Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association  
November 2nd, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Sarah Red-Laird  Richard Dumanski  Ken Olmstead  
Risa Halpin          Russ Williamson  Nancy Olmstead  
Cheryl Housden      Della Matson      Kelly Leatherwood  
Ellen Wright        Bonnie Brown      Jay McMurtney  
Kip Skelton         Clem Stockard     Kent Knock  
Bill and Cara McEnany  Debbie Gent     Joe Wismann  
Nancy Olmstead      Gary Buckmaster   Jody Palzer  
Kate Womack         Bill Bars         Bret Jensen  
Sharon Schmidt      Howell Estes      Ken Muhlestein  
Dolly Warden        Bill and Cara McEnany  
D’Arcy Castro      Bob Denman  

Call to Order at 7:30 PM  
John Jacob is ill with the flu. Sarah Red-Laird presided over the meeting.

Treasurer's Report- Cheryl Housden  
The total amount in the bank account as of today is $8895.95. The donation to OSU Bee Lab for $1000 has not yet cleared, when it does the balance on hand will be $7895.95.

Secretary's Report- Ellen Wright  
A MOTION to accept the minutes from October was PASSED by majority vote. The minutes are posted on the website under Resources->Club Resources->Club Documents.

OSBA Regional Representative Report- Sarah Red-Laird  
The Oregon State Beekeepers Association Conference starts this Friday November 6 in Silverton, OR. Randy Oliver and a number of excellent speakers are presenting. There is no other news this month since OSBA is fully focused on the conference.

OSU Liaison's Report- Rick Hilton  
Rick was not able to attend.

Old Business  
OSBA issues a free ticket to the conference to each regional branch. We held a raffle among the members present. Jody Palzer won the ticket!

The Swarm List Protocol has been updated. We will be adding a ‘Hold Harmless’ clause to protect SOBA, and we will ask participants to sign next year. We will have a presentation at the March meeting on gathering swarms.

SOBA T-shirts are now only $10! Contact Cheryl Housden or email sobeekeepers@gmail.org if you would like one.
Sarah asked for suggestions for speakers next year. She suggested:

- Liz Frost on raising queens for your local hives,
- a member of the UC Davis Bee Symposium and Xerces on native bees, honey bees, and how pollination works.

Other suggestions:

- Rusty Burlew who writes **Honey Bee Suite** the blog
- A speaker on diseases and how to manage equipment after hive loss.
- Hive management for increasing honey production.
- Natural beekeeping practices including a discussion of using powdered sugar as a mite treatment.

If you have an idea for a dynamic, informative, interesting speaker, or if you want to suggest a topic, email **sobeekeepers@gmail.com**.

**New Business**

Bret Jensen agreed to check on and feed the club hives and remove the treatment strips. Richard Dumanski has been making sure the weeds around the hives are under control and the fence remains functional. A big **THANK YOU** to both of you!

D’Arcy Castro is starting the process of getting Bee City USA designation for Medford. She passed around a signup sheet for people interested in helping. If you would like to get on the list, email **sobeekeepers@gmail.org**.

**Announcements**

The Beekeepers Ball is NEXT Saturday, November 14th at Bigham Knoll in Jacksonville. Volunteers are needed and will get a free ticket. For more information and ticket outlets: **www.beegirl.org/#!beekeepersball/c27k**

Sharon Schmidt (Oregon Honey Festival) said that she had discounts for BeeThinking Cedar Hives. Email her at **mailto:oregonhoneyfestival@outlook.com** if you are interested.

**Let’s Talk Bees**

Richard brought up the new research on the use of mushroom extracts to reduce the virus load for honey bees. Sarah talked about the work of Steve Sheppard at Washington State University on fungal treatments. In some tests the varroa mites have exploded and exuded a white substance as a result of the fungus treatments, but the results are difficult to replicate.

Risa spoke about how to make a sugar brick to feed hives in the winter. She uses the recipe from Miller Apiaries with a few modifications. Risa’s recipe will be posted on our website. The recipe does not have to be cooked – it involves mixing driver sugar with apple cider vinegar, essential oils, and citric acid. The winter bees eat the sugar, saving the honey to feed the spring bees and the new brood.

Club members asked how long a hive can be opened when it is 65 degrees or so. The consensus opinion was that it is now too late to open the hive except to add driver to a feeder box right under the top. All reconfiguration and consolidation of the hive should be completed by the end of September. Opening the hive now would break the propolis seals and make it hard for the bees to restore the hive.
to the temperature they need.

No liquid syrup should be given at this time of year to the bees inside the hive or with open feeding. It is too cold for them to reduce the syrup to honey for storage. The extra moisture in the hive from uncurled sugar nectar is bad for the bees.

Club members asked whether the solid panel (sticky boards) of screened bottom boards should be left in or out for winter. Sarah mentioned that she had just posted an article from Bee Craft magazine on the subject (https://www.facebook.com/BKids.BeeCraft/photos/a.321041041265556.66141.321037741265886/912938298742491)

In our area moisture is more of a concern than cold. Hives need good ventilation to prevent them from getting damp. Think about the difference between wearing dry or wet mittens on a cold day. It then depends on how well your hive is ventilated. If you are not using a Vivaldi cover or top venting of some kind, then you should leave the board out. But if the hive is well ventilated and close to the ground or in a very windy location, you can add the solid board. Ventilation is key to handling moisture in the hive.

Club members asked how deep the wood shaving in a quilt box should be. Risa says she uses several inches. She staples window screen to the bottom of a honey super, fills it with shavings or other absorbent material, and adds it to the top of the hive under the cover. She has ventilation holes at the top of the hive. The bees create warm moist air as they generate heat to keep warm. That air rises to the top of the hive, condenses, and falls back onto the bees. The absorbent material under the cover will soak up the moisture so that it does not affect the bees. The quilt material will be moist at the top, so it is easy to see if it needs to be changed out.

Bret offered to give members cedar shavings at the December meeting. Bring a container.

A member asked if we should still be feeding bees. It is too late to feed anything liquid because it would add moisture to the hive. You can feed drivert sugar. Google ‘winter candy for bees’ and you will see recipes for sugar blocks. The drivert sugar will also work to absorb moisture. Do not feed pollen patties until next spring. They are used to boost brood production.

A member asked if you should remove frames of uncapped honey. The consensus was that the frames should not be removed. Opening the hive and reorganizing frames would do more damage than removing possible moisture. It is quite possible that the cells hold honey, but the bees did not have enough time or resources to cap it. If you shake a frame and the nectar does not spray out, the contents are close enough to honey that moisture is not a problem.

A member asked about top bar hives. Sarah pointed out that top bar hives were developed in Kenya for African bees. Bees in Africa have forage all year long, and they migrate with the flowers. They vacate hives regularly to change areas, and will move back into hives when the forage in an area returns to bloom. European honey bees like the ones used by beekeepers in the US are not migratory and are not particularly well suited to top bar hives. Their preferred home is a cavity in a hollow tree. You can use a Langstroth hive and not use the frames to create natural comb. Use starter strips and an 8 frame configuration.
A member considering getting a hive going next spring asked if the many yellow jackets on her property would be a problem. Sarah recommended that she set out pheromone traps for the yellow jacket queen in the early spring when the dandelions begin to bloom. If you can trap the queen when she emerges, you have reduced the number of nests in your area by one. If you have yellow jackets, find the entrance hole and place a glass jar over it. The yellow jackets cannot figure out what is happening and do not burrow a new entrance under it, as they would if you covered the entrance with a board.

A member requested that we have a winter hive configuration demonstration at the December meeting. We will bring in examples of the hive components that have been mentioned (quilt box, Vivaldi board, etc) and set up a few example configurations using the club outreach hive components donated by Shastina.

It was agreed that we would have a Cookie Potluck at the December 7 meeting. Bring a batch of your favorite cookies or other holiday treat. There will also be an Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest – the winner gets a jar of BeeGirl Spring Honey

Meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM