



### Bee Keeping

LeRoy Cobia, a retired employee of Crop Science Consulting, spoke at the Optimist Club about bee keeping. Bees are the only insect used commercially. They use pollen for protein and nectar carbohydrate.

He gets bees from Draper bees. Worker bees come in a box of 2000 bees. Queen bees are ordered separately. He gets new queen bees every two or three years. When ordering bees, the queen bee is kept separate from the worker bees. The workers will kill any queen that does not smell like them. Therefore, the queen is kept in a small cage with an entrance that is blocked with sugar. It takes the bees several days to eat through the sugar and release the queen. By that time she smells like them and they accept her.

Last year Cobia got 110 pounds of honey from six hives. An active hive in pollen season can have 60,000 bees in it. Cobia doesn't sell his honey, but gives it away. He donated two bee bears to the Optimist Club for auctioning.

Worker bees are all female. The male bees cannot survive by themselves. They need to be fed. Their only purpose is to fertilize the queen. Male bees will die in the winter. Males have large eyes and no stinger.

In a normal hive of bees, 4%-5% of the bees are guard bees. With African bees, also called killer bees, 90% of the bees will attack intruders. Killer bees are more aggressive than other bees, hatch sooner, and will quickly take over a hive. Fortunately, killer bees usually don't survive an Iowa winter.

Queen bees can lay 2000 eggs a day. Worker bees and queen bees develop from the same larvae. Queen bees have a larger cell in the hive and are fed royal jelly for their full term while worker bees are only fed royal jelly for three days. A queen will kill other queens that hatch in the hive.

When the hive gets crowded, the bees will swarm. The old queen will leave with the swarm. A swarm is usually friendly. The bees swarm around the queen. Beekeepers can cut off the branch where the bees are and put it in a hive, if the bees have not moved far.

### Meeting Minutes

Dennis White opened the Optimist Club meeting on March 26 with the Pledge of Allegiance and Gary Funkhouser gave the opening prayer. Jim Clausen and LeRoy Cobia provided jokes. There were 11 members and two guests at the meeting.

Ken Graham contributed to the Youth Fund in recognition of the accomplishments of Tyler, the student Julie Campbell talked about last week. Kirk Vorthmann contributed because he has new doors on his house.

Dale Willenborg won the 50/50 drawing. Keith Denton won the attendance drawing, but did not collect.

Bicycle Safety will be April 21 at the Elementary school. Sgt. Richie will speak at school. Extreme Wheels will conduct bicycle inspections. The club will give away one boys and one girls Schwinn bike.

#### CALENDAR

Mar 30 - Can Kennel sorting at 5:30 p.m. for the JOOI club

#### Birthdays

- Mar 2 – Ward Chambers
- Mar 11 – Kenneth Graham (recognized)
- Mar 20 – Jon Jacobsen
- Apr 6 - Kevin Abbott
- Apr 20 – Steve Chambers
- Apr 25 – Rocky Saar
- Apr 28 - Gene Seran

#### Anniversaries

- Mar 4 – Gene & Erika Seran
- Mar 8 – Keith & Georgia Denton (recognized)
- Mar 15 – Dick & Betty Baber
- Mar 15 – Jeff & Carrie Nelson
- Apr 7 – Jim & Diane Clausen

#### Speakers

- Apr 2 – Scott Rucker – Boys Basketball

#### Programs

- Apr – Gary Guttau
- May – Keith Denton
- June – Dick Baber
- July – Judy Guttau
- Aug – Treynor Bank Employees
- Sep – Jeff Jorgensen
- Oct – Gary Funkhouser
- Nov – Arlyn Norris
- Dec – Chuck Nielsen

I had a friend who was 30 years older than myself. He got into bee keeping to pollinate a berry crop he was intending to sell. His first year he was so intrigued by the bees he would sit hours on end and watch. Right after he got his first packages installed, the dutch clover was blooming all over his field that he kept mowed. He appreciated and loved his bees so much that as he was mowing he would stop to let the bees jump off the clover. Needless to say he was stopping every few inches. The funny part of the story was that his neighbor couldn't figure out what was wrong with him, he thought he was having a stroke so he called the family and an ambulance out on him. Then he had to explain what he was doing.