

# The Bee Cause



Volume 4, Issue 5

October 2007

### Points of Interest:

- Next general meeting is 7:30 Tuesday, October 9th at the usual place.

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## Overwintering 2-Frame Nucs in Manitoba



Ted examining a bottom board tray for varroa mites

-By David Ostermann and Ted Scheuneman

For the past few years, Manitoba hobby beekeeper Ted Scheuneman, has been experimenting with overwintering small nuc ("nucleus") colonies outdoors. Using specially-made and modified equipment of standard size, Ted's setup is designed to maximize bee resources and wintering facilities. He's not aware of anybody who's done this type of overwintering, and the results are encouraging. In general, he's found that about 70% of the nucs develop well into the fall period, make it through winter, and produce a normal honey crop the next year. The following highlights the main points of how Ted overwinters 2-frame nucs outdoors in his efficient and intensive setup.

The timing for preparing nucs usually depends on the individual's objectives, desires, and expectations. As most beekeepers know, nucs developed to produce honey in the

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## HONEY-Less Travelled

By Jim Campbell, Honey Show co-chair

The theme for the MBA Honey Show focused on consumers desire to find food from sources close to home. With this in mind "Honey Less traveled" was selected for the 2007 display held for the first time at The Forks Market, in Winnipeg.

Guests were drawn to the "Colours of Manitoba" area, where jars of honey representing unique floral sources stood on wooden



shelves. Honey samples ranged from water white Alfalfa, through golden Sunflower, then onto the dark brown Buckwheat, and many colours in between. Often people

*(Continued on page 2)*

If the bees FEEL prosperous,  
They will BEE prosperous.

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## HONEY Less Travelled

*(Continued from page 1)*

were observed scanning the map to determine where the floral sources were located. Meanwhile, the Honey Competition area was dressed up with bright prize winning ribbons. Thanks to Rhéal and others for the judging.

The Live Bees continue to glean attention, and provide an opportunity to educate people about the benefits of Honey Bees. The bright orange dot made the Queen easy to find this year, thanks to U of M staff. Visitors questions varied considerably however, it was interesting to hear many asking about CCD, African Bees, plus the concern for what's happening in Manitoba. Thanks to the many RRAA volunteers (Rhéal L, David O, Ron & Shirley R, Ray & Donna H, Charles P, Asmara P, Neil V, Dennis R, Marg S, John R, etc) who capably responded in a posi-

tive manner to these queries. Closely associated with the bees was another interactive display. A small extractor proved to be a fun area as young people tried their hand at spinning the crank for Marg & Charles frames. Thanks also to Bee Maid for the beekeeping tools and equipment for the industry display.

A new feature for 2007 saw the return of "Cooking" demonstrations! Thanks to the Chefs John & Charles for the taste tempting Honey recipe demos while animatedly extolling the virtues of Manitoba Honey. In another section, a second new feature saw a "Taste The Difference" display. This area drew considerable attention as people sampled honey from different countries, and then voted automatically through their responsive facial expressions.

Thanks to the volunteers and vendors who made the show another successful educational venture of MBA while using this as another venue to distribute the new 100% Canadian Honey brochures.

## President's Comments

The September Honey Show was a main feature of attraction at The Forks on the weekend of September 21st to the 23rd. The displays of the Competition Honey, the Bee Maid equipment display, as well as the Colours of Manitoba Honey were visited by many people.

Even more attention was perhaps paid to the 2 frame live bee display from the University of Manitoba. With a marked queen as part of the show, observers were keen on watching the grooming of her ladyship, as well as listening to the happy buzz of the bees.

As usual the children were the most curious with great questions to whatever beekeeper was on duty at the display area. Despite having only ONE RRAA member volunteer or turn up at

the show for this important part of meeting the public, members of your Executive worked overtime to make certain the display area was staffed. A reminder that the Honey Show is a benefit to all beekeepers and needs to be supported by all of us. Do your part.

An added feature this year was the "HONEY less TRAVELED" table which had 3 tasting bears and a bowl of tasting spoons. One bear contained honey from a Australian/Argentina container, while the other bears were honey from the apiaries of two Manitoba beekeepers, Marg Smith and John Russell Badiuk.

