



G O T T A B E E

Mecklenburg Beekeepers Association
Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 pm
2219 Tyvola Road
Marion Diehl Park and Rec Building
Mailing address: 121 Hermitage Rd Charlotte NC 28207
704-358-8075
Visit our website at

www.meckbees.org



*President -
Wayne Hansen*

*Vice President -
Richard Flanagan*

*Treasurer -
Libby Mack*

*Chaplain -
Gene Shannon*



This Month's Meeting/Program May 15th



Scott Ewers, a local Co-op extension rep, will be our guest speaker. He will talk about the latest from the Co-op extension office and how we can work with them in promoting bees and beekeeping.

**This months refreshments are provided by
Gary Cathey**

A local newspaper had a contest for the best chicken wings in Charlotte. After extensive surveys and taste test the winner was a local restaurant named Moosehead Grill and the winning entry was Moosehead Bee Stings which are made with honey and habaneras.



Updates and Information

Beekeepers Yearly Management Calendar for May

Watch the bees bring in the honey. Make sure to check supers to see if additional supers are needed.

Speakers for 2008

May—Scott Ewers
Co-op Extention Rep.
Mecklenburg County

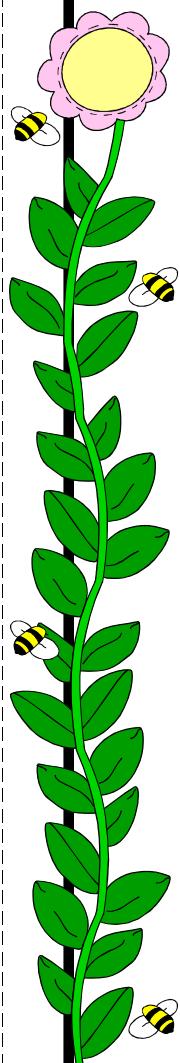
June—Summer Potluck

July— David Crowe
Critter Control

August— Joe Flowers
NC State University
Apiary Division

September—Steve Forrest
Queens

October—
Buddy Marterre
Bee Stings



Honey production in 2007 from producers of five of more colonies totaled 148 million pounds, down 4 % from 2006.

There were 2.44 million colonies producing honey in 2007, up 2% from 2006.

Yield per colony averaged 60.8 pounds down 6% from 64.7 pounds in 2006.

North Carolina produced 495.,000 pounds of honey in 2007 with a production value of \$ 1.1 million dollars.

Numbers from NASS

National Agricultural Statistic Services

US Dept of Agriculture.

Join the Hunt for Bees!

By watching and recording the bees at sunflowers in your garden, you can help us understand the challenges that bees are facing.

- It takes less than 30 minutes.
- It's easy.
- Free Sunflower seeds for planting.
- No knowledge of bees required!

Enter your bee counts online

<http://www.greatsunflower.org/>



Bee Field Day- 4/6/08

By Leslie Carlson

When the weather postponed our field day from the 5th to the 6th I thought no problem. When I got up Sunday and it was still cloudy and wet then I worried we would get our bees with no hands on experience at all! Fortunately things improved and we ended up with a rather nice Sunday afternoon. Starting with lunch was probably a good idea since that mellows out us new bees keepers. To my knowledge nobody got stung.

We first learned how to pack and light our smokers. As always seems to be the case the smoke engulfed me, this may have been a good thing because I noticed no bees tried to land on me for the rest of the afternoon. Also learned to make sure it is completely out before storing. Ken put it in the car, we said our goodbyes, and then opened the doors to a car full of smoke! My car smelled like a camp fire for the next week.

Our group opened a well propolized and very healthy hive. After removing and examining 2 supers and two brood boxes we even found the queen. We removed one broken frame and re-packed to nine frames in one box. We got to see all the different cells and lots of honey! It was easier than I might have expected and lots of fun. A big THANK YOU to Hal Ross for letting us invade his yard and home. Also to our other teachers and helpers for introducing us to the world of bees.



CATCH THE BUZZ

The Great Honey Hunt Begins

The Hoople Group, Zuula Consulting and The American Honey Producers present the rules for the biggest gathering of honey varietals in U.S. History

How it all began...

Working with our friends at Zuula Consulting, The Hoople Group contacted Mark Brady, president of the American Honey Producers Association (AHPA). Together we discussed our love for honey and our desire to help give great American honey the attention it finally deserves. Together, we decided the best place to start: A contest to celebrate our country's dedicated beekeepers by searching for the tastiest honey in the nation.

How does it work?

The Great American Honey Hunt will award prizes for small, medium and large producers and everyone making delicious, American-made honey is encouraged to enter.

Send us a 1lb. sample of your best honey and include the following details:

1. Your name and contact information.
2. The honey's floral source and varietal.
3. The number of hives you maintain.
4. Your annual honey production.

Also, we'd love to get to know you and your honey better, so please share a little about who you are. Sample questions to answer:

1. How did you become interested in honey?
2. How long have you been producing honey?
3. What's the funniest/scariest/most unbelievable experience you've had while making honey?
4. How do you feel about your bees?
5. Do you have any special or surprising honey recipes to share?

Please pack your honey carefully. We don't want to lose a drop!

Send it all to:

The Great American Honey Hunt
c/o The Hoople Group
12105 Browning Court
Richmond, VA 23233

All entries must be received before Memorial Day, Monday, May 26.

Questions? Please email Peter at the World Honey Hunt Headquarters - peter@hooplegroup.com

If you'd like more information about the American Honey Producers Association, please check out their website.

This message brought to you by Bee Culture, The Magazine Of American Beekeeping www.BeeCulture.com

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Stanly County FIELD-DAY MAY 3rd

We will meet at Union Chapel United Methodist Church on Hwy 52 S. & Southside Dr. which is almost across from the Stanly County Fair Grounds and if you wish to eat breakfast be there around 7am. We will try to start at 8am ,weather permitting, checking hives.

1st Stop: Don Shavers- We leave the church headed South on Hwy 52 and turn left onto Stony Gap Rd. and go to intersection of Hwy 24-27. Turn right on Hwy 24-27 and stop at Don's house on right @ 44558 NC Hwy 24-27.

2nd Stop: Tevis Smith's- Leave Don's going back to intersection of Stony Gap and Valley Drive, Turn right on Valley Dr. and go to Tevis's House on left @28139 Valley Dr.

3rd Stop: Bud Barbee's- Leave Tevis's House go back to intersection of NC hwy 24-27 and turn right toward Albemarle and take Hwy 24-27 By-pass around Albemarle going toward Locust. Continue on and just past Providence Church of God (On Left) and before you get to Locust City Limits; take a Left onto Barbee Road. Buds house on left @ 16026 Barbee Rd.

4th Stop: K.C. Hathcocks- Leave Buds going South on Barbee Rd. to Pless Mill Rd., Turn left onto Pless Mill Rd. and go to Hill Top Rd. Turn sharp right onto Hill Top and go to Hwy 205. Turn right on Hwy 205 and go into Oakboro. Turn right at Stop-Light and stay on Hwy 205 South to KC's House on right @4455 Hwy 205.

5th Stop: Mark & Ellen McCarters- Leave KC's go back to Stop Light in Oakboro and turn right on Main St. Turn left onto Aquadle Rd (Hwy 138) toward Aquadle and after about a mile cross Rail Road tracks and take immediate right onto Richard-Sandy Rd. and go to Mark & Ellen's on left @ 9540 Richard-Sandy Rd.

6th Stop: Clarence Crowells- Leave Mark & Ellen's and go back to Aquadle Rd. turn right onto Aquadle Rd and go to Barbee's Grove Ch Rd. Turn left onto Barbee' Grove Ch. Rd. and go to Hazard Road, Take left onto Hazard Rd. and go to St. Martins Ch. Rd Turn right onto St. Martins Ch Rd. Go to Clarence's house on right @ 24106-B St. Martins Ch Rd.

We will hang a small Orange flag on mail box at each house when we leave going to next site so anyone joining us late will know if we have visited that location or not.

We will have snacks, drinks and water along the way and hopefully end up Clarence's house between 2 & 3:00 pm where we will have Hot Dogs and Hamburgers and recap the day.

We will also have a regular Meeting at Rocky River Springs Fish House on May 8th @ 7pm. Jeff Knight will be our speaker on extracting and bottling up Honey for sale.

