

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association
Minutes for October Meeting
October 16, 2023

Apprentice Beekeeper Meeting – began at 6:15 pm

Led by Ed Erwin with 16 in attendance

Presentation Topic by Ed Erwin of BeeHarmony.org – What You Need to Know to Begin Beekeeping

- **Source of Bees**
 - Nucs vs. Packages
 - Suppliers
 - Placing order early
- **Equipment Needed**
 - Bee suit
 - Smoker
 - Hive Tool
- **Queen**
 - Requeening
 - Swarm
 - Supersedure
- **Bees**
 - Drones
 - Worker bees
 - Queen
 - After single mating trip, she stays in hive to produce bees
 - Lays up to 1500 eggs per day
- **Honey**
 - Locally, we harvest around July 4
 - Use of honey excluder
 - What to harvest vs what to leave for bees
 - First two boxes are for bees to use
 - Additional production is safe to harvest
- **Pests**
 - Hive beetles
 - Varroa mites

Question & answer period followed

Apprentice Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Monthly meeting – began at 7:02 pm

Led by President Matt Thomas

- In attendance were 42 members and 7 guests
- Flag poem and Pledge of Allegiance led by Dan Brouse

Announcements

- TBA Convention is Nov. 3-4 at Mayborn Civic & Convention Center in Temple, Texas
 - Honey Competition rules have changed. Current rules have been posted, and numerous new competition categories are mentioned.
- Book "First Lessons in Beekeeping" is available for \$10.00.
- Looking for volunteers for holiday party

Youth Program Update

- Meredith Cox
- Ally & Sofie Clark
- Francisco Trujillo

Meeting Speaker – Steven Brackmann of Bear Creek Apiary (bearcreekapiaries.com) on Bee Brains and Queen Rearing

- **Bee Brains**
 - Neurons in bee brain produce better memory and holds more knowledge than human brain
 - Described 6-year experiment studying bee brain using flower color effects on bee foraging
 - Bees used sight and pheromones
 - Bees knew within 0.5 seconds whether flower was food source
 - Level of decision making in bee is 3000 times that of a human
 - Decision making seeks to optimize highest nutrition sources
- **Royal Jelly**
 - Kills off all bacteria except one type
 - Important for health of queen breeding
 - More royal jelly in cells produced better queens
- **Optimize health of hives**
 - Concentrate on nutrition and gut health of bees
 - Recommended mushroom-based extract supplements - Reishie and Amaudo
 - Probiotics
- **Queen Rearing - it's all about nutrition**
 - Overfeed nurse bees
 - Shake multiple frames of bees into hive holding nectar and pollen
 - Forager bees will leave
 - Nurse bees stay in hive and feed
 - Overfeeding results in nurse bees producing maximum amounts of royal jelly
 - Creates queen cups overnight

- Higher amounts of royal jelly produces greater quality queen cells
 - Must insure presence of nurse bees to continue feeding royal jelly to queen cells
- **Bear Creek Apiary's Queen Rearing**
 - Has isolated and protected queen yard
 - Maintains quality drone yards fully surrounding queen yard to saturate queen mating/control genetics
 - Timing is crucial
 - Some hatch on day 15 or day 17
 - Use of monitored incubators is recommended

Doug's Tips – Wax Moth Trap

- 2 liter soda bottle with 1 inch hole cut on upper side
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 cup cider vinegar
- 1 banana peel
- Optional - Hot dog pieces and couple drops of Dawn Soap added produce wasp/hornet trap

Mix ingredients and place inside bottle through cut hole. Tie rope around bottle and hang trap at height of 6-10 ft approximately 10-15 ft from hive. Replace solution as needed (every week or two).

Small Group Breakout Sessions –

- New beekeepers
- Nutrition
- General Question & Answers

Monthly Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm

(Submitted by Keri Warren)