



# Wake County Beekeepers Association

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## November 2007

### Editor's Notes

*I've been asked about the Dowda method of powder sugar for Varroa control. Basically you slide in the cardboard for a screened bottom board or put a piece of cardboard inside for solid bottom boards to catch the falling sugar and Varroa. Then you open up your hive and sift one cup of powder sugar on each level starting at the bottom level. After sifting, brush all sugar off the tops of the frames. Your goal is snow-white bees. The mites have suction cups on their feet and the sugar causes them to lose their grip. I have had better luck having more fall all the way down by unstacking the hive, setting each on 2x4s and sugaring each separately. Sugaring will get the phoretic (riding) mites, but will not get the mites reproducing in cells. To be most effective, it needs to be done weekly until counts show that mites are under control. Search the web and you will find more information. Here is one: <http://www.damoc.com/beekeeper/sugar%20dusting/sugar%20dusting.html> This beekeeper must live in a less humid area as he does not sift the sugar. In NC the sugar clumps.*

Michelle Barry, secretary WCBA

### November 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting

We have a very special guest for our November meeting: Freddie-Jeanne Richard from the department of Entomology at North Carolina State University. Freddie-Jeanne did her Ph D in France. She decided to come in North Carolina State University to start a post doc. She has been working on research determining differences between queens that have mated with one drone and queens that have been a bit more promiscuous. While this may not seem to affect the common beekeeper, it will be important information if/when Africanized honey bees arrive in North Carolina and we are encouraged to purchase artificially inseminated queens.

Jerry Brantley has been very secretive about what he has in store for door prizes, but he says you don't want to miss this meeting.

Time is the usual: 7:30pm. Location: Wake County Commons Building, Carya Drive.

### WCBA Fall BBQ

The pig pickin' became a chicken pickin' and was held at the Raleigh Police Club on October 27<sup>th</sup>. There was great food and socializing. Thanks to Ricky Barbour and family for all their work to make this a great event.

### Door Prizes

Thank you to Steve Brown for fresh eggs and Eleanor Silver for several large golden rain trees. A great big thanks to Jerry Brantley for organizing door prizes for the last two years. Jerry will not be able to do this job next year, so this is another position that is looking for a volunteer. Jerry especially wants to thank those who gave door prizes over and over again. He was hesitant to give names for fear of leaving someone out, but I know that the following have given prizes more than once: Steve Brown, Mitchell and Austin Wrenn, Stan Bolden, Larry Green, Jack Tapp, Eleanor Silver, Karma Lee, and Jerry Brantley.

## Board of Directors

### President

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### Vice President

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### Secretary

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### Treasurer

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### Program Chairman

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### Directors

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James Knox (1 year term)  
847-5098  
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### Phone Mentor:

Jerry Brantley 919-269-9333

### Website:

<http://www.ncneighbors.com/wcba>

### Yahoo group:

wakecountybeekeepers  
to subscribe send mail to  
[wakecountybeekeepers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:wakecountybeekeepers-subscribe@yahoogroups.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 extractor: Ricky Barbour  
(in Zebulon 269-0108) , Whit  
Joyner (in New Hill 387-0164)  
Hand extractor: Raleigh Myers (in  
Raleigh 787-0058)

## Bugfest

Bugfest was a great success again this year. The final results are not yet in, but it appears that the club netted about \$1200 in profits from hot dog sales. Many people worked hard both in the concessions booth and the regular booth where Larry Green and Denton Bell did their crowd pleasing display of bee beards. Jill Currin was recognized at the meeting for outstanding service at Bugfest.

## Nominations for Officers

It is that time of year again and the nominating committee is looking to fill the offices that will be vacated by retiring officers. The president, secretary, program director and one of the board of director positions need to be filled. As the outgoing secretary, unless there is a person who is has a great deal of time, this job could be broken down into up to five jobs:

- Newsletter editor – edit a newsletter or shorter notice monthly or quarterly.
- Membership coordinator – work closely with the treasurer to maintain a list of members and print name tags, attendance sheets, rosters, and address labels for the newsletters.
- Name tag coordinator – bring name tags to the meetings and collect them after the meetings. If I get them to the meetings early enough there are always volunteers to help get them in alphabetical order.
- Correspondence secretary – send thank you letters to the speakers and notes to visitors.
- Recording secretary – take notes at regular meetings and board meetings and communicate with the newsletter editor to get information to the membership.

If you are interested in any of the open positions or you can do part of the secretary's job, contact the nominating committee Jim Cook 919-321-0217 [jimcook@operamail.com](mailto:jimcook@operamail.com) or Steve Hildebrand 919-266-9464 [stevesbeers2cool@bellsouth.net](mailto:stevesbeers2cool@bellsouth.net).

## Refreshments

Thanks to Mark Reep and Eleanor Silver for bringing refreshments to the October meeting. For the November meeting Bob Kellam 231-2827, Vivian Joyner 387-0164, and Danny and Mary Jaynes 567-9568 are signed up to bring refreshments.

