

Spilling the Honey

GBA Monthly Newsletter

Editors: Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman



Noah Macey, Georgia's youngest Journeyman beekeeper, working on his top bar hive (Photo by Julia Mahood)

Message from our President: Jerry Edwards

November brings families and friends together to celebrate living and give thanks for the blessings that touch us all. Among my bag of diverse blessings is the privilege to serve as president of the GA Beekeepers. My first official duty, outside of the club's business, is to be a speaker at the Georgia Farm Bureau's annual meeting in Jekyll Island this December with the requested topic being "Beekeeping in Georgia." It is of utmost importance that all issues regarding this subject are discussed so I am asking for your input about topics that should be mentioned. Please email your ideas to presidentGBA@aol.com

Jerry Edwards, GBA President

Saving the World, One Bee at a Time

Hello Folks,

This is a note for anyone not able to attend the last meeting of GBA. When you miss these meetings you really miss some knowledgeable speakers. Some speakers have some very valuable information to share.

Wyatt Mangum PhD was such a speaker. I personally got to know Wyatt and was able to spend some quality time with him. He is one of the most observant beekeepers that I have known. A few years back, after a meeting, I was taking him the train station for his return home. During the meeting a young lady had asked about a problem with her hive. Wyatt suggested that we stop on the way to the station to check out her hive. On arrival we removed the top and he instantly realized that the hive had 2 queens. Sure enough he was right! We saw both queens and he asked the lady if he could have one to take back to his Bee Building with all his observation hives. He pulled a queen cage from his pocket, placed the queen in it and we left. In our conversation he made the statement that he would not publish anything without photographic backup. Wyatt is one of the most interesting individuals I have had the pleasure of getting to know.

See you at the Spring Meeting.

P.N. Williams



PN and Evelyn Williams (Photo by Linda Tillman)

“Winnie the Pooh: Christopher Robin, I think the bees S-U-S-P-E-C-T something.

Christopher Robin: Perhaps they think you're after their honey.

Winnie the Pooh: Well, it may be that. You never can tell with bees. “

--A. A. Milne from Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree

New Local Beekeeping Associations in Georgia

By Virginia Webb

This year the GBA welcomed 2 new local beekeeping associations in Georgia. The Appalachian Beekeepers Association and the Lake Hartwell Beekeepers. This brings the number of local beekeeping associations in Georgia to 22.

[The Appalachian Beekeepers Assoc. of GA](#) meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Jasper Senior Center beginning at 7pm. Bud Champlin is the current president. The Lake Hartwell Beekeepers meets the first Thursday of every month at 7pm at the First Baptist Church of Lavonia Family Life Center. Tom Atkins is the president.

As a new local beekeeping association, the GBA may award each club a onetime start up grant funds up to \$350. Request for funds for a new beekeeping organization must be sent in writing to the GBA president, and will be approved by the GBA Board of Directors.

The guidelines for approval of these funds include:

Elect officers

Hold at least 4 meetings a year

Approve bylaws for the organization

Have a set date for the meetings

Elect or appoint a member in good standing to the GBA Board of Directors

November Beekeeping Tip:

Hive Scale - Computers and beekeeping

By Steve Page

Paul Vonk was the last speaker at GBA in February, 2012, and I liked his presentation best of all of them. Paul taught us how to set up a hive on a scale with temperature sensors inside and outside the hive. A computer records the weight and temperatures every 5 minutes 24/7. The data goes to a server and is used to create a graph that is accessed via the Internet.

I set up my hive scale in late April. So.... you're wondering what's the deal with putting a hive on a scale?????

I can tell when the bees leave the hive and when they all get back home at the end of the day. I can tell when the nectar flow starts and when it ends. During the main nectar flow the hive would increase 6 to 10 pounds per day. The main nectar flow ended on May 10, 2012. There was a small flow in June which I suspect was sourwood. We have sourwood in Coweta County, but not enough to produce a honey crop. From sunset to about noontime the next day the bees were evaporating water out of the nectar.

We are now in late October and there is no nectar coming in as the hive is not increasing in weight. So, do we have a fall nectar flow in the piedmont of Georgia? I check the website multiple times a day to see what's happening.

