**Lake County Beekeepers**

Meeting Minutes – Thursday, August 4, 2016

**Opening**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. in the Lake County Agricultural Extension Office by President Billy Fussell. Billy introduced the officers of the club, Vice-President: Dan Backhaus, Treasurer: Kevin Martin, Publicity & Communications Secretary: Kris Gehman. Visitors at the meeting were from Clermont, Mt Dora and Altoona with a total of 70 people present.

General Conversations:

Club members were offering various items for sale at the meeting, to include eggs, club honey, beekeeping equipment, books and magazines. In addition there was a flashing light apparatus that hooks up to an electric fence that alerts you if the power fails or there or if a serious breach occurs. Kris G, Secretary, can purchase this at 15% off - contact her though the regular club email.

The “Day in the Beeyard” at D&J’s facility was a huge success and was attended by over 50 people. Small groups rotated in 15 minutes intervals to cover different topics. Apiary Inspectors from the State were also there to share their knowledge. Topics included:

1) Types of boxes to use and how to build them

2) Tools of the trade: Smoker, hive tool, veil etc. and how to use them

3) How to install a nuc and what comes next

4) Treatments for the hive

5) Uncapping frames and honey extracting

6) Hive inspection

7) How to build a bear fence.

The club purchased the food for the event and spent approximately $400.

Billy had a hive painting contest and the club now has 6 beautifully custom painted hives for when we bring them to Discovery Garden here at the extension office.

The 50/50 split of $158.00 resulted in $79 dollars for the club and $79.00 for the lucky winner.

**Guest Speaker:**

David Westervelt of Umatilla, Florida started beekeeping at the age of 6 and continued his interest during his 10 year career in the armed forces where he worked with bees in Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Costa Rica, and Peru. Upon retiring from the armed forces, Westervelt started a commercial apiary and started working as a local bee inspector for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He started first as a Bee Inspector, then an Environmental Specialist and Researcher, and now as the Chief Apiary Inspector. Westervelt has received awards for research work on honey bees from the United States Department Agriculture, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Apiary Inspectors of America, Florida State Beekeepers Association, National Honey Producers, American Beekeeper Association, and the Davis Productivity award. David can be reached at: [David.Westervelt@FreshFromFlorida.com](mailto:David.Westervelt@FreshFromFlorida.com) or (352) 398-4636 or (352) 267-2568

David shared that the number of registered Florida beekeepers is now over 4300 versus just under 700 ten years ago. They have also changed (or are planning on changing) the beekeeper classifications based on the number of hives to be: 1-40 backyard, 41-100 sideliner and over 100 commercial.

**Pests and Parasites**

Varroa Mites

Varroa mites are parasitic mites that feed on the bodily fluids of adult, pupal and larval bees. Varroa mites can be seen with the naked eye as a small red or brown spot on the bee's thorax. Varroa mites are carriers of virus’ that are particularly damaging to the bees. Bees infected with one virus during their development will often have visibly deformed wings.

Varroa mites have led to the virtual elimination of feral bee colonies in many areas, and are a major problem for apiary bees. These mites are generally not a problem for a strong hive. When the hive population growth is reduced in preparation for winter or due to poor late summer forage, the mite population growth can overtake that of the bees and can destroy the hive. Often a colony will simply abscond (leave as in a swarm, but leaving no population behind) under such conditions.

Treatment

A variety of treatments are currently marketed or practiced to control these mites. Common treatments used are: Apivar, Apistan, CheckMites, Apiguard and the use of oxalic acid and formic acid (sold in gel packs as Mite-Away). These items are not intended for use during production of marketable honey. Another method is the use of powdered sugar dusting which encourages bee cleaning behavior which can dislodge mites, allowing them to fall through the screen bottom board.

American foulbrood

American foulbrood (AFB), caused by a spore-forming larvae, is the most widespread and destructive of the bee brood diseases. Bee larvae up to three days old become infected by ingesting spores present in their food. This disease only affects the bee larvae but is highly infectious and deadly. Infected larvae darken and die. If you think you have AFB, take a picture and sent it to Billy or our local inspector Lisa and she can come to inspect your hive to confirm.

David also shared some current facts about other less common bee diseases and also shared information about the Zika virus carried by mosquitos.

The next meeting will be on Thursday September 1, 2016, dinner at 6:30 meeting at 7:00. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by Minutes Recording Chair: Michael Matson