

## Minutes for BGES October Meeting

Saturday, October 4, 2014 Melfa

The monthly meeting was opened by our president John Chubb who welcomed all members. John gave a running list of several fall events that are opportunities here on the Shore for us to promote bees, speak about their pollinator work, and invite the public to become beekeepers etc. John encouraged us to participate in these events. Two events have no volunteers for taking charge: Cape Charles/Birding weekend October 11 and Greenwing on October 19. Unless several members wish to work these festivals, we will not be represented.

Mary Walker has spoken for the Watershed festival, October 22 in Onancock and will be there all day. John Chubb is attending another table at the same event. We hope some of our members who are reading these minutes will contact Mary and volunteer to help her out for a few hours. Please consider this assistance to our leadership. And come and visit the exhibit to give your support.

Ann Snyder spoke asking for help with the setting up and taking down the refreshments for the meetings. She passed out a paper requesting that member's signup for contributing baked goodies or fruit or juice at our meetings. She'd really like a person to coordinate the nourishment (break) time. Ann also gave a pitch for a short course on Pollinators sponsored by the Xerces foundation on Nov. 20 at the ESCC.

Don Forbes made an announcement that he had his entire hive stolen from his property in Onancock. He has notified the police. Since he was not at the Picnic, he brought a lovely jar of his honey for all to sample.

We shared about getting hives ready for winter and David Boyd reminded us to pull the queen excluders. Mary Walker uses scrunched up paper towels on the screens to absorb moisture and she mentioned pine needles. Paul Kist paints his boxes brown with a roller brush.

John gave the treasurers report.

Our guest speaker Felicite “Licho” Berrouette gave an enchanting and captivating presentation describing his life-long love of beekeeping and the differences in tropical Belize from the ESVA. Licho was born in Haiti and moved to Belize at the age of 6. He and his Father built up their beekeeping industry by “catching wild bees” in the tall jungle trees. After felling the tree, they found 2 to 4 established hives and collected these, eventually bringing their apiary to over 1000 hives. Felice explained that in a tropical climate there is such a wealth of available nectar that the bees are never without flowering plants and trees. In both the dry and rainy seasons, in the lowlands and mountain areas, honey abounds. The honey produced in the highlands is dark and initially was not as marketable. Over the years this darker honey was also appreciated. His family marketed honey to Europe and Canada producing tons of honey for sale.

The only predator that his family had to contend with was the veroa mite, as their hives were strong without pests such as the SHB or wax moth. They never fed their bees. He had African bees that were so aggressive that the hives were set 10 miles from the nearest homes.

After several decades, Licho’s family moved the bees to Mexico and he has been on the shore for 10 years. He is convinced that the success he experienced is based on good bee management. He cannot envision a life without bees.

Licho talked about raising queens, building his own boxes, about splitting hives. He presented a wealth of information.

Our membership thoroughly enjoyed and learned some astonishing facts from Mr. Berrouette. Licho invited us to visit his hives. Hopefully he will continue to encourage and help our membership with his store of beekeeping experience.

Our meeting adjourned at 12:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Zuccarino, Secretary