SOBA Meeting Minutes  
November 5, 2018

Attendees:

Scott Allison  
Kayley Blood  
Brian Boisen  
Grace Boisen  
Hedley Bond  
Betsy Bradshaw  
Linda Brock  
Bob Brehmor  
Ron Burrus  
Noah Clipp  
De & Robert Davis-Guy  
Robert Denman  
Richard Dumanowski  
Larry Edwards  
Kim Elmer  
Josee Fournier  
Denise Garceau  
Debbie Gent  
Risa Halpin  
Rick Hilton  
Cheryl Housden  
Chris Jones  
Kathy Kelly  
David Kyazze  
Jay McMurtrey  
Eric McEwen  
Ken Muhlestan  
Kenny Olmstead  
Travis Owen  
Jody Palzer  
  
Dave Powell  
Dale Puckett  
Teresa Reavis  
Jeff Rice  
Sharon Schmidt  
Lewis Severson  
Gene Sibet  
Kip Skelton  
Don Smith  
Maryjane Snocler  
Jill Townsley  
Chelsea Varkonyi  
Teresa Vonn  
Heather Wolf  
Kate Womack

October meeting minutes were accepted by motion and seconded.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

Next Meeting: Monday January 7 at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point, OR.

Treasurer’s Report: Cheryl Housden reported that we are in budget.

New Business:

Eric McEwen reported on the October OSBA conference with great enthusiasm. He spoke of the wide variety of research being carried out surrounding beekeeping and honey bees. The four largest threats to honey bees as identified by the scientific community and beekeepers alike were parasites, pathogens, pesticides, and poor nutrition. These four areas are where the majority of research takes place. Eric highly recommends becoming an OSBA member and attending a conference at least once. Membership for OSBA is $40.

A new computer and a wireless microphone will be purchased with SOBA funds.

The date of this particular meeting also fell on the birth date of SOBA secretariat Travis Owen. Kate Womack brought amazingly delicious carrot cakes (yes, three of them) and a few wise members ate said cake. Those who did not try the cake missed out.
Let’s talk bees:

Rick Hilton, OSU liaison, brought a few genuine Flow™ Hives to demonstrate how they work and discuss his experiences with them. For those not familiar with the Flow Hive, it was marketed as a product with which one could “tap” honey directly from the hive without removing frames and extracting in a traditional (and messy) manner. As Rick says from his experience, the Flow Hive is not as simple as the ads lead one to believe. It is also not a maintenance free product. The Flow Hive frames, entirely made from plastic, contain many small clear parts, and some parts can become easily lost if dropped on the ground or misplaced. They are also notably expensive and somewhat fragile. During Rick’s demonstration, one of the plastic Flow Hive frames broke. Rick quoted the cost of a complete Flow Hive at nearly nine hundred dollars! Due to this high cost, he admitted to owning only a small number of Flow Hives, and explaining that more than a few is probably not a cost effective endeavor except for those who happen to be particularly affluent and know their way around a hive.

Despite the drawbacks, Rick was proud to share that he had been able to collect 40LBs of honey from a single Flow Hive super from one or more of his Flow Hives. Collecting honey from the Flow Hive was also less messy and quicker than the traditional extractor method. He did confess to needing to make a few alterations to the original frames in order to avoid robbing. The individual frames each must have a small tube inserted at the bottom for honey to flow from into the jars (or other honey containers. Rick recommends extending the tubes with clear tubing purchased from a hardware store. His Jars also included special lids with holes the size of the jars to prevent bees from entering the jars as honey is flowing. Note: extraction must take place during a day with sufficient warmth to make sure the honey is viscous enough to flow.

A few closing thoughts from Rick concluded his demonstration. He warned to beware of cheap Chinese knock-off products. If it is less than $800, buyer beware! Queen excluders are recommended when using a Flow Hive super. It is unlikely the queen will lay eggs in it, but it has happened. Better to play it safe. Rick found some reluctance from the bees to start using the all-plastic Flow Hive frames. He suggests brushing with melted wax or spraying with a feeding stimulant such as Honey-B-Healthy or something similar.

Eric McEwen followed Rick Hilton to talk about the Warre hive and other alternative hive types. Eric has been keeping bees for almost two decades. Through his years, he has studied and experimented with various hive types. His talk focused primarily on the Warre hive. The Warre was called the peoples hive because of the simple construction that could be accomplished with simple tools. Warre hives are a form of top bar hive wherein the comb hangs from wood bars hung inside the boxes similar to Langstroth hives. The walls of Warre hives are also typically thicker than modern Langstroth hives. Supers are installed below the cluster rather than above, and a quilt box filled with wood shavings (or similar insulating material) sits under the lid. The inner dimensions of a Warre are also smaller than the dimensions of either eight- or ten-frame Langstroth boxes, mimicking the conditions a colony might find in a hollow tree cavity.

Following discussion of the Warre hive, Eric spoke about Layens hives with are similar to Lang hives but with much deeper frames than traditional Lang deep frames, allowing for the building of continuous comb in the brood area. Eric is quite fond of Layens hives. Horizontal Langstroth hives (sometimes called Longstroth hives) were deemed inefficient in our northern climate along with horizontal top bar hives due to the laws of thermodynamics. Eric argued that honey bees in northern climates fare better in vertically oriented hive configurations, because it is easier for a winter cluster to move vertically than horizontally.

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