

**AABA MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 21, 2015 AT ARLINGTON  
ECHO**

Lindsay called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Lindsay welcomed everyone to the meeting. We had 8 attending for the first time. Attendance was 50.

**Announcements:**

The 2015 Short Course was completed on April 11 with 64 graduates (an AABA record). Congratulations to all!

Michael Doyle announced that a store in Gambrills is considering carrying supplies from Little Giant Beekeeping Supplies. A brochure was passed around for members to consider and comment upon.

The P.G. County Soil Conservation District office will offer a Short Course on April 25 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Lindsay has been contacted by a photographer who wants to photograph Maryland apiaries. She will find out more specifics.

Magazines and handouts were available in the back for members. Thanks were given to Gayle and Bart for providing them.

Carl Guerci reported that Loyd and Doris Luna had sent in their 2015 AABA membership. It was proposed and passed that they should be made honorary lifetime members.

**Arlington Echo Hive Inspection:** We examined the 5 colonies in the bee yard and found that the two packages installed during the Short Course on April 11<sup>th</sup> had released their queens and had good brood patterns. Two packages installed on March 19 were also doing well. The one over-wintered hive was also doing fine. Bart felt that the hives were small but doing well.

**Program:** Tim McMahon of the Eastern Apicultural Society (EAS) gave an informative talk about the EAS and continuing education for beekeepers. He states that beekeepers will learn much more by using mentors, being members of their local and state clubs, and being part of the Eastern Apicultural Society. Tim is also president of the Montgomery County Beekeepers Association.

Tim encouraged us to join the EAS, stating that EAS is one of the largest and oldest beekeeping organizations in America. It covers the U.S. east coast and Canada. The EAS holds an annual conference promoting beekeeping education, certification of Master Beekeepers, and research.

This year's EAS week-long conference will be held at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, from August 10-14, 2015. Over 800 people are expected to attend. The conference is made up of the Short Course and beekeeping courses for all levels and aspects of beekeeping. It will give you the chance to learn from professionals and take a Bee Vacation.

If Canada is too far, the next three conferences will be much closer: New Jersey 2016; Delaware 2017; and Virginia 2018. Most EAS conferences are held at universities and have the option of staying in the dormitories. See the EAS webpage here <http://www.easternapiculture.org/>.

Tim also reminded us of the next Maryland State Beekeepers Association meeting on Saturday, June 13, at the University of Maryland, College Park.

**Panel of Experts:** Our own experts, Bart Smith, Dave Crump, Dwight Fielder, and Peter Quinton, answered questions from members. Topics included:

**New hives and a honey harvest:** You should not expect a honey harvest this year from a new hive, especially if started on foundation. The bees will need to draw comb and make stores for winter. If started on drawn comb, you may be able to take a frame of honey after the nectar flow and feed syrup later if needed.

**Feeding:** Stop during the May nectar flow. New hives you can keep feeding to get drawn comb. Be careful not to get comb drawn around the feeder (make sure they have enough room). You can place a queen excluder between the hive and feeder which will at least prevent brood in the feeder. Stores left from winter may be used.

**Viability of capped Queen cells:** Q-cells removed from the hive need special care and temperatures close to hive temperature to remain viable. Queen cells in your hive are an opportunity for increase by making splits.

Local queen cells are now being offered for sale for \$15. It is recommended to buy two-- an heir and a spare. Be sure to ask the supplier the age of the cell. Later is better (at least 14 days) for chance of survival and wing development.

How to keep your apiary small? Cut out swarm cells after making sure you have a queen, and are sure the bees have enough room. If you are looking for a swarm, you can be placed on the Maryland Department of Agriculture's swarm catching list in the event a member of the public sees the swarm and would like it removed.

How often should beekeepers go in to the hive? Limit visits so you do not disrupt development. Keep a log for weather and bee activity. Look for normal activity at the hive entrance, i.e. pollen and nectar coming in.

You can peak under the cover once a week without smoke and without pulling frames to see cluster size. Pull frames and inspect if you suspect a problem, but otherwise leave alone.

There is always the risk of injuring the queen when you open the hive so use caution. If you see worker brood of all ages and food (pollen, nectar, and capped honey) the bees are fine. You do not need to go through each frame during each inspection or see the queen.

If bees are flying at you and bumping your veil, that is a warning, so calmly finish up and close the hive. If you have pesky bees following you, walk through brush to lose them.

In a small yard, it is best to have the hive entrance facing away from where you want to be. Bees do not appear to worry about the backside of the hive. Plant bushes or place a fence in front of the hive to make bees fly up and away.

Cutting grass: Bees may not mind the lawnmower during the nectar flow, but from July on you will be safer wearing a veil to cut grass. Bees seem to like weed-wackers even less than lawnmowers. Use caution.

Excessive amounts of drone comb (bullet-shaped caps), especially in worker-sized cells, could indicate a drone-laying queen (out of sperm) for

laying workers. It is possible to add frames of eggs and young larvae from a queen-right hive to see if they will raise a new queen. Drones in new hives from packages probably came with the packages and are a sign of health.

### **Business Meeting:**

The minutes from our last meeting in March 2015 are posted on our web site. A motion passed to accept the minutes as written.

The treasurer, Pat Beers Block, gave a report on club finances. The balance in the club account is \$4898.83. A second hive scale for the Sentinel Hive Project has been ordered.

Addendum: The appropriate filing to the IRS was submitted this month so that AABA can continue as a non-profit organization.

**Mentoring:** Lindsay thanked those who have offered to serve as mentors to new beekeepers.

**Hive Hops:** Pat Block announced that those who signed up for Hive Hops are on an email list through Mail Chimp. If you would like to join, go to your profile on Mail Chimp and check the box to participate. The first hive hop was postponed, but Jim Larson has volunteered to host on May 16 from 10:30am -12:30 pm.

Severna Park Farmer's Market – Carl Guerci will keep a schedule for beekeepers wishing to sell honey. Begins April 24<sup>th</sup> through October.

Sentinel Hive Project – UMD Honey Bee Diagnostic Lab. We will begin mid-May and run through October. The first hive scale was set up just before tonight's meeting in the AE yard. Lindsay and Carl will be sampling AE. Nate Fincher volunteered to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> location of 4 colonies. The hive scale for this site is on backorder from Brushy Mountain. Nate and Debbie Hewitt will sample from his apiary.

**REGISTER YOUR BEES WITH THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE!! Applications were available (online). Cybil Preston is the Maryland State Apiarist, if you have any questions.**

**Maryland law dictates that you must register your bees. Please do it now!**

Dates for future meetings are: June 17, August 18, and the MSBA Honey show on November 14, 2015

The door prize drawing, a hive top feeder, was won by Bethany Prechtl.

Lindsay requested a volunteer with a pressure washer to clean frames for the AE hives. Bethany volunteered.

The meeting was adjourned as 8:30 pm.