



East Texas Beekeepers Association

Vol. 26 No. 9

Sept. 1, 2011

September Report by Dick Counts

If you haven't been to our club lately, I invite you to come back as did 86 persons at the last meeting. Our new President Gus Wolf has worked up a survey in an effort to serve you better. We especially want to be attentive to visitors and to new beekeepers. When we do the introduction of visitors and new beekeepers, look around the room and see who they are. During break, take a moment to introduce yourself and wish them welcome. New Beekeepers, feel free to ask us about your questions and problems. I am sure we can give you several versions of how to solve them. Members, don't forget to pick up your name tag as you arrive. The name tags make it easier for visitors to know who you are and where you are from.

In this summer's heat, you and your bees need help. Those hives that survive this year can really be called survivors, but you must help them by making sure they have plenty of honey stored up. Lift the back of your hives. If it is easy to lift, you need to feed. We will talk about feeding methods at the September meeting. I will bring examples of several methods of feeding. If you have a special way, would you please bring it so others may see.

As we head into the fall season, it will be time to switch from 1 to 1 syrup to a 2 to 1 syrup. A 2 to 1 recipe is eight pounds of sugar to 4 pounds of water. Another way to describe this recipe is two 4lb bags of sugar to ½ gallon of water. It is easy to make if you heat the water.

Once again, we will have the ETBA booth at the East Texas State Fair. The Fair begins September 23 and runs through October 2. I will have a schedule showing when you need to work and passes to get you in the gate. We will start staffing the booth Thursday, September 22 at 9:00 AM.

Some of us will be working the Texas State Fair in Dallas. If you are interested in joining us, please see me at the meeting.

President—Gus Wolf

Vice President—Mike Rappazzo

Treasurer—Tammy Lenamond

Secretary—Karen Anderson

Ex. Director and Reporter—
Dick Counts

Honey Queen Chair—Vi Bourns

Directors-at-Large—Stanford
Brantley, Randy Bobo

Program Directors — Joshua
Bradley, Eddie Collins, Mike
Rappazzo, Stanford Brantley

Webmaster—Ardy Johnson

NEXT MEETING
Sept. 1
TJC West Campus — Room 104
1530 West Loop 323 S SW
6:45 PM

Contact Us
On the Web: easttexasbeekeepersassociation.com
Or on the phone: (903) 566-6789

HONEY QUEEN REPORT *By Vi Bourns*

Bekah and Hayden took the month of August off for some much needed R & R. But when you read their report, you will wonder when they worked it in. They both stayed very busy with other things. Oh to be young again and to have their energy! I can remember those far away days. However I enjoy the years I am living now as they always bring new adventures and learning experiences. Especially following Dick all over East Texas to check on the hives we work together and removing bees from structures — yes, even in the triple digit temps.

Your Queen and Princess were invited by Mike Ferguson, President of the Lions Club in Mineola on Sept. 8th to talk about cooking with honey and maybe do a cooking demonstration. They will be working the East Texas State Fair on kid's day on Sept. 23 & 26 and on the 27th through the 30th.



Hello again! All my bees are doing well, there's nothing out of the ordinary with them. Every morning though, either my Dad or I go outside to "water the bees" which come to the potted plants on our porch for water. I love sitting out there just watching them go to and fro getting water.

This month I was very privileged to go to the Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Association meeting and learn how to judge honey. I was even able to judge some myself! The first step to judging the honey was to check the container appearance and make sure there were no finger prints, smudges, or other artifacts on the jar. Then, we put the jar under a polariscope, which is a really bright light. That helped us to see if there was any wax, lint, or other foreign matter in the honey. Next, we looked for crystals and granulation. We then took the lid off the jar and looked for air bubbles around the inside edge of the jar and checked that the honey was at the fill line and not above or below it. After that, we got to taste the honey. It was fun trying all the different kinds and tasting the different flavors! Next, we took the refractometer and looked at the moisture content which ideally should be at 18% or lower. Then, we noted the brightness of the honey. And last, we checked the density of the honey by turning the jar upside down (with the lid on of course) and watched how fast or slow the air bubble went to the top. It took a bit of time judging each jar but it was a lot of fun doing it and learning all about judging honey. I also really enjoyed getting to visit with the other Honey Queens/ Princesses and meeting other beekeepers.

I am looking forward to the months ahead, with the East Texas State Fair, the Texas State Fair, the TBA convention in Corpus Christi, and all the many other events scheduled. In the mean time, I am preparing my presentation on honey judging that my dad and I will be sharing with the club at the October meeting and also getting my cooking demonstration together. Thank you so much for all the support that you give to Bekah and me as we do all these presentations and events. We really appreciate it and we could not do it without you. ~Hayden



Hayden and I took a little break this month to just relax and catch up on some things. It's been a busy year! While I wasn't busy doing events this month, I was very busy with more 4-H projects! This year I made a Recordbook, which is similar to a scrapbook, and competed at the county, district and state levels. I won 1st place at the county level, as well as the district level, and then sent it off for state judging. A few days ago at the annual End-of-Year 4-H banquet, I received the news that I had placed 3rd! This was my first year to compete in this competition and to go so far and do so well was a great privilege! I was also the only one in my county whose Record book went to the state level!

In 4-H there is one award that all 4-Hers try the most to attain, the Gold Star Award. This is the highest award that you can receive at the county level through the Texas 4-H program. To become eligible for this award, you must complete a Recordbook the year you apply for the award, must have been an officer in a 4-H club for at least three years, and must be between the ages of 14 and 18. The Gold Star is given to the two 4-Hers every year who have done the most, gone the farthest, and shown the best leadership skills. That's a lot to accomplish! I applied for this award thinking that this was the best year I've ever had in 4-H. I went to State Roundup with many events, was elected President of my 4-H club, and if there was ever a time to achieve this award, it was now. After I applied, I had to go through an interview process with a panel of three judges. Once again, the Honey Queen program did a lot to prepare me for this process! Before becoming Honey Queen I had never gone to an interview. The interview I went through with the Honey Queen Chairpersons helped me to know what to expect. Thank you for that! ~continued on page 4



President's Letter *by Gus Wolf*

Thank you to the forty-seven people who handed in survey sheets at the last meeting. The information garnered from them is invaluable. I am not sure of the last time we asked for input from the members but it is very helpful. I was astounded to learn some don't know that we have a website or that we host a forum that allows members and non-members to participate in a lively dialog. Lots of questions have been answered at www.etba.info. You can ask away and get as many opinions as you can handle! Speaking of opinions, the survey results had some interesting responses. Some like the auction, some do not. Some like the auction first, some last. Many said that the food is great. I agree! The future will probably see some revisions to what we do as a direct result of the input you gave.



Of my seven and a half hives (the half is a nuc swarm), four are second year hives, one is a third year hive, and two are late fall swarms caught last year. Only five were fitted with supers this year. I took them all off this week. The five hives started the year with new frames. I anxiously waited for the bees to draw out the comb and start filling the cells with honey but not one super had any drawn comb to speak of. There was not even enough to interest the wax moths.

The frames will need a fair amount of work though before I put them away for next year. What the bees lost in nectar this year they made up for in propolis and burr comb. Since I put nine not ten frames in each box, the bees made sure that they are not going to move. Propolis is everywhere. The amount of burr comb on the bottom of the frames and the queen excluder is astonishing. It is a pity that they were so bored and didn't expend their energy and wax in drawing out the frames instead. I wonder how they make that decision in the hive. "Hey girls, forget the comb, for a change let's stick everything together with enough burr comb to sink a ship!" It must have something to do with disrupting the natural order of things in the hive by putting them in a rectangular box with rectangular frames.



Speaking of queen excluders, does anyone prefer one type over the other? I have two wood bound metal ones and a bunch of plastic ones. It seems that the bees seem to like the metal ones better. Anyone have any thoughts?

Two hives is about all I can handle on a day when it this hot. So, it is two hives one day and two hives on another. I really want to get in them and fortify the swarm nuc with a few frames from a couple of stronger hives. That way I can get the nuc hive in a standard brood box well before winter. They all need a thorough examination and cleaning. I do take regular observation trips in front of the hives from the safety of my car and see that the activity at the landing board is what it should be. Once I open them, I'll know just how right or wrong I am.

Has anyone else used the feathers that David Mitchell brought to the last meeting? I tried them and they appear to work well. The bees seem to tolerate them better than the bee brush. I have found that one sure way to irritate my bees is to use a brush to move them around. The feather seems to be a better solution.



On August 8, I was able to attend the meeting of the Collin County Beekeepers. Hayden went to observe and learn how to evaluate and judge honey. They are a bit more sophisticated at it than we are. We go for flavor only. They do it "according to the book." I believe that Hayden and I will be the main event for our October meeting to do a presentation on about we learned. They made me feel like a visiting dignitary and, I guess in the bee world, I was. It was good to see how another club runs their meeting. There are similarities and there are differences. But we definitely have at least two things in common. First, bees! Second, they also have to be out of the meeting hall on time!

Director's Meeting at 6:15



Come to the East Texas State Fair

Join us at the East Texas State Fair.

It is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy fellowship with other ETBA members, meet lots of interesting people, and educate the public about the honey bee. The ETBA booth will be set up and ready for business at 9 AM on Thursday, September 22.



Thursday is Senior Day and we will have a more "mature" set of visitors. They will tell you some wonderful stories about helping dad or granddad rob bee trees.



On the mornings of Friday the 23rd and Monday the 26th, we will be visited by the Pre-School Tours. On the 27-30th, we will have Kindergarten through 1st grade tours beginning at 8:45 AM followed by 2nd through 5th grade tours beginning at 10 AM. The kids are fascinated with the observation hive and are full of questions.



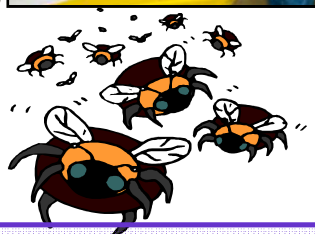
If you have not notified Dick Counts that you want to help in our booth, call him or see him at the Sept. 1 meeting. Dick will have a schedule and entrance passes. If you can't help at the booth, be sure to come by and visit.



We will again be able to sell honey at the booth. If you have honey that you wish to sell, see Dick at the meeting for details.



We had a great time last year. Be a part of the fun this year!



Jimmie Oakley of TBA will be our guest speaker at the September meeting.

Bekah continued: Also, one of the judges on the Gold Star Committee knew me as a Honey Queen!. When I walked in, he stood and said "Well, look ,it's the Honey Queen"! Turns out Hayden and I had given a presentation to his 4-H club in Wood County! After the interview and an agonizing wait, at the End-of-Year banquet they announced the Gold Star winners. I was so proud to be one of them!! They called out my name and then listed everything I had done with 4-H the past few years. This just goes to show that hard work really does pay off! Also, the other Gold Star winner was none other than Savannah Ross, former ETBA scholarship student! They also give out another award at this banquet, the Rookie of the Year Award. This award goes to a Junior 4-H member who has just completed their first year in 4-H. The Rookie is the one boy or girl, who has shown remarkable leadership skills and accomplished the most in 4-H that year. I'm so proud to tell you that the winner of this award this year was Emily Lenamond! Up against three other kids applying for this award, Emily held her ground and won! She also had to go through an interview but nothing daunts her! She did an amazing job and we are all so very proud of her.