



# INLAND BEEEMAIL

Monthly newsletter of the Inland Empire Beekeepers Association

Volume 12, Issue 5 — May 2007 — [www.inlandbeemail.com](http://www.inlandbeemail.com)

## Presidents Corner:

Another month has gone and how are the bees doing? Over the last several years I have had colony losses and did not know the reason. A year ago I lost a large amount of my hives. Reasons; some unknown; some known and unable to control; some were lost to my neglect. I decided that I needed to be a better keeper of bees from that point on. I installed brand new frames and foundations in my new hives and removed the old frames from the three existing hives that the good Lord allowed me to keep. This spring things were different. I lost two hives to AFB and destroyed the woodenware. I removed the darkened frames from the overwintering hives and replaced with new frames and foundation. For convenience I have switched from liquid feeding to sugar patty feeding. And this appears to be doing OK. My hives are strong and growing. Over the past year I have noticed that my hives become aggressive when I use smoke on them. So this spring I switched to a water/peppermint solution. I spray a light mist on the bees and this seems to work OK. The water does cool them and the peppermint odor appears to mask the alarm sent. Will my changes continue to have positive effects on my hive? Will I continue to grow and understand how the colony works? Only time and the good Lord knows.

Happy Birthday goes to the following people this Month. When you see these people wish them happy birthday.

Kristen Silva  
Brian Spock  
Scott Ingles  
Charles Bourg  
Natalie Ancker  
Boyd Lundberg

If I missed someone I am sorry, we did not have you on the list for some unknown reason. Let us

know and we will correct our short comings.

The meeting in May will be a business meeting only. We need to establish our financial budget for the year. We need to decide on what we are going to do about storage and who has what. We also need to decide on how much honey we will need for the fairs and what to do about the honey straws. Should we reorder cook books? How much money should we and can we put into the IEBA bee yard this year? The fair rosters are being started for both fairs and your support is needed. A lot is going on and we need your input into these matters. **The monthly meeting will start at 7:00 PM.**

## Soybean Rust

Editor's note: As many of you know in my other life I work for the USDA Risk Management Agency. This article from Bee Culture caught my eye as Soybean Rust is an issue for producers in the Midwest and our agency but I am also aware that soybeans are being tested in the Walla Walla area so I thought this might be of interest to some of our larger beekeeping members who have hives in that area of the state.

## A new disease in North America

Asian soybean rust is a fungal disease of leguminous plants that was introduced into the southeastern United States late last year, presumably during the hurricane season (USDA 2004). It is fast-acting and highly contagious, and has plagued agriculture in such countries as Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, and India for years; recently it has spread to Argentina and Brazil (Dorrance, et al. 2005). The damage caused by this disease is defoliation, which can reduce crop yields by up to 80 percent (Stokstad 2004). Soybean rust may be caused by several species of fungi, but the most tenacious, *Phakopsora pachyrizi*, is now posing a threat to U.S. crops. The dispersal rate of the fungal spores is especially high in windy and rainy weather, and the survivability of the pathogen is increased by numerous over wintering hosts, including the ubiquitous southern weed, kudzu. No commercial variety of soybean has shown resistance to the pathogen as of yet, and scientists believe that

(Continued on page 2)

it may take as long as five years for pathogen-resistant genes to be expressed in modern cultivars (Stokstad 2004 and Ozkan 2005).

### How honey bees could be affected

To keep Asian soybean rust from reaching epidemic proportions in North America, USDA-APHIS is urging soybean growers to follow 'preventative' and 'curative' fungicide application programs. The Ohio State Department of Plant Pathology proposes that spraying begin at the R1 (early flowering) stage and end at the R6 (seed set) stage to achieve maximum protection. Spraying guidelines call for *thorough* coverage of the plant (Ozkan 2005), which means honey bees will probably come into contact with the fungicides while working the crop.

