated income for us.

Recently, Stan talked Larry into taking Gary Lawrence's place as the moderator of Bee Chat. What a character he turned out to be up in the front of the room for a change. We really had a gem of a man in our midst and I know he'll be remembered that way.

I only recently realized that the reason that Larry didn't eat much at our Board meetings was because of the rules in his faith regarding food and it's preparation. Because of this, I warned my wife Florence when we hosted a meeting recently, that

Larry probably wouldn't eat with us. Flo was undaunted, and when Larry arrived, she told him what she had prepared. I was amazed to see Larry eagerly having several helpings of her food, and Florence was honored that he did. She told me "I'll always remember that little guy" because of the way they got along that night. I wish that I knew Larry better on a personal level; I hope that I can learn from this and spend more time with all of my friends.

By: Ron Pipa

I knew Larry since my first day three 1/2 years ago visiting the MDBA meeting to see what it was all about. He was always personable and friendly. Besides both being beekeeper's he also had a daughter who started college this year and we would sometimes talk about how they were doing.

When the MDBA board "retirement" was held last year, he gave each of the "retirees" a honey bear with his own honey and a very nice bow tie label on it. I just looked at that honey bear this morning in the cupboard and it brought back fond memories. He will be missed

By: Debbe Holeman

I was just starting to be friends with Larry. He was going to piggyback (his words) with me next time I ordered hive stands. And he mailed me accounting papers for the club because I told him I was interested in accounting. I was looking forward to talking with him when I paid my membership this year and getting to know him better at upcoming meetings. I liked him because it seemed like he didn't put on airs.

What's the Buzz?
THANK YOU!



February Guest Speaker, Janet Brisson

Janet Brisson of the Nevada County Beekeepers Association, and proprietor of Country Rubes in Grass Valley, gave a talk on mite control using screened bottom boards (SSB) and powdered sugar (PS):

1. SBBs are essential in combination with PS applications to control varroa mites.

2. Coat the removable tray of an SSB with canola oil or Crisco to make “sticky board”.

3. If mite counts exceed 25 in a 24 hour period, start PS treatment. Mite count is determined by leaving a sticky board in the SBB a full three days after a PS treatment. The mite count after three days is then divided by three to arrive at the 24-hour period count. This method is only reliable when brood is present -- usually from late winter/early spring until fall.

4. In infected hives, an average of 1.4 mites are present in worker cells, and an average of 2.9 mites are present in drone cells.

5. A weekly PS treatment from late winter until fall eliminates virtually all mites. Doing this treatment three or four times during the spring, about seven to 10 days apart, and again a couple of times in August, should keep mite populations under control.

6. To prevent robbing when there is a dearth of pollen and nectar, remove the tops of all hives prior to the PS treatment. Bees would defer to defending their homes instead of stealing food from their neighbors.

Janet’s multi-function anti-varroa SSBs are available from Country Rubes (530) 913-2724. These SSBs are dipped into a paraffin and tree rosin solution to render them weatherproof. You can e-mail her at rubes@countryrubes.com, or visit her website at www.countryrubes.com.

Honey Bees Dying of Mysterious Disorder



UNIVERSITY PARK, Pennsylvania, January 29, 2007 (ENS) - A die-off of honey bees has beekeepers struggling for survival and farmers worried about whether bees will be around to pollinate their crops this year.

An affliction recently named colony collapse disorder, CCD, has decimated commercial

beekeeping operations in Pennsylvania and across the country.

"During the last three months of 2006, we began to receive reports from commercial beekeepers of an alarming number of honey bee colonies dying in the eastern United States," said Maryann Frazier, apiculture extension associate in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Since the beginning of the year, beekeepers from all over the country have been reporting unprecedented losses".

Initial studies of dying colonies revealed a large number of disease organisms present, with no one disease being identified as the culprit, says Dennis vanEngelsdorp, acting state apiarist with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Ongoing case studies and surveys of beekeepers experiencing CCD have found a few common management factors, but no common environmental agents or chemicals have been identified.

"Preliminary work has identified several likely factors that could be causing or contributing to CCD," said vanEngelsdorp. "Among them are mites and associated diseases, some unknown pathogenic disease and pesticide contamination or poisoning."

The bee die-off is serious because so few bees remain after previous problems. "Because the number of managed honey bee colonies is less than half of what it was 25 years ago, states such as Pennsylvania can ill afford these heavy losses," said Frazier.

The National Honey Board has pledged \$13,000 of emergency funding to the CCD working group. Other organizations, such as the Florida State Beekeepers Association, are working with their membership to raise additional funding.

The important Pennsylvania apple crop, fourth largest in the country and worth about \$45 million, is dependent on pollination services provided by commercial beekeepers.

In total, honey bee pollination contributes about \$55 million to the value of crops in the state, said Frazier. Besides apples, crops that depend at least in part on honey bee pollination include many other fruits and vegetables.

Classifieds

☞ Kelly Knapp and Debbe Holeman are interested in giving homes to bumble bees and any other native bees. Also, they want to learn about restoring native bee habitat. Please call 925 634-4584 or email kellyknapp@sbcglobal.net

☞ Newbie Mariko Giverink, who lives in Concord, wants to start a new colony, so she's looking for someone willing to donate or sell used equipment -- supers, brood box, cover, stand, etc. She can be contacted at bobandmariko@gmail.com

☞ The Pleasant Hill Market is looking for local honey to sell. Please call 925 945 1585

☞ Major Branzel has 2 Dadant, 2-frame extractors for sale, 1 new (\$150) and 1 slightly used (\$125). Can be delivered to next meeting. Please call (707) 643-9433



2007 MDBA Calendar of Events

March 8	General Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Heather Farm. Dr. Larry Connor , an expert on queen and drone biology and management, will be speaking on "Making Colony Increases".
March 15	Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
April 12	General Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Heather Farm. Steve Gentry will be our guest speaker.
April 14	<i>Bee Work Day</i>

The Diablo Bee
21 Newell Ct
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

