



Meck Bees

Mecklenburg Beekeepers Association
Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 pm
Wendover Child Development Center

749 N Wendover Road, Clt, NC 28211

Mailing address: 121 Hermitage Rd Charlotte NC 28207
704-358-8075



February 2010

*President -
Wayne Hansen*

*Vice President -
Greg Clements*

*Treasurer -
Libby Mack*

*Chaplain -
Jimmy Odom*



**This months
refreshments are
provided by**

Hernan Atencio

This Month's Meeting/Program Feb 18
**Carol Buie Jackson from HAWK
Habitat and Wildlife Keepers will be
our guest speaker . She is a Master
Composter with Mecklenburg County
and is an instructor for the County's
PLANT (Piedmont Landscaping and
Naturescaping Training) program. She
will come and speak on preparing our
yards and gardens for wildlife and
planting.**

Here is a photo from a beekeeper in Alberta Canada named Allen Dick. He is posting a daily journal on line to track his bees and the effect of the minus 7 degree F weather on his bees.

Check out his site at:

<http://www.honeybeeworld.com/diary/articles/WrappingJan2010.htm>



URGENT MEETING LOCATION INFO

Our usual location at Marion Diehl is no longer available so we have had to make some adjustments.

We may be meeting in different locations for the balance of 2010 so please watch for announcements.

THE NEW LOCATION FOR THE FEBRUARY AND MARCH MEETINGS IS

Wendover Child Development Center

749 N Wendover Road, Charlotte, NC 28211

It is at the corner of Wendover and Marvin Road, between Monroe and Randolph

We will be meeting in the left building as you face the property.

Please plan to arrive after 6:45 pm as there may be children and parents there until 6:30.

NOTE THAT THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE JANUARY CLUB MEETING LOCATION



Updates and Information

Beekeepers Yearly Management Calendar for February

Medicate with Terramycin to treat for foulbrood.

Speakers for 2010

**Feb 2010 - Carol Buie
Jackson
Wildlife Habitats**

**March 2010 - Jeff Drone
Wing Haven**

**April 2010 - Rick Boon
Stop the Sting**

**May 2010 - Greg Clements
First 30 Days of a Queen**

Joy

by Julie Cadwallader Staub

Who could need more proof than honey—

How the bees with such skill and purpose
enter flower after flower
sing their way home
to create and cap the new honey
just to get through the flowerless winter.

And how the bear with intention and cunning
raids the hive
shovels pawful after pawful into his happy mouth
bats away indignant bees
stumbles off in a stupor of satiation and stickiness.

And how we humans can't resist its viscosity
its taste of clover and wind
its metaphorical power:
don't we yearn for a land of milk and honey?
don't we call our loved ones "honey?"
all because bees just do, over and over again, what they
were made to do.

