



WAKE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION DECEMBER 2008



Next Meeting: December 9, 2008 @6:30

*******NOTICE TIME CHANGE: 6:30*******

The December meeting will be our Annual Christmas Dinner. A sign-up sheet circulated for people to commit to a vegetable dish or dessert. If you missed it, bring your favorite dish or dessert to share.

Location: Wake County Commons Building, Cary Drive. Refreshments will be provided by all of us.

November Meeting Summary

Jack spoke about his battle with esophageal cancer and recovery. He is getting surgery and hopes to be improving steadily. He expressed appreciation for NC Beekeepers for helping out during his time of need.

Thanks to everyone who worked the State Fair booth. Our club took the Best in Show and Sweepstakes. We received blue ribbons in almost all categories. Honey sales were good, making approximately \$8000 for the State Association. Money is used for research into CCD and promoting beekeeping in the state.

If you have changes in your email, let Bill or me know. We continue to have people inadvertently omitted on the emails. If you are one, I'm sorry. We continue to work on the glitches. Also, it is time to renew your membership. There is a form to fill out in the newsletter: Fill it out using good handwriting skills and return to Vivian with your check. If you are a member of the State Assn, You will get the yellow book, and receive 25% off subscription to American Bee Journal and Bee Culture.

The 2009 upcoming spring beekeeping course will consist of pre-meeting instruction/assistance in the months leading up to the class. Starting in January, new and soon to be beekeepers are encouraged to arrive 1/2 hour early to meetings for instruction on various topics: Setting up and assembling equipment, what you need to get started etc. The Saturday Course is tentatively scheduled for March 14th at the Police Club in Knightdale. At the NCSU Bee Lab 2 weeks following will be the field portion and testing for Journeyman and Master Beekeeper. If you are studying for these there is a study guide/information on the state website www.ncbeekeepers.org. We will need mentors for next year- as one of our main club goals is encouraging and promoting beekeeping in Wake County. If you can be available for the assistance of new beekeepers, please let me know and I can start assembling the Mentor list for next year. I have already had several calls from soon to be beekeepers with questions. Danny is ordering approximately 60 nucs, if you want to be on his list contact him and let him know how many you want/need. As always, it is first come first serve. The swarm list will need to be assembled too, if you agree to be on the list, you need to be prepared to get a swarm quickly.

Member news:

- Our oldest member Mr. Golden Pennington is out of the hospital and recovering.
- Jack Tapp is cancer-free and continues to count his blessings!
- Whit Joyner has had hip replacement surgery; he is home and has started rehabilitation therapy.
- Barry Pulley has an excess of Food Grade Plastic containers of various sizes. If you would like some, let him know. These do come in handy for honey storage and other uses.
- Some of us are done Christmas Shopping! (me)

Danny reminded us how outstanding we are as a club. We have met and surpassed the requirements for achieving recognition with the Golden Achievement Program. If you have done any presentations, worked Bugfest, or bee related promotional or educational activity, selling honey at farmers market, state fair or zoo etc. - please fill out the form on the 2nd to last page of the newsletter. If you were featured in printed media and have a copy- that is also helpful. Charles, Mary and Michelle have graciously volunteered to head up assembling information for us to achieve "Chapter of the Year ". If you fill out the form, please give it to one of them or Danny or myself.

Ricky Barbour presented "How to Make Mead", and drew a good crowd! Ricky is our Clubs most recent past President and current Vice President. He won a Blue Ribbon in the State Fair this year for his Mead. He tells us he had beginners luck. Ricky took his beginner Beekeeping class from the late Fred Deer. Fred actually had the opportunity to meet Brother Adam in Buckfast Abbey. He told us the story of Fred asking Brother Adam the best part of beekeeping: for his answer, Brother Adam threw his head back as he laughed: "The Mead".

Mead is a good alcoholic beverage. There are various ways to make mead, depending on if you add fruit or not and what type of yeast you use. Ricky got his award-winning recipe on the website: www.gotmead.com. He tells us there are hundreds of recipes there. There is also a discussion forum if you have questions. Ricky originally saw a guy make mead at a local Renaissance Festival. Ricky tells us, you can buy meadmaking supplies from Beekeeping suppliers, but there is a local store American Brewmaster who has everything you need. American Brewmaster is located at 3021-5 Stonybrook Dr. - just off Capital, North of the beltline. They are closed Mondays and Tuesdays. I do know from personal experience, they are very helpful with novice questions and suggestions.

Ricky tells us, it takes 3 Lbs of honey for a gallon of mead. That will yield 3.5 bottles of mead. As a retired alcohol and beverage agent Ricky has disposed of many gallon containers, yet when he wanted to make some homebrew, he had difficulty find one. American Brewmaster does sell the 1- gallon carboy and the airlock and rubber stopper.

Ricky demonstrated the mead recipe cutting up an orange, throwing in 25 raisins, and had a hand out for all of us with his Blue Ribbon Recipe. I guess he wants more competition next year! He said you can vary the recipe with more juice or just water. Once you get it all together, you will quickly see the bubbling of fermentation.