There are currently five fungicide products that are registered for use on Asian soybean rust\*, and seven more products which have received Section 18 exemption labels for most states\*\*. The majority of these fungicides are systemic, meaning they penetrate the waxy cuticle of the leaf and travel throughout plant tissues, preventing or inhibiting fungal sporulation. Others are contact poisons, which remain on the outer surface of the plant and inhibit metabolic processes of the fungi (Butzen et al. 2005). Due to the target-specific nature of the active ingredients, none of these products have proven toxicity to honey bees or other beneficial insects in accordance with LD501 or LC502 standards.

Actually, most fungicides aren't toxic to honey bees in the quantities ingested or contacted during foraging, but in some cases they have been shown to deter feeding and cause hypothermia in adult bees (Mussen et al. 2004), and even cause developmental defects in larvae (Vandame and Belzunces 1998). Such consequences are termed 'sublethal,' and are generally ignored in fast-tracked pesticide registration because they are not directly linked to mortality. For years, research has shown a correlation between sublethal effects of pesticides on honey bees and a decline in colony size and health, but a testing procedure for these effects has not yet been integrated in the standard protocol. Fortunately, there is a growing interest in the preservation of feral and managed honey bees, which encourages more extensive research on factors influencing honey bee behavior, including sublethal pesticide poisoning.

### Why bother with soybeans?

There is no evidence that honey bees significantly increase soybean production by aiding pollination (Danka and Villa 2004), but commercial beekeepers profit from setting hives near monoculture soybean fields. In Tennessee, for example, it is reported that large quantities of surplus honey crops have been produced by bees

working soybean fields (Hivetool.com 2003). As a marketable commodity, soybean honey ranks high among the nectar crops. Soybean honey is desirable in both taste and nutritive properties, and its high antioxidant content makes it an ideal preservative for use in the food industry (Engseth 1999). To the hobbyist beekeeper, soybean is a readily available and abundant source of nectar and pollen for their bees, providing forage from Spring to Fall in warmer climates. It would be in the best interest of both growers and beekeepers to keep Asian soybean rust from becoming an epidemic in the U.S., and with careful research and appropriate control techniques, this can be accomplished without risk to honey bees.

- Quadris®, Bravo®, Echo 720®, Headline® 2.09EC, and Chloronil®

\*\* *Tilt® 3.6EC, PropiMax 3.6EC, Bumper® 41.8EC, Folicur® 3.6F, Laredo 25EC, Laredo 25EW, and Stratego®*

*Audrey Sheridan is a student in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at Mississippi State University.*

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# April

**Linda Carney, Secretary**

Friday April 13th

April 13, 2007

President Jim Miller called the meeting to order. Because the Treasure was not present, we had no Treasurer's Report.

Our secretary, Linda Carney, read a quick recap of the minutes that were published in the Inland Beemail. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as published.

## Old Business - none

## New Business

June 15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> is **Pioneer Days** in Elk and will be held at the Elk Community Park. Please speak with Jim Miller if you are interested in setting up a booth at the Elk Community Park or if volunteering is of interest to you

The president recapped the various committees for our association and asked them to update the members. We heard from the following committees.

The *newsletter* is working to get up on the website.

The *Spokane Interstate Fair committee* has not paid the insurance yet. They will attempt to get it paid by the next meeting.

Brian Smith is in charge of *The Farm Fair*, which will be held May 2, & 3<sup>rd</sup>. It will be in the Ag Building at the interstate Fairgrounds. Brian asked Brian Smith.

The *mailing list* can be accessed on website.

A member-*auditor* will go over the books so a budget can be done for next year.

The President would like to know where all of the supplies are. He will compile a listing of the locations of the supplies and what we have. It needs to be discussed further on having a place to put all of the equipment and supplies of the Association.

The *Joy of Beekeeping* has not received its 10% of the profits from the fair as of this date. A motion was made to give \$291.60 to the Joy of Beekeeping. It was accepted and passed.

Volunteers are needed for auditing and budgeting. Please contact Jim Miller.

Our meeting was adjourned.