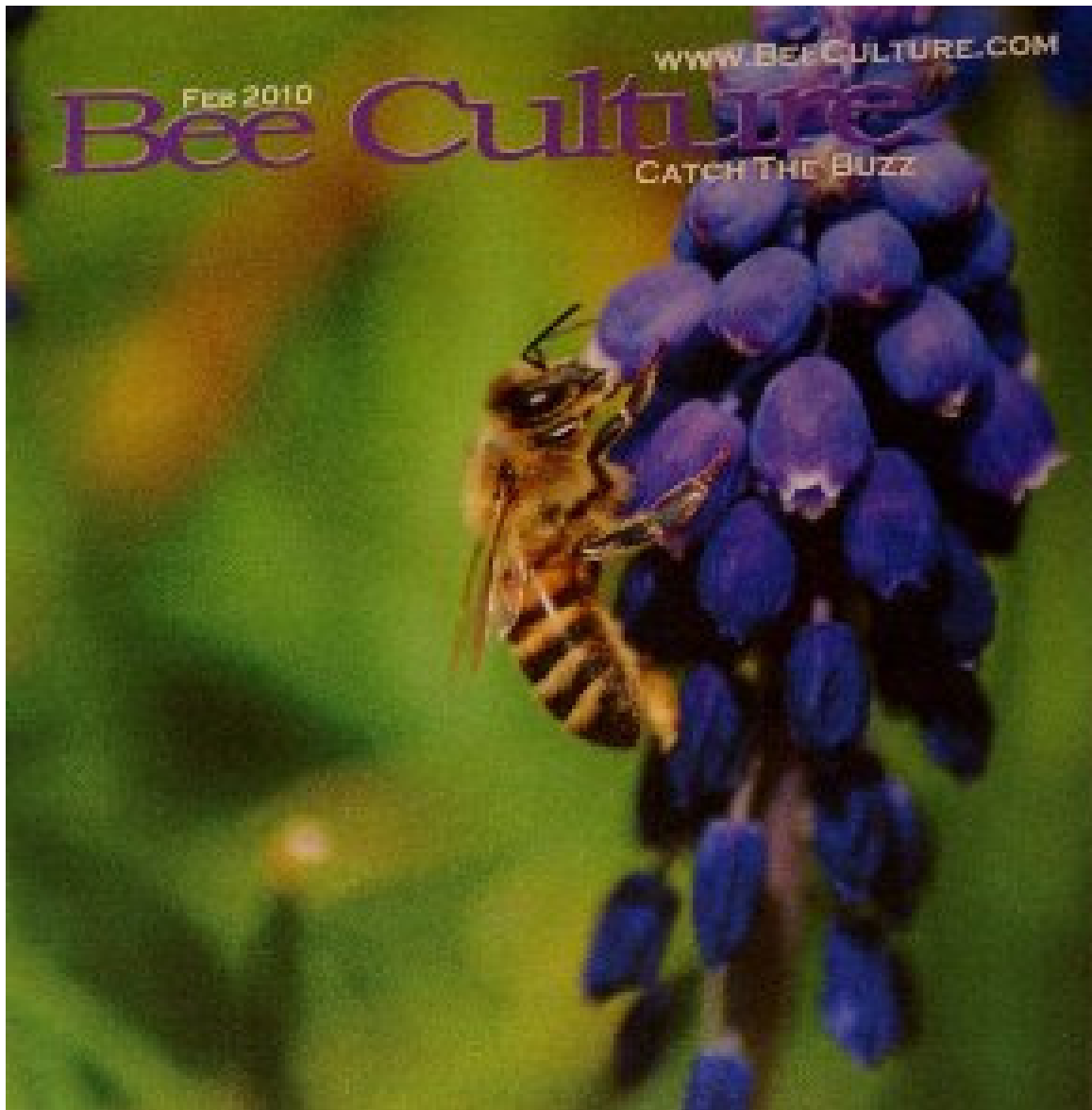
Oh, who could need more proof than honey
to know that our world
was meant to be
and was meant to be sweet?



What is a bee bole???

A bee bole is a cavity or alcove in a wall or a separate free-standing structure set against a wall (the Scots word 'bole' means a recess in a wall).

Our own Carl Albrecht has the honor of having his photo selected from the many entries to appear on the cover of Bee Culture magazine Feb. 2010 issue. Pick up a copy and enjoy the great photo. Congratulation to Carl and keep up the good work.



Project Turns Former Coal Strip Mines into Fertile Honey Farms

by Jaymi Heimbuch, San Francisco, California on 01.20.10

Appalachian mountains have been - and are being - ravaged for their coal, including the use of intensely destructive practices as strip mining. But there could be hope for areas previously used for strip mining. Enter the honey bee...and Tammy Horn, who wants to turn eastern Kentucky and neighboring West Virginia into a "honey corridor."

According to a recent study, illness and premature death in coal mining regions far outweigh any economic benefits of coal mining, costing anywhere from \$9 billion to \$76 billion more per year than it brings in. On the flip side, the humble honey bee has countless positive health and environmental benefits, on top of being the key component in a booming business for agriculture.

