

OCBA Meeting Minutes, February 7, 2012

Lizabeth B. Collins

1. Todd Walker welcomed members and guests, and called the meeting to order. He mentioned a Bees Knees giveaway from GRIT.com.
2. Dick Merritt and Todd Walker explained that, due to the importance of keeping **attendance** for Golden Achievement Award (which Todd is determined OCBA will win this year) and to the length of our membership roll, attendance would be recorded by members on the alphabetical lists attached to clipboards found on the table at the entrance to the room. There are additional lines to record the names of non-members/guests as well. Dick mentioned the hats and badges for sale. Membership is encouraged; Dick has registration forms; \$20 for state and county dues.
3. Todd reported that **a survey for the membership** was completed by 81 members. Some of the interesting info the survey disclosed was shared. Among those who responded are 358 years (combined) of experience; those who responded have 353 hives; most are interested in field days with hands-on activities; ages of these beekeepers range from 41-65—and Todd would like to encourage a younger group of beekeepers to become active in the club. He reminded all that the newbees at the current bee school will need mentors.
4. Next Geneva Green introduced Watty Bowes, who is in charge of “outreach”. Geneva has set up a Bee Box for community/school presentations, which includes three separate but related packets. “Introduction to Honey Bees,” “Pollinators in Our Gardens,” and “Varietal Honeys and Honey Plants” each include a CD slideshow presentation and other items to use for presentation to groups. Anyone can check these out to use, and get credit in the Master Beekeeping program.
5. Kitty reported that the “Queen of the Sun” video is now available from Amazon and that it costs only \$4 to rent. She reported that space at the United Church of Chapel Hill (200 seats) was available on March 29 at a cost of \$150, and that a license to show the movie was \$200. In order to cover costs and made a little profit, tickets prices would need to be \$4 or \$5. Fred Fesel stated that he had seen the movie and was not impressed. Another person thought it was good, and would come to a large group showing of the movie because of the question/answer session that would follow. After some discussion, a show of hands indicated that it would be better to try for small group showings of the movie rather than pursue the large venue. Todd thanked Kitty for her hard work.
6. The NCSBA Spring Conference will be in Morganton, March 9-10. The Summer Conference will be in Lumberton, July 12-14.

Todd introduced the speaker, Adolphus Leonard, State Inspector from the eastern part of the state. The presentation, “Colony Development: Winter-Spring,” was very helpful.

We learned that there are four indicators of colony size in spring: the size of the fall cluster, the size of the food reserves, the health of the queen, and the parasite level. Adolphus pointed out that more bees starve in warm winters than in cold, because the colony is active and uses up stores of food before sources of food are available outside the hive.

Swarming naturally occurs in spring. Usually an alert beekeeper can observe 5-6 swarm cells near the bottom of frames. Swarming is aggravated by overcrowding and/or having an old queen. To relieve overcrowding, a beekeeper can reverse the hive bodies early in spring. Check to see if the bees are out of the lower super first. You want them to move up into an empty super. Another method to relieve overcrowding is to add honey supers. You may need to add as many as two supers a week during the honey flow. Also moving frames of drawn comb to the newly added super can encourage bee to move up to the empty space. Put the empty frames in the crowded super. Finally you can make a split in March if your bees are strong, but you should not expect to get any honey from them. If you want to head off swarming, you can re-queen in April or May.

Following the presentation, members enjoyed fellowship and a snack. Chris Richmond reminded members to sign up to bring refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,

'Lizabeth Collins