Comments from the tasting public varied from: "the best tasting honey is from Manitoba; local honey is better; while others were that the offshore honey tasted syrupy or tasted very sweet and

## Overwintering 2-Frame Nucs in Manitoba

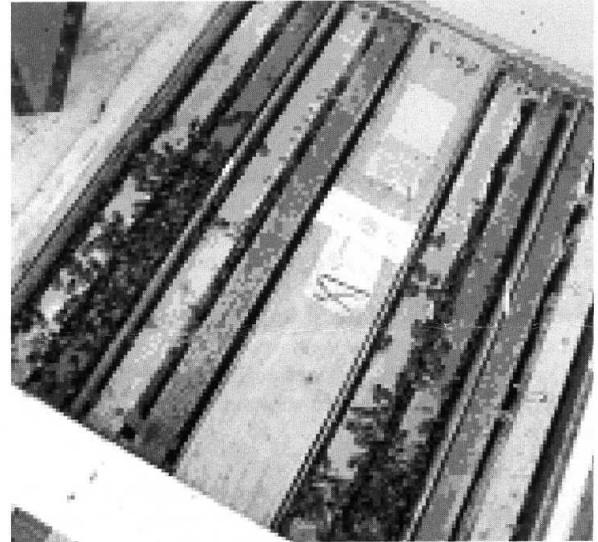
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same year must be started early, while nucs prepared as late as mid August only produce honey the following year. For Ted, the process usually begins in late May or early June, as soon as ripe queen cells are available. He establishes the 2-frame nucs beginning with 1 frame from a strong standard colony that is three quarters full of bees and brood (no queen). The second frame is usually an empty frame, or a frame with some feed. To each nuc, Ted adds a ripe queen cell within the hour but not more than 2 hours later.

An important and unique part of Ted's setup is the modified equipment of standard size, particularly his brood chamber with 5 nuc compartments. In each compartment Ted is able to fit a 2-frame nuc, thereby accommodating 5 nucs in a single hive box while maintaining standard outside dimensions. In order to fit all 10 frames and 4 pieces of 1/8 inch plywood (dividers) in a 5-nuc hive box, the 2 long sides are made with 3/8 inch plywood, while the 2 short sides are standard width (7'8").



The modified single brood chamber box with standard outside dimensions, showing the 5 empty compartments.



The modified single brood chamber box filled with 5 separated 2-frame nucs

Even with the thinner side walls, the fit is snug, so it's important to keep the equipment clean of wax and other material. The divider pieces must extend beyond the bottom of the box, to the bottom board. It is important to seal off each compartment so the bees cannot mingle or have contact at this point.

*(continued in next issue) - IN JAN 2008 ISSUE*

## Honey Show Pictures



## Red River Apiarists' Association Minutes of the General Meeting September 11, 2007

Charles Polcyn welcomed everyone to the Sept. meeting at the River Heights Community Centre, Winnipeg.

**Minutes:** The minutes of our last executive meeting will be circulated with the Bee Cause for the month of October.

**Membership and Financial Report:** Dennis Ross reported that there are presently 74 paid up members in our association. The RRAA account balance stands at \$5410. Regularly held loonie draws have added approximately \$200 to our operating account this year.

**Research:** Because money from our membership fees remain adequate to meet the regular expenses needed to run the RRAA, Charles suggested that a portion of this money could better serve beekeepers by helping to fund some research. The amount of \$1500 was proposed which could be used for this purpose. Rhéal indicated that it would be better to fund a specific project because the donated amount can often qualify for matching funds from one of several agencies.

Ron Rudiak suggested that the industry may need to have research done which will determine the suitability of using painted coatings to eliminate traces of lead which are showing up in honey. In some cases stainless equipment has been assembled using solder which contains lead. If this equipment can be coated to eliminate lead traces there would be a huge cost saving to many beekeepers across Canada.

Donna Hourd suggested that we could use some of this money to promote Manitoba honey by producing a cookbook or advertising.

