



Hive Vibes

**Meeting the First Monday of Each Month
7 p.m. at Mountain Folk Center (formerly Industrial Park)
65 Folk Center Circle, Murphy, NC 28906
www.AppalachianBeekeepers.com**

**President's
Corner**

Welcome back from our winter break, everyone. Our first meeting of the year went well in spite of the cold weather. Most of the time was spent simply going over "housekeeping" type stuff.

Remember that our Protégé, Brionna Sparks, is graduating from our program! It has been great helping her get into beekeeping. Now, however, we need to start looking for our next Protégé. I spoke with one promising candidate on the phone the other night. At the March meeting the club will decide who to pick as the new Protégé if we have more candidates come forward.

The other big thing to look forward to is our putting on the Basic Bee School on Saturday, March 7th (9 A.M. – 1 P.M.). Thanks to the club members who have volunteered to lead sessions on the various topics. Now is the time to begin advertising the event. There will be a copy of the flier on the club's website by the time you get this newsletter. Please feel free to print a few copies and give them to people you know in your circles who are interested.

Now that winter has settled back in, don't go in to your hives. There are some things you can do outside of the hive, though. I am still worried about how little food my hives seemed to have laid up last fall. So I am going to be making some fondant to slip in to the girls whenever our next warm spell arrives. Lord-willing, we will have a demonstration on how to make bee fondant at the March meeting.

One of the big things we talked about at the last meeting was where to get bees this year. I just looked at some package bee prices... holy smokes. Wayne's has them for \$80 each because the order was placed so early last year. Other places are pushing almost \$100 per package. Most places are selling out quickly. All of a sudden \$135 for a nuc does not sound as bad. If you have a hive survive this winter in good shape, please consider making a split. Keep it for yourself or sell it to someone in the area. Remember that splitting a hive in the spring is one means of swarm prevention, perhaps the best means.

Although the winter is back, I am hopeful about this year for us in beekeeping. "In due time we will reap [a harvest] if we do not give up."
(Galatians 6:9) *Zack*

P.S. There are a few old copies of Bee Culture donated by a club member, if anyone wants to read them.

P.P.S. Jeff Mansker managed to track down some good information on the lifecycle of the varroa mite. It is on the [Education page](#) of our website.



Minutes – FEBRUARY 2, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Zack Stockbridge. There were 21 members in attendance along with 4 visitors. Two of the visitors were interested in beekeeping.

The Treasurer's report was presented by Fred Bernhardt. Finances unchanged from November 2014.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was discussion in regards to finding a new Protégé for 2015/2016. Plans are to contact Shannon Coleman for potential 4H students who might be interested in our program. We will also be contacting area schools to scout for interested parties.
- Experimental Wintering Program – Zack had spoken with Keith Wood and reported that there has been no change in Co2 levels in the building. There are currently 6 hives in the facility.

NEW BUSINESS

- Tom Handford will be teaching an 8-week Beekeeping class at TCCC beginning February 19, 2015. Classes will be on Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
- Discussion of projects for 2015 ensued. Several projects are planned for this year.

Tentative plans for our “Bee School” in March were discussed. We will be conducting a ½ day program again this year. There will be 5 workshops during this event. Members voted and elected to charge \$5 per person or \$10 per family as attendance fee. Tentative date is March 7, 2015, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

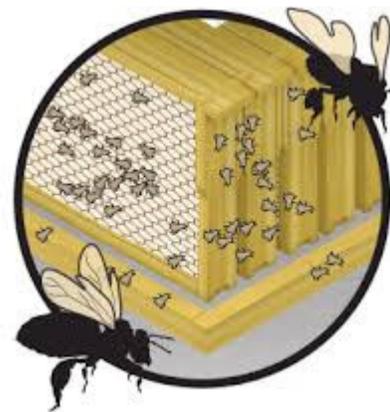
- Plans are for Zack to conduct a workshop in April on how to split hives and start Nucs.
 - Tom Handford agreed to host a Grafting Workshop in May. He will also provide information on raising Queens.
 - The membership discussed our Club Hive Program. A vote was taken in November and it was agreed that we would obtain hives to keep at the Folk Center Campus. These will be used as training tools for our workshops and meetings. We are looking to obtain 4 packages of bees from Wayne's Feed Store.



- Door Prizes for monthly meeting were discussed. Members voted to use a Raffle system. This will help increase revenue for the club.
- Zack provided a list of vendors who might still have bee packages for sale. Those included Wayne's Feed Store, Pigeon Mountain, and Brushy Mountain. Nucs are said to be available from Harold Watkins and Aaron Warr.