He tells us, once you get it all put together, you just wait. It is helpful to put it somewhere that it will get a little heat to aid in the fermentation process. He said it is a good idea to put the jug somewhere out of the way. Out of sight, out of mind probably helps if you are impatient. It does take 2 months for the process of mead to be made. If you start a batch, and need some to consume in the meantime, you can buy some from one of several commercial meaderies. Redstone in Colorado is a popular one. You can buy mead at Whole Foods Market and Total Wine.

Ricky recommended using tap water from a well. Distilled and chlorinated water is not recommended. He tells us, when it stops bubbling, the yeast has reached maximum alcohol content and it is done. You can taste it. You can also put Campden tablets or Sorbistat in to stop fermentation if necessary. You can make mead semi-sweet to semi-dry. Different types of honey will give mead unique flavor. You basically let it sit until it is clear then bottle it up. If you use fruit or herbs, you will have to strain them out and let debris settle and "rack" it to get the sediment out.

One more reason to home-brew: In the days before Rid-X, the old winemaker's recipe (package of bread yeast and sugar) was flushed down the toilet to help the septic system. I like to think by flushing the must, when racking is beneficial. The live cultures supposedly help keep the system working optimally.

Todd Warner, mead connoisseur spoke up about letting it age for a better smoother flavor, He tells us in 8-10 months, and it will lose the bite and taste even better.

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www.Wakecountybeekeepersassociation.org

Yahoo group:

wakecountybeekeepers
To subscribe send mail to
wakecountybeekeeperssubscribe@yahoo.com

Back copies of newsletters and the bylaws are available on this yahoo group.

Club Extractors:

The club owns extractors that are available for members to borrow.
Electric extractors: Ricky Barbour (in Zebulon 269-0108), Whit Joyner (in New Hill 387-0164)
Hand extractor: Raleigh Myers (in Raleigh 787-0058)



Someone asked about labels: Ricky has not made any labels and has not got any complaints, most people are happy to oblige to a bottle of mead. (You can get labels at American Brewmaster.) Most people have not tasted mead, and are eager to try. Ricky tells us, once you get started home brewing, it is addictive. You start out with 1 Qt honey to a gallon of water, if it does not make the alcohol content you want, you can “sugar it back” by adding yeast and sugar to raise the content. Different yeasts will tolerate different (higher) alcohol contents. You can get a hydrometer at American Brewmasters to determine the % alcohol by volume. Less than 24% alcohol content is desirable for wine.

Ricky tells us, you can make all the mead you want for your personal consumption or to give to friends. It is illegal to sell, barter or trade for homebrew. It does make a great Christmas Gift.

There is an international mead festival: In Raleigh, we have a Renaissance festival where you can try mead.

http://www.meadfest.com/component/option.com_frontpage/Itemid,1/

Also, this past year Chapel Hill Winery in Morrisville had a mead tasting event.

Fair Judging of Mead is based on a point system:

Points are given for different aspects:

25 Clarity (put in clear bottle)

5 Color

20 Taste

10 Body

20 Bouquet- smell

10 Bottle

10 Bottle Closure

If you compete in the fair you will have to make your mead in May-June and bottle it by late August.



“**Mead Cures All**” by Merrie Murdoch posted on www.honeywine.com

“As I poured the second half of the Wild Elderberry Mead into a sauce pan to warm with oranges and berries tonight I thought I should tell you how it has helped quell the aching pains from this cold I've had for so many days. Nothing seemed to work, and I've tried plenty, so last night I drove to town and bought my second bottle of Elderberry Mead. The first time was a few weeks ago when my son got the cold and he thought it might help him. Interestingly, after a glass last night I didn't ache all over like I had. So, over the evening I had another glass and felt as well as I had in a couple weeks. Tonight as the ache returns despite all the OTC remedies I will have another warm glass of mead and thank you for bringing this old time remedy back to the shelves in the supermarket. Genius! As I spoke with my 88 yr old mother tonight and told her of the Mead, she enthusiastically recalled having it many years back. It's always warming to hear of good folks like yourselves taking chances and making a great idea and hard work come to fruition and success as you so deserve after reading your story. Thanks many times over.”

Honeymooners Test the Sweet Sex Brew

Mead was brewed in Babylon 4000 years ago. It is believed to increase fertility and sex drive. Newly married couples were expected to drink the sweet beverage everyday for one complete cycle of the moon, honey month, hence honeymoon. This was believed to achieve a successful marriage and ensure a son in 9 months.

Mead is rich in B vitamins, helpful for reproductive health, also amino acids, which make proteins, and nitric oxide, which is good for circulation and male reproductive health.

Read the entire article at: <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/05/30/britain.mead/>

Bee-leive it or not.

- Jerry Brantley gives us a bit of trivia this month. The oldest known bee fossil dates back to the Cretaceous Period.
- 2008 is coming to an end... it is time to renew your membership- fill out the form at the end of the newsletter and return to Vivian at the next meeting.

Mead Resources:

Mead is the oldest fermented drink in the world. It is easy to make. Mead will vary in flavor depending the type of honey, the brewing process you use, and the things you add. You can make it simple with just honey water and yeast or diverse as you want by adding things like fruit, herbs or spices and even peppers. You can make it sweet or dry. Unlike most store bought wines, you can make it sulfite free.

www.Gotmead.com is an online resource for *everything* to do with mead: [how to make mead](#), [mead recipes](#), [mead in history](#), [mead and honey tasting notes](#), articles and hundreds of links.

The National Honey Board has a 12-page document on mead making including recipes and instruction. Their website is www.Honey.com.

Recommended reads:

The Compleat Meadmaker by Ken Schramm: This is a good book. It goes into detail over selecting yeast, ingredients, and different methods of making mead. My husband Andy followed a recipe in here that turned out better than expected (it was his first batch).

Radical Brewing by Randy Mosher: This is a good book, geared more toward beer. It does have beer and wine recipes using honey. It also has several helpful tables of fruit, and herbs and their brewing qualities.

The Homebrewers Garden by Joe and Dennis Fisher: This is a good book if you like gardening and using herbs.

What to do in the Bee Yard this Month

Member James Howard covered this subject at our November meeting: Over wintering bees: Some people keep screened bottom boards open during the winter, it is good for ventilation. Others close them off. It is important for everyone to reduce the entrance. As weather cools, start to reduce the opening, by cold winter weather, have smallest opening being used. When the bees cluster during cold weather, mice have a chance to move in. Some people over winter bees in a nuc, this way they are more compact for clustering around the queen and stored honey. For winter, you want to remove excess supers, leaving only a hive body and one super. The dry September here did cause some problems. The girls were able to bring in some nectar and pollen. Many of us have seen more yellow jackets; they do fly at cooler temperatures than bees do. Now is a good time to watch THEIR flight path, find their nest and drown them. During winter, it is a good time to reflect over your year, make plans for next and build or repair equipment. You can use cypress, pine, poplar, and any UNTREATED wood. If you are going to be on the swarm list, you can assemble your swarm catching gear. Danny has a great method for framing cut outs- If you have not seen it, it is an empty frame with string or rubber bands to hold foundation you cut out of a structure.

DONT FORGET TO PRINT OUT THE NEXT TWO PAGES

FILL OUT AND BRING TO THE NEXT MEETING WITH YOUR COVERED DISH!!

Golden Achievement Program

Help our club achieve the Golden Achievement Award for 2008. This program gives points for many different activities, but we have to keep track of our accomplishments and we need your help. If you did any of the following in 2008, please fill out the form email it to djaynes101@nc.rr.com or mail to: Danny Jaynes, 6905 Landingham Drive, Willow Spring, NC 27592.

1. Gave presentation at schools, 4H, Boy scouts, Girl scouts, civic groups, church groups or for other local groups and events.
2. Gave presentations at local, state, regional, or national beekeeping events or for other chapters.
3. Authored local newspaper articles on beekeeping.
4. Being featured on local television and radio on beekeeping topics.
5. Helped out at the state fair in the bee display.
6. Attend the NCSBA spring or summer meetings
7. Attend a national or international meeting (EAS, Honey producers, American Beekeeping Federation, etc.)
8. Advanced a level in the NC Master Beekeeping Program (New certified, journeyman, master, or master craftsman).
9. Legislative activities supporting beekeeping including letter writing to congress, visits with legislators, etc.
10. Other?

Name _____

Activity

Approximate Date

(Continue on back of page if needed)

2009 Annual Wake County Beekeepers and/or North Carolina State Beekeepers Associations Membership

Please complete and return this form at the next Wake County Beekeepers meeting in order to register for membership in either or both the County or State Beekeepers Associations. We encourage all county members to register for State membership in order to support that organization. You may also register by mail to:

Vivian Joyner, Treasurer
2829 Old U.S. 1
New Hill, NC 27562

Please print all information legibly. One wrong letter will make the e-mail not work.

Please use the name you would like printed on your name tag.

Date _____ Name _____

Family Member/Spouse _____

Phone _____ Address _____

Number of beehives _____ E-Mail _____

Memberships:

Wake County Beekeepers (\$10.00 each person listed above) \$ _____

New Member

Renewing member

Free life-time WCBA member (over 70 years old and paying member for the last two years)

NC State Beekeepers Assoc. (\$15.00 each) \$ _____

You will receive the Yellow Book with this membership.

We submit accurate information, but cannot guarantee it will be free of typographical errors.

Publication Subscriptions – Coupons from the NCSBA Yellow Book can be used for savings

American Bee Journal

(1YR subscription-\$24.95) With NCSBA membership you save: It's only \$19.10-1YR or \$36.15- 2YR

New Subscription? (Y/N) \$ _____

Bee Culture

(1YR-\$25.00) With NCSBA membership you save: It's only \$19.00- 1YR or \$36.00-2YR

New Subscription? (Y/N) \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make Checks payable to **Wake County Beekeepers Association**