*Submitted by Secretary, Linda Carney*

## *Annual Beekeeping Task Calendar for Small Beekeepers - Spokane Area*

**Bob Arnold**

## May

Check for AFB. Boomer colonies (2 or 3 boxes full of bees and brood) must be split/reduced or they will swarm. Move box with queen and open brood to a new stand 6 feet or so away. Introduce a mated queen immediately into the box on the original stand. Reduce colony strength, on those not split, by moving frames of brood and bees to weaker colonies. Replace queens that exhibit poor laying performance or those going into their second honey flow year. Feed pollen patties if insufficient pollen is available. Check weekly for swarm cells. Cut swarm cells only if there is evidence of a good laying queen (lots of eggs). Split colonies with swarm cells that are determined to swarm moving the box with the queen to new stand and leave cells in original stand. Keep switching brood boxes as top box gets full of brood. Keep checking new queens and package queens every 5 days for good egg laying. Replace new queen that is not laying properly immediately in the presence of nectar or syrup. Put 1:1 sugar syrup on during nectar dearth periods. First evidence of whitening comb put on new foundation in the top box. Add supers only if there is a substantial prolonged nectar flow. Start any swarms caught on foundation. Keep vegetation down around colonies.



**An Unclear Case Of Colony Survival**  
**By: James E. Tew**  
**After 16 years, it appears prosperous**

When you thumb through any issue of *Bee Culture*, you find an eclectic collection of articles covering many aspects of beekeeping and bee related subjects. As is the case with 'Trade' publications, all of the magazine's offerings will not intrigue all readers every month. I suspect that if I liked every single article within this particular issue, then there must be someone who wouldn't like any of the offerings in this particular issue. Essentially, though we are all beekeepers we are at different places in beekeeping. Someone dipping candles probably does not have the same immediate interests as one who is trying to produce comb honey or someone else collecting pollen. It's different strokes for different beekeepers. Now hold this concept in mind while I tell you a short story about a beehive.

*A long time ago*

About 15 or 16 years ago I established a beeyard to exhibit hives from around the world, and other somewhat offhand equipment. It was an interesting yard exhibiting Kenya Top Bar hives, Botswana long hives, a Hayes Barrel hive, an antique sized Jumbo hive, some 8-frame equipment, along with other long gone stuff. Around that time we had a very active international training program, but it has since waned. The yard was always very difficult to access requiring a four-wheel drive to get through the corn, soybeans, or wheat, depending on the crop year. The yard was only occupied for a couple of years before we stopped using it and removed all the equipment (or so I thought).

During times of the year when trees were leafed out, the yard location was invisible, but during Winter months, the distant location could be seen from the highway several thousand yards away. All through the years, as I would occasionally be driving that road, I would glance in the yard's direction and reminisce about the events that tran-

spired there. Strangely, I would frequently think I could still see a hive in the underbrush, but the distance was so great and I was moving at 55 miles per hour so I would ignore my impression and blame it on my imagination. The years passed and then more passed, so that now soon-to-be 20 years have gone by since we did bee stuff in that inaccessible spot.

*Maybe I changed*

I don't know why but on a whim, after seeing what appeared to be a distant hive for all these years, last Spring I pulled off the highway and began the trip to the old location. It was the usual rough ride requiring the use of the four-wheel drive option in my old JEEP. After all this time, as I neared the location, but still bouncing in the corn stubble from last Fall, I could see that there was a lone stack of equipment standing there – standing there after more than 16 years of abandonment. For all these years, in fact I **had** been seeing a beehive from the highway. Why had this stuff not rotted? Why was it left here? In fact, what kind of equipment was it? Except for this single stack of equipment, everything else was gone.

*Some answers, but more questions*

While I don't know why it was left there, for the most part, the abandoned equipment was a modified version of eight-frame equipment. Due to the ugly color and a unique modification that I recognized, I was immediately able to identify the equipment as part of a donation made to my lab by a former editor of *Bee Culture*, now long gone to other pursuits. The stack of equipment was comprised of manufactured equipment, home-made equipment, and modified 10-frame equipment. It was sitting on what had been a plywood bottom board, but the plywood top was weathered away. As the bottom board side rails rotted away, the original entrance had collapsed, but the equipment was in astonishingly good condition for all the years it had sat there. But the real shock.... it was **full of bees**.

