

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association
Minutes for November Meeting
November 20, 2023

Apprentice Beekeeper Meeting – began at 6:15 pm

Led by Ed Erwin with 21 in attendance

Presentation Topic by Ed Erwin of BeeHarmony.org – First Aid for Bee Stings

- **Explanation for Aggressive Bees**
- **What Happens When a Bee Stings You**
- **Why Do Bee Stings Hurt?**
- **Composition of Bee Venom**
- **Pain of the Sting**
- **Allergic Reaction to Bee Stings**
- **Alarm Pheromones Produced by Bees**
- **Honey Bee Stinger**
- **Traditional Treatment for Bee Stings**
- **Home Remedies for Bee Stings**

Question & answer period followed

- Recommendation to regularly wash bee suit in non-fragranced detergent to remove residual pheromones from stings to suit
- Helps to smoke bee suit and gently smoke hive prior to opening hive

Apprentice Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Monthly meeting – began at 7:02 pm

Led by President Matt Thomas

- In attendance were 36 members and 15 guests
- Pledge of Allegiance led by Dan Brouse

Announcements

- MoCo Bees Christmas Party date is set for Monday, December 11. Additional information will be provided by email.
- Book “First Lessons in Beekeeping” is available for \$10.00.
- Julie at Winding Creek Bee Supply announced they are moving to a new location in January, and will host an event-filled grand re-opening celebration on February 17. January 6 is the date of the first Spit & Whittle get-together for 2024.
- Club always is in need of presenters for future meetings

Youth Program Update

- Jackson Skelton

Meeting Speaker – Ed Erwin of BeeHarmony.org – Beepocalypse: The Man-made Perfect Storm

- **What is Bee Harmony?**
 - A non-profit dedicated to educating others about honey bees
 - Public Awareness
 - Safe Hive Locations
 - Beekeeping Education
- **Importance of Honey Bee**
 - Pollination (www.sciencewithme.com)
 - About 1/3 of human food supply depends on insect pollination
 - 80% of all flowering species are pollinated by bees
- **Evolution of Pollination**
 - Jurassic Period - pollination occurred by wind
 - Cretaceous Period - needed pollinators
 - First bees evolved from wasps
 - First flowers evolved 140 million years ago
- **Early Settlers in North America**
 - Had difficulty growing crops, as honey bees weren't located on this continent
 - European honey bees brought to North America in 1622
- **Evolution of Honey Bee**
 - First appeared 20 million years ago in Asia
 - Today there are 20,000 species of bees in the world, including 4,000 species in North America (native solitary bees)
 - Worldwide, there are 28 types of honey bees (including Africanized bee)
- **Queen Bee**
 - After mating flight, she never leaves swarm
 - Lays 1,500-2,000 eggs per day
 - Lays approximately 3-5 years
 - Communicates with bees in hive through pheromones
- **Growth of a Honey Bee**
 - Most bees in hive are females
- **Swarm**
 - Existing queen takes half of hive to find new location
 - Workers create new queen by feeding royal jelly
 - Most gentle state of hive
 - Not protecting hive
 - Are gorged on honey
- **Drones**
 - Are males
 - Not capable of stinging
 - Only purpose is to mate
 - Dies immediately after mating
 - Are killed at some point so they don't consume resources
- **Worker Bees**

- All are females
- Worker bees sting
- Only insect that produces food consumed by man
- Life span of 42 days
 - 21 days as a hive bee
 - 21 days as a forager
- **Hives**
 - Most commonly used is Langstroth
 - Developed in 1851 as a movable frame hive by L.L. Langstroth
 - Colony can contain 60,000 bees at its peak
 - Colonies produce beeswax
 - Takes 6-10 pounds of honey to produce 1 pound of wax
- **Honey**
 - A single honey bee produces about 1/12 tsp honey in its lifetime
 - Bees can visit up to 20,000 flowers in a day in search of pollen and nectar
- **How Honey Bees See**
 - Bee eye anatomy
 - Bee vision vs. human vision - bees see ultraviolet light
- **Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD)**
 - Identified in 2006 with seemingly healthy bees abandoning hives
 - Average hive loss prior to 2006 was less than 6% but increased to 46%
 - Human induced stress
 - Climate
 - Habitat
 - Residues
 - Malnutrition
 - Agricultural pollination practices
 - Systemic poisons
 - Neonicotinoids
 - Pests
 - Varroa mites
 - Tracheal mites
 - Wax moths
 - Nosema
 - Small hive beetle
- **How Can You Help?**
 - Plant wildflowers
 - Obtain a speaker for an event

Andy Knight Recap of TBA Convention

- Terrific Speakers
- New President for 2024, as well as new VP, Treasurer, and directors
- Apiculture Extension Entomologist is new position obtained by TBA

- Club Centerpiece Contest - won by Magnolia SWARM Club, photography winner, mead making and baking event winners
- Ally & Sophie Clark are now youngest certified Advanced Master Beekeepers

Door Prizes –

- Jams and Preserves provided by Whitman Farm - The Honey House
- Winding Creek Apiary

Small Group Breakout Sessions –

- Beginning Beekeepers
- General Beekeeping Questions

Monthly Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm

(Submitted by Keri Warren)