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The Bee Buzzer

The Monthly Publication of the

Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers Association

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December 1995

DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting will be at the Stony Point Christian Church, as it has been for many years.

I am pleased to inform you of the entertainment for the December Holiday Party! Each year we gather a little earlier (1:30) than our normally scheduled meeting to enjoy a holiday dinner complete with entertainment. This year the entertainment will feature the *Strolling Strings* from Shawnee Mission North High School. My daughter, April Rose, is a member of that walking and playing group and you won't want to miss them! While you sit and watch, they stroll around and play their orchestral pieces. They have been featured on local TV shows and are going to compete in the National Strolling Strings competition in Wisconsin next year. They also hope to make a trip to Europe (and are saving vigorously for it - make a donation!).

The program will be during the dinner. For the dinner, you are asked to bring a covered dish, salad, and dessert. The organization will provide the meat and the drinks. Be sure to bring table service for as many as are in your group. After the dinner and program, we will announce who the 1995 Beekeeper of the Year was.

How to get to the December Meeting

Stony Point Christian Church is in Kansas City Kansas. It is located 9 blocks south of State Avenue on 78th St.. The address is 149 S. 78th St.. Phone 299-4821.

FROM THE EAST: Take I-70 or take US 24/40 (State St.) west to 78th. Turn Left (South) and go about 9 blocks.

FROM THE NORTHWEST: take I-70, or US 24/40 east, or I-435 or K-7 south to where I-435 or K-7 meet US 24/40 (State St.). Go east to 78th St., then turn right (south) for about 9 blocks.

FROM THE SOUTHWEST: take I-435 or K-7 North to I-70. Go east on I-70 to 78th St. Then south on 78th about 9 blocks.

1996 Officers!

At the November meeting, we voted in new officers, they are:

President - Richard Bean

Secretary - Kristi Sanderson

2nd Vice President (Librarian) - Frank Smith

Treasurer - Joli Winer

3rd Vice President - Rex Hubbard

Non-elected Volunteers:

Honey Queen Chairperson - Melissa Ostermeyer

Editor - Joli Winer

Program Chairman - Cecil Sweeney

Food & Hospitality - Vera Young

We wish to give a big thank you to all the people who volunteer for this club! Without them, our club would be nothing. Think of all the hours they put in so you can learn more about beekeeping.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A JOYOUS AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Members,

Forgive the sketchiness of this note, but my brain slows as the bees go to the house for the winter.

This is the best time of year to reflect upon your season. Make a list of things that worked well and write also things that you'll never try again. Try to improve your beekeeping practices by learning what works best for you. As we know, each one of us takes a slightly different tack on the tasks at hand. Trying different approaches is not always rewarding, but can lead to new methods of accomplishing the desired goal. Keeping a journal to record all the results of your trials can be beneficial both to you as well as to other beekeepers.

If you've not yet cleaned up your honey processing equipment, do so. Then relax and enjoy the holiday season. Take time to have a few dreams, plot out your next bee year and set a few goals for the next year as well. Get positioned to do things with bees that you've always wanted to do. Set those goals in your minds sight and go for it!

We'll be having a nice Holiday Dinner at the Stony Point Christian Church again this year. Come see who the beekeeper of the year will be.

Richard Bean,
President

The Bee-Boy's Song

Bees! Bees! Hark to your bees!
Hide from your neighbors as much as you please.
But, all that happened to us you must tell,
Or else we will give you no honey to sell!

A maiden in her glory
upon her wedding day,
Must tell her bees the story,
Or else they'll fly away.
Fly away. Die away.
Dwindle down and leave you!
But if you don't deceive your bees
Your bees will not deceive you.

Marriage, birth or buryin'
news across the seas,
All you're sad or merry in,
You must tell the bees.
Tell `em coming in and out,
Where the fanners fan.
`Cause the bees are just about
as curious as a man!

Don't you wait where trees are
When the lightnings play,
Nor don't you hate where bees are,
or else they'll pine away.
Pine away - dwine away -
Anything to leave you!
But if you never grieve your bees,
Your bees never grieve you.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

New Members:

Bill Cook - Lawrence
Mary Bradford - Pratt

William Worster - The Czech Republic
Jim Fowler - Wichita

We welcome our new members and hope that you can attend some meetings to learn more about beekeeping, if not, then enjoy the newsletter.

* * * * *

In memory of Bill Holden, Jackie Masopust, Cecil Sweeney and Joli Winer have donated money for new books/videos for the club library. Thank You.

