



The Shore Swarm Newsletter

November 2022

BGES Leadership

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A Message from the Vice President

Hello BGES Guild Members,

For those who don't know me; I lived in Connecticut until my family and I moved to Virginia in 2002. My husband, Tim and I have always had a small hobby farm with lots of fruit trees, a garden, chickens and other small animals. Getting honey bees was always part of the "Big Plan." Five years ago we decided the time was right and took the Beginners Beekeeping Class. We started with two hives in 2017 and we now have five hives in our apiary.

Two hives were started this year and three are older hives. One of my new hives is a VSH hive that we got in June from Kristine Smith across the bay. It took a while for that hive to build itself up but it has grown into a strong hive this fall. I hoping to make a split in the Spring.

At our October meeting we talked about winterizing hives. The weather has definitely started to get colder and by now your wintering preparations should be over. The bees should be in their cluster and have frames of honey above it. If the hive is light on honey stores, you can feed them sugar patties. Be sure to have an upper ventilation and moisture barrier so that condensation does not drip on the cluster. This will cause hyperthermia and death of the hive.

Now all we need to do is give them supplemental food till spring, catch up on reading about bees and plan for next year!

Hope all your Holidays are BEEutiful!!
Mickey

Recap of September Meeting by Tia Bell

The BGES club hosted Eric Talley, Master Craftsman Beekeeper from Onslow County NC who lives and raises bees on the coast. Eric started beekeeping in 1973 as a Future Farmers of America project. Four years later he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and didn't have honey bees for the next 30 years. He currently has 45 colonies and raises VSH queens during the summer. This research was conducted for partial fulfillment of the Master Craftsman level in the NCSBA Master Beekeeper Program.

Eric has submitted articles to both the American Beekeeper Journal Magazine American Bee Journal : June 2021 Vol. 161 No. 6 (bluetoad.com) as well as the NC State Beekeepers Association Quarterly Magazine, <https://www.ncbeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Bee-Buzz-Winter-2020.pdf> (page 17)

Eric raises queens for his personal use and also to sell. They are called VSH queens (Varroa Sensitive Hygiene). This is one of the many ways to control mites in your hives he says.

Treating for Varroa Mites without using Chemicals was the topic and Eric went in depth covering different options of controlling mites.

1. Monitor your hives – Varroa easy check (1/2 cup bees, 2 tablespoons Dawn Ultra to 1 gallon of water). This should be done APR/JUNE/AUG/OCT mid month. Make sure you are catching the nurse bees for this test since the young nurse bees are the ones tending to the brood. Here is a link from betterbee.com How to Use the Varroa EasyCheck (Alcohol Wash) Sampling Method | Betterbee
2. Drone Trapping – Purchase drone frames install preferable 2 per colony, ideally place them in the middle of the hive. Once they are full and capped, remove from the hive, place in the freezer for at least 48 hours. The remove from freezer and put back into the hive. The colony will clean out the frames of dead drones. ****DO NOT** let them hatch. In the winter months, place the drone frames on the far side of the hives.
3. Breaking the brood cycle – When breaking the brood cycle there are several options. **a.** Cage the queen so she cannot lay eggs but will remain in the hive with her pheromones. **b.** Kill the queen and let them raise a new one **c.** Make a reverse split – how do you make a reverse split? The Parent colony need to raise the new queen, so put your old queen in the with the split. Use 3-4 frames of **UNCAPPED** Brood along with nurse bees. Then feed 1:1 ratio sugar water, which is a **MUST**.

After Eric presented his power point, some attendees left, however many stayed behind to ask more questions. Eric is full of knowledge and information and said he looks forward to returning the shore for future events, meetings and or presentations. Many club members talked about planning a “field trip” to Eric’s apiary and property to see his queen production, bee yard, wood shop and honey extraction house. Attached are a few pictures from the presentation on Treating for Varroa Mites without using Chemicals.

Eric Talley Presentation on Controlling Varroa Mites without Chemicals



Business News on Banking 501c3 by Sandra Scher

The Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore (BGES) started in 2010 as a small group of individuals who shared a common interest in beekeeping. Since that time BGES has grown to 50 or more members. Up until recently, any earned funds were kept in a personal banking account to be used for educating the public about bees and beekeeping, but the time has come to transition to non profit organization status; the official term being a 501c3.

