

ORANGE CO

Beekeepers



July Meeting

Charles Fleckenstein introduced our host in the county extension office, Carl Matyac, and thanked him for allowing us to meet at the extension office.

Charles introduced Ken Medlin, beekeeper and former president of OCBA. Ken had brought with him a number of items of woodenware which he had made and sometimes adapted. He gave us an entertaining talk about the bee business, and included several tales about cutting bees out of old houses. He recommended an old stand-by, a book titled *How to Do It Book of Beekeeping*, by Richard Taylor (@1974, 1984), which helped him get started with the woodenware needed in a hive.

Ken showed us an entrance reducer which won't slip into the hive, and he gave away 19 of these he'd brought with him. He also demonstrated several jigs he had made—one to square up hive boxes during construction and another to allow him to nail 10 frames at a time. He generously offered to give away a form he'd made for wiring a frame (any size) and another gizmo to aid in framing.

He showed the club two bee vacuums that he had created. The first one ingeniously re-used two wire bee packages to store the sucked-up bees. The second one gently blew the bees into an 8-frame nuc with a screened top, so the bees don't have to be transferred a second time. He said he knew someone who used a 5-gallon bucket with his bee vac!



Highlights



August Meeting

August 12th at 7:30 will be our next meeting. Jack Tapp will speak on "A Year in the Beeyard."

EAS

Remember the [Eastern Apicultural Society](#) Meeting Runs from August 2-6th on Boone, NC.

State Fair

Now is the time to start thinking about entries for the state fair. We also would love help and donations/loans for our booth. Check out the [State Fair site](#). Entry deadline is September 24th at 5 pm!

Nominations

We are looking toward our officers for next year. We will need a new president, a new vice-president and three new directors to assist the vice-president with programming. If you are interested in taking on a greater roll at OCBA, please let us know.

North Carolina State Meeting

Key Speakers

Dr Marion Ellis

One of our key inspectors, Dr. Marion Ellis shared with us an introduction to the history of bees and mankind. Bees have served as representatives of sweetness and light. Until the 1600s with the introduction of sugar cane to the New World, beet sugar in the 1800's and corn syrup which is a product of the 20th century, honey was critical as a sweetener to man. Honey and beeswax have been held in association with divinity and used in religious celebrations from the use of beeswax in candles in Catholic services, and honey in religious food used from Ramadan to passover. Dr. Ellis' favorite quote about bees come from The Prophet by Kahil Gibran: "to the flower, a bee is a messenger of love.

In his plenary address, Dr. Ellis showed us some beautiful slides of his trip to Europe studying beekeeping in Southern France. It was wonderful to learn more about lavender honey and see acres of lavender in bloom.

Kristen and Michael Traynor

Kristen and Michael shared with us two lectures and two workshops. They spoke on both photographing honey bees and on bee breeding in Europe. They showed off many pictures of bees and flowers from their time in Germany.

Kristen spoke extensively about the way bee breeders cooperate and work within the German and European breeding programs. It was interesting to learn that along with artificial insemination many virgin queens are carried to isolated islands which are rented out for bee breeding and then stocked with drone colonies of specific stock for mating. The breeders work hard to create bees that are gentle, avoid swarming tendency, seat on the comb (stay on comb when frames are removed), good honey production, varroa tolerance, and overwintering in their long winters. One great aspect we can take away from their program is their blind comparison of queens that is made public.



Other Major Speakers at the Conference:

Dr. Jeffrey Harris, from the USDA/ ARS program at Baton Rouge, gave us a report on the VSH Breeding Program. Varroa Sensitive Hygiene is “a trait that confers a strong resistance to Varroa. This trait is revealed by the ability of the brood bees to smell Varroa infestation in capped pupae and remove the infected pupae from the hive. He spoke at length on an integrated pest management plan for varroa :using varroa resistant stock, good quarantine practice for unknown hives, drone comb trapping, and breaks in the brood cycle, and screened bottom boards. He says it is critical to monitor your mite loads and to know your thresholds.



Dr. Tarpy, Don Hopkins and Dr. Rangel gave us reports on beekeeping in the state. Dr. Rangel discussed the work that took place at the first series

of Born and Bred in NC Workshops and about the much smaller second series. Dr. Tarpy spoke about current research happening at NC State. Don Hopkins reported what he and the other state inspectors have been seeing which suggests a fair honey crop this spring and the possibility of a good Sourwood yield in the mountains.



Dr. Ambrose presented his proposal for a NC Honey Standard which passed. We are following Florida which has led the way to eliminate doctoring of honey and misrepresentation of foreign honey as local. The major points of the standard involve clear labeling on honey for content and for where the honey was produced. [Read it here!](#)



Dr. John Ambrose proposed a new honey standard for North Carolina.



BIG WINNERS AT SUMMER MEETING

Orange County Beekeepers took lots of awards at the Friday night Banquet. Randall Austin officially became a Master Beekeeper. OCBA received a Golden Achievement award for our activities in 2009. Geneva Green brought home a 3rd place for her wax carving. Gail Young won a 2nd place for her cooking and a 3rd place for her extracted light honey. John Wallace won a

2nd place for his light chunk honey, a 1st for his light cut comb, and 1st for light extracted honey. Lewis won a 2nd for his extracted light honey, and 3 first place ribbons for light section (Ross Rounds), amber extracted, and light chunk.

OCBA swept the light extracted competition (John 1st, Lewis 2nd, Gail 3rd). A great night!



Workshops offer a range for everyone!

A

wide range of workshops were offered at this year's meeting. They included work in the beeyards, testing for nosema, master beekeeping tests, cooking with honey, and making creamed honey. There were lots of things to learn about better beekeeping from making splits to German hive rotation to planting a bee garden. We learned about the history of the Nebraska State Fair and what beekeepers there do to further knowledge and interest in honey bees. Dr. Ambrose helped us to become better beekeeping neighbors. We learned about cost sharing programs, and how to educate young children about bees.



Buddy Marterre offered debate over the NCSBA's policy over internet privacy. Now members with email addresses will automatically receive emails pertaining to NCSBA events, listings about vetted bee education opportunities, and the electronic BEEBUZZ unless they opt out. This is a shift to more use of the internet.



Our inspectors hold workshops in the beeyard to show how to look for varroa and other bee diseases.

A Highlight!

Dr. Buddy Marterre presented a wonderful workshop on splitting hives as a way of producing queens geared for your specific area. He emphasized timing for splits. It is critical to get young larvae and to go back to your split five days later and destroy all but two of the least developed queen cells. This way, it will only leave the

youngest queen larva that get the maximum time for royal jelly producing the largest and healthiest queen. Also critical to a good queen is a large number of drones available to mate with her. Since drones take 24 days to hatch and need another 10-12 days to fly, you should not make your split until 16 days after first drone eggs are laid.

NCSBA Business Meeting

The major part of the business meeting was the election of new officers. Which are as follows:

President: Jeanne Price

Vice-President: Danny Jaynes

2nd Vice President: Bill Thering

Treasurer: Paul Madren

Membership Secretary: Buddy Marterre

Membership Administrator: Laurie Shaw