- **General discussion topics included:**

- Splitting hives that make it through the winter
- Selling survivor bees to other club members
- Production of local stock
- Raising our own Queens
- Hosting fellow club members' bees for a couple of weeks
- Winter Feeding



The meeting was adjourned 8:30 p.m.

Next meeting will be March 2, 2015

It is common practice for the beekeeper during the first hive inspection of the year to reverse the top and bottom boxes. The theory is that coming out of winter the majority of the bees are located in the upper box. Bees tend to migrate to the upper box for heat and access to food stores in the winter months. The top box is where the bees will typically form their winter cluster. The queen will begin to lay a few eggs in the middle of the winter months and by the time spring arrives, the hive population has increased such that the upper box is overpopulated. The queen is typically still in the upper box with the brood and most of the adult bees will also be in that upper box taking care of the queen and brood.

Common solution: The common theory goes like this: to alleviate hive congestion, all the beekeeper has to do is swap the top and bottom boxes. The queen will begin to move up into the now empty top box and half of the adult bees will follow her. That will divide the hive population between the two boxes which will reduce the number of bees in each box. It all sounds reasonable, right?

In my opinion, there is so much good information there that it makes the solution "seem" right. In reality, I think that when you just reverse the two boxes, the box with all the congestion is no better off. The congestion has not been improved. The beekeeper is hoping (by just swapping the boxes) that the queen will immediately move up into the now less congested box before the hive begins

swarming preparations. This solution is too risky.

My solution: Remove the top box and set it aside for now (this is where most of the bees and congestion can be found). Remove the four middle frames from the empty bottom box and set them aside. Take the four middle frames from the top box (these frames will contain most of the brood and young bees) and place them in the bottom box. Now squeeze what's left of the brood in the top box together into the center. Then put the four empty frames from the bottom box on each side of the top box brood frames to fill in the empty space. Place the top box back on top.

Now, you have four frames with bees and brood located in the middle of the bottom box and four empty draw frames on either side of the brood in the top box. The bees and brood will now be divided between the top and bottom box. The queen will have plenty of room to lay eggs in. It doesn't matter if she is in the top or bottom box because she will still have plenty of room to lay in. You will have divided the current hive congestion which should also "minimize" the swarming instinct.

Hive congestion should be dealt with immediately. Just by reversing the two brood boxes doesn't help in the short term. The one box is still congested no matter if it is on the top or bottom. Don't wait for the bees to handle congestion. They usually decide to handle it by swarming.

Developing bees undergo six molts during which the outer skeleton is shed; five of these take place during the larval stage, and the last occurs when the bee emerges as an adult.

	<p>Andrews Veterinary Hospital</p>	<p>David Ackerman</p>	<p>1575 Main St., Andrews, NC</p>	<p>828/321-3316</p>
	<p>Candy Mountain Farm</p>	<p>The Juhllins</p>	<p>Candy Mountain Heights, Murphy, NC</p>	<p>828/494-2083</p>
	<p>135 Mi-Po Tree Service</p>	<p>The Popes</p>	<p>Murphy, NC 28906</p>	<p>828/644-5405</p>
	<p>Shadow Ridge Bee Farm</p>	<p>Harold & Becka Watkins</p>	<p>Mineral Bluff, GA 30559</p>	<p>706-994-4175 706-374-0409</p>
	<p>Stockbridge Farm</p>	<p>Jen & Zack Stockbridge</p>	<p>Andrews, NC</p>	<p>828/321-2171</p>
	<p>Wayne's Feed Store</p>		<p>869 Andrews Rd, Murphy, NC</p>	<p>828/837-2139</p>



Officers

President	Zack Stockbridge	Vice President	Tom Handford
Secretary	Kay Cameron	Treasurer	Joyce Bernhardt

If you have an interest in bees/beekeeping, we hope you will join us and enjoy meeting and talking with others who share your interest.

Membership Application For Appalachian Beekeepers

Date _____ **Individual/Family-\$12** _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ **Cell** _____

E-Mail _____

How did you hear about our Club? _____

Mail to: Joyce Bernhardt, 325 Rolling Oaks Rd., Murphy, NC 28906

RECEIPT

Date _____ **Amount \$** _____

Received from _____

For Membership dues prorated from date above to following April 1.

Signed: