March meeting minutes were accepted by motion (Shawn Kerr), second (Dave Powell) and vote of members in attendance.

**Secretary Report:**

**Vice President Report:** Our President, John Jacob, is still in the almonds, so Risa is chair of this meeting.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Cheryl Housden reported that she has club hats and t-shirts for sale and new membership forms available for anyone wishing to join. There are still a few spots available for next Saturday’s bee school.

**Regional Representative’s Report:** Mysti Jacob

**OSU Liaison’s Report:** Rick Hilton introduced the OSU extension’s newest faculty member, Gordon Jones, an Agronomist (soils & plants)!

**Old Business**

Bee School speakers. Bring bee gear.

**New Business**

Sarah Red-Laird aka “Bee Girl” will be holding her educational “Bee Week” for 3rd graders at the SOU farm (in Ashland) the week of May 14th-18th. Volunteers are needed for many shifts.

“Zombees” will have a list/demo of plants that are good nectar producers at Saturday’s Bee School. Some plants (Class 6) can produce up to 600 lbs. of honey per acre. The best is the honey locust tree.

**Let’s Talk Bees**

Dr. Andony Melathopoulos of OSU is involved with developing a statewide strategic pollinator plan and is involved with the Oregon Bee Project, a collaborative project geared toward pesticide applicators and agriculture. There are good resources online. There are lots of good initiatives occurring statewide.

Andony also has a podcast called PolliNation, in which various bee related issues are covered.
Andony talked about various ways to obtain a colony of bees:

1. The “Paleo Way”: Find a straw skep full of bees. When they’re ready to swarm, capture them in a net. This ancient form of beekeeping is still practiced as Heather Skep beekeeping in Lower Saxony.
2. The “Old School Way”: Shake a strong colony returning from Almond (or other) pollination into a box and be sure there’s a queen. There are about 2 pounds of bees in a package. Canadian beekeepers used to routinely do this and get new colonies every year without attempting to overwinter the colony. If you buy a package of bees you get a box with 2 lbs. of bees, a queen and a can of syrup. It’s a hard way to start a colony. When your package arrives, remove the queen cage and attach it to a frame, candy side up. Remove 3-4 frames and shake the bees into the box, then return the frames to the box. Be wary of old (dark) comb as it can transmit disease, especially AFB. Queens, however, prefer laying in old comb. Follow up in 5-7 days and check for signs of a “queen right” colony. If you see the queen or eggs and larva, feed them and check again in 3 weeks. At the 2nd check, look for any signs of problems. Check again in 4-5 weeks and make sure they have plenty of food.
3. “Splitting a Colony”: Find a strong colony and pull 3 or 4 frames from the brood area into a box on top of the old colony with a queen excluder between the two boxes. Nurse bees will move up to cover brood in the upper box. The following day, remove the top box, move it to a new location and add a queen.
4. “Get a Nuc” (nucleus colony): These can be bought from many sources in the springtime and should have 2 or 3 frames of brood, a queen and 2 or 3 frames of resources (honey and pollen). When you get a nuc, transport it either early or late in the day to avoid leaving foragers behind. Transport the nuc with the frames parallel to your direction of travel. Nucs need airflow and can easily suffocate if left in the trunk of your car for too long on a warm day.
5. Kirk Webster, a nationally known beekeeper, says the key to building up your apiary is to split a strong 20 frame colony into 4 frame nucs in June or July when you see queen cells. Be sure to get at least one or two queen cells in each nuc. Don’t touch the colony for 2 weeks and then check for a laying queen.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm