

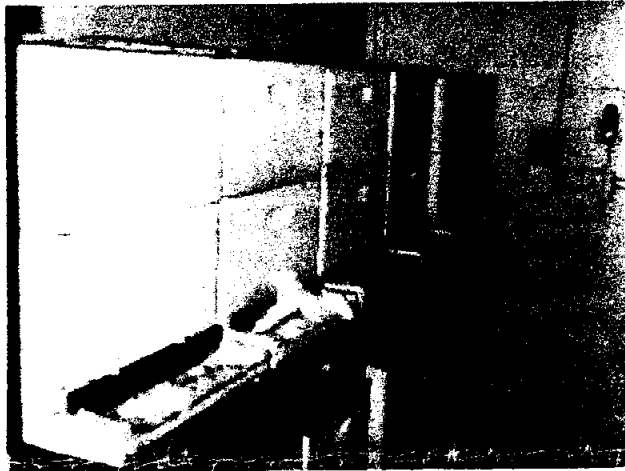
Red River Apiarists' Association

Bee Cause



Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2000



Back in the wintering chamber again...

Meeting Location

River Heights Community Center

**1370 Grosvenor St.
(intersection of Oak & Grosvenor)**

Meeting Date

Jan. 11th

**7:30 PM in the upstairs meeting
room**

Guest speaker(s):

Daryl Wright

Topic(s):

Tracheal Mites

Guests are always welcome and coffee will
be served as usual, byob&b's :)

RRAA Website URL:

<http://www.blazeinet.com/rwayne/RRAA.html>
(offline at the moment)

The *Bee Cause* newsletter is published by the *Red River Apiarists' Association* eight times per year (monthly excluding June, July, August and December).

Membership in the *Red River Apiarists' Association* is \$20.00 per year and includes a subscription to the *Bee Cause*.

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President's message:

In the name of the executive and myself I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year fill with health, peace and prosperity for year 2000.

I want to thank you for the hard work and enthusiasm you put in the pass year I know some of you are leaving so thank for the job well done, I hope it will be the same for year 2000, it was surely a pleasure working with you all.

Thank You Raymond Kozak for chairing the last meeting and bringing the door price.

Daryl Wright will be talking on Tracheal mites on our next meeting. Hope to see you all their.

Rod Boudreau

Editors note:

Well its happened, 2000 rolled around and the world didn't come to a grinding halt, yet.

On the cover I put a picture of my hives in their wintering chamber. I didn't put them in till Dec. 18th this season and that was a little later than last year. With a little luck we'll have a normal or better than spring and they'll be able to make a new record on getting out the earliest also.

I tried to get the newsletter out before Christmas, but to no avail. Between family and work commitments with that Y2K thing there just wasn't enough hours in the day. But I'd like to thank the entire executive who I built a fire under to get their submissions for the newsletter in before mid Dec. for a job well done on that issue. Sorry I let you down.

I just hope you all receive this edition before Jan. 11th. I'm not sure when the post office goes back to work with them having extra days off.

Also included with this edition is the membership renewal form. If you have access to email please give us your email address when you renew. This way I'll be able to send you the newsletter as soon as it falls out of the desktop publisher, this will not preclude you from receiving the newsletter by conventional mail unless you express otherwise

Later Ron

Red River Apiarists' Association

MINUTES

November 9, 1999

Ray Kozak, vice- president and evening chairman called the meeting to order at 7:35PM, 20 members in attendance. Ray announced that the topic for the evening was " The Do's and Don't's in Beekeeping Biz", presented by Ted Scheuneman and Ron Rudiak.

Motion: To accept the minutes from the October 12th meeting as distributed. (Moved by: Herb Schon Second by: Jim Campbell).

CARRIED

Business

Dennis Ross, treasurer, reported that the current balance of the RRAA financial account was \$3058. Dennis also reminded the members that membership fees for the year 2000 are due in January.

Motion: To accept the treasurer's report as presented. (Moved by: Dennis Ross Second by: Jim Campbell).

CARRIED

Committee Reports

Murray Porter, Chair of the Honey Show committee reported that the Honey Show was a success, increased participation in the Open Basic class of the honey contest and the strong support for the Baking contest provided us a great opportunity to showcase honey as a commodity. Jim Campbell added that the MBA display was an important part of the overall honey display. Ron Rudiak, one of the members selling honey and honey products at the show reported that sales were good.

Rhéal Lafrenière, nomination committee announced that three of the current executive officers would not be letting their name stand for the election in January.

Evening Events

Ted and Ron put on a great presentation! Ted displayed the importance of well-constructed and maintained frames and boxes and Ron presented some of the ingenious and not so ingenious equipment ideas he has tried over the years.

Motion: For adjournment (Moved by: Dennis Ross, Second by: Jim Campbell)

CARRIED

Ray Kozak closed the meeting at 9:15pm.

Do's and Don'ts of Frame Building

One of the most important things in your beekeeping operation, besides strong colonies and good locations, is good frames in every brood chamber and honey super. Frames can be either purchased pre-cut and ready for assembly or made by the beekeeper in his own shop. Either choice should result in a well constructed frame. Ted Scheuneman has built many frames from factory cut pieces or pieces made in his own wood shop. He has a preference for red or white pine because it is easy to work with and lasts for many years (well made frames should last up to 100 years or more). Red or white pine does not have a great tendency to warp and holds nails well. Poplar wood is useable but occasionally some pieces may warp when they dry out. Well made frames are accurately cut for length, width and height. Grooves and joints must be snug enough that the frame can hold together without nails, if the pieces fit loosely together the frame will not be as durable. Ted glues all joints before nailing them together, this keeps the frames together when they must be pried from the supers because of excessive bur comb construction. When re-building frames he glues any joints which are not already glued before re-nailing and replacing the frame wires and foundation.

Many frames, especially those which were manufactured many years ago, were equipped with four holes in the end bars for frame wires. Today almost all frames have only two which has proven to be quite adequate to ensure that the comb remains straight. Any missing eyelets must be replaced before the frames are re-wired. Large staples can be placed adjacent to the holes to keep the frame wire from cutting into the wood.

Using the right size and number of nails is important to the construction of sturdy frames which won't pull apart, twist or sag out of shape. The top bar is best held to the end bars with 2 - 1 1/4" nails driven into each end at a 15 degree angle from vertical. The holding power is three times greater because of the 15 degree angle. A lock nail should be driven through each end bar into the end of the frame to decrease the likelihood of the top bar pulling away from the end bars. Staples are often used to attach frame parts together. Their holding ability is slightly less than coated nails but lessens the assembly time required to build large numbers of frames.

When frames are repaired, re-glue any that are not of solid construction. Any that are twisted or have cracked or missing chunks of wood should be eliminated. When top bars come away or lift from the end bars, the bee space is reduced and bees can be killed when boxes are moved or lids are replaced.

Ted prefers split bottom bars to a grooved bar because they remain straighter. Beeswax foundation sometimes "grows" vertically as the frame is filled with honey. This growth can sometimes exert downward pressure on the bottom bar causing it to bulge bottomward

After the wax is removed from old frames then they are sterilized in a bath of 5% caustic soda in boiling hot water which will kill any American foulbrood spores that may adhere. Any remaining wax will float to the surface and can be skimmed off. Ted's frames emerge

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from this cleaning and sterilizing process looking like new. They are then rinsed in tap water to remove any remaining caustic soda and allowed to air dry. Plastic frames and foundation cannot stand up to this sterilization process and emerge from the bath badly warped and unusable. Does anyone know how to sterilize this equipment?

When installing new foundation make sure that the horizontal wires are both on the opposite side to which the vertical wires are embedded. This allows the beekeeper to properly embed the horizontal wires with an electric current or a spur embedder. Many of the commercial frames do not have the holes drilled in the centre, always check for this and correct if necessary. If the holes are offset the foundation will be crooked when installed.

submitted by:
Ron Rudiak

A Winter Alert

by Vic Macdonald - BCHPA *Bee Line*

Due to the excellent weather we have been experiencing in the Capital Region, the queens have produced abnormally large quantities of eggs and this in turn has put some pressure on food reserves. Be alert to food shortages and feed accordingly. Remember to feed warm, very thick white sugar syrup in a top feeder. The feeding should be done in the evening, so as to prevent excessive disruption of the winter cluster. Daytime feeding does encourage flying and the resultant exposure to the cold weather could increase population losses. Do not be alarmed if you notice "swarm-like" flying at the hive entrance on warm days. These are young bees performing orientation flights, and of course the older bees are attempting to gather whatever they can find, especially water.

