

# North Carolina **Bee Buzz**

The Official Magazine of the NCSBA

Pollinator Garden Design  
Slovenia  
Summer Conference Info  
And Much, Much More...

Summer 2019





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# North Carolina **Bee Buzz** Summer 2019



**North Carolina State Beekeepers Association**

*~ Since 1917 ~*

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**ON THE COVER:**

**"Bearded Lady"**

2nd Place Color Photo 2017 NC State Fair

*Photo: Jody Moore*





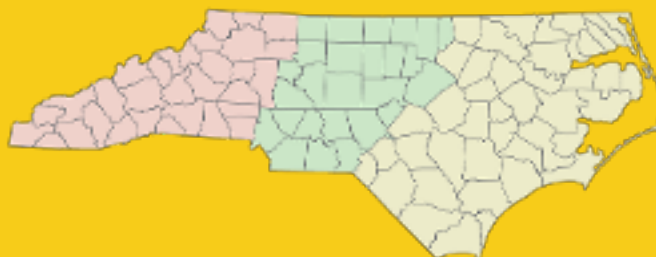
# North Carolina State Beekeepers Association



The mission of the NCSBA is to advance beekeeping in North Carolina through improved communication with members, improved education about beekeeping, and support of science enhancing the knowledge of beekeeping.

## 2019 Executive Committee

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*Contact information for the NCSBA Officers and Regional Directors  
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Webmaster Jessica Mjelde [webmaster@ncbeekeepers.org](mailto:webmaster@ncbeekeepers.org)

## From the Bee Buzz Editors:

**Bee Buzz Story Submission Deadlines:** Spring : Dec 21 - Summer: Apr 21 - Fall: July 21 - Winter: Oct 21

We enthusiastically accept article and photo submissions! Please send us your articles and photos of news and information you'd like to share about your local association's latest events, successes and failures, a biography on a long-standing NCSBA member you would like to honor, or a young beekeeper you'd like to see highlighted. All honey bee-related topics will be considered for publication. While we regret that we cannot always include every submission, we will do our best to print as space permits. Submit your article in .doc or .docx format. Photos should be high quality jpg or tiff format. Please include a caption for photos. Do not embed captions in your photos or photos into your news article, but submit these as separate files. If you do not have access to a computer, we will accept typed or clearly handwritten articles. Mail written submissions to: *Bee Buzz* Submissions PO Box 1771 Pittsboro NC 27312.

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## NCSBA Communications - Stay Informed!

Beekeepers, please reference the text portions for the following announcements at [www.ncbeekeepers.org](http://www.ncbeekeepers.org)

2/5/19	2019 Summer Meeting
3/14/19	McGrady introduces House Bill 334 in support of NCSU Field Honey Bee Laboratory
4/4/19	2019-2020 GAP Forms Available
4/26/19	NCSU Honey Bee Lab Progress
4/28/19	June is Cooperative Extension Appreciation Month





## Message From The President

by Paul Newbold NCSBA President

**Spring is about over**, and summer is fast approaching. Time moves too quickly, with no time to stop and smell the roses! Things at the NCSBA are also moving quickly and we'll try to summarize what we can here and keep you posted with emails when we can.

June is officially "Cooperative Extension Appreciation Month". Time to thank the Extension agents for all they do to assist us in beekeeping and all the background work that never seems to be noticed. A lot of chapters meet at Extension offices, receive assistance in programs, making copies and keeping in touch with members. Show them how much we appreciate what they do for us. Invite them to your next meeting, club picnic, wherever beekeepers are gathering. Those working on GAP, look at the revised program and you will find that points can be earned by contacting your Extension representative. Also, each year we recognize an Extension Agent of the Year at our summer banquet. See the website for details on how to get your local agent into the running.

Speaking of GAP, we recently added a few more items for points. Highlighting our main programs, extra points can be earned for the Master Beekeeper Program, Born and Bred, Certified Honey Producers and Cooperative Extension Appreciation.

4-H is still high on the list. Grant money is available to assist your local 4-H chapter to get involved in beekeeping. Get more information on the web at [www.ncbeekeepers.org](http://www.ncbeekeepers.org) and elsewhere here in the BUZZ.

August 8-10 are the dates of our summer conference in Hickory, NC. Its starts on Thursday at 10:00 am with **Master Beekeeper Review** and **Ask the Experts**, an informal, you-ask-the-question and our team of experts, Apiary Inspectors, Master Beekeepers, and others will supply the answers. Officially we will begin at around 12:30 with the opening remarks and speakers, and workshops. Vendors will be set up and welcoming you to stop and visit. It's going to be a full 3-day event. The highlight will be the Friday evening BANQUET, when Master Beekeeper awards, Person of the year, and Extension Agent of the year will be handed out. We are also planning to have an interesting guest speaker

(plans are still being made as of this writing), so be sure to book early as space will be limited. And yes, we will have tables with tablecloths- no plastic silverware- and I am hoping, nothing to complain about. We made a few blunders in the past, but we keep trying. Also, look for the article on the Silent Auction. We are having one and it's up to you to make it a success!

A BIG thanks to each of you for contacting your state Representative and Senators on House Bill 334, funding for a new bee lab. It may have made all the difference. Knowing that so many of you from all around the state went that little extra by writing and calling has shown that we can make a difference!

This year we ask on the annual application that we can email you on important items as necessary to run the NCSBA. At the summer conference we will be voting on four changes to our Constitution and Bylaws. We will be emailing you the full context of the changes and why we are making them. These changes are necessary to align with the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act. Emailing is a cost-efficient way to notify you of changes, and the time and place of the meeting.

Briefly, those changes are:

- (1) Effective date of EC members will be September 1 instead of January 1. Also, Secretary and Treasurer will be 3-year vs 4-year terms.
- (2) Changing NC State Apiarist from a voting board member to an advisory position.
- (3) Simplifying the requirement for a quorum at a state meeting for the purpose of transaction of business at any meeting of the members.
- (4) Adding a section on the use of Electronic communication with the membership to transact business.

An email with full details will be sent to each member, so we can bring these to be voted on at the summer meeting. As of now we're planning on our general membership meeting for Saturday morning.

Thanks for your patience with me being your president. I'm looking forward seeing you in Hickory in August!

- Paul Newbold, *President NCSBA*

As outlined in the Spring BEE BUZZ, grant money is still available to help with 4-H projects and getting 4-H into the beekeeping community. Members may apply for grants from an NCSBA 2019 budget of \$2,500, approved at the November 2018 Executive Committee meeting to help launch 4-H beekeeping projects. Letters requesting a grant must outline the purpose of the project and proposed use of funds. These requests should be addressed to Chris Apple, NCSBA 2019 liaison with Cooperative Extension at [chrisapple1231@gmail.com](mailto:chrisapple1231@gmail.com). The applicant must apply first to a local chapter of the NCSBA. Project expenditures and results must be reported by a date determined when funds are accepted.



# Have you heard the BUZZ?

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# It Looks Good On Paper “Beesplained”

by: May Markoff Certified Beekeeper

**Last month** at our monthly club meeting, the presentation topic covered winter feedings. Club business was discussed, and an announcement was made about the Beginner Beekeeping Class, after which students are offered the opportunity to take the NCSBA Master Beekeeper Certification exam if they chose. Some discussion ensued mainly about the materials, cost, time and location of the class. Then a question was posed about the rationale for certification to the present membership: “Why *should* I be certified? I have five years’ experience and I know a local Master Beekeeper. If I have a question, I can just pick up the phone and get the answer. The certification is just a piece of paper.”

Well, many club members were surprised by the assumption that being certified was pointless. This was a valid question worthy of explanation, so I decided to put thought to paper and attempt to *beesplain* why so many had this surprised response. The answer is simple. No one *should* do anything they don’t want to, but most agree it’s a worthwhile endeavor. Pursuing a certification is not a requirement to be a competent beekeeper but it does lend you some “street cred”. Everything you want to learn nowadays can be found by a simple Internet search and YouTube video so why *should* anyone come to monthly meetings either if one follows that line of reasoning? Our club is all about educating tomorrow’s beekeepers and beekeeping is constantly changing and growing with new information brought to our membership by experienced and expert beekeepers. It’s a wealth of information in one place.

Earning a certificate speaks volumes. A certificate is like a diploma that says you attained a certain degree of expertise from a reputable source. A doctor’s consultation and diagnosis carry more weight because of the diploma certificate on the wall. The pilot flying the plane has a licensed certificate of training; the attorney has one, you need one to drive a car, and the person cutting your hair or painting your nails has one

on the walls. A house needs a CO (Certificate of Occupancy) before it can be lived in, even if it’s *just* a piece of paper. We all put a degree of trust in that certificate. In addition, the Certified Beekeeper can obtain a state certified label for their honey jars that assures the consumer that the honey is unadulterated, natural and safe. We’ve all heard about the fake honey that tries to get into our markets from other countries or from fly-by-night bee stands. Scary stuff!

In the Master Beekeeper Program, the first level of achievement is Certification. Passing the written and then practical exam demonstrates a good basic level of competence and knowledge in hive management and problem solving. It’s all well and good to have a Master Beekeeper as a handy mentor. The Master Beekeeper has achieved a level of expertise whose opinion and advice are trustworthy and proven by their paper certificate and experience. Having said that, that certification is probably why this person seeks out the Master Beekeeper in the first place.

Most of us can also call upon a friendly Master Beekeeper, Inspector or a trusted mentor for help. That’s not unique. Personally, I prefer to increase my knowledge and skill set by studying and becoming a Certified Beekeeper. I’m sure the Master Beekeeper would appreciate that too. So, choosing to advance my skills, attend conferences, listen to experts, become a better beekeeper, network and make some friends along the way are all our choices. That’s why we come to the monthly meetings. That’s why some choose to attend the bee school and become certified. I want to be able to share my knowledge competently and reliably. Taking the certification test is the first step and is not for everyone. However, for those who do take this first step and go beyond, I feel great respect and admiration for their dedication to this worthy endeavor.

As an attorney friend of mine once said about his framed certificate on the wall, “*It looks good on paper!*”

## NCSBA Library Update: A Glitch in Getting Access to the NCSBA library

We’ve noticed a drop-off in requests, and we attribute that to the loss of the library link under Resources in the new NCSBA website. Our Webmaster is working to correct that. In the meantime, you can use the following to get to the Request form with bibliography link: <https://www.waynecc.edu/library/ncsba-beekeeping/> Or use interlibrary loan services from your local library to the:

NCSBA Collection, Clyde A. Erwin, Jr. Library, Wayne Community College,  
3000 Wayne Memorial Dr, Goldsboro, NC 27534 Attn.: Terri

**Bob Kemper NCSBA Fred Deer Librarian** [kemper27530@gmail.com](mailto:kemper27530@gmail.com) 919-731-2146



# In the Apiary: Summer in North Carolina

by Nancy Ruppert, Apiary Inspector, NCDA&CS



**The summer season** of beekeeping in North Carolina tends to be very challenging for most of us: it gets uncomfortably hot; there's a dearth of nectar in most areas for most of the summer; the bees aren't in the best of moods so most of us have to wear more protection than we'd like; the worst pests in beekeeping tend to be very busy and often warrant our attention and action. But if we don't make the right moves with our bees during the summer, the hive winter survival will likely be adversely affected: honey bees follow a different calendar than we do.

One of the joys of beekeeping is reaping the rewards of our (beekeeper and bees!) labor, primarily in the form of honey; most of us harvest honey during the summer. If you're fortunate enough to live where sourwood nectar is available, harvesting most of the other types of honey on our hives and putting those supers of drawn comb back on the hive might enable a more concentrated sourwood crop to be harvested during late July or August. Review the NC Honey Standard of the NCSBA to guide your labeling as you bottle honey.

Swarming was very heavy during the spring of this year, which for many beekeepers resulted in less honey produced per hive. (When swarms leave the hive, your surplus honey crop usually goes out the door also!) Keep this in mind so that if your hives need to be fed, you can supplement them; a 1:1 ratio (or even more diluted) of sugar: water works well. Food shortages during summer often result in weakness, less brood being raised, and sometimes death from complete starvation.

Summer tends to be a prime time for families to take vacation. Sometimes that allows pests to overcome beehives, and sometimes the summer brings on pool parties that can be ruined by bees visiting the pool as they seek water and minerals. Serious neighbor disputes can result, so please keep a few water sources available in your apiary, and don't let them run dry.