See the graph below to understand what everything means.

Red - weight

Green- ambient temp.

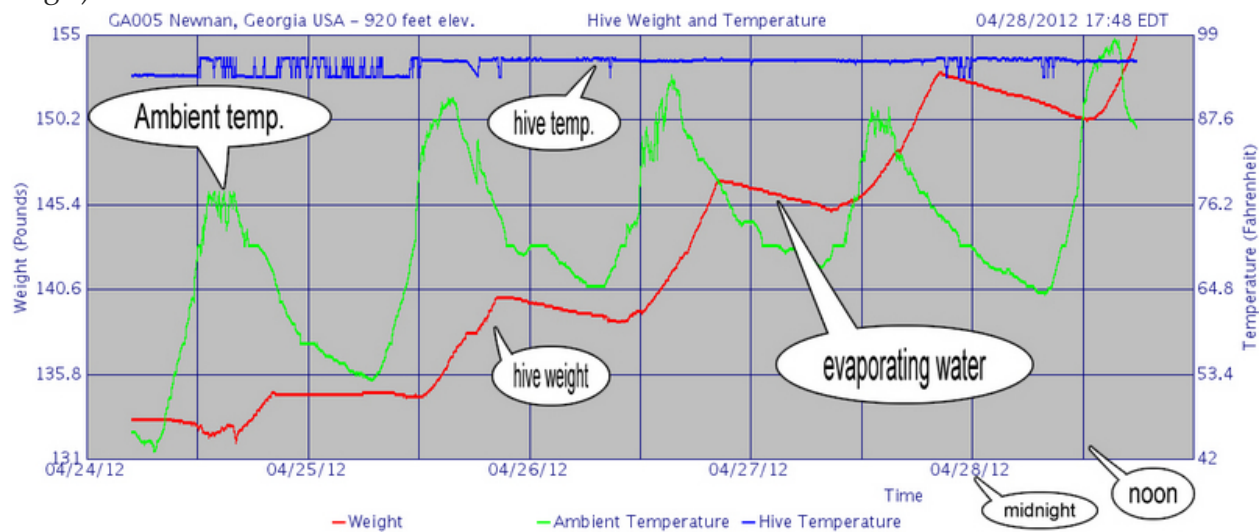
Blue - inside temp

[Follow this link](#) and click on GA005 for my hive.

Thanks to Scott Griggs for all the help setting up the computer. Thanks to Paul Vonk for getting this whole program up and running.

Let me know if you want a hive scale also.....

(Photos and graph below by Steve Page.)



The scale on the platform with the top upside down. I built it so the scale was directly below the center of the hive reducing the chance of tipping over. The scale is connected to a computer using USB cables.



The hive sits on the scale. Notice the house just a few feet away. The cables go thru the wall to a computer in the basement.

Virginia Webb has let us know that one of our GBA life members, Mr. James (Jim) Burch (94) of Lula, Georgia died on November 4. Mr. Burch was an active member of the GBA for many years, as well as a leader in the beekeeping community. Services were held on Thursday, November 8, 2012.

"There are a few rules of thumb that are useful guides. One is that when you are confronted with some problem in the apiary and you do not know what to do, then do nothing. Matters are seldom made worse by doing nothing and are often made much worse by inept intervention."

--The How-To-Do-It book of Beekeeping, Richard Taylor

Funny Beekeeping Story of the Month:**The Ice Queen****By Noah Macey**

As any beekeeper will tell you, keeping an observation hive alive is like multivariable calculus: it's really hard, and I have no idea how to do it. My family keeps trying though, so every year we dust off the glass case and set it up somewhere in the house to await its next set of unfortunate bees.

There are two ways we start up our periodic and unsuccessful observation hives: choosing a failing queen from our life-sized beeyard, or buying a new one. The latter sometimes produces unexpected results.

We had purchased a queen for the observation hive and set her cage inside to let the bees we supplied acclimate to her royal odor. As it seemingly always happens, the workers were unable to eat the candy plug and free her Majesty from the cage, so we took the hive outdoors to release her ourselves. There are more things that can go wrong when opening an observation hive than there are that can go right; one or more of the following will always happen:

1. You will lose a screw, and the door won't stay shut
2. One of the frames tilts, honey spills out, and bees die
3. Most of the bees escape into the wilderness
4. Every bee in the hive manages to fit on the one inch where the door presses up against the wood, and they all die
5. Thunderstorms
6. Spontaneous combustion
7. The rapture.

