

AABA MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 16, 2016 AT ARLINGTON ECHO

Deborah Hewitt welcomed everyone to the last meeting of 2016 and explained that she was guest leader for the meeting because Lindsay was out of town. 31 members attended and we had 4 guests.

Announcements:

Arlington Echo Hive Status: Carl Guerci reported on the current status of the Arlington Echo hives. The 3 hives that overwintered and the two hives started by AABA from packages in April are part of the Sentinel Hive Project for the University of Maryland and are sampled monthly for varroa mite and nosema levels. The reports are available at the AABA website. Pollen is collected biweekly, but we have not had much feedback from UMD on it due to the amount of time needed to analyze the pollen. Carl discussed the changes he has noticed in the colors of pollen collected over the seasons.

The additional two hives that were started from packages in June by Arlington Echo were doing well but small, so last week, one colony was used to replace the observation hive that died recently. The observation hive side vents had been blocked with propolis making ventilation difficult, and the top feeding screen was propolized as well, preventing access to the feeder. It appears that the majority of the bees may have absconded, and those remaining died due to lack of food stores. A very sad reminder that the bees need to be managed on their time schedule rather than the beekeeper's.

The second late AE colony will be used to populate the observation hive that is kept at the Woodlands Educational Center. The extra frames of bees from both late colonies used for observation hives have been or will be combined with weaker colonies in the yard (the observation hives only hold three deep frames and one shallow frame).

The observation hives are important for the education programs at Arlington Echo and also for AABA to use for the Anne Arundel County and Maryland State Fairs.

Sentinel Hive Project with UMD monthly sampling – members may sign up to attend hive visits as part of our monthly sampling which started late May and is scheduled once a month for 6 months through October. The next sampling will be Thursday, August 18th. A sign-up sheet was in back, or members may contact Lindsay at lbarranco@comcast.net.

If dues are due – Please contact Pat Block if you need to pay membership fees of \$5. New members can mail Pat the membership form from the website with a check.

Anne Arundel County Fair is approaching soon. The fair runs September 14th to 18th. Please consider entering honey and wax products/candles, etc. Entry requirements are listed in the Fair book. Fair books were available on the table at the back of the room and

are also at libraries. The information is also available online at the AA County Fair website. Dates to enter honey and other products of the hive are Sunday, September 11th and Monday, September 12th.

A sign-up sheet to volunteer to man the beekeeping booth/observation hive area was passed around. Debbie had tickets for those who signed up, and tickets will be mailed to volunteers who sign up later or did not pick one up at the meeting.

Program:

Dave Clarke gave an entertaining presentation sharing the techniques he has learned to battle Small Hive Beetles (SHB) in his apiary. He show us pictures of the damage that SHBs can do in less than two weeks—when he had only seen one adult SHB in his hive. He has learned through trial and error the best techniques for our area:

1. **Follower boards**— only give bees as many frames as they can cover and protect when you add additional boxes. Start with 3 frames between follower boards in the second box, and as the population increases, move the boards out to the sides and add 2 frames at a time.
2. **Beetle Blaster trap**—placed between frames 9/10 in a 10 frame hive (or between frames 7/8 in an 8 frame hive). Only one trap is needed when placed in the top box. Dave found a syringe at his local grocery store for marinating meat that is perfect for injecting the 50/50 mix of apple cider vinegar (attractant) and olive oil (coats and kills). Just remember to remove the trap before tipping up the hive body to look for swarm cells—you do not want to spill this mix on the bees.
3. **Diatomaceous Earth**—Dave uses it in bottom trays when he has them in, but also sprinkles a layer of DE over his next solution . . .
4. **Ground Barrier**—Dave has carpeted his apiary using indoor/outdoor carpet (but says landscaping cloth works too), adds the layer of DE, then covers it all with gravel. The sharp edges of DE cut and kill SHB larvae, and the carpet prevents them from making it into the ground to pupate. He has to replace the layer of DE about every two years by sprinkling it on just before a rain which will wash it below the gravel.

Dave then added a boarder to keep the gravel tidy and a 6-foot chicken wire fence to force the flight path of the bees over his head so he can mow outside the apiary without bees getting defensive. 18-inch stands deter skunks, and honey suckle hedges create natural windbreaks in addition to providing food. The combination is a picture-perfect apiary with minimal pests stressing the bees.

Dave was warmly thanked for his practical and effective plan to battle SHBs.

[A short break was taken for coffee, snacks and mingling. Thanks were given to Dennis Roundy for bringing snacks.]

Business Meeting:

AABA Minutes from our last meeting in June, 2016, are posted on our web site. Everyone was encouraged to take a look at them and to explore the AABA website.

Treasurers Report: Pat Beers-Block was unable to attend but sent the bank statement to show the AABA balance of \$4427.88. She reports that she is holding \$250 in checks for the Queen Rearing course and will process them when she has all registrations. Everyone was encouraged to keep their membership up to date for the benefits including mentoring, extractor rental, and hive visits.

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

Important Dates:

2017 AABA meetings—dates will be posted on the aabees.org website shortly.

2017 Short Course—registration forms will be available on the aabees.org website in mid-September – if you know anyone who is interested, please let them know. Register early because class fills quickly. The first class on equipment is now in December.

Anne Arundel County Fair—September 14-18. See details under announcements.

Honey Harvest Festival at Brookside Gardens and Nature Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. Saturday, September 17th, 11 am to 4 pm.

Queen Rearing Workshop by Mike Church at Arlington Echo. Saturday, October 1st, 9 am to 3 pm. Registration forms are at aabaa.org.

Honey Judging Class to be held by the Maryland State Beekeepers Association October 29 - 30th. More information to follow.

Maryland State Beekeepers Association Fall Meeting, Elections and Honey Show, November 12, 2016, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM MDA, 50 Harry S Truman Parkway.

Panel of Beekeepers—Larry Rupp, Peter Quinton, and Carl Guerci answered member questions regarding feeding and preparing hives for winter. Members were advised to check their colonies *now* to be sure they had food stores and feed if they didn't. When feeding, members were advised to check to make sure that there were empty cells for the queen to lay eggs to raise winter bees, possibly feeding on and off every 3 days if bees were filling brood cells with syrup. Feed 1:1 syrup now, switching to 2:1 by October when there will not be time to evaporate the moisture, and fondant patties for winter. AABA will reprint its fondant recipe in an upcoming newsletter, and Dadant winter patties were also recommended. Winter prep should also include mouse guards, vented inner covers, wind blocks (as Dave also mentioned), and Larry recommended insulating

colonies with 1-2 inch foam boards (available at home centers) under the telescoping cover and taped to the hive with duct tape, especially for nucs. Colonies can be checked in winter by lightly tapping the hive and listening with a stethoscope for a hum.

The door prize drawings, **Varroa Sugar Roll Kits**, were won by Robert and Linda Lamothe and Kathy Tullier. Thanks were given to Brian Hagenbuch and Pam McFarland who assembled and donated the kits.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Please remember to REGISTER YOUR BEES WITH THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE!! It is the LAW!
Applications are available (online).