

OCBA Meeting Minutes, June 14, 2018

Cynthia Speed

Our pre-meeting dinner was held in the Fireplace Room at Radius Pizzeria in Hillsborough with 15 in attendance.

President Mark Powers 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 Cathy Starks and Cynthia Speed.

Mark introduced our speaker for the evening, Randall Austin, Master Beekeeper and OCBA member. Randall serves as Piedmont Regional Director for the NCSBA, teaches and coordinates OCBA's annual Bee School, leads numerous workshops and field days, and talks about honeybees to other beekeeping clubs and venues.

Tonight his talk was on "Some Honey Bee Pests and Treatments." He focused on the small hive beetle (SHB) and on Varroa destructor. He had an excellent power point with great slides. He went over the life cycle and showed disgusting pictures of SHB slimed combs. The larvae is the main culprit as it eats anything in its path: pollen, honey, eggs, and even baby bees. It is white to tan in color while the wax moth larvae is white to gray. It has legs in the front and moves like a slug dragging its behind while the wax moth larvae moves like an inch worm. Although SHB can be controlled with Guard Star, specific nematodes, diatomaceous earth, and Swiffer pads which entangle them Randall cautioned us against getting carried away by SHB phobia. He said that SHB can smell a hive in distress and reminded us of how important it is to maintain strong hives and let the bees take care of the SHB. A great article, "Love a Beetle" can be found on the Bailey Bee Supply website, under Randall's archives.

Randall went on to tell us about Varroa. It was introduced to the US in 1987 and is now found in every country except Australia. It parasitizes larva and adult bees and is a major vector for nasty diseases. The most successful varroa control is to be proactive. Regular sampling provides an estimate of the mite population allowing you to select the appropriate control technique. He reminded us that there is no magic bullet but many approaches are effective, i.e. drone brood removal, brood interruption, re-queening, synthetic chemical treatments, essential oils, etc. He cautioned us against using unapproved treatments or going off label because it is illegal. All colonies have or will have varroa and it will kill them if you let it. He heavily stressed the good work that the Honeybee Health Coalition (<https://Honeybeehealthcoalition.org>) is doing and strongly urged us to use the free tools and resources there. There are numerous demonstration videos where you can for example, see live, a full sugar shake exercise as well as a guide to help you select appropriate control methods.

Mark described the contents of a letter written by Rick Coor, President of the NC State Beekeepers Association that was directed to the local chapters. Rick wrote that the traditional silent auctions that are held at our spring and summer meeting have reached their maximum potential as a fund raising event for the apiculture program at NCSU. "Although the NCSBA takes credit for raising the money, the actual donors are a small group of conference attendees who place bids on the items; therefore the event cannot be considered to be a statewide effort." He went on to ask that we have a statewide effort to raise funds for the apiculture program instead of holding a silent auction. He stressed that if every chapter and beekeeper gets on board and donates we can potentially raise far more through donations from chapters than what has been done thus far in a silent auction. Mark led off the donation, followed by the members. A bag was passed around and the total raised in 5 minutes was \$491.29! Any members who missed this opportunity to donate can mail a donation to our treasurer Nerissa Rivera at in care of Orange County Beekeepers Association, P. O. Box 683, Hillsborough, NC 27278. The proceeds will be mailed to the NCSBA treasurer. Rick plans to present a check to Dr. Tarpay at the summer meeting and to recognize the chapters who have donated \$250 or more to the NCSU apiculture program.

John Rintoul, past president of OCBA, presented a power point depicting previous year's beekeeping club displays set up at the state fair. Although OCBA won best in show once, many yearly displays were non-existent or pitiful. We have high hopes for a better exhibit this year. John introduced Rob Jewett who will be coordinating our state fair exhibit effort this year. If you would like to be on his committee or have an idea that will put us over the top, please email him at: historyguy.learn@gmail.com

Raffle items given away were a 5 gallon honey bucket and lid with installed honey gate; a honey gate, a stainless steel honey strainer, and a mesh bag all donated by Cedric Pearce; Muth jars and corks donated by Anne Cabell and plastic honey bears.

There were 65 in attendance.