

Minutes for Beekeepers Guild ESVA January 10, 2015 Melfa, VA.

John Chubb opened this first meeting of the New Year welcoming all members and perspective members and wishing everyone a Happy New Year and successful beekeeping. Unfortunately Paul Kist, our past president was nursing the flu and unable to be with us.

During the past winter months there has been a significant loss of bees for many beekeepers. Our own Paul Kist lost 8 hives; Russell Vreeland and Donna Farber have also experienced losses. We are urged to report any losses to Angela Barnes as studies can be made to discover the underlying causes.

John pointed out this is a good time to take inventory of our bee hive stock in order to be ready for the Spring splits and honey flows.

Donna Farber explained how she is organizing BGES Nuk Program. Please see attachment for details.

Our webmaster, Evan Clements, is no longer able to assist us and we are looking for someone to take over this service. Please let John know if anyone has suggestions.

Treasurer report from Chris Merritt gives us \$517.76 in our account and the books have been purchased for the up-coming Beekeeper class.

Mary Walker, our director of Education, took the floor and gave us the information about preparations for the Beekeeper Class to be held on Saturdays, Feb. 7 and 14 here at the Melfa CC. Details of class content was given and a list was circulated asking for members to volunteer for presentations. This year we will have 3 hands-on "stations" where the participants will rotate through learning in small groups with one to one information. We hope to have our Mentor Program set so that each new beekeeper will have an experienced person to be available for guidance and necessary support, thus facilitating the "fun" of keeping bees.

Mary has advertised in the Cape Charles Wave, the Post, John and Russell will speak on WESR. Linda Goldstein will take registrations. Information is on the web site: BGESVA.ORG. Carol will e-mail a FLYER to all members asking them to help publish this event among friends and community groups.

Russell Vreeland will up-date the Swarm List and those members, who would like to come to the aid of swarm collection, please see him.

The Pollinator License plate will be available this month and another Bee License plate is in the process of collecting the 450 necessary signatures for production in the future.

Ann Snyder introduced the topic of today's meeting by telling the multiple benefits of "honey".

This miracle product made by our bees has been known for its powerful curative effects from ancient times. Today we are learning how effective it is medically in wound healing, and as an aid for coughs not to mention as a prime baking ingredient.

Ann distributed two forms for those who are selling honey: Virginia Honey Processor Certification Form and Honey Labeling Guidelines. If you harvest and sell over 250 gallons, a state inspection is necessary. Bob Messenger has written some very helpful guidelines for honey extraction and these will be included in the packet for the new beekeepers.

Donna Farber told her stories of raising bees and honey extraction. We enjoyed listening to how meticulous both she and her husband are in this process and how each has his/her own work! Donna thinks we should not sell our honey at low prices. Little by little the bees will pay for themselves.

Licho Berrouette raises bees and gathers honey by the gallons. He comes from a commercial apiary production in Belize and has maintained a large number of hives here on the Eastern Shore. He spoke of his experience in raising bees including Russian and Italian races. He gave some of his methods for increasing honey production. Licho uses one foundation and two supers. The foundation has 10 frames and the supers 8 or 9. The honey is ready in 20 days. Licho says "the bees do not make surplus honey." He has life-long experience.

Angela Barns related selling honey at the Onancock Market and WT Wilkins has his honey for sale at Eastville Hardware. David Boyd showed us his soybean honey, harvested from the fields where soy was in flower.

An interesting question and answer period followed and the conversation could have continued, but our scheduled 12:00 hour had already passed. Before closing the meeting Mary Walker motioned that we reserve a booth at the Onancock Market for \$20 and we will then see who wants to sell honey there. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 and folks gathered in small groups to continue sharing about bees.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Zuccarino, Secretary