John Russell noted that The Forks is promoting 25 "Superfoods". Honey is among this group of edibles.

**Honey Show:** Charles has made arrangements to appear on CITI TV's Breakfast Television program during the week of the Manitoba Beekeepers' Honey Show. A demonstration hive, a variety of Manitoba honey and a short cooking demonstration are planned for the show.

John proposed that we use "Honey Less Travelled" as the theme for the Honey Show.

Charles mentioned that the RRAA was again supplying 500 gr. jars for the honey entries. These jars could be picked up at the

rear of the meeting room. Entries need to be identified with the entry classification and name of the apiary or beekeeper then delivered to Bee Maid on or before the 19th of September.

Charles circulated a sign up sheet for the various shifts at the show.

**Correspondence:** Charles read a letter from 10,000 Villages. They would like a list of a local beekeepers who could be contacted to supply Manitoba honey to those buying the fair trade Honey Dippers from India. (A suggestion from the floor was to prepare a short list of beekeepers by area of Winnipeg or portions of Manitoba). Task left to executive to delegate someone to do it. Charles will stop by there and talk to them early this week.

**Canadian Honey Council:** Ron Rudiak provided an update on the Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Program for honey and the restructuring of CHC. An October Council meeting will be held in Winnipeg to finalize the restructuring.

**Honey Production in Manitoba:** A general discussion among our members indicated that beekeepers in the southeast produced a somewhat average honey crop.

**Loonie Draw:** Several prizes were won in the draws. Among the prizes were several squashes, donated by Janice Lupenetti, a foam seating pad, coin purses and two small containers of honey donated by Charles Polcyn. Many thanks to the individuals who made prize donations and also to those who enter the draw. The draw proceeds help to pay the cost of our meetings.

**Program:** Rhéal Lafrenière provided information on winter losses last year in Canada and some of the very important steps that we can take to help ensure that our bees survive the long period of winter confinement in good condition. He also presented information on the use of organic acids as an alternative to coumaphos or fluvalinate.

**RED RIVER APIARIST ASSOCIATION**

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*We are on the web!*  
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*The Bee Cause* is the official publication of the Red River Apiarist Association for distribution to its members and their colleagues in the beekeeping industry. It is published eight times a year on a monthly basis excepting December and summer months of June, July, and August.

Articles can be best submitted in HTML or RTF formats as email attachments. Though they may be edited for spelling and basic grammar, no changes will be made to their contents, message and opinions. They are those of their originator and not of the Red River Apiarist Association.

The Red River Apiarist Association, formed in 1963, represents the Beekeepers of the Red River Valley and environs in southern Manitoba. The association provides a forum for the promotion of sound beekeeping practices, education and networking opportunities through the dissemination of this monthly newsletter, meetings, field days, workshops and presentations by local apicultural experts.

**Liquid White Honey:**

1. Jim Campbell
2. Ron Heath
3. Ray Hourd
4. Ron Rudiak
5. Charles Polcyn

**Granulated Honey:**

1. Ron Rudiak
2. Ray Hourd
3. Charles Polcyn
4. Robert Heath

**First Taste:**

1. Jim Campbell
2. Charles Polcyn
3. Ray Hourd
4. Robert Heath

**Sunflower Honey:**

1. Robert Heath
2. Charles Polcyn

**Buckwheat Honey:**

1. Pierre Faure

**Chunk Honey:**

1. Robert Heath
2. Ray Hourd

**Frame of Honey:**

1. Robert Heath
2. Ron Rudiak
3. Charles Polcyn

**Comb Honey:**

1. Ray Hourd
2. Robert Heath
3. Charles Polcyn

**Beeswax:**

1. Robert Heath

**Best of Show:**

1. Robert Heath
2. Charles Polcyn
3. Ray Hourd
4. Ron Rudiak
5. Jim Campbell
6. Pierre Faure

**Manitoba Honey Show  
Competition Winners 2007  
The Forks, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**Honey Competition Judges:** David Ostermann, Neil Vanderput, Rhéal Lafrenière