

# The Nevada County Beekeepers Association

# Local Buzz



March 2011

## President's Message

With all this good weather everyone should know the state of their hives. The almond rush is over and bloom is about 10-20% now.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Randy Oliver. Randy very tirelessly helps many people everyday with answers and advice. Randy is a plethora of knowledge which I think sometimes we take for granted. Many beekeepers would be very happy to be able to converse with him in person. I spoke to some friends from the Boise Idaho beekeepers association and they confirmed this. Randy, thanks for being there for us new-bees.

Your President, Rob Slay

## March 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting

The topic of the month will be 'queen rearing', presented by Randy Oliver. Please also join us for a no host dinner at Lin-q Buffet in the Raley's shopping center in Grass Valley at 5:30 PM.

## Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

We sure had a wonderful break in the winter weather! And the bees sure took advantage of it! By the time that the growers called for hives in almonds, the alder had been blooming for a few weeks, and every brood comb had a fat band of mixed pollens around it. What a great midwinter start for the colonies!

I was actually starting to get a bit concerned about the lack of precipitation, upon which the flora that produce our honeyflow depend. Mother Nature must have read my mind, and sent a couple of cold storms our way, burying us in snow. The cold also hit the almond orchards, much to the growers' displeasure, as they are entirely dependent upon good flight weather and lack of frosts in order to set a crop.

Anyway, the water that's fallen is setting us up for a good honeyflow. Manzanita is in bloom, so be ready to super up for honey should be get some warm weather soon.

It looks as though we beekeepers may be coming out of the woods with regard to Colony Collapse Disorder—there were enough hives for almond pollination, despite there being an increased demand for 20,000 new acres coming into bearing.

I'm writing this on the way home from speaking at the Indiana Bee School. There are two state organizations in Indiana, and this one alone had 600 mostly new beekeepers in attendance! Recreational beekeeping (what we used to call "hobby") is still booming across the country.

I had a visiting beekeeper from Switzerland staying with me during our preparation for almond pollination. The price for local honey in Switzerland is so high, that he could easily make a living on the honey produced from 50-100 hives! And he wouldn't have to work all winter! Sounds like the good life to me...

Randy Oliver

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## **From the Librarian...**

By Tynowyn Slattery

A new book:

The Pesticide Conspiracy

Robert van den Bosch, 206 pages with 11 pages of notes and references and a three page glossary.

Originally published in 1978, Doubleday

Professor van den Bosch was a researcher, a teacher, and an administrator in the Division of Biological Control and the Department of Entomological Sciences at Berkeley for 15 years, who died suddenly of a heart attack on November 19, 1978.

His early work on the nascent Integrated Pest Management model, which has now become our best defense against the myriads of pests that threaten our bees, led him into direct and ongoing conflict with the interests of the agricultural-chemical industry and a whole page list of its allies from banks, utility companies and food processors to highly placed politicians, groups in the USDA and state departments of agriculture and some administrators and individuals in land-grant universities, including Agricultural Extension Services etc.

They well might be concerned; following IPM practices can reduced the need for the enormous and often uselessly prophylactic amount of chemical pest applications by growers while maintaining and increasing production in areas where it has been used and which, in the process, takes a bit of wind out of the sails of the, "...have to use chemicals to feed the world," theory.

Ironically, for all the heat it's taken, the book doesn't advocate total elimination of pesticides, just for a more judicious use of them which definitely doesn't fit the industry business model, however, the overall stunner in this book is the exposure of the level of corruption and collusion in regulatory agencies and universities and the amount of power they have abrogated to the very agents they are supposed to regulate in the interests of the public good.

We have all heard these rumblings before but to have it laid out and detailed makes for a very slow, hard read, and grasping at straws, one might think that much might have changed in the 33 years since the publication date, but a night's research on just one company, Monsanto, didn't provide much comfort. Professor van den Bosch did include suggestions at the end of the book that would go a long way to remedy the situation and ended his book with this thought about technology, "...it is increasingly important that we assess its applications and implications wisely. And in doing this it is especially critical that we have the patience to listen to all reasonable voices and develop a broad information base to guide us in our decisions." So...a walk out in the snow, finding the first violets in a sun melted spot, thinking about the spirit that sustains and enables people of such admirable integrity to carry on and that information that affects us and our well being is a right not a privilege.

