

Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association

Newsletter February 2017

Upcoming LCBA Meeting: Monday, February 20, 2017

The guest presenter at our February 2017 meeting will be Rick Sutton, a commercial beekeeper from Lancaster, KY, and current President of Kentucky State Beekeepers Association. The topic will be all about **using double screen boards with 2 queens** to split hives and prevent swarming.

Doors open at 6.00pm for informal discussion and meeting registration. There will be a brief business meeting at 6.30pm, and Rick Sutton's presentation will start at 7.00pm.

LCBA meetings are free of charge and open to the public. These meetings are a great opportunity to meet with fellow beekeepers in the area.

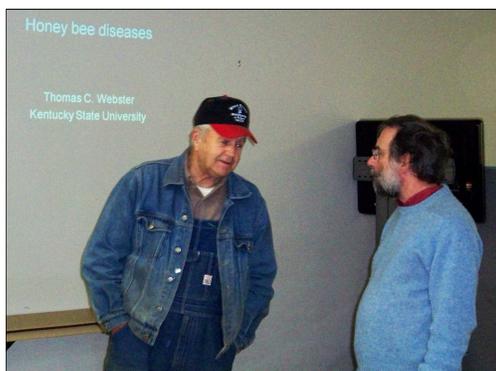
Venue: Basement meeting room at the Pulaski County Extension Office, 28 Parkway Drive, Somerset KY 42502.



KY State Apiarist Dr Tammy Horn Potter gave a 2-hour presentation on Honey Bee Biology

Welcome to the class of 2017!

The first session of the Pulaski/Lincoln County Beginning Beekeeping School was held on February 9, 2017. We wish the class participants much success in their beekeeping ventures. See page 4 for a full report.



Honorary membership

In terms of the LCBA Bylaws, honorary LCBA membership is granted to members when they reach the age of 80. Veachel Yadon is the first LCBA member to receive honorary membership, and we are proud to have him as a member of the Association.

Veachel joined LCBA in 2008, 4 years after LCBA was chartered. He is still keeping bees (4 hives), but his sons do most of the work now and he supervises.

Veachel (left) chats to Tom Webster at the first LCBA bee school in 2010

A reminder: 2017 LCBA dues are due!

It's time to renew your annual LCBA membership! LCBA membership costs just \$10 per year per beekeeping operation. Not yet a member of LCBA? New members are welcome, and we look forward to having you join our beekeeping community.

Membership applications are available at LCBA meetings: simply fill in the form and hand it with your subscription dues to LCBA Treasurer Dan Crockett.

Membership application forms are also available on the LCBA website, www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com

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Help Fight the Mite!

Kentucky Queen Bee Breeders Association wants your help

I am working on a project with Dwight Wells from Heartland Honey Bee Breeders Co-op. We are checking on hives that have survived without treatments or that are longer than 5 years without requeening.

The number one killer of honey bees is the varroa destructor. This mite is a member of the spider family and spreads viruses throughout the honey bee community. We are looking for honey bees with chewing behavior towards mites. How you would be part of this, is to contact me and share your bee story. I will provide you with a mite board or boards to check your hives. You will then preserve that board keeping correct data on which hive, date and time that board was in, and return it to me. I will collect mites off of the board and study them under a microscope. If we find chewing behavior we would like to graft from that hive. We will provide you with queens or queen cells from that hive after successful grafting.



Dorothey Morgan

If you think you have honey bees that fit this, please give me a call: 606-871-7300.

- *Dorothey Morgan, President
Kentucky Queen Bee Breeders Association Inc.*

Rearing Queen Bees is in the news

In the January edition of Beelines, the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association (KSBA) newsletter, KY State Apiarist Dr. Tammy Horn Potter writes:

"In my opinion, Kentucky is well-positioned to be a good queen production state. Beekeepers can use good quality queens to address a lot of health problems, if American foulbrood is not the problem. Requeening will help a hive deal with chalkbrood and sacbrood, break Varroa mite reproduction cycles, etc."

In her accompanying email of January 18 2017 to KSBA members, Dr. Horn Potter notes:

"We also have a new association focused on queen bee production, Kentucky Queen Bee Breeders Association. There is a membership form attached in the January Beeline. To paraphrase David Davis, one of the directors, there is so much momentum behind beekeeping now, we have a lot of work to keep up with it all!"

Beelines is available on the KSBA website:

www.ksbabeeking.org

Dwight Wells' Sustainable Queen Rearing Workshop April 7 and 8, 2017

Guest speaker is Dwight Wells, who is from Heartland Honey Bee Breeders Co-op in Ohio. Dwight works closely with Purdue University and has a wealth of experience in beekeeping and rearing queen bees.

This workshop is designed to train people to provide hygienic queens to all regions of Kentucky.

Date: April 7 and 8, 2017.

Venue: Pulaski Extension Office, Parkway Drive, Somerset, KY 42503.

Fee: \$75.00

Further details on the workshop and a registration form are available on the LCBA website,

www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com

Contact: Dorothey Morgan
email: lavenderlanefarms@gmail.com
Phone 606-871-7300, cell 606-802-1491

New regulations regarding antibiotics came into effect January 1, 2017

New regulations covering the use of antibiotics in beehives come into effect in January 2017. Information on these new regulations is posted on the LCBA website at <http://lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com/resources/>

Report on the LCBA January 2017 meeting

Winter Feeding Strategies

The first LCBA meeting of 2017 was a relaxed and convivial affair, with 20 attendees. The educational topic for the evening was **Winter Feeding Strategies**, presented by Ray Tucker.

Ray explained how important it was that the bees have sufficient food stores to keep them going through the rest of the winter. A solid cake of sugar candy or fondant is the most common way to feed bees in the winter, and Ray demonstrated the sugar/water mix that he uses (12 lbs of sugar to 1 quart of water). This mixture is heated to 240F, then poured into pans to cool and set.

Tony Saylor took charge of heating the sugar solution, while Ray Tucker talked about various nutritional and health additives that he puts into his bee candy. Ray passed these additives around as he described them, so we could all see, touch and smell them: among these were a pollen substitute; Honey Bee Healthy; lecithin; essences of peppermint, menthol and lemon grass. These ingredients were added to the heating sugar solution, to make a true 'Power Candy for Bees'.

While the candy mixture was being heated, an informal round table discussion ensued as to the relative pros and cons of these and other nutritional additives for bees.

Could you feed honey to your bees? Yes, as long as it came from your own hives, to eliminate the risk of foulbrood contamination from other apiaries. This led to a discussion on the identification and treatment of foulbrood in the hive. If foulbrood is suspected in the hive, contact Dr Tammy Horn Potter immediately for further testing. Ray noted that you could be alerted to foulbrood contamination by the smell: foulbrood really does smell bad.

What was the status regarding using antibiotics to treat foulbrood? Ray Tucker pointed out that the antibiotic terramycin is used to treat foulbrood, but must not be used as a prophylactic. In terms of the recent Veterinary Feed Directive, terramycin may not be purchased without a prescription from a veterinarian.

Could you feed home-made strawberry preserve containing only fruit and sugar, to bees? There had been a report on the internet about bees making multi-colored honey after feeding on the colored coating around peanut candies. The consensus was: don't risk it!

This informal discussion was enjoyable as well as being interesting and useful. There are some very knowledgeable beekeepers among the LCBA members, and we were privileged to hear their views and share their expertise. The lessons were clear: the health of our bees is paramount, and research is always essential before trying new treatments.



Mike Gomes (standing) demonstrates the small hive beetle trap. Also pictured: LCBA President Ginger Renaker and Vice-President Mike Wooton

Controlling small hive beetles

At the November 2016 meeting, Mike Gomes had briefly described his method for controlling small hive beetles in his hives using a proprietary beetle trap. Mike had thoughtfully brought this beetle trap along with him to the January meeting, so that he could demonstrate how the trap fitted into the base of a hive, along with some innovations he had made himself to the set-up to improve effectiveness and ease of use.

The beetle trap consists of a plastic tray into which some cooking oil is poured. The tray is covered with a plastic grid which has gaps large enough to allow the beetles to crawl into the dark interior of the tray, but too small for the bees to get through. The beetles, Mike explained, are attracted to the dark space and to the pollen and wax debris that falls into the tray from the frames above. The beetles cannot escape the tray, and are killed as they get covered in oil.

Mike shared that he quickly learned not to put too much oil in the tray, as this resulted in a big mess when he tried to remove the tray to clean it out. Thanks, Mike. We'll all learn from your experience!

With both Ray Tucker's informative formal presentation on making the Power Candy, and the informal discussion about controlling small hive beetles, this meeting was just the kind of forum from which beekeepers can learn so much.

Good Start for 2017 Lincoln/Pulaski Beginning Beekeeping School

The first session of the 2017 school was held at the Pulaski Extension Office with 30 of the 38 participants present. Almost half of the group present were couples and even a delightful 8th month old baby boy was in the group. Talk about starting them early to learn about beekeeping!

Manuals on Beginning Beekeeping were passed out to the participants which had been printed by the Pulaski Extension Office and compiled by LCBA members earlier in the week.

Beth Wilson from the Pulaski Extension Office welcomed the group to the school. Katherine White, a member of the Lincoln County Beekeepers Association, spoke about their monthly meeting time on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00. Mike Wooton, vice president of LCBA welcomed participants and stressed the importance of joining a group of beekeepers for support. He announced that LCBA met on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00.

Kentucky State Apiarist, Tammy Horn Potter, presented a detailed program on honey bee biology with 70 slides! Even the most experienced beekeepers learned much from her wealth of knowledge during the 2 hour presentation. In addition to honey bee biology she talked about the latest information on queen rearing, research,

and pesticide concerns. Some of what she stressed was:

Rotate frames of wax out of the hive on a regular basis. Do not keep wax in the hives too long, promoting disease.

Drone mating areas are being affected by pesticide spraying resulting in sterilization of both queens and drones.

Varroa mite control is one of the most important activities to keep hives alive.

Beginning beekeepers should start with nucs rather than package bees and queens. There is no comparison in the success rate of nucs over package bees.

Join a bee club.

The next session of the bee school will be held at the Lincoln County Extension Office on Thursday, February 23 at 6:00. Laura Rogers will present a program on Honey bee Pests and Diseases.

- Pat Rizenbergs

Further photos of the event are available on the LCBA website,

Bee news from Casey County

In late January, with a forecast of several days of cool weather, we took the plunge and relocated our 6 bee hives. We were working on the premise that few bees would venture out of their hives in cold weather, so the relocation would be less disruptive to the bees.

While the original bee yard was in a nice sunny but sheltered location, the surrounding trees had grown at an impressive rate and were now threatening to shade out the hives. Plus the location on the edge of woods at the top of a ravine seemed a little too risky to us should a bear or two wake up feeling hungry.

People move hives all the time—from State to State, from one side of the country to the other, and the bees seemingly adapt perfectly well to their new situation. However, moving hives just a few hundred yards could be more of a problem: the bees tend to fly back to their previous location, and then not be able to find their new bee yard. Some strategizing was needed.

The night before the move, we taped up all of the hive entrances, and strapped the hives together securely with ratchet straps. The following morning we loaded the hives onto the trailer, transported them up to the new bee yard, and settled the hives onto their new stands. A 'fence' of dried brush stalks was placed in

front of each hive, in the hope that this would encourage the emerging bees to reprogram their GPS units and form a clear idea of where their new homes are.

We kept the bees locked in for a couple of days, knowing that they would have sufficient airflow through their mesh screen boards. When the weather warmed up, however, we figured the bees would need to get out for their 'bathroom breaks'. We removed the tape over the entrances and stood back in trepidation: Would the bees all come flooding out, fly back to their old bee yard and be lost for ever? Thankfully, no. We watched the bees emerge from their hives and take careful reconnoitering flights through the brush screens and around their hives, and breathed sighs of relief when we saw the bees fly right back into their hives again.

Not all of the bees made it: some did indeed go back to their old haunts, and a couple of dozen died there. Our observation was, however, that most of the adventurous bees had safely rejoined their hives in the new location.

-Hilary Forsyth