

SABA Meeting Minutes

Meeting – Monday, 8/26/13

By: Donna Victors

Officers Present:

Steve and Donna Victors

Tom Elliott

Ty Tobias

Treasurer's Report:

We have \$6625.05 in our treasury. We have no bills to pay.

\$2500 is ear-marked for the "rainy day" fund. We have about \$4000 left for projects or equipment improvements or additions. The old club that joined ours has an observation hive project they need to work on for the Fair, which will cost about \$500. Tang made a motion that they speed up the project! The Fair's observation hive is too cold! Tom E. seconded it! He said they needed a push! But help getting it done may be better!

Correspondence:

Speaker for 3rd grade classroom on September 5th. They would love to have a demo at the Alaska Jewish Campus, 117 E 35th Ave, ANC. Contact Stacye Westerlin, the Admin Assistant, at 279-1200 or rabbi@alaskajewishcampus.or, Rabbi Greenberg.

Gwen Hill wants a speaker for her fifth grade class out in the Valley. Dawn C said she spoke with her already.

The Western Apicultural Society of North America will be have a conference on Oct 16-19 in Santa Fe, NM. The theme is working together to preserve, protect and promote our pollinators through their relationship to food, security, health and environment. The fee is \$145 for the full conference or \$60 per day. Half days are \$30. Contact Fran Bach at 509-573-4245, febach3@gmail.com.

Steve read from an old beekeepers book entitled, Bee-Keeping for Women, Bee-Keepers Ten-Cent Library—No. 18, The A.I. Root Co., Medina, Ohio, September, 1906.

"The ordinary every-day work of the apiary is especially suited women—the gentle handling of combs, clipping and caging of queens, and every phase of queen-rearing. How many beautiful queens are killed in the process of grafting, in the handling of cells, when clipping and when caging, because they are clumsily or nervously handled by a man who is addicted to tobacco and other nerve-wracking vices."

"By using a smoker, a veil and gloves, one is thoroughly protected from stings. In a few months, the fear of the average woman in substituted by intimacy; and what she once regarded as almost unapproachable monsters are treated like pets."

"True, man has achieved much in the beekeeping world; but the average man is too phlegmatic to know very much about bees. It takes the keen susceptible mind of a woman to probe into and discover the mysteries of the hive."

"What we, as a nation, are losing physically, mentally, and morally by shutting off ourselves from Nature and her treasures can hardly be imagined. 'Nature is man's teacher; she unfolds her treasures to his search; unseals his eye, illumines his mind, and purifies his heart; an influence breathes from all the sights and sounds of her existence.'" E.J.P.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

This year's annual end-of-the-season picnic will be on Monday, September 23rd. Ty explained that in years past, the Club supplies the steaks and drinks. Tom E moved to buy them again. Tang seconded it. Passed. Ty will get with Terry Turner to determine what is needed in regards to supplies. Ty said that last year the Club spent about \$600, and we had 20-25 steaks left over. He said he'll pick up more burgers and hotdogs this year.

We will need help with setting up at 5:30 and cleaning up at the end. There will be door prizes from Alaska Wildflower Honey; the group told Steve to make them "good" ones!

Bring a salad or other side dish to share with the group.

We need a volunteer or two to help collect dues at the picnic. Ty will have the membership list printed out. The present members just need to verify the information is correct and pay their \$20. New members will fill out a form and pay their \$20. Checks need to be made out to SABA.

SABA Membership Dues at Picnic

Fair:

Tang and Ty judged the moisture, taste, etc. of the honeys this year. There were 57 entries. The entry names are all covered up by Dawn C. Tang & Ty separated the honeys into as many different categories as they could; that way there are as many winners as possible.

Tang & Ty said that they'll work on an instructive sheet on how to prepare Fair entries. Next year, they won't accept entries that are NOT in queenline jars.

The group said the Club should have queenline jars available. Steve will place an order for jars in the spring. Maybe someone holding the extractors could have queenline jars. The group suggested handing two queenline jars out with each membership!

Suggestion: Need fliers or something to give to people regarding SABA. Dawn and Jack said that we were not allowed to give out at demonstration booths, but we are able to do that at the Honey Booth.

SABA HONEY BOOTH: Jack A. stated that 18 people brought product to the booth. Sales are going very smoothly this year. Ty explained that this account is separate than the Club

account. Jack talked about the price we pay for the sales booth along with the low maintenance. People seek out the booth and the Yellow Path is one of the most travelled. The booth is in an ideal location. We pay \$1000 for the space.

People asked about honey prices and profits for selling honey at the fair. 70-80% of the selling price is returned to whoever brought it in. You get a better price for your honey at the Fair. They've been selling honey for \$15 a pound or \$1 an ounce. \$40 per quart. There are two additional honey sellers at the Fair this year.

Comb honey sells well in clear plastic clam shells. Jack has them available. One is able to purchase them from Carrs' salad bar. Jack sells them for 20 cents apiece. He also said that the one pound honey is the most popular size along with Dawn's little honey bears.

The main thrust of the Demo Booth: Dawn Cowan said that the observation hive is the most important item to improve for next year. The question was asked about needing a display cabinet as we have money for improving people's education regarding bees. Dawn said that new frame stands would be nice to have.

There was a suggestion to increase the prize monies next year.

Need nicer equipment for display?

The pollen trap was a hit.

A digital picture frame, an 8x10, would be ideal to have going of various bee related photos from the group. These come on sale regularly around Thanksgiving time. Julie Trudeau will look into the frames for purchasing a couple for the 2014 Fair.

