



The PSBA BUZZ

April 2006

Volume 7, Issue 4

EVENTS at the
Arboretum Center
Graham Visitor Center
2200 Arboretum Drive E.,
Seattle, WA 98112
(Meetings are the 4th Tuesday
of each month except July and
December.)

Apr. 25, '06

MEETING 6:30–9 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30–7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Bill Rahr and Bob Clark
Will present past and
present gadgets and
gimmicks for the hive.

May. 23, '06

Kate McWiggins, certified
apitherapist, will talk on
the philosophy and
practice of apitherapy

Hive Calendar

Install Packages, Split Hives

Cold snaps or extended rainy weather may cause starvation or robbing, so be prepared to feed your colonies. Install packages on foundation in mid April and feed until the brood nest (2 deeps or 3 westerns) are fully drawn. Add supers when the fruiting (not flowering) cherries bloom or, alternatively, when the local Maple nectar flow begins. If medicating in the spring, install and remove per manufacturer's directions. Our climate makes fall a much better time to medicate. Apistan must be removed before supering. Coumaphous must be removed 14 days before supering. Formic Acid Gel packs must be removed 28 days before supering.

-Based on Roy Thurber's Bee Chats, Tips and Gadgets

April is usually the beginning of swarm season so pay close attention to the hive population. If your hive is burgeoning with bees, making sure that they have plenty of room is of ultimate importance. Supering is the obvious choice, but splitting, or dividing, can help reduce the swarm drive. This can be a complicated process and deserves some serious research and preparation. You can do it one of two ways, with a purchased queen or let them make a new queen themselves.

Purchasing a queen will gain you as much as a month of brood rearing time, which can be important in this crucial season. Mail order queens are one option, but the stress of the mail and cold can impact the health of her majesty. We are lucky enough to have a member who raises queens locally. See Brandon Clayton's ad in "Marketplace" at the end of the newsletter.

Allowing the bees to make their own queen has the added benefit of expanding on the great genetics. Heck, if you've got a hive that is doing well, you want to duplicate it. If you start with a new queen, you are starting with a completely unknown commodity. Generally, taking every other frame from a hive, making sure that both hives have eggs is enough to get started. Orienting the frames to maintain the brood ball in the center is key and reducing the entrance to allow the brood to stay as warm as possible is also crucial. Feeding the hive with sugar syrup is imperative if a nectar flow is not underway (maple season is a great time to be doing a split). Ensuring that the larval queen is well fed is the most important thing you can do to guarantee a future healthy layer. Then give them lots of room to expand. It can be made much more complicated than that, but it can also be done that easily. Good luck.

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Club Notes

Reminder that there will not be a field day this May because our apiary is not together. This is in preparation of improving our yard at the arboretum. At our last meeting we collected names of members who commit to helping with our shed project. This is an essential step in matching our grant with hours of labor. Our grant has been submitted and we will hear back from the city in a few months. We will continue to need help with getting our shed in order and with gathering information for the educational aspect of our apiary. Contact Bruce Becker or John DeGroot to let them know your availability.

—Tim Comstock, PSBA president

Apiary Report

The active hives were moved out of the apiary to allow for the work that is going to be done in the apiary. Four hives (of about ten) survived the winter, although at least two will be combined into one because of weakness.

We plan to do some big improvements to the apiary this summer. The apiary project group has applied for a grant from the city to add a new shed, some fencing, and a good educational display. The grant will supplement PSBA's contribution by matching our members' and friends' donated labor. The basic time line is as follows:

1. Grant application was submitted April 3, 2006.
2. Grant awards are made by May 8, 2006, but are not final until a contract is signed which meets the city's "specific conditions" for that grant.
3. Final contracts must be signed by June 13, 2006. (I hope this will occur earlier)
4. In the grant we gave a time line for completing parts of the project as follows:

June 6	Apiary cleanup, preparation for shed, crushed rock delivered
July 6	Shed delivered and installed by Tuff Shed. Fencing delivered and fence construction begins. Educational signs and exhibit design completed.
August 6	Shed painted and fence completed.
September 6	Educational signs and exhibits completed.

There is a lot of work that needs to be done to complete this project. Please plan on helping at the work parties. They will be scheduled (at least tentatively) by the April meeting. In addition, if you are volunteering for collecting swarms, schools, Bug Day, Seattle Tilth, or other community outreach where you are telling people about beekeeping and Puget Sound Beekeeper's Association, please keep track of your time and tell Bruce Becker so we can put your time down on our grant reports for volunteer time.

—Bruce Becker, Apiary Manager

We're on the Web!

www.pugetsoundbees.org

www.psbees.org

www.beegeek.com

April Meeting

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2006

Beginners Instruction: 6:30-7:15 pm

Van Sherod's beginner lesson precedes the main presentation. Van will be speaking on queens workers and drones. He will probably bring an observation hive so we can all see the many stages of the young as well. Van is always open to questions.

Main Presentation: 7:30-9 pm

Gadgets, gadgets, gadgets!

Welcome to eighty years of beekeeping mystique! Long time bee club members Bill Rahr and Bob Clark have put together a special 'show and tell' program on a subject dear to the hearts and souls of all beekeepers - gadgets.

Gadgets, Widgets, Gimicks, Contraptions, Thingumajigs, Contrivances, Whachamacallits are all thought up and designed to make life easier for us beekeepers. Most of these items are relatively useless or unnecessary. Some are strange, makeshift or incomprehensible. A few are really clever. Bill and Bob have seen most all of them and are bringing in some of the best and the worst for us to see, examine and play with. Rare and hither-to unheard of historical anecdotes will accompany the presentation.

A special slide show will feature "There is nothing new under the sun in beekeeping".

Marketplace

Got gear? Sell your stuff here!

Queens available May-Sept. \$15 ea. 10+ \$10 ea. Pickup only, please call for availability---Brandon Clayton 206-947-4483.

FREE: Used Full Depth Frames
Call Donald Mech at (425) 432-3971

Miscellaneous Bee Equipment for Sale.

Tired of mixing sugar water for your bees? **HFCS 55, High Fructose Corn Syrup** in 4 gallon buckets is available for sale. Cary Therriault (425) 885-0159 or cktherriau@aol.com

Getting Out of Beekeeping

I am getting out of beekeeping and wish to offer my equipment to fellow members of PSBA. I presently have 13 supers, all deeps, many with drawn comb that I would be willing to part with for \$10 to \$20 each depending on the frames. I also have top covers, and inter covers, queen excluders, jigs for wiring frames and embedding foundation, an uncapping knife, honey screens, a frame lifting tool, queen cages, bee brushes, a smoker, a frame spacer, and some clothing. Please contact me for more details. Dan Bodien 425-828-0170 dan@bodien.org

Short ads are run for free for members of PSBA! The fee for non-members is \$25.

Commercial ad rates: \$15 for ¼ page, \$50 for ½ page, or \$75 for a full page.
Send your ads to editor@psbees.org.

New Gear

A new anti-Varroa bottom board designed by a French inventor and manufactured and distributed by an Oregon beekeeper, the Happykeeper bottom board has the same functional technique as a screened bottom board but without the wide open flow of cold air. Using polyethylene tubes strategically placed to promote mite drop between the frames but minimizing the air gap, the bottom board drops mites and wax litter to the ground. The Happykeeper bottom board is not available through any of the national distributors yet, but can be purchased directly from Happykeeper USA for \$21.95. Contact (866) 371-6006 toll free. For more information contact jim@happykeeperusa.com or visit their webpage <http://happykeeperusa.com/index.html>

