Call to Order at 7:30 PM

Vice President Risa Halpin presided over the meeting. President John Jacob is in California with the almond pollination.

Treasurer's Report - Cheryl Housden
The amount bank account on February 1st was $9450.63.

Bee School is March 19th, from 9am to 4:30pm. The cost is $45. Our speakers are Morris Ostrofsky, Sarah Red-Laird, and Tom Chester. Information about our speakers can be found on the website.

News from the Oregon State Beekeepers Association board meeting:
Cheryl Housden attended the Oregon State Beekeepers Association Board Meeting at Sarah’s request.

OSBA announced news regarding the next Oregon State Beekeepers Conference. They will be having it at the same place again next year, the Oregon Garden Resort. Tom Seeley, the author of Honeybee Democracy, will be speaking. For any of you who haven't heard him, even if you attend the conference just that one day, the drive will be worth it.

I gave documentation regarding our 2015 OSU Bee Lab donation (two checks of $1000 each) to Jeff Mulligan, the OSBA treasurer. I also talked about it with the new President, Harry Vanderpool and Jan Lohman, and was
told that they will get together and match up to $1000 as a donation to OSU. SOBA will get credit in the Bee Line.

OSBA is very concerned about the large number of filbert fields going in their area, and the problem with all the spraying killing the bees. These trees are heavily sprayed. OSBA is trying to get together with OSU and other universities to figure out how to save the bees.

Another problem brought up was the Asian Gypsy moth found in the Portland area. Luckily the infestation was localized and in small numbers around the Forest Park, Hayden Island area. So, OSBA has met with the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture concerning the spraying. According to the Dept. of Agriculture, the pesticide used for the Asian Gypsy moth, is not harmful to bees. More info on the Asian Gypsy moth can be found at [http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/invasives_exotics/agm/agm.asp](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/invasives_exotics/agm/agm.asp).

**Oregon State Beekeepers Association Regional Representative’s Report – Sarah Red-Laird**

Sarah gave us an update on the initiative to allow beekeeping on public lands and her latest activities. She is working with a local county commissioner, and as soon as the new forester is in place she will work with both of them to mark areas that can be used for beekeeping in Josephine County. After some research, she has determined that the folks who are active in native bee conservation are the primary reason behind the effort to block honey bees from public lands, but their reasons are not scientifically based. Honey bees do not compete with native bees for food, nests (honey bees nest in trees and native bees nest on the ground), mating (they do not crossbreed), and they do not share diseases or pests. There is a scientific paper discussing this that will be published soon and may make it easier to promote beekeeping on public lands. She will be meeting with the National Farmers Union and the lobbyist for bee issues in Washington, DC in July to move any necessary legislation along. She is also partnering with cattle ranchers who have BLM contracts to include bees on the land.

Sarah has recently been elected the Oregon Director for the Western Apicultural Society, and is on the Advisory Board for the New York Bee Sanctuary. She has been appointed as the Kids and Bees Program Director for the American Beekeeping Federation. She is also heading the Next Generation Beekeepers Initiative.

**Secretary's Report- Ellen Wright**

A MOTION to accept the minutes from January was PASSED by majority vote. The minutes are posted on the website under Resources->Club Resources->Club Documents.

**OSU Liaison's Report- Rick Hilton**

The date for our Summer Bee School is July 30, 2016

**Old Business**

Russ Williamson is heading up the Beekeeping Table at the annual AG in the Schools Day on May 5 and 6. He needs volunteers for 2 hour shifts to show enthusiastic 4th graders all about bees. Please contact SOBA at sobeekeepers@gmail.com or Russ at sandruss3500@msn.com if you’d like to help. This is a great way for our Oregon Master Beekeeper Apprentices to get volunteer hours!

We still need someone to step up to manage the extractors. It was suggested that we locate one extractor in Grants Pass. Greg Fernandez is considering hosting that extractor. The extractor managers need to have the skills to do minor repairs, make sure the people picking the extractors up were members and that the extractors are returned promptly, and would need to be able to guide people in how to use and care for the extractors. If you are interested, please contact sobeekeepers@gmail.com.
Last month it was proposed that we sell SOBA hats, but we need some fresh ideas for a logo for the hats. Submit your ideas to sobeekeepers@gmail.com!

**New Business**

Greg Fernandez’s son is building metal bee stands. Information will be included in the next newsletter and on the website soon (http://www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org/soba-market).

Our March 7 meeting will feature Ron Padgett discussing how to catch a swarm. Please attend if you are on the swarm call list.

Our April 4 meeting will discuss the many different ways to make a split.

Our May 2 meeting will feature Andrew Watson on tips to spot your queen, why you might not need to spot her, and what to do if you think she is gone.

**Let’s Talk Bees**

Risa talked about what to do in the apiary until the nectar flows. February and March can be a time when colonies that have survived the winter starve before nectar flows. Bees can starve even if there is plenty of honey in the hive if the honey is too far away from the cluster. If the hive feels light when you heft it, you can feed drivist sugar on the inner cover. On a warm day when the bees are flying, you can replace empty frames with full frames of honey you have stored, or move full frames closer to the cluster. Do not use syrup until the daily temperature is above 55 degrees, and it is no longer below freezing at night. 1:1 sugar syrup will stimulate the bees since it mimics nectar. You can feed 2:1 syrup instead which is more like honey and may not serve to stimulate them as much.

Bees are flying now and bringing in lots of pollen. The queen started laying eggs shortly after winter solstice, and the bees working now are ‘geriatric’ overwintered bees. They need carbs to have the energy to get all that pollen. This warm weather and pollen can stimulate more egg production, but there’s not much nectar for the bees to use. This is why it is so important to make sure the bees have adequate honey stores, or to feed drivist, until the nectar flows.

If you have a hive that you think has died (a ‘DEADOUT’), check it on a day warm enough that the bees should be flying. If it is truly a deadout, then you should break it down and do a post mortem. In our area, perhaps the most likely reason for the deadout is a high mite load in the fall that infects the overwintering bees with a virus, or starvation. Check the newsletter and website for a soon-to-be-published article on deadouts!

If you have a hive that looks almost dead – it could be a DINK. A dink as defined by Randy Oliver as a hive with 4 frames or less of bees. Dinks in the early spring need your help. Do NOT combine them with a healthy hive – you may import a serious problem into your healthy hive. If you have two dinks, they could be combined. Hobby beekeepers have the time to feed their dinks and see if they recover. Many will over time. See Randy’s article on this here: http://scientificbeekeeping.com/winter-colony-losses/

We split into 3 groups for questions and discussion. We learned that when we have so many people at the meeting (YAY!!), it can be hard to have small group discussions …

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM