

## **CCBA Monthly Meeting Notes**

Date: Monday, September 19, 2016

Location: Oak Creek Commons Great Room

Attendance: 22

### **Networking**

### **Welcome**

### **Practicum: Anna Rempel – supporting honeybee populations**

- Comparing conventional versus “natural” bee keeping
- Conventional beekeepers goals are different from hobbyist beekeepers
- Conventional goals and approaches:
  - Honey production and/or pollination
  - Regular inspections
  - Sugar feeding
  - Frames with plastic or wax foundation
  - Regular manipulations (i.e. suppressing drone populations)
  - Swarm suppression
  - Chemical treatments
- Natural goals and approaches
  - Integrity and wellbeing of the bee
  - Only excess honey is harvested – this could vary from year to year
  - Fewer hive inspections – every time the hive is opened, the hive is disturbed, the temperature is affected,
    - Volatile compounds are released from the propolis – want to maintain this in hive for hive’s immunity, there is a risk of losing a queen during an inspection
    - Read signs at entrance - An educated bee keeper can learn much just from watching the activity at the hive entrance
  - Natural comb/top bar/frames – free form comb allow for better bee communication
    - John H is using surplus (thin wax without plastic)
    - Comb is considered a part of the super organisms body
  - Emergency sugar feeding –
    - Biodynamic beekeeping in PA sells “tea” formula to mix with sugar supplement
  - Minimal manipulations
  - Minimal treatments – to treat or not to treat???
    - Treatment can be hard on the bees, cause die off
    - Trouble with varroa mite – there are areas in UK, where bee keepers are treatment-free, and they are now finding some bees that are resistant

- A benign (non-virulent) form of deformed wing disease has been discovered, which seems to prevent the virulent deformed wing disease
- John C – professor that did tests on VWV Stephen XX, worked with Randy Oliver (from grass valley), doing study to assess the findings in UK – he is looking for samples from hives that have:
  - Lots of varroa, no deformed wing virus
  - Treated hives expressing deforming wing virus
- John has NO hives that have varroa that do not express deformed wing virus
- John C – in Alabama there is a “no comb” law that does not allow live colonies to be brought into the state (transport laws as a result of 1950’s foul broom problem), so have an isolated situation
- John C – has collected hives in deep big sur, these hives are no more resistant to varroa
- Study on isolated island off coast of Sweden was populated deliberately with hives to see bee survival pattern would be. The study papers are open access and can be read online. The hives ultimately avoided the varroa by becoming a small colony that swarms constantly – the resulting brood breaks crashes the varroa breeding cycle thus stopping the mites from continuing to reproduce. Domestic bee hives that don’t cast swarms are must more susceptible to varroa because they don’t have this break in the breeding cycle so mites continue to reproduce
- Bruce treated with “hop guard” and it seems to have worked – maybe now too late to treat, so if using this treatment, do so in early August
- John C – there are enormous breeding efforts underway for some time (USDA has island off coast of Louisiana where they have been breeding for decades), selecting for bees that that are mite hygienic
  - Poline bees from Louisiana are in continuous insemination line now, which are much more resistant to mite.
  - But because bees must outcross (can’t breed within hive) so selecting are outbred, so much go back to breed bees otherwise mite-resistant characteristics would be lost in outbreeding
  - New world carniolan – uses closed colonies to maintain characteristics – shows how complicated bee breeding is. This variety can be obtained for breeders in northern California

- Natural swarming –

- Rudolph Steiner developed biodynamic approaches – discussed benefits of swarming, predicted potential problems with bee health
  - Swarming conflicts with humans and concerns
  - Is there a way to respect the impulse of the bee to swarm? It is an intact family.
- John c – bees on coast can winter in a single box, two frames of honey is sufficient because foraging and build up start in December
  - Sandra’s coastal bees had a harvest in February due to early build up
  - Bruce’s bees in SLO did not seem to eat any of their honey during winter – probably because it was so warm they were able to fly and forage all winter

### **Financial Report**

- Current balance is \$483.53
- Anna will be purchasing tables, etc soon

**Swarm List** – Bruce and Mike maintaining list of names of folks interested in swarms

### **Networking**

- Sign in/email list – sign up if you want emails
- Sue Hulsman in the news – bee rescue – old hot water heater filled with comb and bees, relocated to Sue’s, she trapped it, then queen walked out, then cut open and looked at old comb inside
- Need volunteer to run October meeting – \*use next meeting organize the October event
- Club meeting in Nov and Dec??
  - John C – during those months is when to buy supplies for coming year – John does bulk order, Dadant has black Monday sale right after thanksgiving when they don’t have delivery charges
  - Aim for co-op buy in January
- Elections in January: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer

### **Education**

- Beekeeping: Diseases and parasites with John Hupp at Hancock College, see application form, starts October 1<sup>st</sup> for 4 Saturdays
- In Spring John H will teach beginning and intermediate bee keeping and maybe honey harvesting
- Report from Natural Beekeeping Conference
- Pollinator protections policy webinar from Friends of the Earth: Cindy

### **Public Awareness**

1) List of events CCBA has participated in:

- Conservation celebration, April
- Earth Day, April
- Cambria Bee Faire, May

2) List of events CCBA will participate in:

- Golden Oak Honey Festival, Oct 22
  - Assist in organizing festival: Jodi says it is set, we will have row
  - Sign up to volunteer
  - \*\*need to get canopy from Anna, fliers and other materials for table
  - \*\* John is willing to donate hive to either sell or raffle off – need to price it out
  - Dale will pick up tables from Anna and will be there all day and do seed bomb table
  - Dale and Cassia have been soliciting sponsorships for festival – does anyone else know of places where we could solicit sponsorships?
    - Jodi suggests exterminators
    - Maybe local nurseries? Yes, Bay Laurel gave \$150
    - Maybe Vineyards? Some need points to be considered sustainable
    - Maybe Firestone? Other breweries?

3) Changing City Ordinance in Paso, SLO – Anna will convene a meeting in early November (Dale, Sarah C, Jodi, Meg, Terri, Sue & Michael Rosen, Brian Larsen, Bruce Terry)

- Brian printed materials on how to find what your beekeeping zoning ordinance is and what use restrictions – for beekeeping business
  - Questions call the County – 781-
  - If you want to be a “legal” bee keeper, just ask for the zoning ordinance, don’t talk about where you want to keep bees
  - For Brian, issue is honey processing – can’t process in his zone
  - Property insurance – some owners get inspected annually, could be an issue

\*\*John Hupp has hives for sale

\*\*Jodi has contact for Trabia Olive Ranch (on other side of Paso) we can meet and educate the kids about bees

Action items:

- Dale to pick up tables, etc from Anna for Golden Oak festival
- Dale to follow up on sponsors

Adjourned: 8:28 pm