

North Carolina

Bee Buzz

Official Newsletter of the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association

Vol. 26, No. 1



See You at Spring Conference In New Bern, March 12,13

Building a better bee is the theme of the Spring Conference of the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association scheduled for March 12 and 13 in New Bern.

“We have designed an agenda that will be both informative and interesting,” said J. D. Foust, NCSBA President. “The agenda focuses on raising strong and healthy queens, which is critical for strong, healthy colonies.”

Dr. Marla Spivak, a nationally renowned expert in queen research, will present highlights of her work in several sessions. She is Associate Professor of Entomology and Extension (beekeeping) in the Department of Entomology at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Spivak has done extensive work with Africanized bees.

Her first experience in beekeeping began in 1974 when she worked for a

**Dr. Marla
Spivak**



commercial beekeeper in New Mexico. She received a Ph.D in Entomology from the University of Kansas, has done post-doctoral work in Arizona and studied Africanized bees in Costa Rica.

“Dr. Spivak brings great credentials in beekeeping research,” Foust said. “I’m confident we will benefit by her presentations.”

Other presentations include leadership, skeps, secondary hive products, preparing honey for show, apitherapy, creamed honey and other practical beekeeping topics.

Dr. David Tarpy, recently appointed to head the North Carolina State University apiary program, will report on his plans for the future.

Inside this issue are registration details and other information pertaining to the Spring Conference.

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From the President

NC State Beekeepers Association

Local Chapters. In the September 2003 issue of The Bee Buzz I stated one of my main goals for the year would be working closely with the local NCSBA Chapters and that I wanted to establish an open line of communication with the chapter presidents. I have since written a personal letter to each chapter president, requested some information about the chapter and asked for comments, concerns and questions. I also asked that I be placed on the distribution list for their newsletters (by US mail or by email jdf@bellsouth.net). About forty percent of the presidents have responded so far. They offered good suggestions which we are trying to follow up on. Some had concerns and/or problems which we are also trying to address. I asked for email addresses hoping to be able to establish an email program (somewhat like a party line or chat line) where we could have regular communication between all of the presidents. We have a similar setup with the NCSBA Executive Committee and it works great. Several chapter presidents and I are now communicating by email. I will continue to seek email addresses from all Chapter Presidents and hope we will soon be able to get the special email program established and active. There are lots of good things happening in the chapters that I have heard from and I hope we will be able to share ideas between chapters so that we may learn from each other.

J. D. Foust

Executive Committee Meeting. The NCSBA Executive Committee met on November 15. Attendance was excellent - 26 for the meeting plus 6 wives who helped the hostess prepare and serve lunch. Important items of business included:

Financial Report, and Budget Approval

The treasurers report showed that our spending has exceeded our revenue by a small amount this year making it necessary to draw from the limited reserves. The small deficit is partly because the budget anticipated more revenues than were collected, publications and mailing costs were higher, postage rates have gone up, and there is some decrease in membership. All of the budgeted funds go for services to members. We are currently providing each member with \$19 in services for the \$15 in annual dues. Serious efforts are under way to reduce expenditures as well as increase revenues. The budget year for 2003 will end on December 31, 2003 and a financial report for the year will be published in the next issue of the Bee Buzz. The 2004 budget was presented and passed.

Zoo Project and Fund Raiser The chairman

of the Zoo Committee gave a progress report on the proposed Bee Exhibit at the North Carolina State Zoo. The exhibit will be located in the "Touch and Learn Exhibit" at the Zoo and is planned for opening in 2007. The cost will be \$160,000 which will have to come through a fund raising campaign. The Zoological Society will work with the NCSBA Zoo Committee in the campaign to raise the needed funds. All checks will be made to the Zoological Society of the NC Zoo and will be tax deductible. (**Do not make checks to NCSBA or NC Zoo.**) The campaign will begin by the Zoological Society seeking significant pledges/contributions from corporations that have an interests in the Zoo and in honey bees. Those commitments will serve as a challenges to the NCSBA Zoo Committee to raise the remainder. The committee is getting organized to get the NCSBA fund raising campaign started in early 2004 and hope to complete the fundraising by the end of the year 2004.

