

Minutes
BGES Monthly Meeting
January 4, 2014

Place: Chamber of Commerce, Melfa, VA

Called to order by President Paul Kist at 10:04 by President Paul Kist
All the Board of Directors were in attendance except the Treasurer. A total of 33 persons attended.

The featured speaker was Andy Westrich who presented a comprehensive program on how to divide hives and build nucs. Andy has been keeping bees for 8 years and now operates Hampton Apiary and provides beekeeping equipment through: http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/equip_exchange.html.

The slides Andy used to explain the process of dividing hives and making queens should be available to BGES shortly and will be announced by email to members. He pointed out that locally raised queens are superior because:

- They keep beekeepers self-sustainable (able to replace lost queens or expand hives)
- Nucs can be traded and banked
- Nucs/queens can be sold
- They reduce the time to repair a hive and are more easily available
- They are acclimatized
- No Africanized Honey Bees (AHB)
- Usually disease resistant
- Quality (quick acceptance to local colonies)

Looking for a Queen Mother Hive (from which to produce queens and nucs) look for:

- Gentle bees
- Resistance to pests
- Good laying pattern
- Hygienic behavior
- Good honey production
- Good hive density (lots of bees in a small area)

Andy emphasized that regular beekeeping hive equipment is sufficient to do splits and build nucs. Details and more on the procedures will be in the PowerPoint. He ended by saying that usually one healthy hive can produce one nuc, complete with queen, per year. It is best done at the end of the spring nectar flow (May/June) and also reduces the pressure on a hive to swarm.

Other business:

- BGES will hold an informational presentation on January 25 (Saturday) at the Accomac Public Library at 1PM. If you know anyone interested in learning about bees and beekeeping or who might be interested in taking the upcoming Beekeeping for Beginners Class in February, invite them to stop by and see what it's all about. There is no cost.
- The Beekeeping for Beginners classes (two-part) will be held at the Chamber of Commerce building on RT13 near Melfa on Saturdays, February 8 and 15, from 8:30AM until 1:00PM. Interested participants can register on-line at our website (www.bgesva.org). The class will be limited to 25, so sign up soon.
- There was no treasure's report but the guild is quite solvent.
- The members present decided to have BGES present an "Intermediate Beekeeping" course through presentations at our regular meeting like the presentation by Andy today. With the accompanying materials, like the forthcoming PowerPoint, each should be able to collect important additional beekeeping skills.
- Russell Vreeland will present info on beekeeping to the Ag Conference on January 8 at ESCC.
- BGES will again have a presentation at the Heritage Festival on February 22 at ESCC
- Angela Barnes (BGES member and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services apiary inspector) gave a short report that included a recommendation to feed our bees through the winter.
- One of our members was successful in getting \$200 in grant money from VDACS through their on-line application process. He encouraged members to visit: <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/plant&pest/hivegrant.shtml> to learn about the application process.

The President adjourned the meeting at 12:14PM

The Guild will NOT meet in February since we are presenting the classes on Feb. 8 & 15.

The next regular meeting will be at the Chamber on Saturday, March 1st at 10:00AM.

Watch for the PowerPoint presentation on splitting hive and making nucs, additional info about the general info presentation on January 25 and on the Beginners Beekeeping Class (remember, sign-up is open on-line now).