Hive beetles, varroa mites, yellow jackets, hornets, bears and wax moths are extremely busy hive pests during the summer. Details on management of these pests go beyond the space available here, but consult reliable sources to guide you on these: some include the Honey Bee Health Coalition ([www.honeybeehealthcoalition.org](http://www.honeybeehealthcoalition.org)), A field guide to honey bees and their maladies from Penn State University, and the Beekeeping Notes outlined on NC

State Extension's website under Apiculture & Beekeeping.

There's no doubt that the queen bee in any hive is among the most important influences in hive outcomes, including survival. In North Carolina, it's difficult to find good quality queens for almost six months out of the year! So the time to take a very close look at the egg-laying performance in your hives is during July and August. If the hive has adequate nutrition available and plenty of young bees to support the queen, she ought to be laying eggs in a nice and full pattern. If she has those resources and still isn't laying well, she probably is unable to lay well and should be replaced for the well-being of the overall colony. Oftentimes pest or disease problems make a capped brood pattern look "spotty" and is completely unrelated to the queen's egg-laying; be sure about a troublesome brood pattern's source before you unnecessarily dispose of a perfectly reliable queen!

Despite the heat and discomfort of attending to these summer colony issues, these assessments/actions must be undertaken if we are to expect colony survival during the winter. Then sit back and reward yourself (cold beverages, vacation, etc.) for a job well done!

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**For the past two issues** this column has been covering bee-feeding plants that are edible, and this issue will continue that thread.

I have been growing black (very dark purple?) raspberries that were given to me here in the Piedmont. The name of this variety has been lost but they do well in the heat and humidity of summer. Raspberries grown in the Piedmont and the NC Coastal Plain prefer partial shade with high canopy tree shade (30-40 ft). In the mountains, full sun would be best and there are many local cultivars from which to choose. Raspberries can be grown throughout North Carolina if you choose the right varieties for your region and follow some basic growing information (see link below).

Raspberries are considered to be self-fertile, but each flower requires pollen transferred by a pollinator to produce a fully formed fruit. With poor pollination, the berries can be misshapen. Bees are responsible for at least 90% of the required pollination. Raspberries bloom for 2-3 weeks and provide a tremendous amount of nectar for honey bees. The honey made from this nectar has been described as having a delicate flavor. Raspberries also produce a reasonable amount of medium-sized yellowish gray pollen. Raspberries are very high in elagic acid which may be healthy for human consumption and possibly anti-carcinogenic.

Blueberry shrubs are native to North America and are not planted enough in our home landscapes. They are quite attractive, especially in the fall when they turn a brilliant red; plus, they produce those nutritious berries. They can be grown throughout the state as long as you plant cultivars developed for your region.

There are three types grown in North Carolina: Highbush, Southern highbush and Rabbiteye blueberries. In the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain, you can grow some Highbush, Southern highbush and Rabbiteye varieties. Rabbiteye however, is the most reliable in both the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain. In the mountains both Highbush and Rabbiteye produce well.

Do a soil test! Soil testing provides the pH of your soil which is very important if you want to have healthy blueberry-producing plants. Contact your local NC State Cooperative Extension office for free soil test kits. The Extension agent or Master Gardener volunteers can also help with any questions you may have.

Finally, do not plant blueberry bushes in heavy clay soils. If your soil doesn't drain well then amend the soil and mound the planting bed at least 10-12 inches high. You should supplement with water during a drought, particularly in the first year of growth. Blueberry bushes are relatively easy to grow once established and can live for 20 to 30 years producing berries early on.

Blueberry flowers are great honey bee attractions that bloom for up to 2-3 weeks. With some care to plant several different varieties you can extend the blueberry bloom time for up to two months. This long bloom season provides a lot of nectar and yellow pollen for bees.



Photo: Bili Cline NCSU

**Rabbiteye Blueberry Blossoms**

Because blueberry pollen is sticky and relatively heavy it cannot move on its own. In order to pollinate the flowers, they must be pollinated by insects even in cultivars that are considered self-fertile. Since blueberries are North American plants, native bees are important for fertilization but honey bees are used extensively to increase berry production for commercial crop growers.

The southeastern blueberry bees are very common pollinators in blueberry fields along with bumble bees. Another important blueberry pollinator is the small native bee, Bradley's Andrena.

Here is a link to the small fruits chapter of the NC State Extension gardener handbook: <https://tinyurl.com/y6brbwyp>. This chapter will provide a list of the raspberry and blueberry varieties that will grow best in your region along with extensive growing details.



# Wolfpack's Waggle: Recalibrating the Razor's Edge of Beekeeping to Promote sustainability

by Dr. David Tarpy

Department of Entomology & Plant Pathology, NC State University



**There is never any downtime** in beekeeping. In the summer, we need to stay on top of our colonies by providing water, shade, and mite monitoring (to name but a few top management concerns). In the fall, we're busy staying ahead of mite control by routinely sampling, preventing, and controlling varroa loads before those critical winter bees are raised in the late autumn. Even in the winter, we need to build or repair equipment and prepare for the next season.

But things go from busy to super-busy in the spring, of course, when there often isn't enough time in the day to do all of the things that you need to do. The majority of spring management, however, is walking that razor's edge between swarm control and high honey production. This is an extremely delicate balance, and one that we often lose, which lies at the heart of pretty much everything that we do as beekeepers. The proportion of nectar foragers is a non-linear function of total colony population; in other words, a colony of 20,000 bees will only have ~40% of the workers foraging for nectar, but a colony of 50,000 bees will have over 70% of its bees as nectar foragers. The result is quite obvious—one large colony of 50,000 bees will produce way more than twice as much honey as the sum of two colonies with 25,000 bees each. But large colonies naturally want to swarm in the spring, so it can be really hard for beekeepers to have their cake and eat it too.

While the focus on maximal honey production is perhaps woven into the very fabric of what it means to be a beekeeper, there are at least two unintended consequences of doing so in modern-day beekeeping. Because larger colonies make a lot more honey, maximizing honey production necessitates larger colony populations. Larger colony populations require higher egg laying by the queen and maximal brood rearing. As such, by promoting honey production we're asking our queens to burn the candle at both ends, and in doing so we may be inadvertently reducing how long they might live. Indeed, there's a lot of circumstantial evidence to suggest that queens aren't living as long and asking too much of them might be one reason why.

