



HCBC Monthly Meetings Summary

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March 7, 2017

At 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 7, 2017, President Allen Blanton called to order the monthly meeting of Haywood County Beekeepers Club, at the Haywood County Extension Center, 589 Raccoon Road, Waynesville, NC 28786.

President Blanton opened the meeting and he reported that the **2017 NCSBA Summer Conference** will be July 13 - 15, in Winston-Salem, NC, and there will be a celebration of 100 years of Beekeeping.

There will be day long sessions or seminars about **Raising Queens** on **May 6** in Greenville and **May 20** in Statesville, NC. Both seminars are full now and there is a waiting list. These seminars are listed on the State Website and the cost is \$75 a session. Bill Skelton is going and he would like for someone to ride along with him. Allan will do a hands-on session if you cannot make it to the sessions. He would like beekeepers who are interested to gather and talk about Queen rearing, then go into the bee yard. Allan raises Queens naturally.

Webmaster David Zachary reported that a school teacher emailed him to thank us for information on our website and that it helped teach and educate her students. She is from Aurora, CO and one of her students went to our "Bee Cause" on the "resources" page of the www.hcbees.org website.

Bill Skelton inspected his hives and reported he that lost some hives and attributes it to Varroa mites, because there were few or no bees in a hive with honey. He says there are brood, eggs, larvae, and pollen coming in and that this is a critical time for the bees. If there is honey in the hive, there is food for the bees. If they are laying brood and need more food, then feed them!

Caution: "Mite-Away" quick strips could kill the queen. It is recommended that beekeepers treat "packages" of bees in the spring, monitor it in the summer, and treat the hive again in the fall. Mites give bees viruses, thus if you kill the mites the bees could survive, however the bees may still have viruses.

- Treat the bees using the "Sugar shake" method: select - 1/2 Cup of bees = approx. 300 bees
- Treat if 3% of the bee sampling has mites (6 mites, or more)
- Use the insert strip during a 24-hr. period, then count the mites on the mite board. *Note: It is not very accurate and the "sugar-shake" method is better.*

Extension report: Bill Skelton stated there are plants for sale, edible and bee plants. Orders must be received by March 17th.

Louis Cauble will do hive inspections from March 30 - April 7th. You need to complete the form on the website. He will give a narrative to you as he inspects the hives. It is very informative. He will try to inspect top bar hives if they are inspect-able.

Bees typically fly within a 2-mile radius from the hive. You cannot have an organic honey unless you are in the middle of the national forest.

- Blooming - peaches, plum, maple, dandelions, Bradford pears, quince,
- We are probably two weeks into early blooming which means there could be early swarming.

Bill passed the written **Master Beekeeper Exam**. Bill and Allan are the only two Certified Journey Master Beekeepers.

Speaker: Jerry Robinson – discussed Hive Health Monitoring and he has been a beekeeper since early 1970 and he has four hives in Madison County, NC. Since 1984, Jerry has worked as an electronic product designer and he is currently a member of the Cold Cove engineering team of Cold Cove Technologies, with four engineers and one marketing person in the company.

He discussed the company's new "Hive Weighing" technology and its ability to identify trends - good, bad, and otherwise. He asked the club, "how are your bees doing?"

Cold Cove Technologies "Hive Weighing" system can take measurements over time, from the easiest to the hardest (scaled from 1 to 4).

1. In a recent test this technology provided such results as:
 - Entrance Activity (4)
 - Hive weight gain/loss (3)
 - Brood Appearance & Activity (2)
 - Brood Temperature (1)
2. This metric correlates to hive-health:
 - Highest - Brood Appearance & Activity (4)
 - Hive weight gain/loss (3)
 - Brood Temperature (2)
 - Lowest - Entrance Activity (1)
3. Cost Obtaining each Metric:
 - Entrance Activity (4)
 - Brood Appearance & Activity (3)
 - Hive weight gain/loss (2)
 - Brood Temperature (1)
4. How it all adds up:
 - Entrance Activity- total of (9)
 - Hive weight gain/loss- total of (8)

- Brood Appearance & Activity- (9)
 - Brood Temperature- (4)
5. Weight is a good metric to:
- determine honey flow
 - check for a successful queen
 - validate good forage
 - robbing
 - swarming
 - queenlessness
 - disease

George McAllister put four hives on scales and created a flow chart of hive-weight, issues, brood-buildup, when to harvest chart, when the hive is flat, a swarm chart, and weight changes by the minutes (Weighing System Technologies).

- Weighing Technologies:
 - Hefting, fish scales (need a fixed pivot point), mechanical gadgets, Dedicated electronics.
- Electronic Technologies:
 - Manual data logging,
 - Remote data logging

Conclusions:

- Record keeping is necessary, so be consistent.
- Use hive weight to determine the hive health.
- Cost for this technology is \$189.00 per scale
- The company is currently developing a device to take to the hive.

RAFFLE

Bill and **Rich Byers** discussed the Certification process to become a certified beekeeper. You can go to the NCSBA to the Master Beekeeper Program or scroll down to it. Each month there are questions for each level of certification.

- Members took a Web Quiz on the website and then played a game.

Rick Queen spoke about the State Conference in S.C. There were around 1,400 beekeepers present. He quoted, "If you want to make a million dollars in beekeeping, you have to start with 2 million." He said the vendors had good prices and there is a new queen rearing apparatus. There were many different program sessions to attend and speakers to hear.

Vicki Morrison

Haywood County Beekeepers Secretary