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

*Your mind races*

At times like this, my mind races with parts of thoughts and parts of sentences. *What are they.....? A swarm? How long.....? Have they been here for years?*

The hive was top-heavy with honey stores and the bees had just come out of Winter so they had been here at least since last year. The plywood outer cover was essentially gone, formed only by a few strips of veneer, weathered top bar frames and gobs and gobs of propolis. Bees were guarding the holes that were exposed.

Transient bees were using various improvised entrances, but they didn't seem to mind my presence. I wondered if I was the first beekeeper they had ever encountered. I gave the hive a heft from behind – or rather what had been the 'behind' of the hive and found it to be heavy, but top-heavy. The bees had a lot of yellow color in them and flight activity on that day was good, but not particularly exceptional. There were no dead bees near entrances, nor any indications of skunk or other such harassment – probably due to all the entrances being so high.

In the overview photo, you can tell that some 10-frame equipment was cut down to an 8-frame size. The bottom brood chamber is of commercial manufacture, but the remaining whitish hive bodies are homemade.

Having no hive cover, the bees had made one from propolis. Could bees do this in one season? The propolis/rotted plywood outer cover was far from watertight, but it must have been better than nothing. As the propolis weathered, what would it look like? The amount of propolis needed to cover the top was impressive. The photo does not do it justice. While I know how long the equipment has been there, I really don't know how long the colony has been there.

You should you have been there, I guess. While I am not trying to make this more dramatic than it

was, but it was a truly unusual event. The yard was quiet; the bees were gently going about their business as they seemingly had been doing for many years. There had been no *Varroa* treatments – not one. There had been no swarm prevention procedures. There had been no supers put on or supers taken off. No queen replacements. Even if the hive was empty of bees at times, it has sat upright during blizzards and tornadoes, through heat and cold. It was a moment of marvel. In retrospect, I don't think I would have wanted you there. It was a personal bee moment for me. At one time, this was a vibrant yard of bees sporting all kinds of off-the-wall-hives and beekeepers from around the world. I remember people who visited that yard who have since died. I was 16 years younger the last time I was there. And yet, there sat this colony of bees, going about their bee business without an iota of help from a human beekeeper, acting as though nothing was different.

*The first paragraph*

Now, I ask you to take a moment to reread the first paragraph of this column in conjunction with the following paragraph.

The last time I was in this yard, I was at a bee-keeping place in my life where I would have ripped into this colony, replacing equipment, checking for mites, replacing bottom boards and definitely replacing the inner and outer cover. Some of you are at that place right now. As a younger beekeeper I would have completely rebuilt the hive and restructured its innards. But a lot of time has passed and though I am still a beekeeper, I am not *that* beekeeper anymore. I chose to do nothing but marvel at the tenacity of this surviving lost colony, and I decided to keep the colony's secret. Some of you are saying what a waste of a lucky hive. Surely it will die without assistance. In truth, it probably will die, but I saw this colony in a different light. It looks like it has been there for a long time. It was fundamentally a wood structure reinforced with a lot of propolis. A single hive examination alone would destroy the

*(Continued on page 6)*

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structure.

My only concession – a few days later I returned and put on an old rusted outer cover befitting the hive equipment it sat atop. That's all I have done to help this survivor colony – not exactly traditional beekeeping. (All articles are not for all people.)

#### Some questions & discussion points

1. There is very likely nothing novel about this colony and not very much that is scientifically useful so far as its survival is concerned. I have no basis for thinking that these are 'super-survivor' bees.

2. I have no idea how long the present colony has been residing in the hive – maybe a couple of years or maybe the hive was left there because it had bees in it all those years ago. I have no idea.

3. If the colony has died out during the ensuing years, I don't know where the swarm(s) came from that repopulated the structure. We have no yards near this location. Neighboring beekeepers? Feral bees? I don't know.

4. Having not seen the inside of the hive, I have no idea what the *Varroa* population level is or any other of the attributes of the colony's biology.

5. Not having a bottom entrance seems to have been useful in preventing marauding animals from pestering the colony. I wonder how clean the bees keep the bottom deep. Is it half full of dead bees and colony detritus or do they clear it out every Spring?