More brood also means a higher population growth of varroa mites throughout the season. The more we push

our colonies to maximize their numbers, the more we allow the mites to get away from us. This is where we have to recognize that we can't have it both ways—we can't have large populations for honey production and expect low levels of mites without significant intervention.

Large-scale beekeeping has always pushed the boundaries for their outcomes, whether it be for honey production, pollination, or bee production. That doesn't mean small-scale beekeeping has to follow suit. Many part-time beekeepers keep their bees for fun and the incidental benefits that they afford (including honey). But that also means that we can afford to recalibrate our expectations for our bees in order to balance our wants with the needs of the bees. If we could curtail our expectations of honey production, then the bees wouldn't need to raise as much brood, which would simultaneously decrease mites as well as extend queen lifespans. Not letting colonies grow as large can also help minimize swarming, so in many ways it's a win-win for the bees and beekeepers alike.

So, as you're trying to balance all of the many moving parts that are involved in beekeeping, I would encourage you to err on the side of smaller colonies that are more sustainable rather than larger colonies that produce more honey. Hopefully, the result will be more effective swarm control as well as more sustainable bees.



Photo: Roger Montague



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## The North Carolina State Beekeepers Association has officially declared THE MONTH OF JUNE as COOPERATIVE EXTENSION APPRECIATION MONTH

by: Paul Newbold & D J Moran

The Smith-Lever Act of U.S. Congress established the Cooperative Extension Service in 1914, and the NC Agricultural Extension Service was founded soon thereafter operating in partnership with the state's land grant colleges (modern day NCSU in Raleigh and NC A & T Univ. in Greensboro).

Two short years later, in 1916, N.C. State Extension and the U.S. Department of Agriculture reached an agreement and a beekeeping specialist was employed for the state of North Carolina.

One year later, in 1917, with the help from then Extension Beekeeping Specialist George Rea, the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association was formed, fulfilling an interest to do so that had been pervasive for over a decade. Two of the papers presented by Extension employees at that meeting were: "Beekeeping in Work of a County Agent" and "First Impressions in Beekeeping Extension".

By 1918 educational courses on beekeeping had begun at what was then known as "The State College" (modern day NCSU). Following WWI beekeeping courses were offered to veterans as a means to help them get re-established on the home front. In 1982, Dr. John Ambrose, then Extension Apiculturist started a Master Beekeeper Program. Although budget restructuring forced NCSU to turn the MBP over to the NCSBA in recent years, Dr. Tarpy and his staff continue to support this integral program of our Association.

Because of Extension we continue to benefit from traditional presentations; webinars; the quarterly Wolpack Waggle; information of advances from the Queen and Disease Clinic; opportunities to participate in research projects of students and staff; and receive news from the NCSU Apiary. We can even opt to take beekeeping courses online through the Beekeeper Education and Engagement System (BEES) so that members and the public can access the courses from home.

Details of how to protect our hives before and following Hurricane Florence were emailed, posted on social media, and disseminated to county agents statewide so that all beekeepers could benefit from the research-based knowledge and experience of the collective state agencies.

Many of our chapters hold their monthly meetings at Extension facilities which frequently offer not only the space, but technical or event support and much more. Quite a few of our Chapters have apiaries at Extension facilities. We can call upon our Extension agents when we have questions about pesticides being used near our hives. We can network with local farming concerns through Extension.

From dealing with (then) new diseases of foulbrood and chalkbrood to current challenges concerning breeding viability and new pests, Extension has shared with us along the way.

It is clear that our two organizations have continued to grow side-by-side for over a century.

We share common missions.

The N.C. Cooperative Extension Service is our link to the many state agencies that provide us with ways to make our beekeeping better.

For these reasons,

**The NCSBA has officially declared:**

**THE MONTH OF JUNE as COOPERATIVE EXTENSION APPRECIATION MONTH**

We hope that you will join in the Association's efforts to show our appreciation.

Here are a couple of things you might consider doing:

Annually, the NCSBA recognizes one **Cooperative Extension Worker of the Year** with an award. The award is designed to reward and acknowledge efforts by the Extension workers on behalf of beekeeping, beekeepers, and the bee and honey industry in general.

If you have someone you would like to nominate for this award, please see the NCSBA website for details (under Membership / drop down Awards).

The Golden Achievement Program (GAP) of the NCSBA has added a category (E-4) and Chapters can gain points for participating in the NC State Cooperative Extension Appreciation Month:

- A. Local Recognition of an Extension Agent
- B. Local Media
- C. Contact with NC State Cooperative Ext. Leadership



# Slovenia: The Honey Bee Capital of the World!

by: Suzy Spencer NC Master Beekeeper

**In May 2018,** I went on a 12-day beekeeping tour of Slovenia and also spent additional time in this beautiful, amazing country. Bordered by Italy, Austria, Hungary, Croatia and the Adriatic Sea, Slovenia is ~15% the size of North Carolina and has 20% of NC's population. However, it is unsurpassed in its love for the honey bee. As stated on the website of the Slovenian Beekeepers Association, "Slovenians are emotionally attached to bees". Here are my ten reasons for why Slovenia is the honey bee capital of the world.



**€2 (euro) coin commemorating "World Bee Day" ("Svetovni Dan Čebel")**

1. At least 1 in 250 people are beekeepers (~8,000 beekeepers out of a population of ~2 million people); some say there are closer to 10,000.
2. The Slovenian Beekeepers Association is strong, unified, and politically influential; they have a uniform and a physical headquarters that includes a lab, library, store, and bee houses.
3. Slovenia was the force behind the establishment of World Bee Day; the first one was on May 20, 2018.
4. The Carniolan race of honey bee (*Apis mellifera carnica*) originated in Slovenia and is the only race that can be raised there; they even have a monument dedicated to it.

5. Slovenia has its own type of hive (the A-Ž hive) which opens from the back; these are kept in bee houses, which are also unique to Slovenia.
6. There are five distinct, large nectar flows, two of which are fir and spruce honeydew honeys; varietal honeys are common, and beekeepers follow the flows with hives on trailers and trucks.
7. The value of apitherapy and use of bees and hive-products for health are widely accepted.
8. Slovenia has a long, proud history of beekeeping which is preserved in museums; painted bee hive panels are a folk-art form unique to Slovenia going back to the mid 1700's.
9. Images of honey bee and honeycomb were placed on old Slovenian money; a new €2 (euro) bearing the name of Slovenia commemorates World Bee Day.
10. Slovenians show reverence and respect in how they speak about honey bees. For example, the Slovenian word for "death" of humans is one word and the word for the death of all other living things is another with one exception: the honey bee. The word for its death is the same as for a human. Please sit and think about that a minute.