* * * * *

The Editors Notes

As all you frequent readers know, this is the last issue that I will edit for the association. I have enjoyed it, but it has been a lot of work too. I want to thank all the people who have helped me over the years. I was (and still am) a poor excuse for an editor, but I have learned a great deal. My thanks go to many people, only a few of which I name here: Richard Bean for encouragement and articles, Bill Holden for many articles, Bob Dye for the advice: If it was me, I'd work a little on it at a time and in a month it'll be all done. Mostly my thanks go to Cecil and Joli who have been my supporters for their entire time - teaching me and correcting me when I flubbed. Good Luck in your tenure, I'm sure you'll do well.

The "Mite Solution" is not a solution

An illegal chemical is being advertised in bee journals. It's called the "Mite Solution". The advertisement claims that this product has been tested and is now approved for use against bee mites. Actually, *the substance has not been properly tested*, and the company selling it is breaking the law. We do not know whether this stuff affects bees, affects bee mites, leaves residues in honey, or is dangerous to beekeepers applying it. Don't waste your time and money on it.

Africanized bees in the U.S. are slowing down:

Recent studies of the spread of Africanized bees in this country show an encouraging trend. The bees are now moving northward very slowly. Ten years ago, the bees were moving north at a very steady rate of about 300 miles a year. In 1995, they have moved into only two new counties in Texas.

Why is this? Dr. Bill Rubink, a U. S. Dept. of Agriculture scientist, discussed this issue at the American Bee Research Conference recently. He feels that there are three reasons that the bees are bogged down. One is that the Africanized bees are interbreeding much more with the more gentle strains of bees kept by beekeepers in Texas. Second, the African bees are getting into cooler climates that don't suit them. They are now around Houston and Austin -- not cold by Kentucky standards, but they do get frost and it's cooler there than in the tropics. A third factor seems to be Varroa. The feral colonies have little resistance, so they are really hit by this mite. Rubink feels that the bees will eventually get to Louisiana, where they could take a ride on Mississippi River boat traffic, but it will take longer than originally thought.

It's also worth noting that only one person has been killed by Africanized bees in the U.S. since they crossed the border from Mexico five years ago. Clearly, the educational programs launched in Texas and other states have been highly effective. (I have recently heard reports of a stinging-related death in Arizona, but don't know yet what actually happened. Many early claims about "Killer bee" attacks turned out to be caused by other strains of bees or other insects.)

Tom Webster

Tom Webster
Apiculture Extension Specialist
Kentucky State University

(Reprinted from Eastern Nebraska Honey Producers Association Newsletter - Nov. 1976)

Winter Colony Stores

by BILL CARLILE

IN MOST winters a colony should have about 60 or more pounds of honey. With less than that, the bees may starve before a new supply is available in the spring. One of the quickest and easiest ways of deciding if there is plenty of honey is to lift the hive by the hand hold in the front or the back. But, if you haven't been a beekeeper for several years, how do you judge which hives are heavy enough and which are not? The surest method is to lift one hive and make a guess. Since the position the hive is sitting on the ground may make a difference in how heavy it seems, you may want to lift it from the back and then try it from the front. After you have made an opinion, take off the cover and the inner cover and then lift out one or more of the combs from the center of the top body. If these combs are pretty well-filled with brood, then you can assume that the colony does not have enough stores to last the winter.

In a two-body hive, the top body should be pretty well-filled with honey. Whether there is any in the bottom body is of lesser importance. When the bees cluster toward the center of the hive, the positioning of the honey they have, becomes most significant. Two hives might have equal amounts of honey by weight. In one hive, all the honey might be concentrated in the top body, with plenty of honey in the center combs. In the other, the honey could be in the combs toward the insides of both bodies, with practically no honey in the center combs of either body.

The bees in the first example would probably make it through the winter in good shape since they would cluster at the bottom of the honey and would work their way up between the combs as they ate the honey during the cold weather. The other hive would probably cluster close to the top of the top body, and, having access to honey only at the sides of the cluster, probably would starve during some cold spell when they could not move over to the honey at one side or the other.

So, it becomes important to observe how the bees have stored the latest part of their crop, as well as seeing how much they have. By hefting each hive, then opening it to see just what the food conditions are, you will soon get a feeling as to the amount they have and you will see the storage pattern. If the centers of the top bodies are relatively short of honey, then feed sugar syrup, or honey.

One ten-pound pail of heavy sugar syrup stored right in that center area will do a world of good in preventing starvation. If there is any doubt in your mind about there being enough and you don't want to feed syrup, but you do have some full supers of disease-free honey left over, then put one of these back onto the lightest colonies.

If you have only a few hives, you may be able to shuffle the combs about, putting the heavy ones from the sides of the bottom body to the center of the top body and then moving the light combs to the lower body. Or, if deep combs of honey have been saved, these can be used to replace the near-empty ones.

