

Sussex County Beekeepers Association

January/February 2008

President's Message

Hello,

Thanks to everyone who came out to our last meeting to help with planning for the new beekeeping year!

We scheduled our meeting dates and topics for the year and will be doing another beekeeping short course in March. Please check the newsletter for further information and dates.

Cathie Skove is our new Librarian and has been busy gathering some new books, DVDs and other materials. She will be bringing them to each meeting for members to sign out and return the following meeting. If you have found a book you thought was helpful and/or interesting, let Cathie know so that we can add them to our library. We will also take any appropriate donations. (we want to keep our library information up to date).

February is not too early to check on your bees! Wait for a warm day and do a quick look see. You will want to check on two things: 1. Are the bees alive? 2. Do they have food? If the bees are on

the top frames, you can assume they have eaten up through their winter stores and feeding them will be necessary. This is the time when bees starve to death.

At our last meeting, Bob Burkard gave a demonstration on how to make fondant candy. (Recipe to follow) This is not difficult to make but be sure that you boil it to 238 degrees or the candy comes out runny and very sticky. We made three batches before we got it right! We put the candy right on top of the bee cluster which should get them through the middle of March.

In March, we will give the colonies pollen patties to stimulate the queen's egg laying. We will also feed the bees with sugar water but be sure that the food is next to the bees. Last year, we used top feeders and found out the hard way that the bees do not leave the cluster to get the sugar water. Use a "division board feeder" that fits right inside the hive body or a jar of sugar water that goes right on the top frames. (Top feeders are good to use in the fall before the bees have clus-

tered.)

This is also a good time of year to clean up your old equipment, order new equipment and prepare for spring. Each year we replace an old brood frame with new foundation in each one of our colonies. This practice helps to reduce the chance of disease or viruses from building up in the wax.

If you plan on ordering bees, please call the Webb's ASAP. (973-875-3889) There are a limited number of bees available this year.

Plan on coming out to the short course even if you have already attended in previous years. It is a great way to prepare and get excited for the new beekeeping year.

Linda Osborne

PS The skunk cabbage is up in the swamp near me.



SCBA Newsletter
Jan./Feb. 2008

SCBA Calendar

Clip and Refrigerate

- **Saturday, Feb. 16th**
Meeting Cancelled
 - **Saturday, March. 8th**
9 am to 3 pm—First Session of Beginner Beekeepers Course, 4-H Building at Fairgrounds.
 - **Saturday, March 15th**
9 am to noon—Second Session of Beginner Beekeepers Course
 - **Saturday, May 3rd**
Meeting at 1 pm, Brodhecker's house. Program—Installing a package, producing comb honey
 - **Saturday, July 12th**
Meeting at 10 am at Osborne's, Program—Hive inspection, preparing entries for the fair. Picnic and pool party
- August 1-10 Sussex County Farm & Horse Show**
- **Sunday, Sept. 14th.**
Noon at Brodheckers, Joint meeting with Southeastern NY Beekeepers.

Meeting Cancelled

The Saturday, Feb 16th meeting was cancelled due to lack of a speaker.

Please feel free to join the short course—beginning beekeepers love to talk to experienced beekeepers.

The Beginning Beekeeper course will be offered on Saturday, March 8 and 15th at the 4-H Building on the Sussex County Fairgrounds.

If you plan to attend or know somebody who would like to attend call Linda at 973-875-5770 or Deb at 973-702-1223 before March 5th.

January Meeting Minutes

The meeting was held Jan. 26 at the Sussex County Fairgrounds. Linda Osborne, president, called the meeting to order.

Current officers are : President, Linda Osborne; First Vice President, Roman Oscada; Second Vice President, Bill Foley; Third Vice President, Chris Tomlinson; Treasurer, John Vnenchak; Secretary, Debbie Vnenchak; Newsletter Editor, Deb Brodhecker.

A new position was added —Librarian. Cathie Skove will serve as Librarian and has already collected beekeeping books, tapes and DVDs for members to check out.

Treasurer's Report: John reported the club had in savings, \$5697.13 and in checking, \$7134.53 at the end of Dec. 2007.

Beekeeper notification forms from the NJ Dept of Environmental Protection must be filed by **March 1st**. Obtain the forms at www.pcpnj.org to register your apiaries so that you are notified of any pesticide application in the area.

The club voted to spend \$500 to obtain materials for our library.

The club also voted to raffle off a complete beginner kit including a package of bees at the short course.

I Want Candy... I Want Candy...

Bob Burkard demonstrated making Bee Candy at the January meeting. Candy is good to use in the hives at this time of the year to keep the bees fed without over hydrating them.

The recipe Bob used for Bee Candy:

1) Heat one pint of water to boiling in a large pot on the stove (or outside using a turkey cooker)



2) Stir in as much sugar as can be dissolved. This will be about 5 pounds. More sugar is better.

3) Boil uncovered until the mixture reaches 234 degrees F. Be patient, it takes awhile. The boil should be gentle not rolling.

4) Pour into jelly roll pans lined with wax paper. It should not be more than 1/8 of an inch thick—it has to fit between the top of the frames and the inner cover.

The candy will harden as it cools—it may

take overnight. Bob said sometimes the consistency is like taffy and sometimes like a peanut brittle—either way cut into strips—wax paper and all and lay on the frames. The bees will eat it eagerly and discard the wax paper.

Another Fondant Candy Recipe

This is the one Linda one used

2 cups sugar
1 ½ cups water
1/8 tsp. Cream of tartar

Combine and heat until sugar dissolves. Heat syrup until it reaches 238 degrees. Make sure not to burn the syrup. Pour onto cookie sheet with a layer of waxed paper about an 1/8 inch thick. Let harden. We put a piece of foil on top of the harden candy for easier handling. Place the wax paper side down on the cluster of bees. The bees will eat through the wax paper.

Editor's note: I made Bob's recipe—the trick was to let it boil gently for about 10 minutes at 234-238 degrees.

Turn if off, let it cool slightly, then put in the pans—it hardened almost immediately. Remember, even though you are bringing them a treat, the bees will not be happy to see you in this chilly weather. So suit up and have your smoker going so you can clear the top bars for the candy.

Dues are Overdue!

If you haven't already paid your dues please do it now!

Family dues are \$20 and individual dues are \$15.

Please make checks payable to SCBA and mail to our treasurer, John Vnenchak at 29 Dogwood Trail, Kinnelon, NJ 07405.



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Sussex County Beekeepers Association
75 George Hill Road
Branchville, NJ 07826



Who Ya Gonna Call?

Officers:

President:

Linda Osborne, 973-875-5770
E-mail, foxhill4@embarqmail.com

1st VP:

Roman Oscada, 908-852-7362
E-mail, roman.osadca@roche.com

2nd VP: Bill Foley, 854-726-4211

3rd VP:

Chris Tomlinson, 973-300-4860
E-mail, syncros@nac.net

Secretary:

Debbie Vnenchak, 973-492-5632
E-mail: KSDVN@aol.com

Treasurer: John Vnenchak, 973-492-5632

Librarian:

Cathie Skove, 973-579-5864
E-mail, honeylady@juno.com

Newsletter Editor:

Deb Brodhecker,
973-702-1223
E-mail, sdbrodhecker@gmail.com

Mentors:

Deb Brodhecker, 973-702-1223
E-mail, sdbrodhecker@gmail.com

Cathie Skove, 973-579-5864
E-mail, honeylady@juno.com

Chris Tomlinson, 973-300-4860
E-mail, syncros@nac.net

Website:

brodheckerfarms.com/SCBA
Check for directions and updates.

