

AABA MEETING MINUTES– APRIL 19, 2016 at Arlington Echo

Lindsay Barranco welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7 pm. 10 people were attending for the first time. Attendance was 49.

Arlington Echo Hive Inspection

Status of 5 hives in yard – 3 colonies overwintered successfully/2 died – 2 packages were installed on 4/12/16.

Carl Guerci inspected hive #2 in the side yard at 6:30 pm before the meeting. The colony was very strong and had started queen cells, so management options were discussed to give the colony more room to prevent swarming and to possibly donate some queen cells to one of the AE observation hives that has gone queenless.

Bee Talk – Lindsay started a discussion on what is happening in our bee colonies now? What to anticipate/what to do. Spring management questions were welcomed and answered.

- Feeding 1:1 was recommended until the main nectar flow started and the bees would no longer take syrup. Beekeepers, especially those with new colonies, were advised to feed again during the dearth.
- Queen supercedure is normal after the spring build up.
- Spring trees for our area: Maple, Willow, Holly, Black Locust, and Tulip Poplar.

Announcements:

- Congratulations were given to the 60 new beekeepers from our short course and those attending the meeting for the first time were welcomed.
- A sign-up sheet was available in the back for the hive visits for monthly sampling as part of our Sentinel Hive Project with the University of MD. We will begin mid-late May and sample once a month for 6 months after that.
- Pat Block was accepting membership dues--\$5.
- Delia Edelman from Crownsville Gardens now has equipment and is taking package bee orders for early May delivery.

- **Varroa Sugar Roll Kits** – Brian Hagenbuch and Pam McFarland have complete kits for sale for \$10 as a fundraiser for AABA. Thanks were given to Brian and Pam.

Lee Travis shared a hive inspection tip he learned from a Belgian beekeeper. He recommends using two pillowcases during inspections. One is used to cover the open hive, only exposing enough room to pull out a frame, and the second is draped over the removed frame on a frame rest (or an extra box). Covering the bees will keep them calmer and limits robbing. He says it also keeps the bees in the box rather than gathering on the edges so will limit squished bees--something we all will appreciate.

Lee also makes and sells equipment.

Program:

Larry Truchon, VP of Carroll County Beekeepers Association, presented "Queen Rearing Using the Nicot System" in order to have a self-sustaining apiary. He raises his own queens for nucs to replace any winter losses. He chose the Nicot system for its simplicity and the size of his operation. He has documented his learning curve in pictures and by saving examples of queen cells that have emerged (which he has in presentation boxes to show at meetings). It is interesting to see that his first year queen cells were considerably smaller than more recent cells. He has found that the quality of the queen depends on the quantity of royal jelly, so he now uses three hives to donate enough nurse bees to raise queen cells.

Larry gave thorough day by day instructions and warned that the beekeeper must work on the bees' schedule and must transfer the queen cells to nucs or cages by day 14--or risk losing queens to the 1st emerging queen (a lesson learned the hard way). Larry transfers his queen cells to 5-frame medium nucs and inspects the cells after the queens emerge to be sure there was a surplus of royal jelly. He reports that he has 75-80% mating success and 80% overwinter survival with his nucs. He finds that queens reared after the solstice and overwintered in double story 5- frame nucs (top frames honey) are ready to boom the next spring.

To reinforce Larry's presentation about creating a self-sustaining apiary, **Mike Church**, who was visiting from the Northern Neck of Virginia, also spoke about the importance of raising our own queens. He tracked the rate of queen replacement in packages ordered by his club from 2008-2012 and

found that 67% of the queens were replaced by August. That is when he and his club decided to focus on raising queens and producing nucs for their members, which they have done successfully since then. Mike also presents clinics on queen rearing using a variety of methods, and our club expressed interest in hosting a clinic with a show of hands.

Tim McMahon talked about EAS and the upcoming 2016 Conference in New Jersey. The EAS Short Course is July 25-27 and the conference is July 27-29. The continuing education opportunities at an EAS short course and conference range from beginner to advanced and are highly recommended.

The members enjoyed a short break for coffee, snacks, and mingling.

Business Meeting:

The minutes from our last meeting in February, 2016 are posted on our web site. Everyone was encouraged to take a look at them and previous minutes in addition to looking at our website resources. Thanks were given to the secretary, Debbie Hewitt.

The treasurer, Pat Beers-Block gave a report on our finances and reminded members and visitors of the benefits of membership (mentoring, rental of extractor, library, and hive visits).

The AABA checking account balance as of April 19, 2016, is \$4085.36. Adjustments include 2 outstanding checks (1 for \$500, the 2nd for \$100), and a deposit of \$80 (extractor and membership dues). Our AABA has 92 paid members and about 360 MailChimp subscribers for the newsletter.

Ortho, the maker of some of the neonicotinoids, announced this week that it will stop all manufacture of these products in 2020.

Anne Arundel County Fair: We need to increase AAC entries this year. Michael Doyle discussed the need for wax entries and will do a short presentation at June meeting on fair entries.

Mentoring: Thanks were given to those who have offered to serve as mentors to new beekeepers. Their time and knowledge is greatly appreciated.

Hive Visits: Lindsay discussed the Sentinel Hive Project (SHP) here at Arlington Echo and what will be involved in the monthly sampling.

REGISTER YOUR BEES WITH THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE!! Applications were available (online). Cybil Preston Maryland State Apiarist. Maryland law dictates that you must register your bees. Please do it now!

Dates for future meetings are:

Wednesday, June 15, 6:30 – 8:30 P.M. Sam Droege will speak.

Tuesday, August 16, 7-9 P.M.

The **Door Prize** drawing, a hive top feeder, was won by Bernard Kiss. Thanks were given to Dwight Fielder for bringing the prize.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20.