



General Membership Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2024

6:30 pm – Networking, 7:00 pm Meeting

1. **Call to Order:** 7:05 PM

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **In Memoriam** – Walt Wilson, Sr.

Moment of Silence

Comments by Jeff Burd and Gene Armstrong

Family sent acknowledgement of flowers sent

4. **Presentation:** David Peck from Betterbee: “Making Comb Honey”

David began by discussing the historic background of comb honey (Ross Rounds) before describing the Hogg Halfcomb System. The system consisting of plastic containers in a super is priced for the beekeeper to make a profit. A 10 frame system costs \$130 and the refill costs \$100. Each filled section of comb honey can be sold for \$17-\$20 (approximately 12oz. of honey). In order to protect against wax moths, freeze the containers in a plastic bag for 2 days and keep in the plastic bag until room temperature in order to avoid condensation while defrosting. Comb honey prepared in this manner is completely unprocessed. The appearance, fragrance, texture and taste are factors which create sales and providing samples from incomplete containers is also a marketing factor.

Key take-home points are:

- Comb honey excites honey customers
- Commercial comb honey production requirements:
 - VERY strong colonies
 - VERY strong/fast nectar flow
- Various methods/systems available
- Experimenting with comb honey is fun, even when conditions aren't perfect

Making comb honey teaches a better understanding of nectar flows, comb production, and bee behavior

For more information go to: support@betterbee.com

Presentation: Jeff Burd – “Cleaning your Smoker”

Jeff created and presented an informative video on how to clean your smoker. Supplies needed include a screwdriver, wire brushes, torch, and gloves.

First remove the bellows using to screwdriver. Put on gloves, light the torch and burn the excess creosote which has coated the inside of the smoker as a result of burning pine needles. After the creosote has dried out, use the wire brushes to remove it. The smoker should be cleaned once each year or every other year depending on use and creosote accumulation.

5. **Member Introductions**

6. **Minutes from last meeting:** Motion to approve by Jeff Burd. Seconded.

7. **Treasurer's Report:** As of March the balance is: \$32,104. Motion made to approve and seconded.

8. **Committee Reports:**

Education: Jeff Burd

A class was held in Ewing with 15 students. Another class will be planned in September/October.

Details to follow.

Events Chair: Geff Vitale

The Family Bee Day Picnic is planned for Sunday, May 19th. Lew is reaching out to Dr. Celina Bruckner, a Penn State professor, to find out if she would be interested in doing a 20 minute presentation and attend the picnic. Geff will look into possible entertainment (band). If possible, Gene will perform a log extraction. Cost per person will be \$10. The Monmouth County Fair will be held on July 24 through July 28. Geff will reach out for volunteers in June. The Poker Run Fundraiser has been cancelled and we will not be participating in the Ocean County Fair.

Donations: Bill Woodard

Membership discussed the donation for the Honey Queen Program which is usually \$1000. Due to the fact that the Honey Queen nominations are still open, the discussion has been tabled for a future meeting.

Social Committee:

It is suggested to schedule “Meet ups” with other branches to meet beekeepers in the area. These can be informal meetings such as bowling events, dinners, hiking, etc. Last year several of these “meet ups” were fun and successful.

Honey Queen:

Any branch can nominate a Honey Queen. The nominee must be 18-25 years old and promote 2 events per month. Members were encouraged to think about potential nominees that they may know.

9. Statewide Updates:

New Secretary of Agriculture – Ed Wengryn

Essex Merger: Essex is now part of the NJBA

2 Positions Opening for Apiarists – New Queen and Nuc Rearing: Contact Meghan McConnell or the State – additional info on website.

Winter Meeting at Eco Center

Katie Culbert’s “Parks, Plants and Pollinator’s” bill: Assemblyman Alex Sauwickie encouraged members to support the Bill which is now in the NJS Senate. A template and legislative contacts has been included in the recent newsletter. A discussion resulted regarding the vetoing of a similar bill last year by Governor Murphy due to the language which would affect landscaping companies.

Petrusia Kotlar’s Spotted Lantern Fly Results: Results show that honey resulting from the honeydew of spotted lantern flies has a high incidence of antimicrobial activity (similar to Manuka honey). Studies are ongoing.

10. Old Business:

Discussion resulted regarding the cost of the picnic and the balance in our account. The Executive Board will pursue this. Suggestions should be sent to Geff Vitale.

11. New Business:

Jennifer passed around a sample of the Yellow Legged Hornet which is invading hives in Georgia. They fly in front of the hives and prevent honeybees from exiting or leaving the hive. Please report any sightings of these hornets. In each hornet’s nest there may be as many as 300 queens.

Proposal for Revised Extractor Policy: Jeff Burd created a new extractor policy due to the fact that extractors were being returned dirty or damaged. A deposit of possibly \$50 would be necessary and if the extractor is damaged the member would have to pay (parts and labor) to have it repaired. The extractor can be borrowed for 5 days and if not returned in required condition, the member would lose their deposit and borrowing privileges for 2 years. Additional discussion is needed regarding this issue.

T-Shirts: Jennifer modeled a CJBA t-shirt she had made to determine the membership interest. Contact Jennifer if interested. Possibly a flyer can be sent to the membership with details, pricing and colors to assess interest.

12. Raffle: 50/50 - \$48 and “Mystery” gift (hive nutrition product)

Meeting adjourned: 8:52 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Juffey

Central Jersey Beekeepers Association, Secretary