**Lake County Beekeepers**

Meeting Minutes – Thursday March 3, 2016

**Opening**

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Lake County Agricultural Extension Office by President Billy Fussell. See sign-in sheet for members and guests present. The club had some new people at the meeting from Bushnell, Apopka, Lake Catherine and Orange County.

Mario was the first speaker from D&J Apiary, who is a 3rd generation beekeeper. Mario is a long term member of the American Beekeeping Federation, ABF, and is a director representing commercial beekeepers. ABF is offering a complimentary membership until 12/31/16. Just go to [http://www.abfnet.org/](http://www.abfnet.org/%20) and click on the “Join now” link. The ABF is a great source of bee knowledge including webinars and an online magazine. A full membership runs $65.00 per year. Mario encourages us to consider joining.

His store is located in Umatilla and is open Monday to Friday 8-4. D&J offers classes, nukes, queens and a store full of merchandise. Mario comes often to sell a limited amount of items prior to the start of the meeting. His next advanced bee class is March 15. He will also be holding a lip balm and candle wax class, with the date still to be determined.

Mario updated us on the upcoming Bee Collage held twice a year. It is not just for beginners as some of the classes include detailed science and biology of the bees. Dr. Ellis is often a speaker at the college and is from UF. He is a supporter of hobbyist beekeepers and is well known worldwide. The other speakers are wonderful and also informative.

Mario spoke of the Master Beekeeping Program from UF as well. It is a 5 year program where each level indicates a greater degree of knowledge. More information can be found at: <http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/honeybee/extension/master_beekeeper.shtml>

Two other suggested informational sources are the bee magazines, American Bee Journal and Bee Culture.

Lastly he spoke about the great and reliable video instruction on the UF web site <http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/honeybee/>. There is great stuff there, check it out.

Billy introduces a longtime member and friend of the club Jerry Harrington. Jerry has been a commercial beekeeper since 1979. As a commercial beekeeper he had over 1,000 hives but has scaled back to a reasonable workload but still maintains 300-400 hive (a small workload?). Jerry now concentrates on raising Queens and Nukes. He offers a wonderful product and can be reached at either 352-406-4938, or 352-669-5711. Get your queen orders in now.

A big thanks goes out to Courtenay Marra who had made all the name tags for the members. If we missed you or the tag needs corrections, let us know. Be sure to return the tag when leaving the meeting. Kris is asking for content for the web site. Please email in pictures of your hive, short articles on yourselves and or bee experience, information from anyone going to Bee College, or any links that may be of interest to the club to lakecountybeeks@gmail.com.

**General Conversation**

* After purchasing a nuke, be sure that when you transfer it to your brood box that you put the frames in the same original order and direction. Complete the box with empty frames. Once you get the nukes, don’t forget to ask all the questions you can.
* Get with a mentor or others you meet at the club. They are a wealth of information.
* Continue with the pollen patties to give the bees a source of food and some sugar water they need to help build wax. The bees will know when to stop drinking as natural food becomes available. Beware, in the middle of summer the food source can go flat. Every area is different. Plant flowering plants for all times of the year.
* Bees enjoy the red maple trees. Spanish needle stay blooming a long time, great plant.
* Commercial beekeepers have a different program than hobbyist. For the "newbees" ask: Why do you want bees? Are you pollinating, making candles or balm, making honey or just making bees? Answers to these questions will help determine your program.
* Some folks like a 9 frame honey super versus a 10 frame because the wax combs are built out wider, making it easier to uncap.
* Swarm season is here! Keep an eye on your bees. Inspect the hive regularly, every 10-14 days. Watch for unusual behavior. Is the hive building queen cells? Is your queen getting old? Replace her this year. If you want to do a split, now is the time to order a new queen.
* The 50/50 raffle was $72.00 and congratulation to Chris G. for winning ½ of the pool.
* Lisa Reynes from the Florida Department of Agricultural will be here next month and will speak on apiary registration and bee regulations. Go to their web site for a wealth of information and to learn more about licenses and inspections: <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Bureaus-and-Services/Bureau-of-Plant-and-Apiary-Inspection/Apiary-Inspection>
* The bee club will be at the April 16-17, Landscape and Garden Fair right outside in Discovery Gardens. More information later.
* If you are interested in the Agriculture center, they have numerous programs during the month that may be of interest to you, here is the link. <https://www.lakecountyfl.gov/departments/public_resources/extension_services/>

The next meeting will be on Thursday April 7, 2016, pot luck begins at 6:30 meeting at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted by Minutes Recording Chair: Michael Matson