6. While the hive has some weight, I have no idea what kind of honey stores it has.

I've taken bee colonies from houses; I've transferred colonies from improvised structures (like

old kegs); made splits; and captured swarms, but I don't recall stumbling across a colony that seems so contented in existing without any need of me for what may have been many years. Is it possible for a bee colony to be noble?

#### *Now that you are teary-eyed*

Before I submit this colony for some kind of United Nations Award, let me give you an update on another colony about which I recently wrote. Do you recall the story of *An Unclear Case of American Foulbrood*? Well, you should know that as the Summer progressed, the AFB case became crystal clear. *That* particular noble colony has now gone to the beyond. What initially appeared to be a colony fighting off a deadly bee disease was, in fact, a colony in the early stages of succumbing to a deadly bee disease. That's a big difference.

Could it be, with the present lost hive, that this is a snapshot of an incidental colony that stumbled onto an isolated nest structure that will live there for a while, be confronted with *Varroa*, and then die? Am I looking at a six-month period in this colony's life and assuming – from that six-month period – that this colony is years and years old? Could be. I don't know.

*What should I do with this colony?*

Though I found the colony last Spring it is now Winter, and making changes now would be a drastic procedure. But what about next Spring? It may be dead by then. But if not, should I see what's inside? Leave it alone? How about leaving it alone, but checking it every few years for live bee flight? What do you think I should do? Let me know.

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# 2008 *Bee Culture* Calendar Photo Contest – Bees On Flowers

Plan now for the 2008 *Bee Culture* Beekeeping Calendar Photo Contest. This year's topic is a favorite with beekeepers everywhere – close-ups of bees on flowers. Here's some guidelines and suggestions to consider before you even start, and before you push the release.

- **Frame the photo**

*Bee Culture* calendar photos are nearly square, so the best part of your photo should fit in to that shaped square area.

- **Photo should be both bee and flower**

The finished product should be a close-up, but not so close we can't tell what the flower is.

- **Color Contrast**

A bright yellow honey bee on a bright yellow flower may not be the best choice. Look for colorful differences between bee and flower.

- **Focus**

Both bee and flower should be well focused in the final cut.

- **Action**

A bee hovering over the surface of a complimentary colored flower, with yet another colored background (sky, leaves, other flowers) adds a level of beauty to a final shot. Also, two, three or five bees in the scene add action, especially if some are arriving and others feeding.

*This photo is one of our contest winners from the 2007 calendar. It was taken by Carol Mark of Utica, Kentucky and appeared on the May page of the calendar.*



- **Friends**

Additional models add interest – other kinds of bees, different colored honey bees, or other insects on the same flower. Try to ID them if possible.

**Deadline for January 2008  
publication absolutely has to be  
October 1, 2007.**

- **Quantity and Quality**

If possible, get two or three similar shots for your entry. And try this several times, Spring, Summer and Fall. You may find that you, and your bees are much more comfortable together on goldenrod than apple blossoms. Consider, too, different times of the day – different light; more, or less nectar/pollen; less wind; more, or fewer bees. Good Luck!

Submit photos via email attachment, as tif, jpg or pdf, at 5" x 7" size, 300 dpi resolution. If submitting more than one photo please send only one/message. Or, send on a cd or dvd; or, send prints or slides. Do not submit transparencies.

Enter as many photos as desired. We will choose 14 photos – cover, 12 months, back page article. Each winner receives a free one year subscription. Photos will not be returned. Send to [kim@beeculture.com](mailto:kim@beeculture.com) or Bee Culture Calendar Contest, 623 West Liberty Street, Medina, OH 44256

## Agenda for IEBA Monthly Meeting

May 11, 2007

**The Monthly meeting will start at 7:00 PM.**

Call to Order  
Secretary Report  
Financial Report  
Old Business

### Committee Reports

Financial Audit Report  
Audit for the year 2006  
Equipment Audit Report  
Location, quantity of equipment  
Storage of equipment  
Newsletter Report  
Mailing list  
Cost of mailings versus e-mail  
IEBA bee yard Report  
Progress on the bee yard and queen rearing  
Immediate and future needs for the bee yard.  
Can the bee yard be self sufficient?  
Yearly Class Report  
Report on the two classes.  
Students  
Financial  
2008 class will start January 4, 2008.  
Idaho Fair Committee Report  
Dates  
What will be needed?  
Spokane International Fair  
Dates  
What will be needed?  
Program Committee Report  
June  
July

### New Business

Budget for 2007  
Newsletter Cost  
IEBA bee yard  
Class 2008  
Honey Purchase for Fairs  
Items for sale at the fairs  
Straws, Ross Rounds, bottles bottling for the Fairs  
Idaho Fair  
Spokane Fair  
Programs  
Speakers  
Picnic  
Thanksgiving  
Christmas  
Order Cook Books.

Close the meeting at 9:00 PM

If all items are not covered within the two hour time span they will be tabled for June 2008 meeting.

# Classified Ads

**Tate's Honey Farm** has all of your extracting and packaging needs as well as spring packages and queens. Woodenware for all your winter projects and spring needs. Shop hours are 8:30—2:00 every Saturday at E. 8900 Maringo, Millwood. Contact us at 509-924-6669 or online at [www.tateshoneyfarm.com](http://www.tateshoneyfarm.com)

## BEEBOXES BY LEE

Woodenware, standard or custom orders, IPM bottom boards, Hive top feeders, etc, select lumber. Order now to be ready for spring. Lee Berchtold  
(208) 687-1300

## NUC's - For Sale

Now taking orders for 07 Queens and Nucs 4.9mm and standard cell sizes available. Also 2nd. generation Australian Nuc's available please call for prices. Contact Travis Sammons at 509-928-4326 / 509-991-3758

## Miller's Homestead

**Jim and Jenine Miller**

Cheney, WA 1-509-299-9085  
14606 Stangland Rd., Cheney. Look at our web site for prices on all available items.  
[www.millershomestead.com](http://www.millershomestead.com)

## NUC's For Sale

**RUSSIAN or KONA Queens**  
You Get:

### Proven Queen

- ◆ 3 frames brood
- ◆ 1 frame honey
- ◆ 1 frame honey/empty comb
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Chattaroy Hills Honey Farm  
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**Available: 21 or 28 April**

Limited #, First Come First Serve



**Beeboxes, frames, foundation, tools and equipment**  
**open M-S 9-5:30**

**East Farms Feed**

21518 E. Gilbert  
Otis Orchards, Wash. 99027  
509.928.3616

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### IEBA Website

[www.inlandbeemail.com](http://www.inlandbeemail.com)

### WSBA Website

[www.wasba.org](http://www.wasba.org)

## Hive Care :

## MAY

**The Bees.** Now the activity really starts hopping. The nectar and pollen should begin to come into the hive and may get heavy at times. The queen will be reaching her greatest rate of egg laying. The hive should be bursting with activity.

**The Beekeeper.** You can remove your Apistan strips (if they have been in the hive for 45 days). Also remove the menthol if you were using that for Tracheal Mite control. Add a queen excluder if you choose to use them, and place honey supers on top of the top deep. Watch out for swarming. **See Bob Arnold's article starting on page one in this issue.** Inspect the hive weekly. Attend bee club meetings and workshops. And, if you are like rest of us, keep making up those frames to get ready in time for the honey flow.

If you have hives really busting at the seams, consider making up some splits to make up for any winter losses. An extra nuc or two always comes in handy.

-adapted from  
[www.backyardbeekeepers.com](http://www.backyardbeekeepers.com)



**Inland Empire  
Beekeepers  
Association**

Next Meeting:  
Friday May 11th  
7:00 pm

The Inland Empire Beekeepers Association (IEBA) meets the 2nd Friday of every month at the Spokane County Ag Extension office by the County Fairgrounds, at 222 N. Havana. The association is affiliated with the Washington State Beekeepers Association (WSBA). IEBA membership dues are \$5.00 for an individual or \$10.00 for the entire family. This includes your receiving the *Inland Beemail*, which is published by the association every month.

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**2007 Farm Fair A Fun Success!**