## Correction for Larry Green's Phone Number

Larry Green's phone number was accidentally typed wrong with the information about the Franklin County Club. It is 556-9212

## February 2008 Meeting

It looks like we will need another place to meet for the month of February. If you have access to another meeting place that will hold 100 people or ideas for another activity to take the place of our regular meeting, let Larry Williams know.

## Preparing for Winter

Larry Williams moderated an experienced panel of beekeepers from our club: James Knox, James Howard, and Jack Tapp. The overall subject was preparing for winter. Here are some of the highlights:

### **How much stores do the bees need for the winter?**

If you have a two deep hive, they should have several frames of honey in the top, if you have a deep and a super, the super should be filled with honey.

### **Should I remove the supers from a hive?**

If they are dead space, you will want to take them off. Leave them on until after the first frost then you can stack them where they will get light and air. Two other options are to use paradichlorobenzene crystals (not naphthalene moth balls) or to put them in a deep freeze. (I rotate mine into a deep freeze then put them in black plastic garbage bags. This year I am trying heavy duty contractor clean-up bags since they are so much thicker).

### **How big or small can a hive be?**

A Nuc can overwinter if it is a strong hive and a mild winter. James H. uses a deep and a super, James K. and Jack use two deeps. The activity should be in the bottom deep this time of year. In early spring check every 2-3 weeks. The main problem is that most beekeepers don't put their supers on early enough. Don't combine a hive that is weak because of pests or disease.

### **How do I combine two hives?**

The best way is to do a newspaper combine after wiping out one of the queens. Unless you know what you are doing, you don't want to requeen in October. Another option for two smaller hives is to use a double screen to run a two queen hive.

### **When should a super be added in the spring?**

Rotate the hive body one time, then when you see new white wax on top, put the super on.

### **How much honey do they need to survive the winter?**

They should have 40-45 pounds of honey. The cheapest feed right now is white sugar, not high

fructose corn syrup. You should have the feed in the hive before cold weather sets in.

### **How do you do a sugar roll?**

Gather 300-400 bees in pint jar... (As a newbie, this is just the kind of information that is worthless. It is not like the bees are going to stand still in this jar and let you count them.) After searching around the web for a little bit, I found the useful conversion: ¼ cup of bees equals 200 bees. Here is a great website of a poster from the University of Minnesota explaining the whole process:

<[http://www.extension.umn.edu/honeybees/components/pdfs/posters/VarroaMites\\_155.pdf](http://www.extension.umn.edu/honeybees/components/pdfs/posters/VarroaMites_155.pdf)>

You can get #8 hardware clothe at Burke Brothers in Raleigh. Jack Tapp also volunteered to bring some to the next meeting. (I have found that sprouting jar tops available at natural food stores work even better and there are no rough edges.)

### **How do I treat for Varroa?**

Follow the directions on the pesticide packaging. Use only approved pesticides. Checkmite requires a pesticide license. It will contaminate your wax and honey so don't use it unless you have to. James K. has bred from his survivor colonies and never treats his hives.

### **What do I do about Small Hive Beetles?**

Use your hive tool to crush them on the inner cover when opening the hive. Once you see larvae it is too late. Wipe out colonies that can't handle it on their own. The best defense is a strong colony and limiting the extra empty space the bees have to defend.

### **Should I requeen?**

It is better to requeen in September or October. By the October meeting all queen breeders in the continental U.S. had shut down. The only place to buy queens now from is Hawaii.

### **Should I feed pollen?**

If the bees run out of pollen they will eat the eggs and young larvae for protein. Pollen patties are a magnet for small hive beetle larvae, so if you do feed, only give them the amount they can finish in a week. At that point any unfinished pollen can be put

in the freezer to kill the beetle eggs and then be refed to the bees. Unless you are raising bees to sell or want to make early splits, most hives in North Carolina do not need supplemental pollen.

### **What are the final things I should do?**

Put on mouse guards on the front of your hive. You can either be sure the 3/8" opening is up if you use solid bottom boards, or you can use the wooden or metal guards. Mice can chew the wooden guards so they are not as good for outyards. You do not need to close off the screen bottoms during the winter.

### **NC State Fair Results**

Did you make it to the fair and see Beeville? Our own Danny and Mary Jaynes won first place and best in show for their display booth of their wonderful beehives. We had many winners from our club. Here are the ones I was able to pick up from the internet results:

Danny Jaynes:

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, amber
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, light
- 1<sup>st</sup> display of extracted honey
- 3<sup>rd</sup> display of pure beeswax products
- 1<sup>st</sup> observation hive
- 1<sup>st</sup> display booth (best in show)

Mary Jaynes:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> display of pure beeswax products
- 3<sup>rd</sup> gift package

Tom Jaynes

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 jars of extracted honey light
- 3<sup>rd</sup> B/W or color print
- 4<sup>th</sup> salad dressing

Shannon Hughes

- 3<sup>rd</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, amber

Theresa Green

- 2<sup>nd</sup> quick fruit bread

Michelle Barry

- 2<sup>nd</sup> barbecue sauce

Junior members of our club pulled in quite a few ribbons (and as a proud mother I need to point out that my children, like my husband, have the last name Schnoor)

Ann Marie Green

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, light
- 3<sup>rd</sup> color print

Nathan Schnoor

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, dark
- 1<sup>st</sup> B/W print
- 1<sup>st</sup> color print
- 1<sup>st</sup> penuche fudge
- 1<sup>st</sup> snack foods
- 1<sup>st</sup> pies
- Junior honey sweepstake ribbon
- Junior cooking with honey sweepstake ribbon
- Junior best in show for pie

Laura Schnoor

- 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 jars extracted honey, dark
- 1<sup>st</sup> beekeeping coloring book
- 1<sup>st</sup> fruit drop cookies
- 1<sup>st</sup> chocolate fudge

Aaron Schnoor

- 2<sup>nd</sup> beekeeping coloring book
- 2<sup>nd</sup> chocolate chip cookies
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sweet sauces and spread
- 3<sup>rd</sup> salad dressing

Shannon R. Hughes

- 1<sup>st</sup> cookies, plain

### **Dr. Tarp's Queen Diversity Research From 10/16 Raleigh News & Observer**

Among bees, the looser win -- Queen bees need many, varied partners, researchers say  
Josh Shaffer, Staff Writer

RALEIGH - In the pitiless world of honeybees, it pays to be a floozy. Research at N.C. State University shows that the happiest, most productive bee colonies are ruled by queens with roving eyes and a taste for insect whoopee.

For a beekeeper, this means that a honey harvest's success can be tied to the variety and number of the queen's partners.

It also spells good news for bee health in a perilous time for the insects. Nationally, colonies are getting wiped out by a mysterious collapse, and North Carolina has seen hives hit hard by parasitic mites.

The NCSU study shows a link between queen quality and healthy colonies. But in a larger sense, the professors' work spells validation for promiscuity in at least one corner of the animal kingdom.

The queen bee is born into a world that closely resembles the British monarchy circa 1600.

One question -- who shall be queen? -- dominates bee life, with workers always ready to kill off an unproductive monarch.

A queen gives off pheromones that block the urge to kill and create new queens, said Christina Grozinger, professor of insect genomics and co-author of the study. The idea that spawned the study suggested that the more partners the queen had, and the more variety in her mates, the more compelling the pheromone.

So to the test, which took about two years in an artificial bee colony at Lake Wheeler. Half of about 60 bees in the study got a microliter of semen from a single drone. The others got 10 times as much from 10 times as many.

Inseminating the bees was a specialty of David Tarpy, assistant professor of entomology and co-author of the study. To do it, the bees were knocked out using carbon dioxide and probed with a tiny needle. "You have to maneuver it in there and kind of wiggle it until it's in the right position," Grozinger said.

The results: Queens with multiple mates drew crowds that were 1 1/2 times as large. So if a single-mate queen drew 10 bees, a more libertine bee attracted 15.

The results repeated themselves when the researchers placed an extract from the bees' pheromone glands on a slide. Pheromones with variety proved most popular, evidence of the queen's history.

"You'd think the bee would want control no matter what and not let on how many times she mated," Grozinger said. "But she does. The workers seem to know that it's better."

The upshot is better bee colonies, said **Freddie-Jeanne Richard**, a postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Entomology, also involved in the study.

A pair of parasitic mites have caused the number of managed hives in North Carolina to drop from 180,000 to 100,000 since the mid-1980s.

Beekeepers complain that their queens last just a year, Richard said. But with happy workers not bent on regicide, they can last three. And if a queen mates more freely, she has a better chance at picking up mite-resistant traits that neighboring bees could carry.

It's hard for a beekeeper to know a queen's mating history in advance, said Charles Heatherly, president of the N.C. Beekeepers Association. But if a colony starts drawing all manner of bees, both black and yellow, it's a good chance there's some variety in the queen's mix.

To really select a queen with a good history, Grozinger said, you'd need to inseminate her.

It's the kind of science that can draw giggles from the professors whose work appeared this month in the online science journal PLoS One. Talking about their work, it was hard for them not to notice parallels to the human world.

The scarlet letter of the insect kingdom isn't A, it would seem.... It's B.

## Telling the Bees

submitted by Charles Heatherly

I'm sad to report the death of **Fred Deer**, Master Beekeeper and recipient of NCSBA's McIver-Hass Lifetime Achievement Award. I was a student in Fred's basic course more than a decade ago and still remember his passion for beekeeping. He regaled us with his own rich experiences in the apiary and stories of his Mississippi boyhood. For example, he strongly advised not to mess with the bees at night, "and if you do, don't be the one holding the flashlight," a chore he said his father left to him and which brought him much pain. Fred was a stalwart in the Wake Chapter and was active at the state level for many years until his health began to decline several years ago. We understand that his body will be returned to Mississippi for burial.