

Minutes of the ETBA 2-4-2010

President Andrew Bellefeuille called the meeting to order and lead the Pledge and gave the invocation. Visitors were introduced. No swarm calls were reported. 123 persons were in attendance.

It was noted that this year marks the 25th year of the ETBA newsletter; thanks were given to Dick Counts for his wonderful job over the years.

Applicants for the student scholarship program were at an all time high this year. Eleven students were able to be accepted due to the overwhelming response for sponsors support, plus equipment that has been donated to help with this important effort. Over \$3000 was raised. Thanks to all who help make it possible to grow future beekeepers.

A discussion ensued about who is feeding at this time, many are feeding syrup or candy and pollen patties. Some bees are bringing early in pollen, possibly from Elm trees. It is important to check your hives during the continued cold weather. Many hives starve during this time before nectar flows start.

Vi Bourns – honey queen chairperson gave her report.

There will be a Honey Bee Festival on March 27th at the Paul Breedlove Nursery in Tyler, they have a building that will be set up for a KLAB (kids learning about bees) demonstrations that will need junior volunteers to talk to kids about bees .ETBA queen Kellie Lenamond will be giving a cooking demonstration and samples.

Cookbook sales, which support the honey queen program, are on-going. There are 160 books left from the first printing. The book is now for sale on Amazon and Ebay and the ETBA website. Flyers are available for members to distribute to help promote this effort. The ETBA cookbook will be eligible for a cash prize for best cookbook from the printing company.

2010 ETBA queen Kellie Lenamond found and prepared a recipe for honey grahams which she brought. (Noting that her brothers did not eat all of them) She reports she has one hive left over the winter and is keeping a close eye on it to make sure it makes it to spring.

2010 ETBA princess Merry Margaret made chocolate honey almond truffles. She reports her bee hives have all survived this cold winter.

Dick Counts acknowledged the scholarship students and their families and thanked all the sponsors. All the students will be introduced at a future meeting.

Dick reports that member Jesse Adams has donated equipment for the scholarship efforts. He had to scale back his beekeeping due to poor health. A card is circulating for him, we wish him return to good health.

On February 20th, 2010 the Honey Bee research Lab at Texas A&M will be dedicated at 2pm. The ETBA raised more money than any other bee club in Texas toward this lab. At 10am on February 20th, the TBA delegate meeting will take place at the Quality Inn, you are welcome to attend.

On February 12th, the Fruit and Vegetable conference will be held at the Tyler Rose Garden, a few members have volunteered to have a table to talk about bees and sell cookbooks. Anyone wanting to volunteer, contact Dick Counts.

Don Johnson reports that Tammy Lenemond will be acting as librarian for the DVD check out's. Members are welcome to check out 2 DVD's per month. Don asks that members not able to return them the next meeting to please mail them back in the mail package provided.

Stanford Brantley introduced speaker Randy Fair. He is a sideline beekeeper from the Clear Lake Apiary in Mansfield, Louisiana. His PowerPoint program was titled "Making Bee Splits the Bee Bumbler Way" He can be contacted at Randy@beebumbler.com.

Randy started keeping bees with his father then started catching his own swarms, getting bees out of buildings and trapping swarms. He started making splits 3 years ago and reports a 50% success rate. He runs 150 colonies and last fall ordered 40 queens for making splits. He makes his own recipe for essential oils containing lemongrass oil, spearmint oil and eucalyptus oil. He puts this in his syrup as this helps control varroa mites.

A synopsis of his presentation follows. Before attempting to make splits make sure you have the following: Strong hives, enough equipment, order good quality queens, presence of drones in hives.

The colony you will make the split from must be strong, plenty of workers, 6-8 frames of brood and young bees, 2-4 frames of pollen/honey stores.

To start, force all the bees down in the bottom box, pull 2 or 3 frames out, get all the bees off (so you know the queen is in bottom box). Put frames in an empty hive body.

Place a queen excluder on the lower chamber.

Place 2nd hive body above the box with the queen, nurse bees will move up. Later that day or the next assemble the 2 separate hives. Remove the parent colony to a new location at least a mile away, further better. The workers return to the queenless colony.

Add a new queen 1 to 2 days after splitting. Check every few days for queen release.

Feed the bees heavy during this time. After 3-7 days, look for eggs and brood, remove any queen cells. Queenless colonies can be re-queened or combines or given eggs to raise their own queen if enough drones available. After 14-21 days look for young brood emerging, check for brood pattern, queen cells. Feed until nectar flow begins.

Randy gave a 2nd presentation entitles Bee Bumbler Board Beetle Trap. He built this using wire mesh size #8, it uses a plastic cafeteria type tray that holds the oil.

An Auction and Raffle followed and the meeting was adjourned.