Photo: Suzy Spencer

**Slovenian bee house with A-Ž hives**

If you want to learn more about any of these facts, please see the much longer and detailed article I wrote as a guest columnist for Randall Austin's column in Bailey Bee Supply's monthly newsletter for January 2019. This is archived at [https://baileybeesupply.com/educational\\_resources/](https://baileybeesupply.com/educational_resources/) under "Randall's Archive".





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## Letters from Hawley Prindle

### Peace at any Price

**Spring is about over** and here I sit with several problems. Bernice, my wife, spent last winter making plans for our bees. We have been married for over 50 years and when she learned to drive many years ago, I was quite relieved. I could let her go about her business while I took care of mine. Then she moved from watching General Hospital to the Internet and Facebook. And she found a story about Slovenian beehives by Suzy Spencer. She got really excited about what they were doing in Slovenia.

She has lately developed a new way of dealing with me.

We have had a few discussions on how “our” bees should be managed. Since I have kept bees forever, and she just got interested last year (remember, I encouraged her to take a beginning beekeeper class), we don’t quite see eye to eye. Don’t take what I am about to say wrong. I love her dearly.

This all started when she lovingly said, “*Honey, can you (handing me some pictures she printed from something she saw on the internet) DO this?*” She had printed pictures from an article she was excited about. She showed me several bee houses and sheds. My bees never cared for the color of the hive they were in, or in fact, care if I even painted the boxes.

But this is different. She showed me several pictures of

bee houses enclosing a number of beehives evidently worked from inside. Each hive shown in the picture was painted a bright color in all shades of the rainbow. There was yellow (her favorite color), red, blue, green and flowers and squares and triangles and all sorts of pretty things on the front of these hives. There must have been a dozen or more hives all set next to each other two or three high in sheds facing out.

My bees pretty much sat on concrete blocks facing south with a little slope to the front so water will drain out instead of into the hive. Each has plenty of room for me to walk around them when I am working the bees. And I have a barn full of supers to put on them for a honey crop.

She wants all of that to change. I was in shock! I tried to explain that her pictures would require me to change my entire system of beekeeping. I always have tried to keep her happy. What was it that Henry Ford said to his wife when he returned home one day after a long business trip? He found that she had painters paint over the walnut paneling in their music room with a lime green because the music room seemed dark and depressing. It had cost a fortune and three years of labor to get that room finished. His response: “PEACE AT ANY PRICE.”

I am not quite up to Henry Ford’s reaction. I am pleading poverty and a bad back. I am trying to work on a compromise. Maybe she will settle for a visit to the paint store to select a number of colors of paint she likes. I will bring in some of those old supers from the barn and give her a paint brush.



Pictured left to right: Earl Rouse, Duplin County Veterans Museum Board of Directors; Diane Leaming, George’s wife; Barry Jones, Duplin County Beekeepers Association President; and, Gwyn Rhodes, Duplin County Beekeepers Association Member.

## Beyond The Bees

-Earl Hardy



### The Duplin County Beekeepers Association

donated to the Duplin County Veterans Museum a memorial gift honoring the life and service of Colonel George Denton Leaming, retired. Colonel Leaming served his country for 26 years in the United States Marine Corps, which included tours during the Vietnam War, the Beirut Conflict and Desert Storm. Following retirement, George flew 15 years for Duke Life Flight. George was an active member of the Duplin County Beekeepers Association and instrumental in establishing their Pollinator Garden.



# NCSBA Born & Bred Program Update

by Etienne Nadeau Born & Bred Committee Chairman



**The past couple months** have been busy for the Born and Bred Program. In February and March, NCSBA members had the opportunity to attend valuable training at the day-long queen rearing clinic. One clinic was held in Fayetteville and the other in Statesville, with a total of 125 people in attendance. Both days were successful due to the support of select volunteers from the Cumberland County Beekeepers and the Iredell County Beekeepers who dedicated some of their time before and after the clinics. A special thank you also goes out to the Cumberland County and Iredell County Extension Offices for sharing their facilities to support the events.

The Born and Bred Program is excited to offer a chapter level queen yard project. This project is for local chapters that have Born and Bred trained members and wish to establish and operate chapter level queen yards. The project is designed to promote local queen rearing and the Born and Bred queen rearing methods. Chapter members who have been through the Born and Bred clinic can put their training to use, help teach other chapter members the queen rearing process and raise local queens their chapters.

The intent is for chapters to maintain their respective queen yards for multiple seasons, not a one-time deal. Therefore, participating chapters must initially invest their own funds and can receive reimbursement from the Born and Bred Program for half of their investment, not to exceed \$500.

Applications must be submitted for approval to the Born and Bred review board. Information on the grant, as well as the application process, has been passed to regional directors and should have made its way to chapter presidents and members. There is a limited number of Born and Bred grants to be approved for 2019, therefore interested chapters are encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible.

This is a great opportunity for chapter members to come together, share their knowledge and supply themselves with local queens. If there are not enough members within one chapter to support the project, neighboring chapters can join together for a successful, multi-chapter queen yard. The Born and Bred team hopes that chapters will take advantage of the project and that the raising of locally produced queens will continue.

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# Master Beekeeper Program

## Much to Learn, Much Opportunity

by Doug Galloway Master Beekeeper Committee Chairman

### 2019 continues to offer many

opportunities to grow as a beekeeper and to learn about the honey bee.

To date, the MBP Committee has disbursed the Certified test to over half of the NCSBA chapters, all having offered some level of beginning beekeeping training. Congratulations to our chapters and a special thanks to those MBP Coordinators/Proctors who manage the testing and processing of data. Chapter testing would not be possible without them. Certified practical exams will follow as weather permits, and as our newest beekeepers learn the skills to perform an educated colony inspection.

The diversity of our Master Beekeeper Program is consistent with the diversity of our membership. Age, gender, race, religion, are all represented in our chapters and are similarly represented in the different levels of the MBP. With some Certified beekeepers still in elementary school, while others are receiving Social Security retirement benefits, the passion people have for the honey bee and its preservation is inspiring. Your MBP committee and the supporting volunteers appreciate this diversity and your continued support.