Even in winter, water is vital to the bees. The honey bee colony needs water to dilute their waste material and honey for the larval feeding, liquefy granulated honey and the dry sugar that many beekeepers supply during winter. A great deal of water is lost during respiration. This is evidenced by the condensation within a poorly ventilated hive. It is interesting to note that bees prefer water with a bit of salt in it and they collect warm water faster than cold water. On a very hot day the average colony will use about 4 liters of water within the hive.

Since all good beekeepers strive for the perfect balance within the colony, i.e. food, population, temperature and disease control, it is essential to maintain good ventilation - so ensure dead bees are removed from the floor board and hive entrance thus allowing the all important ventilation to take place efficiently. Check for water runoff. Hives must slope forward, thus preventing the water collection within the hive. The presence of mould and mildew indicates the need for improved ventilation; cold on its own, the colony can cope with. Cold and water leads to disaster in any environment.

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Increase Your Word Power

Thermoregulation and poikilothermic all imply temperature and heat. Insects take on the temperature of their surroundings and are termed poikilothermic. The bee cannot control its own temperature, yet collectively they produce and regulate their required temperatures for the colony.

The bee has 5 eyes. What are their functions?

Answer: The 3 simple eyes (ocelli) each have a single lens and function as light intensity detectors. The 2 compound eyes have about 4000 - 8000 lenses which are sensitive to ultra-violet rays and polarized light. Various other light frequencies can also be detected. Movement and form have been shown to be detected by the compound eye and the polarized light is used for orientation.

Washboard behavior - what is it?

When hundreds of bees all face the same direction and rub the hive surface with front feet and mandibles (i.e. washboard behavior). This behavior is not directly related to any known cause or function. Suspicion has it that the workers are marking the hive with mandibular pheromone to attract other bees and possibly another queen.

Manitoba Experiencing Unusually Warm Winter

Ron Rudiak

Manitoba has just made history by experiencing the warmest average temperatures for November on record. Our bees were able to take feed on many of the days which were warm enough for active flight. These plentiful days of warmth allowed cleaning activities within the hive and many dead bees were observed to be removed from bottom boards where ordinarily they would accumulate until warm weather in the spring. According to computer models used by climatologists, above normal temperatures are very likely to continue for the rest of the winter with less snowfall than normal. Apparently this condition is being caused by a very large pool of warm water (5 - 6 deg. C above normal) just off the coast of Japan, extending eastward to the central Pacific Ocean. The heat from this vast body of warm water is affecting our upper atmosphere weather patterns.

Because of the continuing warm weather and lack of snow cover it has been impossible to maintain our wintering room at the optimum +4 to 5 degrees C (42 deg. F). Instead, the temperature often reaches +10 deg. C (50 deg. F) during the day, decreasing to +7 or 8 deg. C at night. Since putting the bees into the wintering room during the last week of November the ventilation fan(s) have not stopped. However the bees are remaining semi-clustered and quiet on the combs. There are very few dead bees on the wintering room floor, however, be-

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cause of the warm indoor temperatures our colonies are still able to remove dead bees from the bottom boards and leave them at the entrances.

Because the relative humidity is generally low during prairie winters, especially with constant ventilation, bees in wintering rooms can benefit from having feeders with water available to them. Colonies wintering indoors in singles can usually access containers of water placed on the bottom board (Boardman feeder fashion). Some beekeepers use small honey containers with a tight-fitting snap lid which is filled with water and inverted. 3 or 4 pin holes are made at one section of the rim from which the bees are able to gather much needed moisture. When water is available honey bees can effectively use granulated honey by working it down into a liquid state (besides it gives them something to do on those winter-long nights). When we wintered outdoors the bees were often observed gathering moisture from the small amount of condensation which had accumulated on the inside surface of the lids. We supplied ventilation for our outdoor wintered hives by drilling a hole between the hand hold and the lid on the front of the colonies. Because we now winter indoors, in doubles, the bees are usually clustered well above the entrances. Supplying water at the entrances is not effective with doubles so it must be supplied with a quart size feeder jar over the top of the cluster. To make it attractive we mix up a sugar syrup using 30 liters of water to each 44 kg bag of sucrose. While this may stimulate brood rearing as long as some pollen is available, our bees winter successfully using this method and often have ten or more frames of bees with brood in the spring when they are moved outdoors.