On this particular occasion, numbers 1-5 happened. As we frantically searched for the screw while the clouds rolled in, we noticed the queen was conspicuously absent from the bees in the observation hive. But we released her low on the frame, and, assuming she was hidden in the bottom of the hive, we shut the door triumphantly. The evening drew on, and her Royal Highness did not present herself in the comfort of our living room. Unsure of an alternate explanation, we continued conjecturing that she was recovering from the stress of her release in the nether regions of our observation hive.

In the morning, after a vicious storm that included hail, wind, and (I'm pretty sure) cats and dogs, we stumbled bleary-eyed into the driveway. My dad exclaimed in surprise and pointed at the ground where we had carelessly tossed the queen-cage the night before. Perched on small wooden rectangle, wet, shivering, and glaring at us with all 9,000 facets of her compound eyes was the queen.

My mother grabbed the cage, ran inside, stuck her in a little side door of the observation hive, and got stung.

We christened her the Ice Queen, and she laid so profusely that her progeny absconded from their diminutive quarters and went to find a new home...In September. They all probably died.

GBA Club of the Month

Coastal Empire Beekeepers Association

Five years ago, CEBA ventured into the future by taking advice from Mr. David Reed and observing the success of the Young Harris Beekeeping Institute programs. By chance, Annie Quinting, a teacher at Oatland Island Wildlife Center, was a member of our club. She had the resource of rooms, space, location, and all she needed were the honeybees and CEBA to get an event started.

The FUNdamentals of Beekeeping has experienced over 325+ people attending and learning about beekeeping over 5 years. Our club has grown from 12 members to over 110+. Continuing to meet the needs of so many new diverse beekeepers is a challenge from month to month.

CEBA supported this year's change to Savannah's 3 year old beekeeping restrictions, to allow legal bee hives in Chatham County! The Savannah City Council & Mayor are next and we hope to accomplish that this year. So many opportunities for a growing club! But keeping interest at all levels is a big challenge still today.

Diversity in speakers throughout the year can also help keep interest going. Bill Owens, Georgia's own Master Craftsman joins us at Oatland Island for teaching; local artist from Savannah College of Art & Design demonstrated the art of encaustic painting; and we had Evan Stewart, a 12 year old from Richmond Hill give us a talk on his research concerning CCD.

Regardless of the special speakers during the year, we have found that every meeting needs to have 15-30 minutes for Q & A with the members. Giving members a chance to ask questions about their good and bad experiences is an excellent teaching tool.



Greg Stewart , President, Coastal Empire Beekeepers

Please save the date. Our GBA spring meeting is Feb. 9th and 10th. Location to be announced later.

Upcoming Bee Events

- **North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow**
January 8-12, 2013
Hershey, PA
www.ABFNet.org
 - **North Carolina & South Carolina State Beekeepers Associations**
Joint Spring Meeting
March 1-2, 2013
Rock Hill, SC
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This is your newsletter

Your editors, **Gina** Gallucci and Linda Tillman

We want to make this newsletter a bit of beekeeping information & tips, bee club information and a place to share a good beekeeping story. None of this has to be long and drawn out--we are all busy. Please share your ideas, thoughts and any pictures you have with us for future issues.

Send your tips (with photo), funny stories (with photo) or a photo you are particularly proud of to gbanewsletters@gmail.com and we will put together a newsletter to help keep all of GBA up to date.

*We are compiling a GBA PHOTO LIBRARY and need your contributions. All photos will be credited with photographer's name when used.

GBA Officers 2012

President – Jerry Edwards

Vice-President – Bear Kelley

Treasurer – Roseanne Dorn

Secretary – Mary Cahill-Roberts

North GA Director – Buster Lane

Middle GA director – Steve Prince

South GA director – Fred Rossman

Past president – Steve Nofs

Newsletter Editors – Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman

Webmaster – Bill Owens