For many years I never packed a single one of my hives. However, I tended to bend over backwards to make certain that each hive was left with much more than a minimum of honey and pollen. This was a safety factor in case that I could not get to them as quickly as I would have liked to, the following spring. Also, every hive had a top entrance. My yards were in sunny locations on the south side of strip mine spoil banks. These were excellent windbreaks. Year after year, the winter loss was less than five percent. The live colonies had plenty of bees so that the losses were made up by making early divides from the strongest.

Editor's Comment: Not only should the upper hive body be filled completely with honey, but it should have dark brood combs filled with honey and pollen in the center of this upper body for the initiation of spring brood-rearing. For example, if this hive body has only newly-drawn foundation for honeycomb, the queen is not likely to start laying in these upper combs and the brood will be developed in the lower body where it will be much more difficult to maintain the necessary brood temperature since heat rises.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A HIVE BE REQUEENED?

Some beekeepers requeen yearly, others less often. When we are busy it is sometimes difficult to keep to a regular schedule of requeening.

A seven-year study of this question has just been published by Greek researchers. They followed 40 hives over this period. One set was requeened every year, another set every two years, another set every three years, and a fourth set was allowed to supersede itself without interference. The study followed honey and brood production. It found that the hives requeened every one, two or three years all did about the same in honey production. The hives allowed to supersede did about as well for the first three of four years, but then did poorly in producing honey. Brood production was similar in all sets of hives for the first two years, but after that highest in the hives requeened yearly or every two years.

The authors note that this work was done with a strain of bees native to Greece. Our bees in Kentucky are a mix of Italians, some German bees and a bit from other parts of Europe. Weather and bee plants in Greece could also be a significant factor in their results.

(Tom Webster, Apiculture Extension Specialist, Kentucky State University--KSU)

BEE MANAGEMENT FOR LATE NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

1. Continue to **winterize** your hives if you haven't done so already. Remove all queen excluders. Make sure each hive has at least 40 lbs. of honey, and better to have 60 lbs.
2. **Put entrance reducers** on hives to discourage robbing, block winter wind, and help prevent skunk, mouse, coon and opossum damage.
3. **Feed Terramycin** to protect against foulbrood.
4. **Feed** hives supplementary sugar syrup or honey if they are too light.
5. Start to **prepare/repair** woodenware.
6. **Melt** and clean cappings wax.
7. **Renew** your membership!
8. **Treat** your hives with menthol or extender patties for mites!
9. **Inventory** your equipment.

WANT ADS

FOR SALE: Too many hives & too many mites = too much expense. One story; two story colonies for sale, call after 10:00 p.m. Richard Bean (913)-594-2694.

FOR SALE: 11 Complete Hives \$50 each! (bottom board, 2 deeps, inner cover & telescoping lid) most with 1995 queens, just medicated too! Call Miles Raymond (913)-782-7914 or 913-345-6208.

FOR SALE: Galvanized Extractor. Please call 913-599-3009, Denny Goodman.

FOR SALE: Daytons 4-frame Extractor. Like New, \$225 Deb Carsten 913-425-6236

FOR SALE: Dadant 20 gallon water jacketed clarifier (Sump tank). Two double baffles, wired float switch, 1800 watt 120 Volt heater and cover. Used 1 season. Call Cecil Sweeney, D) 913-492-1670 or E) 913-884-5039.

FOR SALE: 90 hive bodies, 4 telescoping covers, 15 other top covers, 8 bottom boards. Everything is painted and in excellent condition. Also have around twenty frames. Myron Riedel, 913-673-4841. Park, Ks.

THE HAWLEY HONEY COMPANY

Raymond Cooper, 115 N. First St., Iola, Ks. 66749.

FOR SALE: White clover honey strained in 5 gallon buckets. We will pack it in your jars for an extra fee. Bee equipment new and used jars, foundation, bears, comb honey, used extractors. **BEES:** 3 frame brood with queen next spring.

If you need it, we probably have what you want.

Call: (316)-365-7919 after 8:00 PM

MID-CON AGRIMARKETING

We carry a complete line of beekeeping supplies, including woodenware, smokers, extractors, books, gifts, candle making supplies, queens, nucs, containers, corn syrup and more! We trade wax for foundation, supplies or cash. Our hours are 8:30-5:30 M-F. We are located at 8909 Lenexa Dr. (between 87th and 95th East of I-35), Overland Park, Ks. 66214, 913-492-1670. Long distance 800-547-1392. Owners: Joli Winer/Cecil Sweeney. Free Advice. We ship by UPS daily.

MURPHY'S BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Honey Processing Equipment. Extractors for sale or rent. Nucs and Queens for sale April 5th through June 31st. We buy wax or exchange for supplies. Also honey for sale - available in all size containers. Helen & Bob Murphy, 3423 N. 61st Street, Kansas City, KS 66104. Phone: 913-299-2628.

ROBERT DYE BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Complete line of beekeeping needs, Honey handling equipment, extractors, extractors, containers, labels, wooden supplies, suits, smokers, veils and queens. Will pay cash for wax, or exchange for foundation. Our prices are lowest. 50 sheets wired brood foundation for \$25.00. We are located two blocks West of Rainbow on 47th St. ROBERT DYE, 4701 Booth, Shawnee Mission, KS 66205. Phone: 913-722-0417.

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Ed and Jean Fisher 4005 NE 132nd St. Smithville, Missouri 64089. Phone: 816-532-4698.

1995 NEKBA Inventory

Please take the time to complete the following few questions and I'll publish the results in February. Either mail the answers to me or give them to one of the officers at the next meeting.

- 1. How old are you?
2. How many years have you been keeping bees?
3. How many colonies did you overwinter in the '94-'95 winter?
4. What kind of chemical treatment did you use LAST YEAR?
a) Teramycin?
b) Apistan?
c) Menthol?
d) Crisco patties?
e) Fumidil-B?
e) other - please list

5. Besides the chemical treatment of the previous question, did you do anything else to winterize them? (Like wrapping the hive, blocking the entrance, feeding them, combining them, etc...) What? (be specific)

- 6. How many died in the '94-'95 winter?
7. How many colonies produced honey for you in '95?
8. How many total lbs of honey did you produce in '95?
9. What kind of changes would you like to see in the Bee Buzzer?

***** 1996 Membership Renewal Form *****

So that we may update our mailing records, complete the name and address portion ONLY if your name and/or address is different than that on the mailing label on the reverse side of the form.

For new and/or renewal subscriptions to the American Bee Journal, Bee Culture, and/or The Speedy Bee, please indicate this on the form as well. Note that prices for the magazines may have changed since you renewed last year, so please use the prices stated in this Bee Buzzer. Make checks payable to: NORTHEASTERN KANSAS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION.

NAME: _____

Enclose check & mail to:

ADDRESS: _____

Joli Winer
Treasurer NEKBA
8909 Lenexa Dr.

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

Overland Park, Ks.
66214

***** please include zip + 4 *****

PHONE: (____) - ____ - _____

Others in your household who want cards: _____

Table with 6 columns: Item, 1 Year, 2 Year, 3 year, NEW, RENEWAL. Rows include Membership renewal, Kansas Honey Producers, American Bee Journal, Bee Culture, The Speedy Bee, and TOTAL ENCLOSED...

GENERAL INFORMATION

Membership is open to anyone who is interested in bees or bee culture. Dues are \$8.00 per calendar year for the first in the family joining. Additional members of that family wanting voting privileges shall be assessed dues at \$1.00 per year. Anyone in addition to the voting member can ask for membership cards. New memberships or renewals should be submitted to the Treasurer.

The *Bee Buzzer* is the official organ of the Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers Association, Inc. and is published monthly. Commercial ads are accepted in the newsletter for a fee, and non-commercial ads by paid up members are accepted free of charge for a period of 4 months.

The library of the Association is free to all members. Books may be drawn from the librarian at the meetings, and kept for 30 days.

The bee publications, *American Bee Journal*, *Bee Culture*, and *The Speedy Bee*, can be subscribed for through the Treasurer. You receive a 25% discount as a member.

This association meets each month on the first Sunday at 2:30 p.m. This is a non-profit organization; the elected officers serve without pay. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Check the *Bee Buzzer* each month for actual meeting date, time and location.

1995 OFFICERS

- PRESIDENT*: Richard Bean, 467 E 1000 Rd, Baldwin KS. 66006.....913-594-2694
- VICE PRESIDENT*: Don Hendrickson, 5666 Edith, Kansas City, KS 66104.....913-596-1228
- 2nd VICE PRESIDENT*: Cecil Sweeney, 8909 Lenexa DR, Overland Park, KS 66214....913-492-1670
- 3rd VICE PRESIDENT*: Rex Hubbard, 3717 W 24th, Lawrence, KS. 66047..913-842-8659
- SECRETARY*: Kristi Sanderson, 1012 E. Loula, Olathe, KS. 66061.....913-768-4961
- TREASURER*: Joli Winer, 8909 Lenexa Dr., Overland Park, KS. 66214.....913-492-1670
- PROGRAM CHAIRMAN*: Daniel Pfifer, 2544 Minnesota, Topeka, Ks 66605.....913-267-3010
- HONEY QUEEN CHAIRPERSON*: Melissa Ostermeyer, 24176 Haigwood, Tonganoxie, 66086.913-845-9100
- EDITOR*: Miles Raymond, 25230 W. 127th St., Olathe, KS. 66061.....913-782-7914

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