The Master Beekeeper Program committee has encouraged all Chapters to follow the guidelines established for candidates engaging in MBP testing. Any test offered by the NCSBA MBP is only available to current/active/paid members. This is one of the many benefits of membership and an important privilege. Given an NCSBA member number, the MBP is happy to verify a member's status if requested by a Chapter.

At this past Spring Conference in Monroe, NC, a Bee Bowl was conducted between 4-member teams from North Carolina and South Carolina. Interestingly, and purely by accident, the NC team was composed of all women beekeepers while the SC team was all men. The event was well attended with an estimated 200 beekeepers on hand. Both teams were very knowledgeable, and I am happy to report that the team from North Carolina won.

The next significant event offering an opportunity for beekeepers to gather will be the Eastern Apiculture Society meeting on July 15 - 19 in Greenville, SC. The EAS website has plenty of data about the event and I encourage you to attend. I am often asked the difference between the Master Beekeeper Program offered by the NCSBA and the EAS. Simply said, the NCSBA MBP assist its candidates through a process, that if followed carefully with focus and hard work results in success and recognition as a Master

Beekeeper. The EAS expects potential candidates to have already achieved all the education, apiary, community and communication skills that an NCSBA MBP candidate is guided through, before they apply to the EAS for consideration as a Master Beekeeper candidate. If accepted as a candidate, testing at the EAS annual conference must be satisfactorily completed to be recognized as an EAS Master Beekeeper.

A month after EAS will be the NCSBA Summer Conference in Hickory, NC, August 8-10. The MBP will again offer testing with a review on Thursday morning, testing Friday afternoon and again on Saturday morning. Monitor the NCSBA website for details and monitor the MBP level you are pursuing for clarification of requirements.

Ending the conference season is Apimondia in Montreal, Quebec, Canada from September 8 - 12, 2019. Apimondia is a worldwide gathering of beekeepers held every 2 years. Rarely will it be this close, so if you can take the time, it offers many learning opportunities. The Apimondia website offers assistance with airline, hotel and attendance. For an overview of the conference click on Program, then Congress Overview. A trade show featuring some 250 vendors along with excellent speakers and an opportunity to meet and converse with beekeepers from many different countries is very appealing.

Our MBP committee is working hard to prepare testing for the NCSBA Summer Conference along with quizzes and games that are available for you to use as study guides in preparation for your MBP test. This is a wonderful way to identify areas that require a greater depth of knowledge and to gain some insight into areas where your study has paid off. We are here to help, so if you have questions or concerns, please contact the MBP committee.



### Master Beekeeper Program Testing

We will be administering Master Beekeeper Program testing at the summer conference in Hickory:

**Thursday, August 8** 10:00 am till Noon, intermediate and advanced level review.

**Friday, August 9** testing from 1:00 pm till 4:00 pm with no written test issued after 2:00 pm.

**Saturday, August 10** testing from 9:00 am till Noon, with no written test issued after 10:00 am.





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## 2019 NC vs SC Bee Bowl



## Winner: North Carolina



The Winning NC Team: Libby Mack, Jodie Rierson, Jeanie Frye & Lane Kreitlow

MeckBees Jeanie Frye, Libby Mack and Jodie Rierson and 5-County Beekeeper Lane Kreitlow beat South Carolina in the 2019 Bee Bowl at the Spring Conference!

In the above photo, they listen to a difficult question from NCSBA 2nd Vice President and Bee Bowl Moderator Freddy Proni...."Which honey bee gland produces the invertase enzyme?" Answer: Some legitimate references say hypopharyngeal gland, others say salivary glands. The NC team responded by citing both answers and references but lost the question when told to pick only one.

The NCSBA Master Beekeeper Committee subsequently investigated the issue, determined that both answers were correct and has retired all questions regarding this topic from Master Beekeeper Exams and Bee Bowls until further conclusive research is available.

# Eastern Apicultural Society



This is the first ever EAS Conference, to include states on the Eastern Seaboard, to be held in Greenville, South Carolina



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buddy\_may@bellsouth.net

[www.easternapiculture.org](http://www.easternapiculture.org)



# Telling the Bees

by Christi Henthorn



## Granville County has lost a good one...

Charlie Easton, a 30+ year beekeeper passed away in his Oxford home surrounded by family on April 4th, 2019. Charlie was one of the founding (and most dedicated) members of the Granville County Beekeepers Association (GCBA). He was dedicated to his bees, to his gardens. He loved our little beekeeping world.

As most of you know, honey bees are not native to the USA. Most were brought over by early settlers from Europe. In tradition of the "Old Country", it is believed that the bees must be told of important events in their keeper's lives - births, marriages, deaths, or even departures and returns in the household. In 1858 John Greenleaf Whittier published the poem, "Telling the Bees" in the Atlantic Monthly. "Stay home, pretty bees, fly not hence!" If the custom was forgotten and the bees were not "put into mourning", it was believed a misfortune was inevitable. The bees may leave their hive, stop producing honey, or simply perish.

On a beautiful early April Saturday afternoon, shortly after Charlie's passing, local beekeepers and Charlie's family gathered in the clover field near the bee hives. When we first arrived, the bees were not happy with our presence. Retired pastor Alvin Gates said a prayer whilst bees buzzed around us. The GCBA President presented Charlie's children with a 2019 GCBA Lifetime



Photo: Angel Dewalt

Christi Henthorn and Al Crews place a black shroud over the hives

Achievement Award in his name. Then a black shroud was draped over the hives. Using Charlie's old hive tool, Al Crews tapped on each hive three times and told them "Honey bees, Honey bees, hear what I say! Your Master Keeper has passed away. But his friends now beg you will freely stay, and gather honey for many a day. Bony bees, Bony bees, hear what I say." As we were wrapping up, we all realized that the bees had amazingly calmed.

In memory of Charlie, GCBA has assembled, and painted a hive (you guessed it, YELLOW, Charlie's favorite color). It will kept in the new GCBA Club Apiary and affixed with a plaque in his memory. "Charlie's hive" will soon house a colony of bees caught during this year's swarm season.

Rest easy Charlie, we've got it from here. We know you are enjoying endless fields of crimson clover, honey bees and a year round supply of fresh honey!

