

OCBA Meeting Minutes, March 14, 2019

Cynthia Speed

Our pre-meeting dinner was held in the Fireplace Room at Radius Pizzeria in Hillsborough with 13 in attendance.

President Ryan Chamberlain opened the meeting following the brief social period from 7:00 to 7:15 when members enjoyed refreshments and talked about their bees. Members who needed to rush off before the meeting ended had an opportunity to talk with each other and refreshments were available throughout the meeting. Refreshments were provided by Ian Rasmussen, Carrie Donley, and Amy Singleton.

Ryan extended a warm welcome to our visitors and to students from our current bee school. He announced that Cathy Starks has agreed to be the new membership secretary.

Ryan introduced David Fruchtenicht, our speaker for the evening. A seasoned beekeeper of 60+ years, Dave entertained us with first hand experiences and his extensive knowledge of beekeeping. Dave explained the difference between absconding and swarming and what might happen when the bees' relationship with you is not working out. He noted that crowded hives and colonies with older queens are most likely to swarm. The queen pheromone diminishes as the queen ages or the colony becomes so large that the queen pheromone isn't fully distributed throughout the hive. Swarming begins around the 15th of April and ends around the 15th of June. He mentioned that Dr. Tom Seeley a well know apiarist, says that only about 17% of swarms survive. The first sign of potential swarming is an increase in drones followed by the presence of queen cell cups.

Dave likes to follow Dr. Seeley's guidelines for setting up a swarm trap. Use a trap having an entrance of 2 sq inches; a volume of 40 liters (deep super); an entrance facing South; hang along the shaded edge of the woods; and 10 – 12 feet high. These were just a few of the tips that he shared. He gave a brilliant talk to a captivated audience.

Chris Richmond, coordinator for OCBA's Swarm Patrol, talked about a change in the way swarm calls will be handled this year. He circulated a signup sheet for those interested in being contacted when he receives a call to collect a swarm. He will send a group text to all who have indicated an interest. The first to call will be given the opportunity to collect. This would allow others on the list to attend as observers and helpers if they choose. Chris suggested having your swarm collection gear ready and recommended having a nuc as a collection box.

Chris Apple, Director of Outreach, circulated a list with outreach opportunities that she will need help with.

- Apr 6 Morehead Science Fair
- Apr 7 Kidzu
- May 4 Hillsborough Garden Tour
- June 6&7 Info booth at Annie's Lavender Farm
- June 22 Granville County Bee Jubilee
- June 22 Info booth at Duke Homestead

Lisa Vogel, Director of Apprenticeships and Mentoring gave a status report of the new clusters. The first meeting will take place at Randall Austin's apiary on Saturday, March 23, weather permitting. They will be shown how to inspect a hive and how to perform a sugar shake for varroa mites. Participants will receive an email with details and the time and with directions to his house.

Tim Struttman, coordinator of OCBA's first cluster collaborative announced that 26 people have signed up for the group, a huge success thus far.

Ryan mentioned that Wednesday, Mar 20 is Ag Day at the North Carolina General Assembly. Rep. Chuck McGrady has introduced House Bill 334 which will provide funding for a new NCSU Field Honey Bee Lab. Replacement of the lab at the NCSU Research facility has been a major priority for the NCSBA for several years. Hopefully, the bill will pass.

Nerissa Rivera, OCBA treasurer, explained to the group that she discovered Auvi-Q at the spring meeting. It's an epinephrine injector with an audible instructions on its use. It is now available, covered by most Health Insurance companies and requires a Dr.'s prescription. She gave out some application forms and will post a link on the Google groups list to the website that will enable you to download the form.

There were 76 members and guests in attendance.