Extractor Repair: Discussion about the missing and broken parts of the various extractors in Wasilla and Anchorage. The Eagle River extractor needs a new lid. Steve said he sent a new extractor out to Palmer as there was none for that area. The group suggested that all the extractors be returned so that they may be repaired to good working order; and if we needed to replace them, then we needed to replace them.

Julie T suggested purchasing bases for the Club extractors so the extractors are balanced during the process of extracting honey.

Discussion took place on the Time magazine article regarding bees. Hands were shown of who saw the bee movie at Anchorage's Bear Tooth.

Wintering Hives:

Is there a correct number of bees to have for successful overwintering? Most bees are summer foragers and will die shortly. You want young bees going into winter; so the queen needs to be laying eggs as much as possible.

Tom Elliott starts feeding about 100 lbs of sugar as soon as he pulls the honey. He winters outside in three boxes. The top two are full of sugar and the bottom one is full of brood by the time winter arrives.

Steve V feeds but not heavily in August the queen will still lay eggs. In Sept, he feeds heavily two gallons a day to have a hive weight good for winter.

Discussion on where the queen should be and brood placement. A person may need to add a super on the bottom for the queen to lay eggs.

Feed in August the same as in spring so the queen is still stimulated to lay eggs. Pour 25 lb bag of sugar into a 5-gallon bucket and fill with hot water. In September, the strategy alters. Use 25 lbs sugar plus more so there's still sugar in the bottom.

Bees don't do well going through excluders in winter. In a double queen system, most of the bees go to the top leaving the bottom queen unattended except for a handful of workers. The queen excluder catches all the dead bees which cut off the air circulation.

There is no "ideal" set-up. Every winter is different. Each strategy has an element of value to it. Wintering indoors and outdoors strategies are different. Don't insulate too soon. Regardless of which, add a pollen patty on top in January to encourage the queen to lay eggs.

It is important to have the bees have all the food they need to get through winter BEFORE winter arrives. Once the bees are clustered up and cold, they won't be able to break cluster to take the sugar water. If they run out of food in January, candy will only extend their lives for a few weeks—not months.

Most of the time, the most common reason of not being successful in overwintering is lack of food. Try to get them fed up to weight as quickly as you can.

40 degrees is the ideal temperature for surrounding air for overwintering. Hive and the Honeybee has an article on this. Cold stresses the bees. However, if it is warmer, then there is the difficulty of waste products, eating more food, and increased metabolic rates. At 40 degrees, the bees will come out of the hive by crawling out and will crawl to the light. It is important to have air circulation in the hive. Root cellaring of bees has been done a lot in this area. The hive needs to have an upper and a bottom entrance. Excess moisture is often a problem.

How does one transport a hive? Transport them inside. Staple screens to the openings. Once the bees are placed at the wintering location, the screens are removed to allow the dead bees to be thrown out. If the wintering area is inside, red lights should be used. You will always see 3-4 bees crawling around. Foam hives will have more bees moving around. Those hives do the best in Steve's wintering conex.

Tom E. uses 4" of Styrofoam. At 10 degrees the bees are not clustered. They are more active and use more stores. He provides a 2"x1/4" opening at the top and bottom. Styrofoam at the top is a good idea. He usually has a 3" dead space on the bottom below the bottom entrance. This area will be filled with dead bees but will not plug the entrance air flow. Placing a 2x4 frame provides the dead space.

After the first part of August, most beekeepers said they didn't manipulate frames. A Homer beekeeper has an extra box of feed in case his bees have burned through the feed in early spring. Even a medium box works as the cluster won't move sideways to get the food. Add a box only on WARM days! It's important to keep the hive out of the wind. The southside of the house gives the best protection for wintering outside. If you want to add a box, take the box

inside until it's warmed up. Then place it on top of the box of bees. This may be a good strategy if they're out of food in March. Don't take out frames or move the cluster—this is a disaster!

The inner cover can be notched to provide a ventilation hole approximately 2" x 1/2". A circular hole works too. It's shape is not important. You don't want a large opening on the bottom or mice may enter and destroy the hive.

Jack Anderson discussed how used straw in top of the hive as read in Canadian magazine. It works well to hold the moisture and allows the moisture to evaporate when the temperature warms.

Discussion on the middle hole in the inner covers. The inner hole is only meant for a Porter bee escape. Steve uses only solid inner covers. He covers the hole with duct tape except to feed.

Steve moves bees into his conex around the end of October or whenever there are no longer any warm days for cleansing flights.

Frame feeders may be left in but it is best to not have syrup in them. The hive top feeders should be removed and replaced with inner cover and lid. By springtime, it'll be a stinky moldy mess if left full. Pollen patties are applied in August and September for extra protein. Steve doesn't put pollen patties on until two weeks before cleansing flights to give a protein load with additional gut load. They cannot hold it for more than a month= big mess in the hive.

Isn't it remarkable how it was with our lousy spring and then to have the bees build up and produce such great crops this year? Pollen patties help the bees brood build.

Beginners should plan on failing the first few years. Then you'll learn and will find out what works for your area. All beekeeping is LOCAL!

Meeting adjourned at 8:30; there were several door prizes

End of Season Picnic!

The end of the season means another wonderful picnic! SABA will provide steaks, burgers and hotdogs along with drinks. Bring a dish to share. Don't forget to bring a serving utensil marked with your name in case it is left behind. The entire family is invited!

Attendance (who signed in)

Steve & Donna Victors

Ty Tobias

Norm & Jeannette Trudell

Tom Elliott

Mike Fry

Dale Shillington

Judy Cadra

Darrell & Heather Bond

Kenn Barnett
Todd & Terry Turner
Kelly M. Smith
Rick Falk
Josh & Amanda Michie
Michael & Maddy Mott