A 501c3 is a federal income tax exemption, and applies to several entities, including our own organization which operates exclusively for educational purposes in regards to beekeeping. So what are the benefits of this status besides having exemption from federal income tax?

- Possibility of exemption from state income and sales taxes
- Individuals may take a tax deduction on a charitable gift to a 501c3
- Reduced US postal bulk-mail rates and other services
- Ability to apply for grants or other public or private allocations which are available only to 501c3 organizations
- And other benefits

Our hope is to expand further, helping those interested in keeping bees, and continue this path of teaching public awareness of these fascinating insects, who provide us with so many benefits from pollination, giving us food security and biodiversity, to delicious honey, and even medicinal properties.

****UPDATE** as of 12/6/2022, our the IRS approved our application for the 501c3.

The 2022 Beginners Beekeeping Class

Thank you to all who participated in the planning and preparations!

The speakers this year were:

Tara Southard and Mickey Palmer – Bee Colony and its Organizations

Mike Obrien – Components of Langstroth Hive, Tools, Protective Clothing and Starting a Smoker

Chris Kutyla – Where to purchase equipment/bees, First year beekeeping, Getting and assembling your equipment, NUCS, Packages, Working with a mentor

Ann Snyder – Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore

Leilani Brown – Bee Stings, Benefits of Honey

Tara Southard – Seasonal Hive Management

Michelle Birch – Swarm Management

George Brown – Honey Bee Pests

Mickey and Tim Palmer – Honey Extraction, Selling, Laws, Bees Wax

Teresa McCready - Refreshments

We had a really good turn out, 28 attendees. Some students already had hives and others were planning to start in the Spring.

There will be open hive events offered to any members in the Spring. We'll let you know the dates for those in the Spring. We are also working on getting/assigning a mentor for any new member that would like one.



Upcoming Meetings

BGES alternate locations between the Barrier Island Center (BIC) in Machipongo and the Tasley Fire House in Accomack, Virginia.

December – No General Meeting

January – 10th, Tuesday at the Tasley Fire House – 6:30 pm. - Kaira Wagnor PhD of UNCG is discussing her research on a new tool to help bees fight varroa mites via zoom.

Research Scientist Kaira Wagoner will be speaking, via Zoom, on natural honey bee stress signals to develop an assay for the improved selection of hygienic behavior.

Additional information in Dr. Kaira Wagoner can be found at <https://biology.uncg.edu/people/kaira-wagoner/>

Kaira Wagoner

I am interested in honey bee chemical communication, particularly as it related to the social immune mechanism hygienic behavior. Hygienic behavior is the ability of adult honey bees to detect and remove unhealthy brood from the hive, improving the overall health of the colony. My doctoral dissertation was an investigation of the relationships between common stressors, brood-signaling, hygienic behavior, and selective breeding in the honey bee. As a post-doctoral fellow, I have continued this work and am currently using natural honey bee stress signals to develop an assay for the improved selection of hygienic behavior.

Dr Kaira Wagoner can also be found on Inside the Hive TV, discussing her research from 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9SeQYL0cAQ&t=26s>

February – 11th, Saturday at the Tasley Fire House – 10:00 am - Open Discussion

March – 7th, Tuesday at BIC – 6:30 pm. Discussion on Getting ready for Spring.

Upcoming Conferences

Heart of VA Beekeepers First Annual Conference – January 14th 9:00am – 4:00pm, Longwood University Farmville VA – Early Pricing is \$45 before December 15th. The conference will feature keynote speaker Dr. David Tarpy (Eric Talley talked about him at our September meeting) professor and extension specialist for honey bee biology and beekeeping at NC State University. More information can be found here -> <https://hovabeekeepers.wixsite.com>
Tia Bell has already signed up to attend and will be getting a hotel room. If anyone is interested in attending and carpooling please let her know.

Membership Dues

BGES dues \$20. State dues \$10. Membership runs from July 1st to June 30th. Application is on the BGES website. If you have not yet paid your dues for this year, please mail your check to our treasurer Sandra Scher at: 1 Jefferson St. Onancock, Va. 23417

The BGES has a Facebook page. Log on to see some of the latest escapades of fellow BGES.

The official website for the BGES is: <http://www.bgesva.org/index.html>

Any news worthy items – feel free to forward to: mtp26@msn.com for possible inclusion in future newsletters.

Hope to see all of you at a meeting soon!

