

## Ashe County Beekeeping Association

### Minutes from the 4/10/14 Meeting of the ACBA

1. Welcome by Harry Galer
  - a. We know we are competing with other activities for everyone, so our goal for the meeting time is to start at 7:00 pm and end promptly at 8:30 PM
  - b. Bee yard report:
    - 1) Plants already present: sumac, dandelions, maples and cherry trees are also blooming.
    - 2) If you have hives with bees, check for health of queen...if you have a weak colony, combine.
    - 3) Feed with sugar now
2. Jim Smith - Beeware...will be selling buckwheat seeds to produce a great bee food source for \$1.25/pound.
3. Micah shared a NC State University newsletter, the "Waggle." It has several good links and information regarding access to classes. The newsletter is to promote beekeeper education and engagement system and has a lot of good information on bee biology.
4. Tickets for the raffle are still available; the winner will take home a hive donated by Randy Baldwin. Association paid for the materials. The raffle will take place at the end of the meeting.
5. ACBA is working to have a website. We want to use raffles, etc. to continue to raise funds to pay for it.
6. The Hive splitting class was announced - a sign up sheet is going around. It will be in Wilkes on Saturday, May 10th from 9 am to 12 noon and will cost \$20 per person. There will be an optional sack lunch of a sandwich and drink for \$5. Sign up tonight.
7. Joy Lewis demonstrated the approved ACBA logo and discussed getting t-shirts and hats made.
8. The association wants to make our meetings a more relational opportunity with each month by asking some volunteers to present a minute regarding "*what got you into bees?*"
  - a. Mike Haworth - 2nd meeting. New beekeeper. Interest began 4 years ago after moving to Ashe Co. Visited James Wilkes house and was introduced to the topic. His boys raise chickens but they have a bee yard. Was fascinated. Mike visited Honey Hole and saw Shelley's class in Wilkes...30 minutes of training and he was hooked. His interest was because of James' teachings.
  - b. Paulette Lawrence...2nd meeting. Interested in bees because she does organic farming. Concern over bee populations diminishing. Got 1st bees last year and learned a lot of what to do and what she didn't know. Ordered 2 nucs this year.
  - c. Josh - just learning.
  - d. Terry Goodman reported how she did a research project for ASU in which she interviewed persons to learn about beekeeping: three were from the association and seven from outside...they commented that they didn't attend association meetings because it was too political. Terry recommend sharing what we do and help all to understand the benefits. Harry agreed that we need exchange of information. As soon as we get the website up, we should be able to spread the word more effectively, as well as ensure that articles get into the Jefferson Post and the Ashe Mountain Times.
  - e. When should beekeepers take out a bottom board to protect the hive...it was recommended that on warm days take 1/2 way out and put back in at night. Randy Baldwin also commented that you can take a reducer out at day, return at night.
  - f. The Farmer's Market was another way we shared information last year, but it was difficult to get volunteers so a few had to do all the work. No plans to repeat this year. Also, Micah is on radio weekly and will promote information for our association.



9. James Wilkes presented the evening's topic:

a. Background:

1) lives in Creston, Ashe Co.

2) manages 55-90 hives

3) developer of hive tracks

4) Professor of Computer Science at ASU for 21 years...students work on the software

that created Hive Tracks.

5) Began keeping bees in 2000...launched Hive Tracks in 2010. Co-PI on USDA NIFA

grant in 2010...funded Bee Informed Partnership in 2011. Bee Informed Partnership measures bee loss.

6) Owner of Faith Mountain Farms

b. For tonight's program, he asked Helen Baldwin re: What to speak about? List from Helen kept getting longer and longer.

c. James's experience...bees do their own thing. Try to keep up with them.

d. He will talk about: What do you see this month, not what "should" see.

1) 1st thing, observe

2) What am I seeing in MY hive. Wide range of normal behavior.

3) What should I see...bees, egg, larvae, food, but there are many other variables.

e. How often should I open my hives? Generally, a new beekeeper needs to observe, so there really is no one right answer.

f. Beekeeping advice changes every year.

g. Bees seem to be convinced that we are in spring...they are now out gathering pollen.

h. Bee yard in Statesville...basically, we want to get to the time that we'll have a number of supers so we can harvest honey.

i. We had a cold winter, but hope that bees are growing and increasing population. Beginning of April to end of April, population should explode. Many and various reasons: cluster size is important. Early in February, can start raising brood.

j. What can you see? Dead outs - honey in frames but no bees. Queen problem? Run out of food? Disease? Mice nest in hive...Coming out of winter, James had a picture of a top bar hive...only had 2 frames in a deep box, but the bees created comb.

k. What do we want to see? Pollen, eggs, larvae. Want queen to be laying...look for eggs. Is she laying well? Solid pattern? Nice C-shaped larvae. Queen and bees will always push the boundary...want to grow as quickly as possible.

l. Want to see: brood frame with brood in middle, capped, different age larvae toward sides, pollen on edges and also honey. At some point, the population starts to develop drones...queen lays drone eggs. On edges, inspect drone larvae for varroa mites. They prefer drones as they take longer to develop.

m. What do you really hope to see? Lots of capped brood over majority of frame... If not solid or mostly solid, this could indicate a problem with queen, or disease with brood, or chilled brood. Early in spring, don't see frames that are so fully solid. How cold? James uses a 50 degree rule.

n. Spotty brood...re-queen or let the hive fix itself.

o. Drone brood indicates a readying of the hive to swarm...need drones for queen to mate.

p. Question? Do you cut queen cells out or let them hatch? Both.

q. Websites:

[www.facebook.com/faithmountainfarm](http://www.facebook.com/faithmountainfarm)

[www.faithmtfarm.com](http://www.faithmtfarm.com)

[www.hivetracks.com](http://www.hivetracks.com)

Video: [Hive Tracks History](#)

Video: [How to Install a Bee Package](#)

Video: [How to Install a Nuc](#)

Video: [Swarm formation in real time at Faith Mountain Farm](#)

10. The program ended at 8:30 pm.

11. James Wilkes chose the winning raffle ticket...the complete hive built by Randy Baldwin was won by Linda Katsoudas

Minutes completed on April 11, 2014 by Doug Ehrhardt, Secretary (ACBA)

Approved: Harry Galer

Date: