

Spilling the Honey

GBA Monthly Newsletter

Editors: Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman

October 2014



Winning Queen Bee Photo in First Annual Queen Photo Contest. The entries were judged at the Fall meeting by members of the Board of Directors. This photo was taken by Deborah Sasser of the Sasserfrass Hill Bee Farm in Augusta, Georgia in May, 2013. Deborah won this featured spot for her photo, an award certificate, and one year of GBA membership for this blue ribbon photo.

President's Message

I want to thank everyone again so much for your confidence in me and the work we are doing with the GBA while keeping me on for another year as your President. Once again, I also want to thank those who have stood with me and have worked so hard to keep us rolling ahead: Mary Cahill Roberts, RoseAnne Fielder, Andy Bailey, Slade Jarrett, Brutz English, Steve Prince, Steve Cobb, Linda Tillman, Gina Gallucci, and Bill Owens. We have our work cut out for us as we move into the coming year.

It was great seeing so many of you at the fall meeting and getting your positive comments to the wonderful speakers we had. We will continue to work on the speakers/topics list that was generated with your input. Congrats also to Jay Parsons for winning "Best in Show" for his Honey beer entry. Lake Country once again had the best attendance for any club, and we want to thank all the Lake Country members for stepping up and hosting this meeting.

During the meeting of the members I gave a “State of the Colony” kind of report to let you know what we actually did this past year. If you were not in attendance, here it is.....

State of the Colony Address

As we finish 2014 and move on with Father Time into 2015 I would like to inform you of the things that we have accomplished this year.

We sponsored and conducted the first annual Honey Show at the Georgia National Fair with Cindy Hodges winning “Best in Show” in October 2013. Although we had less than 20 entrants and we limited the show to extracted honey only, we feel that it was a success and are trying it again this year. October 3rd is the show date.

I appointed a fourth Director (Slade Jarrett) to help cover the northeast side of the state. This increase in our Directors was necessary since our numbers are growing and the actual number of clubs in that area of Georgia continues to increase. At the fall meeting in Milledgeville, we voted to make that a permanent position giving us four Directors with two year overlaps.

I appointed Mary Cahill-Roberts, our Vice President, to fill the seat on the Board of Directors of EAS. Her position there is a 4 year term. I know that she plans to share with you the EAS happenings and her experience at the EAS meeting in Kentucky this past June.

Brutz English got the Facebook page up and running right away after the September meeting last year. We continue to have a lot of hits on it and new folks are constantly showing up.

We created the Georgia Beekeepers Ambassadors program. The purpose of this is to recognize folks who have worked so hard with the Georgia Beekeepers Association, either as an officer, administrator or public representative. To be selected for this honor, you must have dedicated much time and personal sacrifice to the public education of the importance of Honey Bees and mentored beekeepers throughout Georgia. There are no official duties with this position, just continue to be the "Ambassador" you have always been by representing Georgia Beekeepers with professionalism, pride and enthusiasm. I want to congratulate once again the following Plank Holders: Fred Rossman, Keith Fielder, Bob Binnie, Jesse McCurdy, Evelyn Williams and P.N. Williams.

Early on the morning of November 3, 2013, a semi-truck loaded with honeybees overturned at exit #185 on I-75 in the City of Forsyth, GA. Several hundred colonies of honeybees came off of the truck and were strewn for hundreds of feet along the southbound lanes of I-75. As many as three southbound lanes of traffic had to be shut down as hundreds of thousands of unhappy and confused bees clouded the sky. Local fire and police were ill equipped to handle this type of situation. GBA Northern District Director, Brutz English, of nearby Barnesville, GA, was among the first beekeepers contacted by the Forsyth Police Department for assistance. Brutz got the call for assistance out to a number of local beekeepers in the area, and responders from the GBA and the Henry County Beekeepers Club were soon on the scene helping to sort out and clean up the mess. The salvage and clean-up

took over 14 hours. I am currently working with state officials to establish a “Bee HAZMAT” policy for the state so that local fire departments won’t just hose the bees down the drain. I will discuss this further as we develop the program.

Marybeth and I attended the American Bee Federation meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in January. I was overwhelmed by the information flow and reported on that in the February Newsletter.

Our spring meeting was held in Columbus in February and hosted by the Chattahoochee Beekeepers led by Paul Berry. We had a lot of wonderful comments from you and we are constantly working to improve our seminars with hard work and creativity. The worst comment was that it was “standing room only” because we did not anticipate as many attendees as we had. Our spring meetings have not been so well attended in the past and you can bet it will not happen again on my watch. Our Keynote speaker, Dr Jamie Ellis and the other speakers did a wonderful job.

We revised and put into policy the 4-H and Junior Beekeeping programs into one program. With the assistance of Keith Fielder and Arch Smith (the state 4-H Director), we re-worked the 4H program and integrated it in with the new Junior Beekeeping Policy. We discussed this at the meeting and voted on a by-law change that will affect financing this policy.

We have established some great lines of communication with you by keeping the web site up to date, our Facebook page going, and our “Spilling the Honey” Newsletter that should receive the Edward R. Murrow Journalism award for excellence. Furthermore, I have created the Presidents Council. That is, established open lines of communication with all club presidents (email and phone) and conduct the Presidents Council break out session that we intend to continue for all future GBA gatherings. And the newest is “Twitter”. Linda Tillman is determined to get me into the 21st century. As soon as I learn how to twitter, I’ll be tweeting you!

We as members of the GBA represented you at numerous meetings throughout the year; such as ABF, EAS, Young Harris, 4-H Banquet, FFA, GA Ag day at the Capitol, meetings with State Representatives, State Beehive inspectors, State Pollinators meeting, Former President Carter, and more that I am sure to inadvertently omit. We know that there are in excess of 2,500 beekeepers in Georgia and we have only 300+ members in the GBA, but when we attend these meetings, we represent the interest of “all” Georgia beekeepers throughout our state and will continue to do so. Professionalism, Representation and Recognition are not just buzz words that we are using these days, but it is what we are striving to accomplish.

Thank you for your support, your input and patience with us as we continue to strive for excellence.

Bear Kelley,
President, Georgia Beekeepers Assn.

Fall Feeding Honey Bees – One of the Most Important October Managements Tips in Georgia

by Mickey Anderson, Metro Atlanta Beekeepers Assoc.

Beekeeping is a seasonal, cyclic operation, and beekeepers need to do different things based on what the colony needs. Feeding is one of the most critical things in the fall for successfully overwintering. Beekeepers who are in the northern Rabun county need to feed bees differently than beekeepers who are south of Valdosta. (I have kept bees in both places as well as many other areas in the state of Georgia). Feeding bees is highly temperature dependent, and early October is usually warm enough for bees to take down sugar syrup. Feed your bees now, and because of their advantageous hoarding instinct, the bees will take down extra sugar syrup and use this feed in the winter when feeding will be very difficult.

In Georgia, each good colony needs about 40-50 lb. of honey for overwintering. A deep brood frame can hold about 7-9 lbs of honey. If bees don't have enough honey/sugar syrup, then the colony could likely die from starvation. Beekeepers should try to err on the heavy side. If extra honey/sugar syrup is present, it will be stored in the combs, and used in the spring when the demand for honey (and pollen) greatly increases with the population explosion that every good colony experiences. Feeding sugar syrup in the fall also seems to stimulate the queen to lay more eggs and concurrently entice more workers to collect more pollen, to raise more brood, to produce a more populated colony, which increases the chances for successfully overwintering the colony.

The honey and/or sugar syrup will take care of the carbohydrate needs of the colony, but the honey bee colony also needs proteins, fats, minerals and vitamins, which come from pollen, or some type of pollen supplement feed. As a general rule, I rarely feed pollen supplements to my colonies because I monitor the naturally collected pollen. If I can see frames loaded with yellow and orange (and sometimes other colors) pollen, then the colony doesn't need additional pollen substitutes. In the Atlanta area, where my bee colonies are located, goldenrod and aster produce pollen and nectar in September/October, and this year seems to be better than past years. My bees also collected pollen from centipede grass, and although I have heard that grass pollen has a low nutritive value, my bees collect it every year and it doesn't seem to adversely affect them. I have also heard and read that having pollen from multiple sources is beneficial because what one pollen lacks in essential amino acids, other types of pollen will have.

Without pollen, brood rearing is greatly reduced or shut down completely and will not start again until the workers can eat enough pollen to get their brood food glands going to feed the developing honey bee larvae. Check for pollen in the brood frames, and if you don't have pollen, then it is recommended to feed the bees some type of pollen supplement. Lack of pollen will not kill the adult bees from starvation like lack of honey/sugar syrup, but as noted above, lack of pollen will stop brood rearing.



photo submitted by Diane Holland, Harlem, GA



photo submitted by Julie Civitts, Toccoa, GA



photo submitted by Doug Roberts of Chattahoochee Valley

These three photos were all submitted to the First Annual Queen photo contest. This year the rules allowed multiple entries. If someone entered more than one, we are only putting one of the entries in this newsletter and will include the others in later issues.

Beekeeping and my Life

by Steve Page

Coweta Beekeepers

- Beekeeping has enhanced my connection to nature, to the rest of the living world. I am more aware of the world around me and the changing weather and seasons.
- Beekeeping has connected me to the people of my community and to beekeepers near and far.
- Speaking, teaching and mentoring to my community and to my fellow beekeepers have resulted in fulfillment and happiness.
- The time and energy of mentoring fellow beekeepers can result in significant personal rewards.

“When we commit to service it actually biologically and anthropologically is more likely to lead to our own success and our own happiness.”

Simon Sinek author of *Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't*.

A number of folks at the fall meeting asked for David Williams' contact information.

Mr. Williams is the State Bee Hive inspector who spoke with us.

If you plan to transport your bees in/out of Georgia, you must contact his office to get a certificate. His office is located in Tifton, Georgia.

***David Williams,
State Beehive Inspector
Georgia Dept of Agriculture
229-386-3464 -Office
912-213-8396- Cell
David.Williams@agr.georgia.gov***

Location: Coweta County, Georgia
Name: Her Majesty Queen Victoria of the hive...
My name: Steven Page
Date: August 22, 2014

This large queen was raised by the colony this summer when I made a walk away split and let them raise an emergency queen. I inspected the hive after 4 weeks and this queen was laying. Beautiful...

I can raise better queens than the queen producers.



Queen contest entry from Steve Page

Some thoughts on raising emergency queens from Michael Bush's web site.

<http://www.bushfarms.com/beesafewgoodqueens.htm>

Quality of Emergency Queens

First let's talk about emergency queens and quality. There has been much speculation over the years on this matter and after reading the opinions of many very experienced queen breeders on this subject I'm convinced that the prevailing theory that bees start with too old of a larvae is not true. I think to get good quality queens from emergency cells one simply needs to insure they can tear down the cell walls and that they have resources of food and labor to properly care for the queen. This means a good density of bees (for labor), frames of pollen and honey (for resources), and nectar or syrup coming in (to convince them they have resources to spare).

So if one adds either new drawn wax comb or wax foundation without wires or even empty frames to the brood nest during a time of year they are anxious to raise queens (from about a month after the first blooms until the end of the main flow), they quickly draw this comb and lay it full of eggs. So four to five days after adding it, there should be frames of larvae on newly drawn wax with no cocoons to interfere with them tearing down the cell walls to build queen cells. If one were to do this in a strong hive and at this point remove the queen on a frame of brood and a frame of honey and put it aside, the bees will start a lot of queen cells.

The experts on emergency queens:

[Jay Smith, from Better Queens](#)

"It has been stated by a number of beekeepers who should know better (including myself) that the bees are in such a hurry to rear a queen that they choose larvae too old for best results. later observation has shown the fallacy of this statement and has convinced me that bees do the very best that can be done under existing circumstances.

"The inferior queens caused by using the emergency method is because the bees cannot tear down the tough cells in the old combs lined with cocoons. The result is that the bees fill the worker cells with bee milk floating the larvae out

the opening of the cells, then they build a little queen cell pointing downward. The larvae cannot eat the bee milk back in the bottom of the cells with the result that they are not well fed. However, if the colony is strong in bees, are well fed and have new combs, they can rear the best of queens. And please note-- they will never make such a blunder as choosing larvae too old."--Jay Smith

Quinby seems to agree:

"I want new comb for brood, as cells can be worked over out of that, better than from old and tough. New comb must be carefully handled. If none but old comb is to be had, cut the cells down to one fourth inch in depth. The knife must be sharp to leave it smooth and not tear it."--Moses Quinby

C.C. Miller's view of emergency queens

"If it were true, as formerly believed, that queenless bees are in such haste to rear a queen that they will select a larva too old for the purpose, then it would hardly do to wait even nine days. A queen is matured in fifteen days from the time the egg is laid, and is fed throughout her larval lifetime on the same food that is given to a worker-larva during the first three days of its larval existence. So a worker-larva more than three days old, or more than six days from the laying of the egg would be too old for a good queen. If, now, the bees should select a larva more than three days old, the queen would emerge in less than nine days. I think no one has ever known this to occur. Bees do not prefer too old larvae. As a matter of fact bees do not use such poor judgment as to select larvae too old when larvae sufficiently young are present, as I have proven by direct experiment and many observations."--Fifty Years Among the Bees, C.C. Miller



Photo of the view under the screened bottom board by Ricky Moore

Have you ever looked under your beehive?

If you have a screened bottom, you might be surprised at the activity on the outside of the bottom board.



Queen photo
submitted to contest
by Roy Blackwell of
Dawsonville, GA

True Confessions:

Just Sting Me And Get It Over With

by Ricky Moore

A couple months ago I shared with you my misadventure of being stung 11 times while learning Italian bees do not understand English or swearing, and they have an innate desire to enter a veil and share the space. Yeah, right.

Let me update you on my progress, may I?

During the hottest days in August this year I decided while the foragers were out and the hive bees were busy cooling the hive, I could quietly and expeditiously peek inside and see what was going on in their hives.

I really didn't want to put the full suit on so I donned the bee jacket with hood and veil, and of course being a novice, I wore my gloves. I know, I know what you're thinking, "Rookie, sooner or later you will get use to working with bees barehanded," and while that very well may be true, I'm not there. They may be clumsy, but I'll wear my gloves, for now, thank you very much.

Did I mention it was a hot day? Ya, I thought so. It wasn't long before the sweat was running down the back of my neck and dripping off my forehead and onto my glasses.

There was the usual amount of bees flying around either curious what this big lug was that was disturbing their hive, or they'd woken up on the wrong side of the frame and were just spoiling for a fight. Either way, they attempted to get into my nice, safe veil. They'd dive bomb my face and fly off, come back and do it again. As the sweat poured from my face, my glasses started to slide down. What was I to do? I took my gloved hand and pushed my glasses up by pushing on my veil. No problem, right? You've probably done that many times too, right? I did. All was well. But about the third time I pushed my glasses back up my sweaty nose, one of the Italian Assassins was flying at mission critical point that when I pushed the veil to my glasses, she had flown at that exact same spot at exactly the same time. See where this is going? I pushed the bee into the bridge of my nose, and pinned there she did what all combatants would do. She stung me. Through the veil! Is there no safety in this avocation? Is nothing sacred?

A bee sting is a bee sting. We all accept it as part of the experience, but on the nose hurts like the Devil!

Just last week I replaced the front feeder with water on one of the hives. I did not want to wear all the gear as I'd stand behind the hive and reach around and place the feeder and get the heck out of Dodge. I am so smart, I decided to wear one of the gloves and pulled it all the way up past my elbow. I was completely covered and safe from vicious, inquisitive bees. Because I'm hot and sweaty and again didn't want to put on the suit or the jacket or even the veil, I didn't. Just the glove. I reached around, placed the water bottle and backed away without any troubles. Eureka! Then one lone, solitary bee made it her mission to be my BFF. I backed away, she came at me. I walked away, she followed. I stood still, she landed on my arm. I blew her off my arm, she returned. I moved my arm, she returned to the same place near my watch. Maybe she just wanted to see what time it was. This time I did escape her and managed to get inside without incident.

I offer my experiences to show you we all do dumb things and sometimes get away with it, and sometimes we need a reminder who has the honey also has the stinger. Go. Make experiences. And enjoy that sweet reward at harvest time.

Club News & Notes

by John Wingfield for Heart of Georgia Beekeepers

The Heart of Georgia Beekeepers held their regular monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at Camp John Hope dining room located between Marshallville, Fort Valley, and Perry. Supper of ranch chicken, wild rice, green beans, roll, dessert, and beverages was served. More than 25 preregistered and enjoyed the meal.

Our President, Tim Smith opened the meeting by asking new first time attendance to raise their hands. A number of hands went up. Newcomers were welcomed. Then the Treasurer, Kelly Hillis presented our current fiscal status with over \$4,200. Tim described the GBA Buzz fund and recommended we send \$200 the Buzz Fund. A motion was made and passed to do so without objection.

Then we got to the topic that is always a favorite. Tim asked the members "how are your bees doing"? The members described their current problems and activity. Jesse McCurdy gave answers to many member questions. When there were no more questions. Tim then asked who was going to GBA meeting at Milledgeville this week? About a dozen hands went up.

Tim announced we had 21 entries for our annual black jar competition. All 21 jars were lined up on two tables with cups holding sticks to dip and taste each jar and cups for the used sticks. Most of the members using each end of the sticks for dipping, with our judges using one. Marybeth Kelly was in control of the black jars by assigning a number to each jar.

Our winners are: 1st Place- Jackie DeFore 2nd Place-David Tannehill 3rd Place- Leonard Day



John Wingfield of Heart of Georgia Beekeepers entered this queen photo into our first annual photo contest!

If you'd like to write club news and notes from your local club, we'd be delighted to share it in the newsletter. The more we all know about how Georgia beekeeping clubs use their meeting times, the more ideas we may each have to make our clubs better.

Send your club News and Notes to:
gbanewsletters@gmail.com

This link was shared with us by Steve Price. It's a very interesting video - an overview of the whole colony collapse disorder phenomenon.

[Click here.](#)

Joke from Bear:

Scientists have done studies and found that all beekeepers have beautiful eyes....

Why? Because beauty is in the eyes of the Bee Holder!

Milledgeville 2014

Well, the meeting is over and we are all breathing a sigh of relief. Congratulations to the winners of the raffle; hope that the prizes will help you in the future. I personally would have liked that hive. I was able to attend in body, but not so much in spirit as I have had a few personal ongoing issues that I am dealing with. Overall, though, I think that the Milledgeville site was great. The school was accommodating, and Brent (the school officer in charge) was great. He was always there and very eager to help our group.

The speakers were varied and educational. I learned a lot. The reviews and evaluations from our group are helpful to us that plan the meetings and were good overall. The noise level was an issue that we will address when we go back to the college. I think moving the coffee and snack area will help some of that. There was plenty of space to put the vendors and we will look at moving them, since a lot of noise came from people asking them questions.

The meeting was well attended, the site had easy access, and Milledgeville was a fun town. It is satisfying to the planners, and I enjoy watching the work of the group come together when we see the meetings well attended. If you missed this meeting then you missed some great speakers.

Jennifer Berry's queen class was excellent and I have not heard of any problems. If you attended this break out then please let us know what your thoughts are via email. If anyone has ideas for or changes to the conference please let us know. We organize the meetings for those who attend so we want to meet your needs.

It was also good to see three different commercial beekeepers attending and we hope to increase their numbers. The commercial beekeepers are especially important to Georgia and to our group.

The hardest part for me in getting the meetings together is making sure that we cover the small details. Having a buffet appears to be an ongoing problem. We are going back to Lake Blackshear and for those of you who remember, the buffet line took

forever. The lunch on Saturday in Milledgeville occurred the same way. For Lake Blackshear and in the future we will try to get boxed lunches. It is fast and easy.

Some people don't like to eat boxed lunches but we do lunch this way for several reasons. First, you don't have to leave the venue; second, it's convenient not to worry about where you are getting your lunch; and third, most importantly, is that you, the attendee, can spend time with other beekeepers and talk about bees!!

The other challenge we had was making last minute changes to the speaker list. For the past four conferences, I have had one or more speakers call me and tell me that they have to change the time they speak or will not be coming. It is a little stressful as you might imagine.

Thanks for coming to the conference and thanks for being a member. The board represents all beekeepers in Georgia, whether they are a member or not, so encourage your club mates to become members.

Mary Cahill-Roberts,
GBA VP again.



Photo taken by Derrick Fowler in Hoschton, GA - entered in queen photo contest



Queen photo above was taken in Lee County, entered by Monte McDonald and entered in our contest.



Photo taken by David Miller in Jackson, Tennessee. You can see the queen on the surface of the swarm

“I shouldn't think even millionaires could eat anything nicer than new bread and real butter and honey for tea.”

— Dodie Smith, I Capture the Castle

Fall Meeting Photos - to see more, visit the blog at spillingthehoney.blogspot.com



Submission Guidelines

Keep your articles to 500 words or less and send them as a Word document attached to your email. Be sure to include your own name, your bee club and where you are located.

Send photos as attachments to emails. Include who took the photo, where and when.

Send any of this to gbanewsletters@gmail.com

This is your newsletter! We look forward to your contributions.

Your Editors

The Final Buzz

We enjoyed seeing so many of you in Milledgeville at the Fall Meeting. Our spring meeting this year is on February 14 (and 13th if you come for the Board meeting and reception). Make your plans now to be there for an exciting conference. Our own Cindy Bee is returning to Georgia to talk to us as well as several other speakers we think you will enjoy.

Keep sending in your photos, articles, club news and notes, true confessions, questions for Aunt Bee, etc. Aunt Bee was exhausted after the fall meeting, but she'll be back next issue so send in a question or two!

Linda and Gina

