

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Anthony Ellis in room 201, Galax Hall Wytheville Community College. 32 members were present.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve minutes—Mickey Cunningham, seconded by Gary Tolley. Minutes approved. Gary Tolley presented the treasurers report. The report was filed for audit.

Speaker: Brad Ohlinger, PhD Graduated student at Virginia Tech

Presentation: Waggle Dances Communicate Honey Bee Forage Availability in Representative Landscapes in Virginia

Brad Ohlinger is studying honeybee behavior using waggle dances and pollen analysis to monitor honeybee foraging in representative landscapes in Virginia. He aims to use his research to gain a better understanding of the obstacles that bees face in different landscapes and provide recommendations for the effective management of pollinator habitat. Before coming to Virginia Tech, Brad earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from Albright College in Reading, PA and a Master of Science in Biology from Bloomsburg University in Bloomsburg, PA.

The objectives of his research include:

- *Describe- Determine honey bee foraging dynamics in the three landscapes (Phase 1)
- *Analyze- Compare trends in honey bee foraging across the three landscapes to identify predictors of honey bee foraging (Phase 2)
- *Prescribe- Use our understanding of honey bee foraging to inform the management of pollinator habitat.

Developing honey bees as bio indicators

Phase 1: Investigate honeybee foraging dynamics within three representative landscapes in Virginia.

Phase 2: Compare honey bee foraging between the three locations to determine important predictors of foraging behavior across the representative areas.

Phase 3: Compare honey foraging with non-apis pollinator diversity and abundance.

The three sites included in this research:

Site 1 Winchester, Virginia - Apples Orchards

Site 2 Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center -412 acres of agricultural research land devoted to row crop production – cotton, peanuts, soybean, small grains and corn

Site 3 Prices Fork Research Station in Blacksburg, Virginia- mixed mosaic pasture, cropland, adjacent to suburban and forested areas.

*Honeybees contribute \$15 Billion annually to the USA economy each year.

*Honeybees hives have declined since the 1940's from 5 million to 2.5 million today. ☹

*The 5 P's have contributed to this decline.

Pathogens, Pests, Pesticides, Poor Nutrition

Old Business:

- The Farmers Market Pollinators' Day is coming up June 30.
- Jerome Blankenship which is a member of the Highlands Beekeepers Association in Abingdon is taking orders for 5-frames nucs for around May 15 or around that date. These are mutts! They will be in an E-Z nuc box...They are \$165.00 each. His email address is Jerome Blankenship blankenshipjerome@gmail.com. If anyone has trouble with this email address please send your order and contact information to Anthony Ellis and He will get it to Jerome.
- Workshop for Experienced Beekeepers on:
Saturday, May 4, 2019 - 9 am to 3 pm. "Small Hive Beetle Control and In-Hive Integrated Pest Management" presented by Dr. James Wilson, VT Sponsored by the Highland Beekeepers Association \$35.00
- Anyone who is interested in being a Facebook administrator for MEBA, contact Tina Cunningham. Presently, Billy Ray Armstrong, Peter French and Tina Cunningham are listed as Facebook administrators for MEBA.
- **Grayson County will be having an agriculture fair on August 10, 2019 in Elk Creek on route 21.** Mickey Cunningham is on the committee for the fair. There may be a honey show. Stay tuned for more information on this. If there is a honey show, the rules would be the same as the rules with the Eastern Apiculture Society. <http://www.easternapiculture.org/conferences/eas-2019/2019-honey-show.html>

There are tips for how to get your honey ready for the show.

<http://easternapiculture.org/resources/honey-show-tips.html>

One bottle will be needed to taste and another bottle to be observation. No labels on jars and no fingerprints.

*****It was noted that Willie Richardson won a blue ribbon first place for Class and a gold ribbon for first place Best in Show for his honey in a the 2018 Salem State Fair honey show! Way to go Willie!!!**

- Mickey Cunningham made a motion to pitch the idea and invite the Abingdon Beekeepers Association, NRV Beekeepers Association, Carroll County Beekeepers Association and the Ash County Beekeepers Association in Sparta North Carolina to participate in the Grayson County Agriculture Fair Honey show. Cathy Hounshell seconded the motion.
- Mickey Cunningham announced that Heather Strentz with Mann Lake in Scottsville, Virginia said that if we want to buy club packages (at least 50), we could get them for \$100.00 each. (434) 286-2145
- **www.beeclub.com** – An order of \$200.00 will get up 25% off.
- Mickey Cunningham knows of a place in North Carolina that is selling over-wintered nucs for \$250.00. Another place in Marion is selling over-wintered nucs for \$275.00.
- A motion was made by Gary Tolley to have individual checks from members deposited into our MEBA account in order for MEBA to write one check in order for us to get a club discount. John Todd seconded the motion.
- Mickey Cunningham proposed a motion that a committee be set up to do a procurement to find discounts that could benefit the club. Connie Armentrout seconded the motion.

- Cathy Hounshell will take the library materials home for Herman and Teresa Hearn since they will out of town.
- The Virginia State Beekeepers Association meeting will be May 31 and June 1, 2019 in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

New Business:

- Cathy Hounshell will be picking up honeybee packages for those who have ordered bees from Scottesville Supply Company this Saturday April 27. She will contact Connie Armentrout when she is on her way back who will send out a mass e-mail or call those who will be meeting Cathy at Wytheville Community College Galax Hall parking lot. Expected arrival is around 3:00 p.m. or 3:30 p.m. The total cost including tax is \$106.00 for each package.
- Vernon Stepp has been in touch with Poor Valley Bee Farm just outside of Bristol located in Hiltons, Virginia who have stated they will match Scottesville Supply Company's price next year. They are located about 1 ½ hours from Wytheville. They are a small company with competitive prices.
- Mickey Cunningham will be picking up nucs for people who have ordered them from Larry Cox in Sparta, North Carolina on May 1.
- Vernon Stepp made a motion to reimburse Cathy Hounshell for her travel expenses going to Scottesville, Virginia while picking up package bees in the amount of \$100.00. This motion was seconded by Connie Armentrout.
- The MEBA annual picnic will be Saturday May 11 at Eurel Clippard's home from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Weed-eating and push mowing volunteers are Jeff Wyatt and Willie Richardson. Mickey Cunningham will be picking up sandwiches from the Dutch Pantry. Sandwiches, drinks and paper products and cutlery will be furnished by MEBA. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish and/or dessert.

Hive Report: What Should You Be Doing with Your Hives?

- Manage for Swarms
- Add boxes
- Requeen – if necessary

Raffle:

Unassembled 10 frame hive box – Jeff Wyatt

Uncapping roller – Andy Rose

Gloves- Ronnie Osborne,

Plastic honey bear jars – Andy Dunford

Smoker – Connie Armentrout

Set of 2 honeybee glasses- Anita Parks,

Hive tool – Cathy Hounshell

Sieve strainer- Kirk Burkett

Bee Vail – Anthony Ellis

Uncapping knife – Eurel Clippard,

Bee clips – Connie Armentrout

Frame separator for hive box – Eurel Clippard

Next Month: Annual Spring Picnic May 11, 2019 and MEBA monthly meeting Thursday May23, 2019

Adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Armentrout, MEBA Secretary