



Fort Bend Buzz

newsletter of the
Fort Bend Beekeepers Association

fostering safe, responsible, successful beekeeping



September, 2017

The September 12, 2017 meeting of the Fort Bend Beekeepers will be held at 7:00 pm in Fort Bend County's "Bud" O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg, Texas. Visitors (and new members) are always welcome (membership dues are \$5.00 for the calendar year). The Association provides coffee and lemonade for meeting refreshments. (If you arrive early, please volunteer to start the coffee.) Members can also volunteer to bring snacks. The meeting will be called to order at 7:30 after 30 minutes of social time.

Ask a dozen beekeepers...

Our newsletter is abbreviated because there is so much cleanup and relief work to be done because of Hurricane Harvey flooding. This month we're "asking a dozen beekeepers" (or even more) to help others get back on their feet! Cash or other donations are helpful, but not nearly as valuable as your time and energy helping others.

August Meeting Notes

Be sure that you register at the back table at our meetings since the sign in sheets are an important club record that supports our use of County facilities. We had 39 members and guests that signed in on August 8. Attendance seemed low probably due to end of summer travels.

Both President Nancy Hentschel and VP Tracey Grimme were out of town, so Secretary Treasurer Jeff McMullan called the meeting to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. After welcoming guests, Jeff reported on his Raspberry crazy ant research. His investigation of foraging behavior revealed a strong preference for sugar syrup so we need to be careful about attracting crazy ants when feeding bees. These ants are what is called a "tramp" species, meaning that they expand their range like hobos, moved about by human activity. Any new beeyard location can be easily checked for crazy ants using a small slice of hot dog. It is best to avoid moving hives from yards with crazy ants present since hitchhikers are likely to come along and infest

the new location.

Our next topic was oxalic acid for varroa mite control. OA has been used successfully for many years in Europe and was recently approved for use in the U. S. It can be applied by the "dribble" method which involves pouring a prescribed dose of sugar syrup/oxalic acid solution between frames. Another application method is the oxalic acid vaporizer that uses a heated cup to vaporize a measured dose of acid crystals inside the hive. The proper term is "sublimes" which means going from a solid, not a liquid, to a vapor. A 12V battery is used to power the vaporizer. There are many YouTube videos on vaporizer use and many different models are available for sale on the internet. Jeff presented a short video of Brazoria County Beekeeper Jack Berry using a Vaporox vaporizer.

Varroa reproduce on brood in capped cells. They prefer drone brood since it is more robust and has a longer capped period. Neither dribbling or vaporizing kills reproducing mites or offer long term control so, like other varroa treatments, additional OA doses are needed to kill mites that later emerge with the adult bees.

In a January, 2017 American Bee Journal article, Randy Oliver (scientificbeekeeping.com) reported on ongoing work to develop an extended release OA treatment. Oxalic acid is really cheap so it is unlikely that a private company would develop such a product. It is simply

a blue paper shop towel saturated with an OA/glycerin solution.

Next, Jerzey Trybek presented a great update on his top bar hive beekeeping as a follow up to our May meeting. The hive was established from a cutout on May 1 and he showed many frame-by-frame photos of his booming hive as well as a GoPro video that he uses to record inspections to document later.

Thanks to our August door prize donors and congratulations to the lucky winners.

Treasurer's Report

Our August treasury balance was \$3,151.98. Since then we collected \$10.00 in dues (2 memberships at \$5.00 each). The resulting balance is \$3,161.98 consisting of \$3,101.98 in our Wells Fargo checking account plus \$60.00 in cash to make change.

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AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Boone Holladay

County Extension Agent- Horticulture
Fort Bend County
jb.holladay@ag.tamu.edu
281 342-3034 ext. 7034
1402 Band Road, Suite 100
Rosenberg, TX 77471

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