

# Local Buzz



October 2007



state of bee research, and is in great demand as a speaker--we are lucky to have him visit our foothill venue. In previous years, he's picked up the ill-deserved moniker "Dr Gloom and Doom" (although last year he was startlingly upbeat—"Dr. Cope and Hope"?). With all the chatter about CCD, resistant mites, nosema, etc. we'll get to see how he interprets the state of the art of beekeeping. Eric is a most engaging speaker, with a phenomenal depth of knowledge. This program is not to be missed.

## Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

Much ado of late about Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). The press picked up on the Israeli Acute Paralysis virus paper released by Drs. Diana Cox-Foster, Jeff Pettis, et al. Lost in the frenzy was the fact that the authors only considered the virus to be a "marker," not necessarily the cause, and only in their limited sampling. Other researchers dispute that IAPV is even a marker! The press also put the blame on Australian imports, although the case for that conclusion is far from proven. Again, they missed entirely that some queen producers have been grafting queens using imported Chinese royal jelly, which also carries the virus!

Needless to say, the Australian exporters, and the American importers are a bit upset. Dr. Jerry Bromenshenk and the Army are stepping back into the game to do more virus sampling. The Army has an IVDS machine that they can use to quickly find new viruses, and they practice on animal epidemics, such as poultry and bees. With luck, we'll have more complete data soon.

## President's Message

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,

Join us if you can in hosting dinner with Dr. Mussen at Maria's at 5:30 PM before the meeting. Looking forward to seeing you all on October 1st.

Your President,

Shane Mathias

## October 1<sup>st</sup> Program Dr. Eric Mussen

The Monday October 1st program, 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall, will be our peripatetic (he gets around) Extension Apiculturist, Dr. Eric Mussen. Dr. Mussen has graciously consented to visit us again (we'll be joining him for dinner at 5:30 at Maria's Mexican Restaurant in Grass Valley--call Shane Mathias at 308-1376 to confirm). Eric has been busy keeping up on the

The world reaction to CCD is interesting. The Penn State/USDA paper points a finger in the direction of the new virus. The French blame the neonicotinoid insecticide imidacloprid. The Spanish blame *Nosema ceranae* infection of the gut. (At least we've passed the point of blaming cell phones!)

The "Nosema twins" are clearly in the limelight. The new *N. ceranae* has largely replaced *N. apis* in our bees (unnoticed until researchers started looking for it!). The big difference is that *N. apis* only attacks the epithelial cells that line the gut, which are normally shed and replaced on a regular basis. *N. ceranae* kills the basal cells that produce the epithelial cells, so the gut is destroyed. The adult bee may die within three days of infection. Unlike *N. apis*, *ceranae* can infect during the summer, and the bees don't show evidence of dysentery. The big question to me is why we haven't seen all our colonies destroyed by *N. ceranae*. However, last week I saw two of my own colonies collapsing in Nevada, with *N. ceranae* symptoms. Enough to make me nervous!

I've spoken to most of the researchers (except the French), and really don't know what to make of all this. Beekeepers are in a state of fear, money is at stake, and researchers are striving to get the first "scoop." Not a good situation for reasonable discourse. If you're interested in reading more about CCD, go to the BVS website (<http://www.bvs-inc.us/>). Dave Wicks is the guy who invented the IVDS instrument, and he has compiled a list of most of the articles and blogs on CCD.

In the meanwhile, I've been collecting data on powdered sugar dusting, small cell foundation, sugar syrup disinfection, and now on pollen supplements. As soon as I can catch my breath, I'll begin working the statistics on the numbers.

The new bee feed "MegaBee," or the Tucson Bee Diet has been released. Dadant now stocks it. I've been consulting to the sales manager, and experimenting with the product. We had a gathering of commercial beekeepers in the North Valley to introduce them to the product, and soon hope to hear how it performs in the field. It can be fed in liquid form, mixed into syrup, but gets more

protein into the colony if fed as a patty. If you purchase some, mix it a little wetter than the directions state.

Check your colonies now, on a warm day. Make sure they are heavy with stores, yet have enough unfilled brood combs to make a good cluster. Don't even try to winter weak colonies--combine them with another (if they are free of disease). Pull out some brood combs. You should have good patches of sealed brood, and areas of young larvae glistening with royal jelly. If not, consider stimulating brood rearing with light sugar syrup and pollen supplement. The bees reared now are the bees that need to survive the winter.

Randy Oliver

## September Minutes

MOTION: Only one item at a time may be checked out from the library by those with library privilege (\$5 one time) Passed.

FINANCE: Aug Start \$1484.32; Inc \$46; Exp 206.74; Aug End \$1323.58. Janet Brisson Oliver: Almond contracts 2008 preliminary \$125/colony, but rumor, possible water shortage and haggling may raise price to \$300, which would lead to widespread theft. Almond prices \$1.60/lb, down from \$4, replanting orchards not worthwhile.

Oliver: Colony Collapse Disorder due to combined varroa, bacteria, poor nutrition and suspected Australian virus, according to Columbia U. investigators. Bee operators affected have business interactions and contact between colonies.

Jack Meeks, sec

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# Feeding Honey Back to Your Bees

By Leslie Gault

Have you been looking for a cheap and easy way to feed back extracted honey to your bees? I've tried a number of ways, but all have either been a messy pain, or dangerous to the girls; it's amazing how easily they get stuck and drown in their own honey.

BeeSource.com has an interesting idea on their website on how to do this—feed the honey back from plastic zip-closure bags. Here's how: Fill a large bag no more than ¾ full of honey, burp the air out, close securely, then lay on the top bars in the upper super, or put a queen excluder on the top bars, and the bag on top of it. Take a razor blade and make 2 or 3 four-inch cuts in the bag, several inches away from each other, making sure the cuts are perpendicular to the downhill direction (front of hive if you've done your site work well) so the honey doesn't run out. Put an empty super on the hive to make room for the bag and bees, then cover with your lid. The bees will drink the honey from the slits, won't drown, the bag will flatten as the honey is used, and cleanup is easy!



## Honey Pumpkin Pie

Reprinted from the National Honey Board website  
Makes 8 servings

### Ingredients:

3 eggs

1 9-inch unbaked deep dish pie crust  
¾ cup honey  
1 15 ounce can of pumpkin  
1 cup evaporated milk  
2 Tablespoons flour  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon ginger  
½ teaspoon nutmeg  
½ teaspoon salt

### Honey Whipped Cream Ingredients:

1 cup whipping cream  
3 Tablespoons honey  
1 teaspoon vanilla

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a medium bowl, beat eggs. Brush on teaspoon beaten egg on inside of pie crust. Place crust on a cookie sheet and bake for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, add the rest of the ingredients to remaining beaten eggs and whisk to combine. Remove pie crust from oven, and carefully pour honey pumpkin mixture into hot crust. Bake 5 minutes more at 425 degrees, then reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake 30 to 40 minutes more until the filling is set. Cool completely and serve with Honey Whipped Cream. To make Honey Whipped Cream, beat whipping cream until mixture thickens, gradually add honey and vanilla and beat until soft peaks form.

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RECEIVE QUICK SERVICE

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 November 2007 edition is October 21st. 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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## Nevada County Beekeepers Association



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October 2007

### October 1<sup>st</sup> Program

Our October 1<sup>st</sup> program will feature Dr. Eric Mussen, State Extension Apiculturist, speaking on the latest in beekeeping developments, at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall. No-host dinner at Maria's Mexican Restaurant 5:30 PM.