I will gladly find any suggested materials that would present an alternate point of view concerning, The Pesticide Conspiracy, for the library.

## **For Sale: Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards**

Special NCBA Club Price! Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or email at [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com).

## **Need a Mentor?**

Here is a list of our members that are willing to mentor other members who want little help with their bees. So if you're an NCBA member and are looking for a mentor, please call the person closest to you to arrange a meeting:

Stephanie Hughes  
Grass Valley  
(530) 320-5297

Karla Hanson  
Nevada City  
(530) 265-3756

Leslie Gault  
Chicago Park  
(530) 346-7092

Hugh Cavallaro  
Rattlesnake Rd  
(530) 272-7550

Jeremiah Farrell  
Marysville  
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and inflammation. A to Z Hardware has in stock new pallets of deep and shallow woodware stock at better prices than national suppliers. Randy notes that recent warm weather has encouraged early brood rearing using up honey reserves, and return of bad weather will cause starvation. Colonies may need nectar supplement and need to be checked now. Drones are not produced until March; mating begins end of March. Wood frames and boxes contaminated with foulbrood may be disinfected by soaking in strong bleach, and scorching the wood with flame.

FINANCE (Janet's email) December balance 12/6/10 \$3093.39.

PROGRAM Amigo Bob Cantisano, San Juan Ridge organic farmer and world wide farm advisor. On KMVR and [www.CAFF.org](http://www.CAFF.org) Community Alliance Family Farmers. He advises on use of predatory insects in place of chemicals, and plant insectaries--mixtures of pollen and nectar producers which attract bees. Wide planting of GMO (genetically modified) corn, wheat, sugar beets, soybeans, cotton, canola and alfalfa tied to Roundup brand glyphosate makes farmers Monsanto-dependent. Central Valley between our area and the coast is source of ladybug annual migrations. They are collected and stored under refrigeration for sale as predators. 100 years of untended fruit trees brought from France by Felix Gillet in 1852 still grow on 40 acres near Middle Yuba River. Gillet planted chestnuts, filberts, cherries, peaches, prunes, almonds, walnuts, apples and more. Cantisano is soliciting information regarding new sources of historic foothill fruit and nut trees, and will soon have limited selections of stock available.

Jack Meeks, sec

## **February Minutes**

Pres Rob Slay opened with Q&A. Thom Staser described wound healing compound of hot chili Cayenne powder and honey. Others reported using honey on wounds, since it has dehydrating and anti-infective properties, reducing swelling

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculturists, and the general public. This is a "not for profit" organization. Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building at 255 South Auburn Street in Grass Valley. All visitors are welcome. The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Submission by email is encouraged. Please submit to Leslie Gault at [lesliegault@yahoo.com](mailto:lesliegault@yahoo.com). The deadline for the March 2011 edition is March 24<sup>th</sup>. A limited amount of advertising space (business card size 3" by 2") is accepted and need not be bee-related. Rates are \$1 per issue or \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members. All revenue from advertising goes to the Association treasury and helps offset the cost of producing and distributing this newsletter. To receive the *Local Buzz* via email: please email your request to [lesliegault@yahoo.com](mailto:lesliegault@yahoo.com)

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**Honey Extractor:**      Karla Hanson..... 265-3756

**Nevada County Beekeepers Association**



c/o Steve Reynolds  
PO Box 548  
Chicago Park, CA 95712  
First Class Mail  
March 2011

**March 7<sup>th</sup> Program**

The March 7<sup>th</sup> program will be Randy Oliver speaking on queen rearing, 7 PM Grass Valley Vets Hall. No-host supper at Lin-Q buffet at 5:30 PM.