

AABA MEETING – AUGUST 18, 2015 AT ARLINGTON ECHO

Lindsay welcomed everyone to our meeting. Eight people were attending for the first time. Attendance was 44 members.

Announcements:

- AABA received a thank you letter from the beekeeping representative at the Women's Correctional Institution in Jessup. Ms. Cynthia Downes wrote that John Connors has been invaluable in his help. They started with 2 hives and will be holding a workshop to build up to have 20 hives in the Spring. Thanks were given to John Connors.
- MaryAnn Frazier will be a speaker at the MCBA meeting on Wednesday September 9th at 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Mary Ann Frazier is a world renowned beekeeper, researcher, and Professor from Penn State University, and she is a former Maryland apiary inspector. Her talk is titled "**Improving Your Odds; Factors Impacting Overwintering Success**". This talk will cover experiments done to compare northern and southern queens in a Northern environment while also looking at data on package queens. MCBA invited members from other county associations to join them. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton, MD 20906.
- Michael Doyle announced that Crownsville Gardens, on General's Highway, will carry beekeeping supplies.
- If you have honey you want to sell, the Severna Park Farmers market is looking for it. It is Saturday's 8-12 and there is a \$10 fee for a small space. Carl Guerci keeps a schedule for AABA members. Only one honey seller is scheduled at a time. Beekeepers set their own price for their products.
- Lee Travis and Gina Jones are hosting a hands-on workshop for building frames and installing wax foundation on Saturday, October 24th starting at 10 am (expect 3-4 hours). Text or call Lee (301-343-2265) or Gina (410-440-2903) to reserve a spot. Flyers were available on the table.

- Nate Fincher is expanding his beekeeping operation and is looking for deep equipment from members that are interested in selling. 443-223-8736.

Program:

Sean McKenzie, vice president of the D.C. Beekeepers Alliance, spoke on the topic of "Breeding Honey Bees for the Mid-Atlantic Region". Sean is the head beekeeper at St. Anselm's Abbey and the Franciscan Monastery, both in Washington D.C. He is president and CEO of Capitol Bee Care, which has a goal of breeding honey bees that are especially well-suited to the Mid-Atlantic region and have a proven record of survival and productivity. Sean is an instructor with the DC Beekeepers Alliance and teaches an urban beekeeping short course in conjunction with the University of the District of Columbia's Extension Service program. He has also trained beekeepers in Haiti.

Sean explained how he uses selective breeding in his queen rearing operation. He develops queens from proven local stock, selecting for criteria that will improve honey bee viability in our area. He also floods the area with drones from other proven queens to accelerate the dispersal of desirable genetics. One source of bees that Sean looks for is feral bees from structural extractions that have survived more than three years without human management for survival. He also acquires commercial strains from non-local breeders.

Sean distributes daughter queens to his association beekeepers in each D.C. ward and recruits drone producers. He uses follow-up surveys and quantitative tracking to determine:

- Overwinter survival rate of local queens vs. packages.
- Overwinter survival rate of treated vs. untreated colonies.
- Resistance to pests (primarily Varroa mites) and disease.
- Superior success in foraging and pollination tracked by hive weights and pollen monitoring.

Data from the network of beekeepers in the D.C. community allows Sean to observe behavior changes in the bees and to breed bees that have desired traits, particularly gentleness, that are important in an urban environment without requiring instrumental insemination (which would not be practical on a local scale). He uses creative

methods for studying the bees and has a goal to find drone congregation areas in D.C. using the novel idea of suspending a queen cage from a balloon and walking around town. We wish him success! The membership thanked Sean for his engaging presentation.

Business Meeting:

The minutes of our last meeting in June 2015 are posted on our web site. It was moved to accept them as written. Thanks were given to Debbie Hewitt.

The treasurer, Pat Beers-Block, was unable to attend but provided an updated treasurer's report:

Bank balance as of 8/18:

(8/1): \$4790.43

(8/10): + 135 (memberships and extractor fees)

New Bal: **\$4925.43**

Lindsay presented the Commander Mumford Plaque to Pat Beers Block for her game entry in the 2014 Fair. Lindsay will deliver it to her.

Sentinel Hive Results – Two of the AE hives have tested for an increase in varroa and are within the treatment threshold. Mite levels can change quickly in one month's time. Nosema levels were low and not of concern.

The AE Disease Load Monitoring reports are posted at aabees.org under the AABA Library tab. The AE yard has a schedule of set days through October to sample. Lindsay and Carl Guerci are the main samplers, but if members would like to take part in pollen collection or adult bee sampling, please contact Lindsay. Thanks were given to Lindsay and Carl.

Important Dates:

August 28 to September 7-- **Maryland State Fair**. Members may sell honey there on consignment or may sign up to volunteer to give out honey samples. The rules and prices were sent out by email. Contact Lindsay if you would like more information.

September 16-20, 2015--Anne Arundel County Fair. The AA County Fair is Wednesday September 16th through Sunday September 20th. Entries will be accepted on Sunday the 13th from 1-5 pm and Monday the 14th from 10

am-7 pm. Judging is on Tuesday, the 15th. Copies of the Fair catalog were on the table. The signup sheet for volunteers to man the honey booth was passed again. Entry tickets were given to those present; tickets will be mailed to volunteers not present. Our AA Fair board member, Michael Doyle has all the display materials for the honey booth.

September 19th 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. **MSBA Honey Harvest Festival** is Saturday, at Brookside Gardens and Nature Center.

November 14, 2015-- **MSBA Fall meeting and Honey Show** (9 am to 4 pm) at the MDA.

2016 Dates

Arlington Echo has approved dates for 2016 as follows:

Regular meetings:

Wednesday, February 17, 7-9 P.M.;

Tuesday April 19, 6:30 – 8:30 P.M.;

Wednesday, June 15, 6:30 – 8:30 P.M.;

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

Short Course (6 sessions):

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 7-9 P.M. (early introductory class on equipment and obtaining bees)

Tuesday, February 23, 7-9 P.M

Tuesday, March 1, 7-9 P.M

Tuesday, March 8, 7-9 P.M

Tuesday, March 29, 7-9 P.M

Saturday, April 2, 9 A.M. – 1 P.M.

Dates are on the website and a registration form will be there beginning September 21st. Tell your friends.

Remember to register your hives with the Maryland Department of Agriculture if you have not done so already. Applications are available (online). Cybil Preston is the Maryland State Apiarist. Maryland law dictates that you must register your bees.

The door prize, a hive cover, was won by Jim Larson. Our thanks to Dwight Fielder for providing the prize.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.