Israel's Queen Bees Shipped to Arab World (Taken from Israel Wire) - submitted by John Speidel

Israel has recently exported one thousand queen bees, which produce honey on a much larger scale than ordinary bees, to the Arab countries of Jordan, Lebanon, and several others, including some with which Israel has no trade relations, the daily *Hatzofe* reported.

Following the success of this unique type of export, a second shipment, containing hundreds of queen bees and ordinary bees, will be made in upcoming months to neighboring countries.

Remember:
Its membership renewal time

From: catch the BUZZ - Bee Culture

Milkweed's Image Improves

Milkweed is a common perennial weed, but its chances of growing into a new cultivated crop are getting better, thanks to Agriculture Department Agricultural Research Service scientists who are finding several uses for milkweed's parts. Wild milkweed grows along roadsides and in fields in the eastern US as far south as Georgia and north into Canada. Industry has known the value of its fibre, but is now learning the value of its meal and oil. ARS chemists at the National Centre for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Illinois, have found that the seedmeal kills nematodes and fall armyworms. These pests destroy potatoes, tomatoes, soybeans, sorghum, peanuts, corn and alfalfa. Incorporating the seedmeal into the soil might be an alternative to methyl bromide, now severely restricted in the US and other countries. More good news: Peoria chemist Rogers E. Harry-O'kuru found that milkweed oil -- rich in Vitamin E -- is free of cardenolides. This knowledge may help establish another market for milkweed's parts: skin moistureizers. Milkweed oil, modified with lipase enzyme, can hold 18 percent more moisture than unmodified oil, making it an ideal moistureizer ingredient.

USDA Research Finds Mite Resistant Honey Bees

Beekeepers can produce and maintain colonies of domesticated honey bees that are resistant to varroa mites, one of the insects' worst enemies, according to nearly five years of tests by Agricultural Research Service scientists in Tucson, Ariz. Varroa mites are eight-legged, blood-sucking parasites that have decimated hives of the domesticated honey bee, *Apis mellifera*, in nearly every state. Eric H. Erickson of the ARS Carl Hayden Bee Research Centre in Tucson led the Arizona study, in which about 190,000 bees were analyzed. The scientists populated three research apiaries with survivor bees from Arizona hives not treated with mite-killing chemicals called miticides. To see if the colonies would become naturally infested, the scientists kept the hives free of the miticides. Then, the researchers determined whether the bees had been attacked by mites. Colonies of susceptible bees were removed and replaced with progeny from the mite-tolerant colonies. The test hives averaged only 7 mites per 100 bees at the end of about four years of this selective breeding. In some years, some hives were mite free. The ARS experiment, reported in the December 1999 issue of the *American Bee Journal*, provides more evidence that beekeepers and breeders can keep hives relatively free of mites through selective breeding to populate apiaries with mite-tolerant stock.

The scientists recommend that beekeepers regularly inspect their colonies for mite resistance and then select queens -- for breeding -- from the colonies with the lowest mite populations. Some beekeepers and breeders are already doing this. And scientists in Germany and Russia, for instance, have also found *Apis mellifera* hives that are naturally resistant to the

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mites. Erickson did the work with Anita H Atmowidjojo of the University of Arizona and commercial beekeeper Lenard H Hines of Sierra Vista, Ariz. According to Erickson, it is relatively easy to find varroa-tolerant colonies in commercial hives and to produce and maintain varroa-tolerant honey bees. Currently, miticides are the principal control. The new findings offer beekeepers another new option for strengthening their hives' mite resistance.

What's more, ARS announced in August that mite-tolerant queens, descended from honey bees the agency imported from Russia, would be commercially available next year. ARS scientists in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, led by Thomas E. Rinderer, imported and tested the mite-tolerant Russian honey bees.

submitted by:
Ron Rudiak

Nucs for sales this spring

Rod Boudreau 885-3344

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