.Publications The three NCSBA publications - Bee Buzz, Calendar, and Yellow Book were developed and prepared by Dr. John Ambrose and his students. With the departure of Dr. Ambrose and Dr. Mike Stanghellini it was necessary for NCSBA to assume full responsibility for the publication and distribution of the Bee Buzz and the Calendar. Dr. Ambrose is still working at NCSU and has agreed to continue producing the Calendar. We are lucky to have a NCSBA member, Charles Heatherly who is a trained journalist with extensive experience in the development and production of publications. Charles has assumed the position of Editor of the Bee Buzz and has produced June and September 2003 editions plus this issue of the newsletter. The format was changed somewhat with the September issue and further changed with this issue to turn the Bee Buzz into a 16 page magazine. We have revised the advertising program and Billy Smith is working hard to increase advertising for the Buzz and Yellow Book. Production costs have been reduced and advertising revenues increased to make these changes possible.

Beekeeper License Plate There was a request from the Moore County Chapter asking the EC to pursue the issuance of a special North Carolina License Plate for beekeepers. The EC looked with favor on the idea and asked the President to run a coupon in the January 2004 Bee Buzz asking those interested in purchasing such a plate to complete the coupon and return to a designated address. If interest is sufficient, a bill will be drafted asking the General Assembly to authorize issuance of a special Honey Bee License Plate.

Golden Leaf Foundation Grant Dr. David Tarpy announced receipt of a grant of \$95,000 from the Golden Leaf Foundation for research in the effectiveness of various queens in the control of mites. The grant is for one year with strong hope that it can be renewed and expanded to provide for a three year research program. Several NCSBA members across the State will likely be involved in the project.

Annual Meetings The 2004 Spring meeting on the campus of Craven Community College in New Bern is shaping up to be a great conference. Dr. Marla Spivak, the principal speaker is an authority on hygienic bees and has done extensive research in that area. It will be great to have a person with Dr. Spivak's knowledge and experience on the program.

The 2004 Summer Meeting will be July 8-10 at Holiday Inn Woodlawn in Charlotte. The hotel is a beautiful large facility with 425 rooms, beautiful meeting space, great exhibit space and good entertainment. Everything is under one roof and reasonably priced.

Are Drones Losing Their Spunk?

By David Tarpy

State Apiculturist

One of the most important responsibilities of my position is to serve as a conduit of information flow between apicultural researchers and you, the beekeeper. One of the most effective ways that we researchers can communicate our recent findings is by presenting them at national academic meetings. I returned last week from one such meeting, the Entomological Society of America's annual convention, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to provide a brief update of some of the newest honey bee research that has been taking place.

Tom Webster (Kentucky State University) presented some recent studies on the efficacy of screened bottom boards on varroa control. He found that colonies with screened bottom boards had similar brood areas and 40% fewer mites after 15 months compared to colonies without them. These data suggest that bottom screens are not the final solution to varroa, but that they are a cheap and effective means of reducing their prevalence.

Lilia De Guzman (USDA, Baton Rouge) shared some of her recent results concerning their ongoing project on Russian honey bees (the imported strain that has been shown to be varroa mite resistant). Her findings indicate that the mechanism of resistance in these bees is not singular, but pluralistic. They seem to combat the pest using behavioral traits, such as hygienic behavior, as well as several, undetermined physiological ones. This is good news, because it is much less likely that varroa mites will adapt to multiple modes of resistance, prolonging the benefits that this strain might provide to the beekeeping community.

There were some less than optimistic reports, however. Jan Kochansky (USDA, Beltsville) analyzed the antibiotic tylosin in honey and found that significant residues can remain upwards of three years! This is quite unfortunate, since this drug is the current best hope to address the increasing problem of terramycin-resistant AFB. Stephen Pernal (Canada's department of agriculture) tested how different tylosin treatments affect residue levels in honey. They found significant amounts of the drug in honey when it was fed to colonies in sugar syrup, but low or non-detectable levels if it was fed to colonies using the pollen patty or dusting methods. Together, these studies suggest that if and when tylosin is approved for its use against AFB



(and SHB), extreme caution should be taken during its application to avoid honey contamination.

Gard Otis (University of Guelph) also presented some troubling news. He showed that the sperm counts of drones are not as high as they used to be. Data from a few decades ago show that each drone should produce about 10 million sperm. His recent results show that almost *half* of the drones tested had *less than one million* sperm. While the study is only in its preliminary stages, these findings should be of great concern to all of us who wish to have properly mated, long-lived queens. It also begs the question of what is causing this dramatic drop in drone fertility, to which we can only speculate.

One final presentation of interest was by Olav Ruppell, who was just recently hired by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He presented data from a recent study that investigated how honey bees age. They compared the longevity of workers from a free-foraging colony to those from a restricted-foraging colony. As might be expected, the average life span of free-foraging workers were significantly shorter, demonstrating the inherent survival costs of risky behaviors such as foraging. We are very fortunate that Dr. Ruppell has joined our ranks in North Carolina.

As always, there was an additional student competition for apiculture and social insect research. Of the 18 participants, only six worked on honey bees, verifying a worrying trend that Mark Winston pointed out in one of his columns last year in *Bee Culture*. The quality of work by these young scientists, however, was very high, so we should be optimistic about these future apiculture researchers despite their dwindling numbers.

Certainly these presentations were not the only honey bee talks given at the meetings, nor are they wholly representative of all of the exciting research that is currently happening in the various bee labs. It does, however, provide a good cross-section of the work that apiculturists are currently doing.

I'll keep you posted.

The Small Hive Beetle Challenge

By Adolphus Leonard

The Small Hive Beetle is the most recent pest of Honeybees to arrive in North Carolina. Small Hive Beetles were identified in Florida in 1998. North Carolina identified SHB in three border counties with South Carolina late in 1998. They have since spread to over 40 counties in North Carolina. The list is growing.

The North Carolina emergency quarantine in effect since May 2000 was recently lifted due to the current wide distribution of the pest.

Swarms can carry adult SHB with them. The movement of infected nucs, packages, and supers with comb are some of the routes for the spread SHB. SHB are opportunistic scavengers with a strong attraction to honeybee colonies and supers with comb.

The adult SHB lays eggs in the colony which hatch into larvae. After feeding for ten to sixteen days the larvae move out of the colony to pupate in the soil.

Most of the damage to colonies and stored equipment is caused by the larval stage of the SHB. The SHB larva tunnel through the comb, feeding on honey, pollen and honeybee larva. They defecate in the comb spoiling the honey, creating conditions that result in the honey fermenting and bubbling out of the combs.

SHB reproduce in large numbers under ideal conditions, resulting in thousands of larvae in the colony. In short they can create a colossal mess.

The good news is they don't always reach the level required to cause the damage just described. Conditions aren't always ideal, for example SHB do not reproduce in cold weather. The adult beetles however have no problem over wintering in the honeybee cluster.

Strong, healthy colonies seem to inhibit SHB reproduction success. Weak bees or nucs are ideal targets for SHB to thrive.

Some nucs in Eastern North Carolina this season were observed succumbing to SHB in a fairly short time frame. They went from healthy to completely overrun in about 9 weeks. This is not common, but is an example of what is possible. in a fairly short time frame. They went from healthy to completely overrun in about 9 weeks. This is not common, but is an example of what is possible. SHB is a problem for super storage and honey houses. SHB can feed and reproduce off of stored supers and honey. They can ruin honey waiting to be extracted



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Control

Honeybees in infested areas can be treated with Bayer Check Mite+ (coumaphos) strips following the label directions for SHB. The strips are placed on the bottom board underneath a cover to entice the SHB to hide and come in contact with the strip. The soil around colonies can be treated with Guard Star (liquid permethrin) to kill larvae and pupae. Pay special attention to nucs and weak colonies.

Do not put 'dead out' supers on strong colonies. They may be teaming with SHB eggs or small larvae. Strong colonies have been overcome with SHB by this practice. Put the supers in the freezer or fumigate them.

Honey house and super storage is a special problem for control of SHB. Paradichlorobenzene (PDB) is reported to discourage SHB from infesting stored comb. Honey in the comb is best left on the honeybees until it can be extracted right away (less than five days). For the small beekeeper, empty supers can be put in the freezer for 24 hrs to kill all stages of SHB.

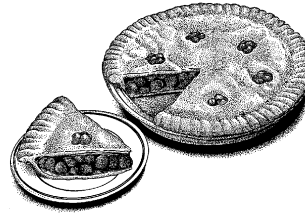
SHB larvae are sensitive to low humidity. If the humidity can be lowered in the super storage area to below 50% SHB can't reproduce. This low humidity may be quite a challenge in North Carolina! Dehumidifiers have been used by some with success. Keep capings and debris processed and cleaned up to discourage SHB.

Regrettably SHB is in North Carolina to stay. SHB is considered a nuisance by some and a serious pest by others. The distinction is unnecessary. Everyone agrees they are an unwelcome import to North Carolina. With smart management and timely treatments their impact can be minimized.

NCSBA Proposed 2004 Budget

Income

Member Dues	\$ 12,000
Advertising	1,975
Spring Meeting	3,700
Summer Meeting	7,500
Designated Gifts	700
Other	1,230
	=====
Total Income	\$ 27,405



Honey Pecan Pie

By Betty Jean Foust

Winner of the Pie Recipe

Category at Summer Conference

1 cup honey
 3 well-beaten eggs
 2 tablespoons sugar
 ¼ cup nonfat dry milk
 ¼ cup butter
 1 ½ cup pecans
 ½ teaspoon vanilla
 One 9 inch unbaked pastry shell

Mix honey with well-beaten eggs. Cream sugar, dry milk & butter. Add to honey mixture. Stir in pecans and vanilla. Pour into an unbaked 9 inch crust and bake for one hour at 375 degrees.

Expenses

Publications	
Bee Buzz	3,000
Calendar	2,500
Yellow Book	2,500
Postage, mailings	1,610
Member Support	1,901
NCSBA Support	650
Projects	
Agricultural Fund	500
NC Zoo	700
State Fair Exhibits	175
Publicity	868
Exec. Committee	500
Special Project	1,550
Spring Meeting	1,900
Summer Meeting	7,400
Administration	
Bank Fees	48
Subscriptions	260
	=====
Total Expenses	\$ 27,405

Beginners' Course In Moore County

The Moore County Chapter of the North Carolina Beekeepers Association (NCSBA), is offering a beginners' Beekeeping Course March 8 -April 19 (Mondays 7-9 pm) at the Moore County Agricultural Center, 707 Pinehurst Ave, Carthage.

Pre-registration for the course and a \$15 fee is required. Deadline for sign-up is March 1. For more information call Hugh Madison, 910-281-4401 or e-mail at hdpymadison@pinehurst.net."

New Membership Card

In mid year 2003 we started issuing a different personal NCSBA membership card when you join. The new card is pocket size, i.e., 2 by 3 ½ inches, and has your personal membership information: your name, address, and local chapter. The fourth line is your receipt. It contains your I D number, check number, date you paid your annual dues and the signature of the Treasurer.

The Helpful Beekeeper:

Gaston County's

L. E. "Moon" Mullins

By Dan Kirby

When "Moon" Mullins bought a piece of property on New Hope Road in Gaston County and built his machine shop there about 20 years ago, someone suggested it would also be a good site for a bee yard. That sounded like a good idea, so he started one with three hives.

Growing up in West Virginia, Moon had watched his father tend bees but that avocation never appealed to him as a child. By the time he had learned enough about bees to take care of his own hives, those in his boyhood town had been pretty well wiped out by mites and poor management. So, Moon loaded up three of his own hives and hauled them back to West Virginia. He organized a workshop for area beekeepers and taught them modern practices of good beekeeping, especially the correct and essential use of medications.

As result of Moon's efforts beekeeping is once again thriving in McDowell County, West Virginia.

He has brought that "can-do" and "will-do" attitude to Gaston County and the surrounding area where he has willingly given numerous presentations on beekeeping to both adult and school groups and where he has taught numerous classes on the subject.

Moon has donated lumber for building observation hives that were distributed by the state association. He has participated in Career Days in the public schools on beekeeping and machine shop work.

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Charles Heatherly, Editor**

Beekeeper of the Year

L. E. "Moon" Mullins

Three years ago he mentored a new beekeeper who is now our association's vice president.

Once he had 65 hives but that number is smaller now due to mites, bad weather and other challenges.

Moon says his worst beekeeping day occurred a few years ago when a truck load of nuc boxes fell off his truck. On another occasion he was backing his truck up to load a hive while being directed by a bystander. There was a mis-communication and Moon backed into the hive, knocking it over. Everybody scattered and Moon drove the truck back to the house before realizing he had lost his glasses. When things settled down, he went back to the spilled hive and found his glasses. He had run over them with the truck.

Moon Mullins is deeply committed to the proper use of chemical in the control of bee pests. In both his personal practices and especially in teaching beekeeping to others he stresses cleanliness and good housekeeping. He is always helpful to others willing to learn from him, especially beginners.

For these reasons he was named North Carolina's "Beekeeper of the Year at the NCSBA Summer Conference.

Agenda

Tentative Spring 2004 NCSBA Meeting

Craven Community College, New Bern

Accommodations: Hampton Inn, 200 Hotel Dr.

New Bern, NC 28562 Ph 252-637- 2111

Friday, March 12

Noon—7:00: Registration

1:00: Apiculture Program at NCSU; A Time of Transition ,Dr. David Tarpy

1:45: Proper Use and Management of Pesticides, Dr. Tom Glasgow

2:30—5:00: Workshops

Leadership (Ed Buchanan,)

Skeps (TBA)

Queen Rearing (Dr. David Tarpy, Ken Pipes)

Soaps, Cosmetics, and Other Non-food Hive Products (Ivy Reid)

Preparing Honey for Show (TBA)

Apitherapy (Ann Harmon)

Creamed Honey (TBA)

In the Apiary (NCDA & CS Apiary Inspectors)

Practical Test

Written Test (Master Beekeepers)

Introduction to Bee Breeding (Dr. Marla Spivak)

5:00—7:30: Supper

7:30—8:15: (Dr. Marla Spivak) Topic TBA

8:15: Stories; Tall but True (Contest)

Saturday, March 13

Morning

8:30—9:15: Honey bee breeding program at UGA (Nabor Mendizabal)

9:15—9:45 Open Dialogue with NCSBA (J.D. Foust)

9:45—10:15 Apiary Inspection Program (NCDA&CS)

10:15—10:45 Break

10:45—11:30 Golden Leaf Grant Project (Dr. David Tarpy)

11:30—12:15noon: (Dr. Marla Spivak)

12:15—1:30: Lunch

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8:30—9:15: Reporting on the progress of the honey bee breeding program
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Afternoon: Workshops

**Hotel Information for the 2004 Spring Meeting
March 12, 2003**

Hotel: Hampton-New Bern
200 Hotel Drive
New Bern, NC 28562
Phone (252) 637-2111

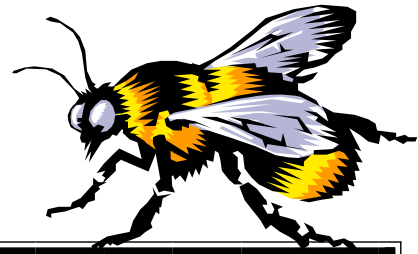
Special Conference Rate
\$60 plus tax for 1-4 people/night

Cut off date is February 25, 2004.

Availability of rooms or rate cannot be guaranteed after that date.

Rooms are being held under the group name North Carolina Beekeepers Association.
Individuals must make their own reservation. . Be sure to ask for beekeeper rate when making reservation.

Telling The Bees



Raymond Lowell Perry

Raymond Lowell Perry, 64, of Albemarle died November 23, 2003. Lowell was a 1957 graduate of Troy High School. In 1961, he graduated from UNC Chapel Hill where he was a member of the Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity. He was an eagle Scout . He served in the Army Reserves from 1961- 1967.

For twenty-one years he owned and operated Perry Furniture Company. Later, he worked in textiles until he retired to develop a business from his beekeeping hobby. He developed Uwarrie Mountain Honey Company. He was a member of Stanly County Beekeepers and the North Carolina Beekeepers Association. He served as a director and member of the NCSBA Zoo Committee. Lowell was a Master Craftsman Bee Keeper.

Irene H. McIver

Mrs. Irene H. McIver. 87, of Friends Home, Greensboro died Saturday, December 6, 2003 at Moses Cone Hospital. She was the widow of past NCSBA President William B. McIver, Sr.

Robert Lee "R. L" Baker

Robert Lee Baker, 68. Died Thursday, December 18, 2003 at his home in Ruffin, NC. He was the retired owner of Baker's Auto Service. He was a member of Oregon Hill Volunteer Fire Dept., Rockingham County Bee Keepers, and the Cattleman's Association.

Pate F. Parsons

Pate Parsons, for many years a beekeeper in Richmond County, died on Tuesday, December 9, 2003, after an extended illness. Members of the Richmond County Bee Keepers Association and the members Ellerbe Civitan Club were Honorary pallbearers.

Born on March 24, 1930, Mr. Parsons was a bee keeper all of his adult life. He was a long-time member of the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association, and he and his wife, Nellie, consistently attended the NCSBA Conventions for many years. During his younger years, Pate had one of the largest apiaries in Richmond County. His "honey-house" was a familiar spot for many local beekeepers who received help from Pate in extracting their honey as well as extracting his own. "Pate Parsons' Honey" was a familiar commodity in Richmond County, especially in the Ellerbe area. Pate Parsons, who loved his honey bees perhaps as much or more than anyone in the state, will be missed by his fellow beekeepers of Richmond County and his friends in NCSBA.

The Master BeeKeeper Program **Update**

Over the past two years, the NCSBA and North Carolina State University (NCSU) have restructured the Master Beekeeper Program (MBP) in a joint effort.

The MBP Committee, working with Dr. John Ambrose and Dr. Mike Stanghellini created a plan, whereby the NCSBA would assume a greater responsibility in administering the MBP. Together, we set goals that would uphold the integrity of the MBP, enlist the help of Master/Master Craftsman Beekeepers, help with Bee Schools and Beekeeping Workshops, create a Study Guide for the MBP, offer testing for the MBP and maintain local records. To reach beekeepers participating in the program, we established teams by regional areas. Below you will find a list of Regional Coordinators and designated Regional Representatives. This listing, along with MBP requirements, study guide and test schedule is also available on the NCSBA web site. All chapters and individuals are encouraged to contact a representative in their area concerning questions pertaining to the MBP.

The MBP Committee continues to work closely with Dr. David Tarpy, Extension Apiculturist, and NCSU. Dr. Tarpy will handle development of the program, evaluating all tests, maintaining MBP permanent records and awarding of program certificates. Presently Dr. Tarpy is working on the transfer of existing MBP records to a database, developing beginning and advanced beekeeping course outlines and setting minimum standards for local chapter Bee Schools.

The NCSBA, MBP Committee and designated representatives will continue to be a liaison between local chapters, individual beekeepers and NCSU on matters concerning the MBP. We will continue to help local chapters on MBP requirements, make course outlines available, help set up Bee Schools and administer written and practical tests. Testing will be offered at regional Bee Schools, NCSBA Spring and Summer Meetings and in the fall of the year, if the need arises. The State Bee Inspectors may assist in the giving of the Practical Test for the Certified Beekeeper Level.

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Sally Ellis – (828) 738-4048

REGION #1

Edd Buchanan (828) 669-8936

REGION #5

Moon Mullins (704) 825-3232

Dan Kirby (828) 728-4301

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Bill Smith – (704) 982-1861

REGION #2

George Byrum (336) 629-9502

Jim Barnes (336) 924-9182

REGION #6

Ellis Hardison (910) 948-4121

Jeffery Knight (704) 764-3731

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Janno Daniel – (910) 572-1015

REGION #3

Don Moore (336) 584-3195

Janno Daniel (910) 572-1015

REGION #4

John Brittle (252) 637-6489

Art Halstead (757) 488-7617