

OCBA Meeting Minutes, June 9, 2011

'Lizabeth B. Collins

1. John Harrell welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order. He thanked volunteers who helped with the events in Chapel Hill and Durham the last weekends in May, and reminded everyone about the summer meeting the second weekend in July (info on web site).
 2. 'Lizabeth Collins called **roll**, and asked guests, visitors and non-members to sign in.
 3. Dick Merritt announced the **total in the bank** currently is \$2,934. He also mentioned that the club has ball caps for sale for \$3 each and OCBA patches for \$2 each.
 4. John next opened the floor for **questions or stories about bees and bee yards**. One observer reported seeing fewer bees with pollen going in his hives. John pointed out that the nectar flow is winding down in our area; Lewis Cauble pointed out that the dry weather is making a difference, too. Another new beekeeper asked about feeding new hives. John immediately said yes, and Lewis added that bees should be fed if the foundation in frames isn't drawn out. John mentioned the Swarm Patrol – especially Chris Richmond – has been great about getting bees out of houses. Anyone else who is interested in helping to capture swarms and getting more bees should contact John or Chris. Dolly offered a "recipe" for any insect sting: ammonia on a cotton ball will neutralize venom & an ice cube will reduce pain and swelling. Fred Fesel asked if anyone knew of a cheap source of sugar for syrup; the consensus was WalMart or Cosco. Lewis reminded members of the club extractor; contact Lewis if you wish to borrow it.
1. Todd Walker introduced **Todd and Monica Warner of Carolina Bee Company**, Youngsville, NC. This married couple founded the company in 2005 and discussed their efforts at making a go of beekeeping as a business. This informative presentation included slides and some great points. First step is to make a business plan. After working the plan, it may need to be adjusted, but having a contract about the business is very helpful. Todd and Monica began with two hives and, through splits and capturing swarms, have increased to their current 50 hives. They have recently become certified naturally grown (2010) and are now experimenting with top bar hives. Their business is primarily based on products such as soap and other health/beauty products, candles, and even a wood finish. Todd strongly recommends "advertising" to the public by wearing bee apparel. He also stressed that the business must have a website. Along with the website, the Warners have an on-line store and a blog. Todd suggested getting on social media as well. Monica has begun raising queens as part of a small co-op of bee breeders in Franklin County. As certified naturally grown (which applies only to honey), the Warners bees are mostly chemical-free. The goal there is to promote healthy bees and honey, although honey is only a small part of their business. Other

recommendations for enterprising bee business people are to do festivals; do honey tastings; set up a retail outlet.

5. Watty Bowes announced a **workshop/pot luck** at the Fesel's home on **August 6**. Will Hicks will demonstrate examining a hive. Please look for more information and directions on the web site.
6. Next meeting will be **Thursday, July 14**, at 7 pm.

Members enjoyed fellowship and refreshments together.

Respectfully submitted,

'Lizabeth Collins