Any Questions call Mike Barbee @ 704-888-2663 H, 704-438-3435 Cell or Nancy Ruppert @ 910-428-3524

SEE YOU There

Florida has recorded what looks like its first death to due African bees <<http://www.local6.com/news/15862169/detail.html>>. On close reading, however, this is not what it appears to be. A colleague has written me the following: "In regards to the gentlemen who died in Okeechobee. He did not die from the number of stings. He received a little over a hundred stings. He died from an allergic reaction to the stings. Labeling his death due to AHB is bad form. Since the average healthy human male can withstand around 1000 stings. And AHB can if provoked attack in great numbers. This was not a death due to the number stings. It was a death due to the allergic reaction of the first sting. If he had been stung by EHB the end result for him would have been the same. Here's a post from Bee-L, which discusses an ordinance on the books promulgated due to so-called "aggressive bees."



President's BZZZZZ

This month, I'd like to mention the NCBSA Master Beekeeper program. North Carolina has 4 levels of certification available. The first level, Certified, consists of a written test and a practical, hands-on-the-beehive exam. The good news is that it has apparently become easier to reach the certified level. I was lucky enough to take the practical test in 2007 at the Spring Meeting of the NCSBA. The weather wasn't great, but certainly much better than at this year's Spring Meeting. This year, some of the bee school students were able to take the practical part of the Certified exam on Field Day. Taking either test for the Certified level officially enrolls you in the NC Master Beekeeper program.

The second level of beekeeping recognized by the state is Journeyman. The good news here is that you don't have to complete the Certified level in order to begin work on the Journeyman. (Or should it be Journeyperson, or maybe Journeyist?) The requirements are 1) written test, 2) oral exam, 3) 2 years or more of beekeeping experience, and 4) 5 credits of community service. Community service for a beekeeper would include teaching a class, giving a demonstration, or helping out with the exhibit at the NC Zoo. The experience begins as soon as you acquire a hive of bees. Community service doesn't start to count until the beekeeper is officially a part of the Master Beekeeper program. The written and oral exams for the Journeyman level can usually be taken at the Spring or Summer meetings. There may infrequently be other times and locations.

I had the chance to take the written and oral parts of the Journeyman test this Spring in Burlington. The written test was tough. But if you know what *melisococcus pluton* or 9-ODA are, then you might have a fair shot at passing the test. One good way to prepare for the Journeyman test is to read either Bee Culture or The American Bee Journal. Or teach a class on bee diseases and pests. The practical part of the test covered eight topics in beekeeping (like diseases, a honey label, or honey judging). The test taker selects their five favorite topics to be tested on, and as long as you pass four of them, then you pass the test.

There is still more good news in all of this. The bees don't seem to care one way or the other. In fact, mine were so unimpressed on Sunday, that I couldn't even plant a few squash seeds in the afternoon. But if you are officially enrolled in the Master Beekeeper program and have ever volunteered to speak at work, or to Boy/Girl Scouts, or to a class of fourth graders, or at a library, or anywhere else, it's easy enough to keep a record to fill out one day. And if you're not in the Master Beekeeper program, please don't let that stop you from speaking to the garden club or youth group about bees anyway.

For more information on the Master Beekeeper program, check out the links from the NCSBA website under "Master Beekeeper." <http://www.ncbeekeepers.org/> If you'd like to find a group to talk to, let Richard Flanagan or I know. We get quite a few requests for speakers.

See you around the bee yard,

Wayne Hansen

Field Day at Bill Bishop's "Hive"

What can I say other than to express the warmest thank you to Bill and the MeckBees for organizing and providing lunch for "Field Day" on Saturday the 19th!

Although weather was intermittently threatening, the day was filled with humming and buzzing, not only from the bees, but from the keepers as well, sharing tales and experiences - pictures of swarms, tales of stings, hive configurations, and honey recipes for many good things. Many practical exams were completed, and congratulations to all for completing their certification!

In my opinion, there are never enough hours in the day to observe and learn about these treasure we call bees, and Saturday was no different. Bill shared his experiences of re-queening and so wanted to share information on establishing queen cells, but the ladies were not cooperating by supply the appropriate age of larvae. He suggested another field day soon to discuss swarm collection and the queens. I for one can't wait!

A warm thanks goes to each member and mentor of the MeckBees, (including the colony members) for sharing their knowledge, and remembering to share - as there is always something to learn if you take the time to listen.

Gail Arias