## 4th Annual Bee Jubilee by: Christi Henthorn

**Mark your calendar!** Saturday June 22nd will be the Granville County Beekeeper Association's 4th Annual Bee Jubilee in Oxford. The Bee Jubilee is a day-long event filled with bee and pollinator related speakers and demonstrations, local arts and handmade crafts, Kidzzzz Corner, silent auction, North Carolina grown produce, HONEY and more! Many vendors focus on bee-themed creations and several NC bee vendors will be selling supplies. Exciting new things are happening this year with a Food Truck Rodeo and Cooking with Honey Competition. No need to sweat it! This is an inside/outside event and much of the outside is in a covered arena.

Several speakers will present on bee related topics - NCSBA's own Chris Apple will be on hand, as well as NCSU's Esmaeil Amiri to discuss "Queens and viruses: Interaction of two major factors in the colony."

We hope you join us for a vibrant and fun filled Bee Jubilee event from 9am-4pm, to be held at the Granville County Expo Center, located at 4605 US-15, Oxford, NC. See you there!!

Questions? Call 907.738.9047, e-mail [granvillebeejubilee@gmail.com](mailto:granvillebeejubilee@gmail.com) or find us on Facebook.



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# The Silent Auction is Back!

by: Jackie Hough Scotland County Beekeepers

**Time flies** when the weather is warming! We've all been busy preparing new woodenware, repairing old equipment, filling frames with new foundation, and monitoring our hives as the nectar flow started in earnest.

But before we know it, August 8th will be here, and it will be time for the NCSBA Summer Conference in Hickory! The Planning Committee is working hard to create an outstanding schedule of excellent presentations and workshops for this wonderful annual event. And change is coming...

Were you one of the people at last year's Summer Conference who asked, "Where's the Silent Auction?" I was, and, after giving it some thought, I volunteered to help. Well, here's some good news: The Silent Auction will be back! And what a great meeting location to launch the Silent Auction, 2.0!

Did you know? On the city of Hickory website, you'll find these words: "Hickory, North Carolina, has a history of craftsmanship. Hickory's past and future prospects have drawn to this place a people with an eye for detail and a hand for hard work... Hickory is for doers and makers... Hickory is Life. Well crafted!"

And the emphasis will indeed be on creating a superbly-crafted Silent Auction. Let's face it – there probably isn't a more creative bunch of people than beekeepers. How many amazing tools, structures, feeders – you name it! – have been created by beekeepers who thought, "Why isn't there a \_\_\_? Well, if there isn't one, I'll make one." (You fill in the blank).

So, the Silent Auction will have categories. Do you – or does someone you know – have a skill, or do you practice a craft that will create a beautiful Silent Auction item for one of these choices?

- Bee Wise, Bee Prepared (educational tools for beekeepers and for the public)
- Bee Thankful, Bee Merry (holiday items)
- Just for Newbees (items for children)
- Hive Sweet Hive (household use and home décor items)
- Bee in Style (wearables: clothing, jewelry, etc.)
- Beauty in the Eye of the Beeholder (fine art items: paintings, sculpture, furniture, pottery, etc.)

After some conversations with leaders in the NCSBA, a plan is taking shape to have a Silent Auction once a year, at the Summer Conference. Know that vendors will not be providing items from their inventory for the Auction. They'll be at the meeting – arriving early and staying late! – offering us the opportunity to purchase the quality products that they sell. We'll be seeking donations for the Auction from our members, our communities, area artists, friends, neighbors – and that beekeeper you know who can make anything!

Planning is ongoing, and an effort is in the works to create a 'how-to guide' for running a Silent Auction, so that any future Summer Conference host chapters will have a published plan available to answer questions and provide solutions to the inner workings of conducting a successful auction. In addition, there will soon be a portion of the NCSBA Facebook presence dedicated to generating 'buzz' about the Silent Auction.

Questions? Suggestions? 'Like' the Silent Auction? Let me know! I can be reached at 910-977-0950.



**A perfect Silent Auction item for the 'Bee Wise, Bee Prepared' category: a 'human-scale' foundress Varroa mite model, created by NC Master Beekeeper Cynthia Speed!**

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# Pollinator Garden Design Application: In the Works

by: Lynn S. Wilson Person County Beekeeper

**A new garden design** app being developed at NCSU will be a valuable resource for beekeepers, gardeners and wildlife advocates. With students at NC State, Assistant Professor of Applied Ecology Dr. Elsa Youngsteadt is developing an online tool for designing and visualizing pollinator gardens.

Dr. Youngsteadt's research and outreach deal with the ecology and health of pollinators in urban environments. She says, "A barrier for homeowners who want to create pollinator habitat is their discomfort with the garden design process, particularly when faced with lists of pollinator-friendly plants that may not be traditional ornamentals."



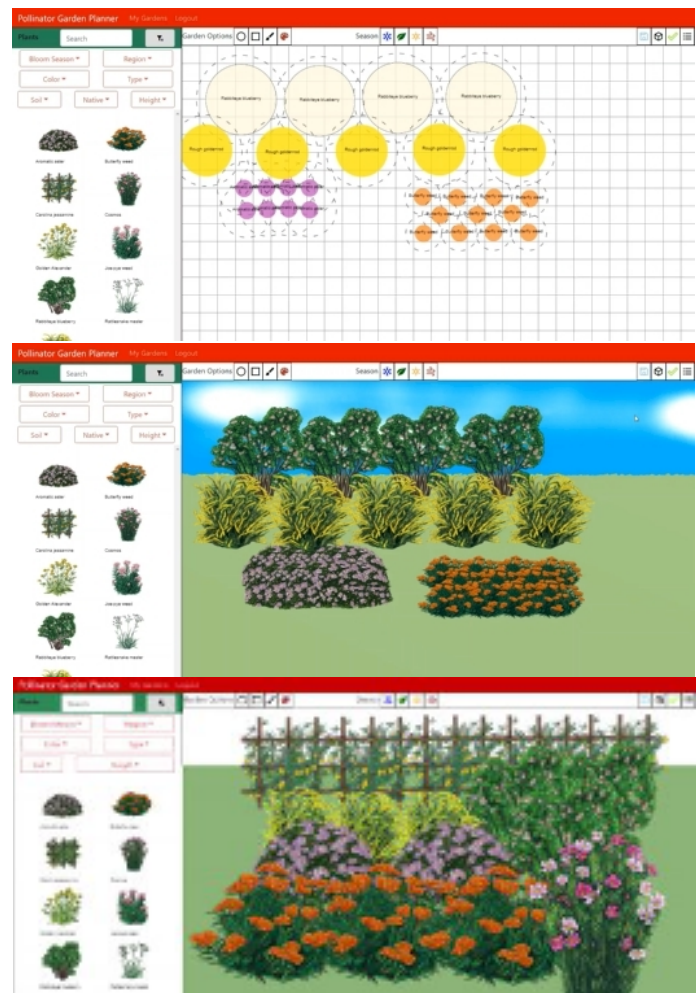
**Dr. Elsa Youngsteadt**

To overcome this barrier, Youngsteadt is working with NCSU's computer science students to develop an online garden-design tool, driven by a database of recommended pollinator plants for North Carolina. The app will allow users to design a garden, see how it would look, check for recommended design features, and make adjustments prior to real-world installation.

