



APRIL 2008

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS

## Remember...

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April 10	Blackberry blooms
April 14	Clover blooms
April 25	Tulip poplar blooms
April 30	Holly blooms

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Add supers and get ready for the honey flow!

*Alamance County Beekeepers*

## This month's meeting...

will be at the Agriculture Building at 7:30 PM Thursday, April 17. At this time of year, we are all aware of the possibility of swarming. Adolphus Leonard will talk with us about Swarm Control. Refreshments will be provided by David and Toni Mullis.

## Mclver-Haas Lifetime Achievement Award

At last month's Spring Meeting in Burlington, Don and Audrey Moore received the NCSBA Mclver-Haas Lifetime Achievement Award. Many of us noted that we didn't know what the award signified, so here is a little about the award, taken from the nomination form on the NCSBA web site.

The award is designed to acknowledge those individuals whose dedicated service to the NCSBA and achievements in support of beekeeping are true and of long lasting significance. This award is not intended to be an annual presentation, and it will be made only to individuals who are widely acknowledged as a worthy recipients.

The following minimum requirements must be met for anyone nominated for the award:

1. A current or past member of the NCSBA.
2. Minimum of 15 years of service to beekeeping and beekeepers.
3. Minimum of 10 years of service to the NCSBA.
4. A nomination for the award must consist of one letter of nomination from an individual or a beekeeping organization plus two supporting letters of nomination from other individuals or organizations.
5. A nomination package must demonstrate the nominee's accomplishments in all of the following areas:
  - (1) Assistance to beekeepers.
  - (2) Promotion of beekeeping.
  - (3) Education of beekeeping and the public about beekeeping.
  - (4) Recruitment of potential beekeepers.
  - (5) Publicizing beekeeping.
  - (6) Service to the NCSBA.

Congratulations to Don and Audrey on this prestigious award!

## April Article

*The topic of this month's article is one that all beekeepers can identify with – mite treatments.*

### Mite Treatments

I've spoken to a few of our fellow beekeepers recently and found that mites have been a cause of some failed colonies. I'd like to relate to you what my experience has been related to treating for mites, both varroa and tracheal.

First, it's important to know what our level of infestation is for the varroa mite. I use the 24 hour sticky board test. I have screened bottom boards with a corrugated plastic sheet below these. I spray the sheets with vegetable oil and count the mites after 24 hours. I do this for 3 days, then average out the count per day. If I have more than 25 mites per day, I treat. My first year I used Apistan strips, which did cause a tremendous amount of mites to drop, but near the end of the 42 day treatment period, the counts started to go up. I called Don Hopkins, who was a great help, and he suggested that my bees were developing a resistance to the Apistan. I changed the treatment to Check Mite, which did the job.

Upon further consideration of the buildup of coumaphos (Check Mite chemical) in my wax, I decided against using the harsher chemical treatments. My second year I tried powdered sugar, which did drop a lot of mites, and may have saved my 2 hives that year. Since this method is so labor-intensive, I also decided against this as a regular treatment. My third year I went with Api Life VAR, a thymol pad treatment. This proved to be very effective in keeping me to low mite counts. I used this method for 2 years.

Last year I tried Mite-Away, a formic acid pad. This method has proved to be completely effective, least labor-intensive, and easy to use. You must wear nitrile gloves and goggles when applying and removing. It is a single application, left on for 21 days, and also kills the tracheal mite. It is very temperature-sensitive, and must only be used when the daytime temperatures are between 50 and 80 degrees F. If attention is not placed on this temperature range, the treatment will either be ineffective (if temp. too low), or it will kill bees (if over 80 degrees F). I treated my 3 hives last October with Mite-Away, and my average daily mite drop in early March, 2008 was less than 5 per hive. If mite counts are high, a spring treatment would be in order. Three weeks after treatment in the spring, the hives can be supered for the honey flow (no treating during honey flow). Here's hoping you are successful in keeping your mite counts low...and for a successful 2008.

*Joe Eiden*

### Save The Date

Don't forget the NCSBA Summer Meeting to be held in Southern Pines, NC. The dates are July 10-12. A state meeting is a real learning experience, and a great place to make new beekeeping friends!

### Call for Mentors

At times we get requests from people who want to get into bees — in a good way, I mean! If you would be willing to serve as a mentor for new-bees, talk to Joe Eiden or one of the other officers. (They're listed on the last page of the newsletter.)



### Extractor Offer

Though extracting time is months away, Ken Pipes is offering his extractor on a loan basis, free of charge, to any new beekeeper that is a member of the Alamance County Beekeepers. It is a four-frame tangential extractor that will handle the deep, medium and shallow size super frames. This extractor is motor driven with a manual speed control. (Extractor will need to be held down while in use.) All frames to be extracted should be wired or have reinforced foundation. Please call Ken at 336-229-5622 if you would like to use his extractor. If no requests are received to use his extractor, he will again use it as a honey storage tank.

Here is another poem from Lawrence Cutts, aka Billy Shake Spere. We published one of his poems in last month's newsletter, along with some background information. This poem was previously published in the March 1999 ACB newsletter.

### To Bee or Not To Bee

To bee, or not to bee,  
That is no question for a honey bee,  
For where would man be without me,  
Says she,  
There'd be less food for him to eat,  
From fruits and vegetables to poultry and meat,  
And where would I be without man,  
Who cares for me as best he can,  
He helps me ward off both the mites,  
Varroa and tracheal, those parasites,  
My cousins who lived in the wild,  
Are now all dead, both mother and child,  
And now it's left entirely to me,  
(Me and my keeper, that is, you see,)  
To supply the world with pure fine honey,  
For that's our treasure, we've no need for money  
And to pollinate, though we charge a fee,  
For no one works this day for free,  
The question then comes back, you see,  
Whether to bee or not to bee,  
Tis sure I'll bee,  
Says the busy bee.

Billy  
Shake  
Spere

*If you like these poems, why not submit one of your own?  
I'm sure your fellow beekeepers would love it!*

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Correction:

Last month's poem, A Bee Yard, was previously published in the April 1999 ACB newsletter, not March 1999 as last month's introduction stated.

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*Article for May: Scott Jewell*

*April Meeting Speaker: Dr. Buddy Marterre*

#### ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS 2008 OFFICERS

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