Tammy Horn sees the potential for reforesting mined areas and teaching locals how to become bee keepers, transforming the torn landscape into a thriving ecosystem once again while providing a new component to the local economy.

This strip mine near Globe, Arizona in 1990 gives a clear idea about how much reforestation could mean to a coal country ecosystem. Photo via PhillipC

The Chronicle of Higher Education reports, "One day, Ms. Horn hopes some 25,000 hives could be supported on former strip mines. Under federal law, such lands must be returned to their prior condition or reclaimed for "better and higher uses." In its initial phase, her project, Coal Country Beeworks, has 53 hives on five sites."

The Coal Country Beeworks project has an excellent goal: "Coal companies have created over 33,000 acres of reclaimed land. Within these isolated areas, we can produce bees that are better acclimated to the region and, in effect, create "genetic islands" of bee colonies that will aid in preserving biodiversity of bees and plants in North America."

Horn, who is part of the Environmental Research Institute, states, "In addition to honey production, we are interested in exploring the potential for value-added cottage industries such as candles, lotions, and soaps. Even if these are not full-scale cottage industries, the U.S. needs as much beeswax as possible. The U.S. does not produce as much beeswax as needed for our cosmetics industry. Another side industry is queen rearing, which requires more advanced beekeeping skills, and that is a long-term goal of this project. A third, less visible "product" is pollination, and as Kentucky moves toward a diversified agricultural landscape, pollination services will become more necessary.

Part of the effort revolves around choice of plants for reviving the area. The native sourwood is the best tree for beekeepers, however it's considered a "trash tree" by the timber industry which also wants to turn pieces of former strip mines into commercial forests. Thankfully, Don Gibson, International Coal Group's director of permitting and regulatory affairs, says he'd rather see sourwood trees and a whole lot of bees and wildflowers, since the thriving ecosystem would be such a major economic boon to the area.

So, with the help of the honey bee, and one incredibly dedicated researcher in Tammy Horn, there's hope for a strong recovery for areas where strip mining harmed the landscape. And considering coal mining in Appalachia is expected to be on the decline, having a new, healthy way to make money in coal country will be more important than ever.



February 2010

Wow! That's about all I can say this month. Wow! To the cold weather that most of my hives (so far) are handling pretty well. Wow! To the record number of students in bee school. We didn't quite break the 90 mark, but it's certainly a noticeably larger group of eager students than we could fit into the Marion Diehl space. And Wow! To the people who have volunteered to look for and recommend a place for the bee club to meet this year. We should have some options at the February meeting. If you have any other suggestions for the search committee, send them to meckbees@yahoo.com and I'll forward them.

For reasons that aren't entirely clear to me, we won't be meeting at the Marion Diehl center this year. So the search committee has taken on the challenging task of finding an appropriate place for us to meet this year. February and March we can meet at the location we found for bee school, which is the gymnasium of a day-care on Wendover Road owned by one of the bee school students. For January's meeting, we fit into a meeting room at the realty offices where John Byers works, and had a really good time with the trapout presentation by member Frank Clements. I've seen trapouts and heard about them, but really enjoyed hearing about some of the do's and don'ts of the art. Frank pulled a double in January by also teaching the first night of bee school.

With February upon us, it's time already to think about what we're going to do with the bees this year. Some have already attended one of the Certified Naturally Grown classes, and more of those are scheduled. Others, including me, are planning to attend the queen rearing classes that are being held around the state. Close to 300 people have already signed up for that. Bee school's in many counties are starting, so the bee supply vendors like Brushy Mountain and Miller Bees will be busy. I found a gentleman in Cabarrus county last year who has equipment for sale that he is making in his shop, and a Mecklenburg County member is also beginning the same thing. Hopefully he'll advertise in the newsletter a little bit!

This will be only my fifth year of keeping bees, so it's time to start trading out the older combs. Trading out the combs every few (3-5) years helps eliminate about three of the diseases – American foulbrood, noseema, and chalkbrood.* I got a few of them cleaned out last year, but there are probably about 20 that need to be taken out as soon as possible. They are marked with the year they went into service. I started marking with a Sharpie, but found the bees can work that off. Then I used a paint marker, and those seem to run out at inconvenient times, and they aren't real cheap. So last year, I started using a ball point pen. That works pretty well. It's especially easy if the frames are marked when they are new. I did start marking them with a "mmyy" system, which usually amounts to an "myy" system since I don't include leading zeros and there are only bad reasons for introducing flat wax in October, November, or, heaven forbid, December.

To close, here's an excerpt from an email from a beekeeper last month. It's comments like this that make me really happy to be a part of beekeeping in general and the Mecklenburg County Beekeepers Association specifically. "Three Years Beekeeping with six hives at present and four empty hives to fill. Enjoyed mentoring some bee school students last year and found somebody for Bee School this year. Raising honeybees has got to be absolutely the most enjoyable and rewarding experience there is. The honeybee is one of God's most interesting creatures. And on top of that, it is just an insect. Each and every day is a new and learning, and almost always, a rewarding experience. I love and pet my bees everyday. Call me sometime and we will talk about honeybees. Available most anytime."

Wow! I'll see you around the bee yard!
Wayne Hansen

*American Bee Journal, November 2008, p. 979. Bee Health: Putting Control in Last Place, by Marla Spivak.

DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES

Yes it's that time of year, time to renew your membership in our county association, and if you're not yet a member of the North Carolina State Association, consider joining up there too. Both organizations deliver great value for your membership dollars, so support your beekeeping associations.

Mail this form and your check made out to Mecklenburg County Beekeepers to
Mecklenburg County Beekeepers

121 Hermitage Rd

Charlotte NC 28207

You can also get discounts of 20-25% on Bee Culture and American Bee Journal.

See Libby for a coupon or to pay directly for the subscription.

Mecklenburg County Beekeepers Association

Please Print Clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Send newsletter via _____ email (thanks!) _____ paper

Number of hives: _____

Today's Date _____ Membership Year 2010

Bee School \$30 _____ I am registering for Bee School

Includes 1 year membership in County Association

I heard about the bee school from _____

County Association \$5 I am a _____ New Member

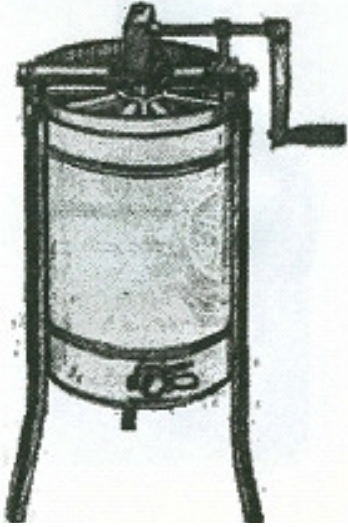
_____ Renewing Member

State Association \$15 I am a _____ New Member

_____ Renewing Member

Total Payment





It's Harvest Time!

We have the following equipment available for extracting honey:

- Extractor (manual)
- Uncapping tank (use your own excluder)
- Bucket with valve
- Electric uncapping knife

The charge is \$2 per day to borrow the extractor.

You will want to use your own filters and food-grade plastic buckets.

To obtain the equipment:

- Call Jimmy Odom to arrange a time to pick it up.
Phone: (704) 408-2726
Address: 17026 McKee Rd Charlotte NC 28278
- When you pick up the equipment, take an envelope and card to mail in your payment
- Return the equipment **promptly, clean and dry**
- Mail your payment in the envelope provided

With the growth of the club, there is heavy demand for the extractor in the summer months. There will be a waiting list, so be prepared for a short wait, and when you get the equipment, please return it promptly so the next person on the list can get it. Please don't pass it on to someone else who isn't on the list. Thanks!
