

SKAGIT VALLEY BEEKEEPERS



Ed Markus, Editor 360 421 4296

ejmarkus@fidalgo.net

Board Members: William Markus, President 630-5086 661 0452 Mary Pat Larsen, Secretary 708 0337

Alerd Johnson, V President 293-7953

Bruce Bowen, Board 422-5146

Charlie Langseth, Honorary Board 293-6853

Scott Rhodes Treasurer 856 2652

Robert Castillejo, Board 856 -1774

Greg Fagot, Board 854-0424

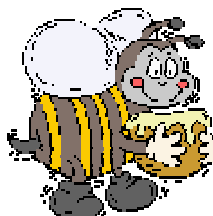
September 2010

The September meeting will be Thursday the 9th, at 7:00 PM as always. We still meet at the CENEX Skagit Farmers Supply administration building on Park Lane, If you are new to us, go north from Burlington on the old highway 99, turn in east at the KIA dealer, drive over the tracks and take the first right turn.. CENEX is at the end of the road on the right.

Bill has arranged for Bruce Vilders to speak. Bruce has been a long time beekeeper and has written in the local press about the plight of bees.

Hop Guard, the new product I talked about several months ago, is heading for a Section 18 emergency release, hopefully. The Washington State Beekeepers Association website has a copy of the application for folks to review, There are some big time beekeepers and researchers who have put name on this application. It is worth reading because it has all the details and expectations the Feds demand before they OK something new. It is all there. Impressive! And not available in time for us to use I'm afraid.

- It has been an interesting summer. I resolved to build up some nucs to have spare queens to use when queens disappear as they so often do. Right! I wanted to raise those queens myself. Right! Despite my efforts and three or four different methods I mostly failed. The hive in put the woods above Big Lake I thought would do nothing took off and made bees, cells AND honey for a change. Remarkable. Others not so much and others just fizzled. A lot of them fizzled. Virgin queens failed.
- So, you should be in the middle of mite control if you need it. You should be feeding for winter if your bees need it. And the mean part, put weak hives over strong hives using newspaper and let the queens fight it out. We are running out of time for most treatments. That is the problem with Hop Guard not being online for us. It really sounds



Cookies —A to M

This newsletter is on-line.
Please e-mail your e-ddress

sounds good. These things mostly do.

I have to share I am trying to improve my beat up old bee boom to save me a lot of work. I wired right to the truck battery. That works great. I changed the wire on the little winch and there is the story. I put too much wire on the little drum. Bad mistake. When I tried to load bees I would get within 2 or 3 inches of where I needed to be and the wire would jump off the drum and drop about 6 inches with a hard jerk at the end. I had mad bees everywhere and because it was getting very dark they were looking for my pants legs. I got things loaded and headed for home, desperate. I had my son help me cut about 50 feet off the wire this morning. That worked. But it was 5 AM and he does not do 5 AM very well. My real disappointment is that when I shift bees to the trailer there is no bottom under them for a minute. So when they dropped and stopped, they snapped bees out and I am fearful my best two queens snapped out too. Dang! I will find out. I am still digging bees out of my coveralls and my underwear. That is farming though.

I have not asked about seed set in the cabbage and such, I am afraid someone might cry. We now know how big a hit the potato guys had, the squash and pumpkin guys too. Too many cuke fields had to be tilled under because they just did nothing

One problem of wet cabbage seed crops is something called after-bloom where the female seed cabbages decide they did NOT bloom and try to bloom again. The problem there, in part anyway, is there are no bees then and no cross-pollinator cabbage left in most cases. I don't know what the farmers do that is successful but I have seen after-bloom for the first time, on my way to La Conner.

To Do List:

- Finish extracting. Some folks put wet supers over a inner cover on a hive and the bees crawl up and clean the comb. Store good comb with a way to stop wax moths.
- Pick out the hives for wintering. If there is no pollen, or queenlessness or the queen is weak, stack them up over a strong hive and let them fight.
- It is recommended you have 60 to 90 pounds of stores and two pollen frames on the outer sides of a hive for our winters. You can feed heavy sugar syrup for about another two weeks or so if the weather holds at all. Remember the bees have to store that syrup like they would honey and that takes time and heat.
- Pollen patties can go until early October. Some folks leave them in all winter adding as necessary and the weather allows.
- Drainage, hive ventilation and a wind break to prevent wind chill issues are critical to bee survival. I worked hard to build a wind fence. The hard part was using no money to do it. Find a place in the winter sun if you can. It doesn't hurt.

We are building for next spring now. The weather guesser says look for a La Nina, wetter and cooler perhaps. See you at the meeting, Ed Markus