

Mt. Empire Beekeeper's Association
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2010

Bernie Bradley called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in room 122, Smyth Hall at Wytheville Community College.

Treasurer Report: Janice reports that we currently have 3,076.56 in our account. We have 138 paid members.

Janice passed around a sheet for people to vote on a logo for the hats (the previous favorite logo did not fit on the hats). We will keep the current color scheme.

Secretary Report: Cathy and Carol (filing in from Sharon) presented the minutes from the last meeting and the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Elections Committee: The election will be held at the next meeting, November 18, 2010. The slate of officers for next year is

President: Tim Spraker
Vice President: Eric Benjamin
Treasurer: Janice McGrath
Secretary: Cathy Wheeler

TIC Status: To date, \$87,800 has been distributed out of an initial draw of \$118,000. Bernie showed a chart of disbursements by county. About 20 people who applied for the grant have not submitted their claims yet. New beekeepers in Carroll County are encouraged to apply.

The bees:

Right now the bees are clustering at night. The lower the temperature, the denser the cluster (maximum density, however, occurs at 23°). Clusters expand above 45° and contracts below 45°. The queen has slowed down egg laying – not much reproductive activity as they get ready for winter. The life spans of the bees are increasing.

Members discussed robbing. (Bees can be defensive / aggressive right now, and are ready to defend their winter stores.) It was mentioned that the entrance of the hive being robbed can be reduced to help the bees defend the hive. Another method mentioned was to confuse robbers by putting glass in front of the entrance, with some space on the sides to allow the hive members to enter and exit the hive.

Some members noted that the bees seem to be taking more food than normal, and it was suggested that they have fewer stores as a result of a summer dearth.

The newspaper method of combining weak hives was discussed, as was overwintering a small or weak hive over a stronger hive.

Winter hive ventilation was discussed. Bernie mentioned that two articles this month mentioned the importance of ventilation in reducing fungus and disease.

Other discussion topics were “normal” numbers of dead bees outside hives, emergency winter feeding, and honey marketing.

The next meeting will be held November 18, 2010.

Tim and Hosea Spraker were thanked for providing refreshments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.