

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

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August 2010

What You Missed

At our June meeting our guest speaker was Dr. Michelle Flenniken. Michelle is conducting studies on the details of honey bee cellular immune responses to infection by RNA viruses in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the Mission Bay campus of UC San Francisco where she is the Häagen-Dazs postdoctoral fellow.

Most of the viruses effecting bees are RNA viruses. RNA viruses are extremely small viruses that invade a healthy cell. The cell is unable to detect the virus, due to it's small size. The virus then replicates itself eventually destroying the host cell and then spreading on to other host cells.

Michele is involved in the process of developing microarray "chips" that will be able to identify any known honey bee pathogen(s) in a submitted bee sample. The ability to identify which pathogens are present in a colony may eventually lead to the discovery of which pathogens are responsible for CCD.

Michele also spoke about methods to combat RNA

see Missed on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 What you Missed
- 1 What's the Buzz
- 2 Dues Reminder
- 3 Fair News
- 3 Bee Film Premier

What's the Buzz

There is no regular meeting of the Marin County Beekeepers in August. Instead, please plan to join us on August 7th at Draper Farms for the annual potluck dinner. The event starts at 5 pm.

Location:

Draper Farms

11 Sacramento Avenue

San Anselmo, CA

Cups, plates, napkins, silverware provided. Please bring your dish in a reusable container. This is a "no waste green event".

Look below for the first letter of your last name then bring the corresponding dish:

A-B: entre
C-G: salad
H-K: vegetables
L-O: drinks
P-S: appetizer
T-Z: dessert

Upcoming Meetings:

September 2, 2010

Melanie Kirby of Zia Queenbee Company

Melanie Kirby established Zia Queenbee Company to provide quality queenbees and natural honeybee products. Melanie has been a professional beekeeper

see Buzz on page 2

for 13 years and has specialized in queenbee-rearing for the past 11 years. She began her career as a Beekeeping Extension Volunteer with the United States Peace Corps. After serving her country abroad as a technical and cultural ambassador, she continued to learn and grow as a beekeeper. While working for two companies on the Big Island of Hawaii, she learned more skills in queen grafting and rearing. In Florida, she learned about nucleus and package bee production. Following these experiences, she committed her energies and skills towards beginning Zia Queenbee Company, a beekeeping enterprise that is progressive, innovative and ethical. In partnership with Mark Spitzig, Zia Queenbee Company and its sister enterprise Superior Honey Farms span from border to border.

October 7, 2010

Tom Seely, Professor and Chairman in the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Professor Seely's scientific work focuses on understanding one of the five major transitions in evolution, namely the transition from independent organism to integrated group as the highest level of functionally organized entity. To understand this transition, we must solve two puzzles: "Why is there strong cooperation among the members of a highly integrated group?" and "How do the members of such a group work together as a united whole?" He has focused on answering the second question by investigating colonies of honey bees. A honey bee colony is a wonderful system for studying functional organization at the group level because it interacts with the environment as a coherent unit and it possesses numerous devices for social coordination, yet it is open to experimental analysis. To date, he has devoted most of his efforts toward understanding two crucial aspects of a colony's physiology: the efficient acquisition of resources and the wise selection of a nesting site.

November 4, 2010

Dr. Diana Sammataro, co-author of the *Beekeeper's Handbook*.

The title of Diana's talk will be: "A Molecular Biology

Approach to Honey Bee Pathogen & Colony Collapse Disorder Research".

Diana plans to tell us about her research focused on pathogen detection in honey bee samples and her work investigating the honey bee antiviral immune system.

Missed continued from page 1

viruses. The most promising method to date is RNA interference. The RNA virus consists of the virus' genome surrounded by a shell made of protein. RNAi is introduced into the infected cell where it combines with the RNA virus. The host cell then identifies the virus combined with the RNAi and destroys it. The hope is that RNA interference may have the potential to be used to combat other animal viruses and possibly human viruses in the future.

Michele closed by encouraging everyone to be an advocate for science. Without a strong science program in our schools the ability to carry on the type of research that Michele is involved in will be diminished.

Dues are Due

A reminder that annual dues for 2011 are now due. Dues are still just \$20 per year. You can pay in person to David Peterson at the monthly meeting or mail you check made payable to Marin Beekeepers to:

Marin Beekeepers
c/o Mary Nordquist
2072 Hatch Road
Novato, CA 94947

New members and members with new contact info please make sure to include your address, phone number and e-mail.

Membership includes free admission to all meetings, access to the Club's honey extracting equipment, and subscription to the Club's "MarinBuzz" listserv, which serves as an online discussion forum and a way to notify Club members of local bee swarm information.

Bee Film Premier

Saturday August 21, 2010
National Honey Bee Awareness Day
Marin County Premier of the documentary "Vanishing of the Bees", feature-length film.

Film will be shown at:

Open Secret Bookstore
923 "C" St.
San Rafael, CA 94901
415-457-4191

Show time is 7:00 pm.

Admission: \$10 or by donation, no one turned away for lack of funds

Contact: Barbara Framm 415-456-2799

visit www.vanishingbees.com for more information, and to view a trailer of the film

Fair News

The 2010 Marin County Fair has come and gone. Thanks to Dan Stralka for all of his efforts arranging for the judging and organizing the exhibit. Also thanks to all the volunteers who manned the exhibit area and answered the question "So, what is happening to the bees?" and found the queen, numerous times.

Fair results will be posted in the September newsletter.