

# Newsletter

Florida State Beekeepers Association, Aug. 2003

<http://floridabeekeepers.org>

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For other information, see the associations' website above or visit Who's Who in Apiculture at <<http://beeculture.com>>.

## Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Florida State Beekeepers Association will take place October 30, 31 and November 1, 2003 at the Holiday Inn, 2701 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33612, ph 813-971-4710 or 800-206-2747. The program is expected to contain pesticide certification, a Thursday-night Tampa food fest (free for all those pre-registering), Friday night banquet and Saturday business meeting. President Elmore Herman will send a letter to registered beekeepers with the particulars. Anyone with questions should communicate them directly to him.

## Laurence Cutts Retires on August 28, 2003

Laurence Cutts will officially retire at the end of August 28, 2003 as Florida's Chief Apiarist. This will end one of the longest tenures for a chief bee inspector in the Sunshine state. And there is no question that Laurence's tenure has been more filled with inspection challenges than any of his predecessors. He came to office as the tracheal mite situation appeared to be on the wane, but was quickly replaced by introduction of the Varroa mite. Other situations included registration of a series of mite treatments, inauguration of a vigorous trapping program to monitor Africanized honey bees, and finally, introduction of the small hive beetle, *Aethina tumida*. Florida will certainly miss Laurence's combination of optimism and "can do" attitude that marked almost two decades of incessant change in beekeeping inspection.

His retirement will no doubt be marked by a variety of celebrations. The first is scheduled on his actual retirement date, Thursday, August 28, 2003. It will take place at the Division of Plant Industry Auditorium in Gainesville, FL (1911SW 34th St.), beginning at 3:00 p.m. For further information, contact Ms. Cathy DeWeese, ph 352-372-3505 x 114 or e-mail: <[deweesc@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:deweesc@doacs.state.fl.us)>. I hope to see you there!



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## Conrad Cramer Apiary

A donation of \$100 in memory of Conrad Cramer has been received from the Brevard County Farm Bureau. Conrad was a long-time member and on its Board of Directors. The association's Board of Managers is discussing the disposition of this money. One suggestion is to invest it in research.

President Elmore Herman reveals those currently running Conrad Cramer's bees have agreed to continue managing the 60 colonies that constitute one part of the Conrad Cramer Memorial Apiary. Conrad's two step sons, Jerry and Jody Turner, are managing about 2000 colonies of their own, and including those of the Florida State Beekeepers Association. This seems like a good match, which would also continue a long-time tradition. This is especially relevant given the decision to name the association's apiary after Conrad.

The other part of the apiary, includes 18 colonies, according to President Herman. These are now under his control. He and Bert Kelley will be developing a standard reporting form for managers of the apiary to use in reporting their activities with the Association's apiary. Currently the procedure is that managers split the revenue with the Association, and keep a consistent number of colonies.

## Hambleton Award at EAS

Dr. Marla Spivak received the James I. Hambleton Award this year, given by the Eastern Apicultural Society meeting in Brunswick, Maine. When accepting the award, Dr. Spivak told of finding her first bee book in a library and how through it she found her life's occupation as a honey bee researcher. (more on page 4).

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## News From Canada

### American Association of Professional Apiculturists

The American Association of Professional Apiculturists (AAPA) has updated its web site under the careful direction of Dr. Eric Mussen at the University of California, Davis, CA <<http://entomology.ucdavis.edu/aapa/index.cfm>>. This organization, based on the highly successful Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists <<http://www.honeycouncil.ca/capa.html>>, includes some of the most highly respected apicultural researchers and educators in the nation. It also sells the following publications <<http://entomology.ucdavis.edu/aapa/aapapubs.cfm>>:

Bee Pollinators in Your Garden is the newest publication of the American Association for Professional Apiculturists, edited by E.C. Mussen, M. Spivak, D.F. Mayer, and M.T. Sanford. It is an 18 page color booklet that covers the following topics: Why Bees are the Best Pollinators, What is a Bee?, What Bees are Common? Habitat for Bees, Insecticides and Bees, and lists of sources for honey bees, non-*Apis* bees, bee equipment and references. Color photos of bees on flowers are provided for rapid identification. This is an ideal reference for beekeepers, Master and home gardeners, and anyone interested in the conservation and value of bees as pollinators.

A Guide to managing Bees for Crop Pollination, a publication of the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists. The guide includes chapters on: Pollination, Managing honey bees for pollination, Managing leafcutter bee, orchard bee and bumble bee pollinators, Pollination requirements of specific crops, Pesticide hazards and bee pollinators, The value of honey bee pollination, and Recommended honey bee colony stocking rates for crops.

Protecting Honey Bees from *Varroa jacobsoni* is an eight page bulletin that provides basic information about varroa mites and their control. It is a publication of the American Association of Professional Apiculturists. This full color publication includes 11 images and was edited by J.C. Bach, R.G. Danka, M.D. Ellis, E.C. Mussen, J.S. Pettis, and M.T. Sanford. In addition to general information on mite biology, detection, control, research-based regional guidelines on when to treat are included.

The May 2003 and HiveLights, published by the Canadian Honey Council <<http://www.honeycouncil.ca>> contains information of significance to those who keep bees in the United States. Heather Clay reports the final protocol developed by Dr. Medhat Nasr, Alberta Provincial Apiarist, is now available <<http://www.honeycouncil.ca/importb.html>>. It is not expected to be voted on before annual meeting in January 2004.

In a related incident, the magazine reports on an Alberta beekeeper, Jouwert DeJong, who tried to illegally import 250 queens from the United States. He was apprehended at the Carway border crossing near Cardston on May 23, 2002 according to an article by Peter Scott in the Calgary Herald, April 18, 2003, and on April 17, 2003 he was fined \$5000. Mr. DeJong's defense was that the law is flawed, but the judge declared there was no constitutional argument that was appropriate. Nevertheless, the article concludes: "American bees are already prevalent in Alberta, making the ban moot."

The Canadian Bee Research Fund has awarded \$25,000 in research monies. The funds support four bee research projects that focus on Terramycin resistant AFB, controlling Varroa in indoor wintering facilities, impact of insecticides on honey bees in sweet corn, and evaluating pollen supplements.

Allen Dick writes about feeding pollen patties. In contrast to the usual thinking, he feeds patties not to stimulate brood rearing, but to ensure that protein needs of adults are met until natural pollen is present. The patties encourage slower, but steady consumption, he concludes, "...and do not raise the bee's expectations to unreasonable levels." He might have said the same about beekeepers. For more on pollen feeding, see Allen's innovative web site <<http://www.honeybeeworld.com/misc/pollen/default.htm>>.

Peter Keating of Quebec describes the shift in his region from pollinating one crop, blueberries to two. Cranberries are grown some distance away, so Mr. Keating and his colleague had to become migratory and gear up accordingly. For those in the pollinating business, a look at crop fees is instructive. Blueberries command the most per colony at (\$70), followed by cranberries (\$57), raspberries (\$47), cucumbers and strawberries (\$46) and apples (\$36). Lest these seem high, these are Canadian dollars, not U.S. Currency.

Paul van Westendorp writes that an apiculture web page has been launched by the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries <<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/apiculture/>>. This site has some good information, including help on both bee and financial management.

Hambleton Award; continued from page 2:

Dr. Spivak's resume speaks volumes, including a stint in commercial beekeeping, as research assistant at the USDA labs, and work in much of Latin America on Africanized honey bees under the tutelage of Dr. Chip Taylor at the University of Kansas (also a Hambleton winner). She is now Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota.

Honey bees are in crisis, Dr. Spivak said in her acceptance address at the meeting, and beekeepers are not helping them much. Bees are certified "junkies" and beekeepers have become their "pushers." A new set of rules is necessary to get the bees off the chemical/pesticide treadmill. Her advice:

1. Stop right now any preventative feeding of antibiotics.
2. Cull combs to remove AFB spores and pesticide/antibiotic residues.
3. Leave mites in colonies; do not try to eliminate them all; in some cases bees can sustain 10% to 15% infestation with little harm.
4. Pesticides "pamper" bees; let them use their own innate defense mechanisms. Use selective breeding to give bees tools to work with and then leave them on their own. This includes incorporating hygienic behavior, SMR and characteristics of other stocks (Russians).
5. Use IPM now! This means thinking before acting; apply pesticides only as a last resort. Use soft chemicals when possible. Again, leave mites in the colony so the bees have a long-term fighting chance on their own.

She concluded that none of the above will be easy. However, it is the only option to save both the bees and beekeeping industry in the long run.

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