Beyond its pollinator-friendly plant pallet and the ability to show the garden in side view AND layout view, the application will also generate reminders if a planned garden doesn't meet

recommendations such as having variety in flower colors and shapes in each season.

This fall, the software project made the cut for development in the Senior Design Center capstone course at NC State. Youngsteadt says, the basic application will be free. Users will need to create an account. "To support maintenance costs, we might add premium features in the future, but the core functionality will be available to everyone."



**Pollinator Garden Design Screenshots**

To find out more about the design app, visit Dr. Youngsteadt's website:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3a83glk>. To help with future usability testing of her garden design application or to invite her to talk with your chapter about her urban pollinator research, email Youngsteadt at [ekyoungs@ncsu.edu](mailto:ekyoungs@ncsu.edu).



# Welcome to the NCSBA Summer Conference!

by Freddy Proni NCSBA 2nd Vice President

**The NCSBA will host** its Summer Conference August 8-10 (Thursday-Saturday) at the Hickory, NC Convention Center. The Executive Committee shifted the conference for 2019 to August because the tri-state area has been swarmed upon this year with regional meetings. The American Beekeeping Federation was hosted in SC, the Honey Convention in Tennessee, and the Eastern Apicultural Society will land in SC this July. All this educational buzzing gave us an opportunity to migrate to August knowing, at that time, the honey will be in and you may have some time to attend and get away from that summer heat! We are happy to offer an exciting schedule this year. The program will begin on Thursday at 12:30pm and end Saturday at 3:00pm. As a teaser, some of our speaking guests are Dr. Elina Nino from the Department of Entomology at the University of California, Davis, Dr. Olav Ruppell from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, and Michele Colopy, the program director of the Pollinator Stewardship Council. More bright and exciting names will be added to the main stage list as the event nears.

As with tradition, we will host a honey competition, cooking with honey, beekeeper review and testing, plus

a plethora of the things we enjoy during the summer conference. Vendors will be abundant, attendance is expected to be high, and Friday evening we will dine amongst North Carolina's newest Master and Master Craftsperson beekeepers. Breaking from tradition, workshops will be spanned over the afternoons of all three days. Some of the discussions will include honey bee stressors, different products of the hive, pollinator plants, agritourism in the bee yard, bee health, beginning and advanced husbandry skills, diseases and pathogens, small hive beetles, and so many others! In addition to workshops we will have main stage presentations from this year's Ambrose Student Award winner, and we will learn firsthand about microbials from the experts in the field. Speaking of the field, don't forget the summer program offers us direct contact with our NCSBA@CS apiary inspectors in the apiary and in the discussion rooms, plus it gives us an opportunity to work with and learn from Jennifer Keller from the NCSU Bee Lab.

August will be upon us shortly and updates will be posted on the NCSBA website and social media. Until then, happy, healthy, and safe beekeeping!

## NCSBA 2019 Summer Conference Featured Speakers



**Dr. Elina Nino**

University of California, Davis



**Dr. Olav Ruppell**

University of North Carolina Greensboro



**Michele Colopy**

Pollinator Stewardship Council

# NCSBA SUMMER MEETING

## August 8-10, 2019

### *"Bee Scene in Hickory"*



**By Doug Vinson** NCSBA 1st VP, EAS Director NC

Join hundreds of fellow NC beekeepers August 8-10, 2019 at the Hickory Metro Convention Center for the 2019 NCSBA Summer Meeting. As always, expect a great mix of education, fun and fellowship. Early interest suggests a record attendance so plan now to attend.

Online registration and hotel information will be available in early May so visit the website to utilize those features.

Consistent with our mission of providing education and support for the beginner as well as the more advanced beekeeper, the meeting will provide a variety of keynote, workshop and apiary presentations. Speakers have been chosen to assure that attendees receive a variety of current beekeeping information. The intent is to provide something for everyone.

The official agenda is not complete but a few highlights are offered here:

- There will be two “pre-meeting” activities on Thursday morning. An MBP review session for Journeyman and Master testing and a general question and answer session, “Ask the Experts”. Both are separate activities and will be scheduled from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon.
- MBP testing will be available on both Friday and Saturday. The agenda will provide times and location.
- Friday evening will be our “Evening of Festivity” featuring dinner, award presentations and entertainment. Be assured that dinner will NOT have anything to do with BBQ or sandwiches! Our caterer is very experienced and knows how to make this work efficiently and professionally. It is recommended that reservations for this event be done with registration. Food for a certain number will be requested; when tickets are sold out, there are no more.
- The Born and Bred Program will offer a hands-on lab for grafting training. There will be one session Friday and a repeat Saturday. This is open to those who have completed the lecture course. There is a separate fee for this activity. The location will likely be in a nearby hotel so check the meeting program for details.
- Please note this NEW feature: The NCSBA officers will take the stage as a panel to initiate a “Association Issues and Answers Forum”. Officers will field questions from the audience regarding operational and governance issues of the association. There are no dumb questions, it is your association!
- Regional reports will be presented by our NCDA inspectors.

Vendor participation is always an important part of our meetings so please show your appreciation with visits and interaction. They are also a great source for beekeeping information in addition to equipment and supplies. Without vendor/sponsor support, our registration fees would have to increase substantially.

Bee there and bee seen at the “Bee Scene in Hickory”.

**For the Latest Meeting Updates, Registration, and News**

[www.ncbeekeepers.org](http://www.ncbeekeepers.org)





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I to tired to make more honey.

*Piper Hicks, Age 9*