

CARROLL COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

THE CARROLL BEE

<http://www.carrollcountybeekeepers.org/>

AUGUST 2013

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What do rain and high humidity have to do with honey? At the well-attended July meeting, CCBA members got to see firsthand how honey is affected by moist air as Anna Pryor and I demonstrated two hand-held refractometers for the club. Margo and Larry Truchon had brought their new refractometer, too, so we used all three to test honey samples and measure the water content.

Regardless of what we may have heard, experts are adamant that honey with water content above 18.6% is liable to ferment—not a good thing to happen. We are also advised that even capped honey in a high humidity environment may be over the 18.6% limit because raw honey is hygroscopic (absorbs water) and capping wax is not airtight. Couple those facts with recent heat and high humidity that make it difficult for bees to dry out nectar, and we have the potential for harvesting wet honey. CCBA has a very good Atago refractometer, which you can borrow, or I can come to your apiary and check your honey before you harvest. As I am writing this, Anna is comparing the readings on her refractometer against the club's refractometer (which we calibrated at the meeting) so she can perform accurate measurements of her honey. It pays to be sure.

The refractometer demonstration brought up an important point. As we all know, there are as many opinions about beekeeping as there are beekeepers, but when it comes to harvested honey we're talking reputation and finance. Prices for local honey are climbing as supplies shrink. We don't want to charge top dollar for questionable honey, and we don't want to explain to our relatives, friends and coworkers why they received gifts of fermented mead instead of honey!

I mentioned the demand for honey is growing. CCBA has received several requests this year for sources of local honey. Farmers want beekeepers to sell local honey at their markets. Other groups see selling local honey as a way to raise money for their organizations. Interest spikes every time there's another news article about "problems with honeybees." We are in the midst of a revival in beekeeping and clubs such as ours are well positioned to take advantage of it. Everybody benefits! You may sell more honey or more nucs and packages. The club membership grows. As the

beekeeper population grows, there's increased demand for more research to improve beekeeping in general. Take advantage of CCBA having some good equipment that can help you produce good honey.

Thank you to Margo and Larry Truchon for conducting a "Meet the Beekeeper" session at Bear Branch Nature Center on Saturday, July 13th. Margo and Larry kept six youngsters interested and entertained with bee lore for an hour at the observation hive in the nature center.

And thank you to Dave Gallegos for conducting the open hive session at the CCBA Apiary at Hashawa (Bear Branch) in the heat on Sunday, July 14th. Our four hives have benefitted greatly from his attention and commitment.

And there lies the real message. Beekeeping today cannot be a spectator sport; it requires your time, your energy and a lot of information. That's why CCBA is a valuable resource for Carroll County beekeepers. See you at the next meeting and remember to thank Jodie King for setting up the refreshments. He always brings cookies.

Fred Sypher

UPCOMING BEEKEEPING EVENTS

8/5 – 8/9: [Eastern Apicultural Society 2013 Conference](#)

8/23 – 9/2: [Maryland State Fair](#)

AUGUST 21ST MEETING AGENDA

Old/new business

Please sign up for e-mail notification when the newsletter is posted at <http://www.carrollcountybeekeepers.org>. Also, please share your beekeeping experiences with the club by submitting articles/pictures/upcoming events by the last day of each month (for the upcoming month's newsletter) to Stella Fouts at Newsletter@CarrollCountyBeekeepers.org.

CCBA Meeting – July 17, 2013

Fred called the meeting to order this month and had Alan Hayes report on the donation to Africa. With club members' donations, Alan was able to send supplies to a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa and the supplies made it! Thank you all for your generous donations!! There was no old business.

New business included:

- ✦ Dave gave an apiary report and informed us that there are four hives now. Two are packages left over from the Short Course order, one is a split from the old hive and one is the old hive. They are going to require a good bit of feeding to survive the winter and if you'd like to help, please stop by the second Sunday of each month.
- ✦ Larry reported on the Meet the Beekeeper demonstration that he gave on Saturday, where six kids attended. Each child, along with the two adults present, left with a much greater understanding of bees.
- ✦ Dan asked club members to donate honey for a Westminster Marching Band fundraiser. The band has been selected to play at Pearl Harbor and has a lot of money to raise! Donations to the Marching Band would be greatly appreciated.
- ✦ There are still openings to sign up for the Carroll County fair. While Brad is out of town, Gary is in charge of sign-ups, so please see him for more information. Through a string of emails, collaboration and hard work, the booth and website will be better than ever just in time for the fair.
- ✦ Some upcoming events to remember besides the fair are the **Pollinator Fest** held on September 15, the **Fall Fest** held in late September and the four hour **Intro to Beekeeping Class** held on October 12.
- ✦ The club has purchased a new extractor that is smaller and easier to maneuver than the old one. Three people have tried it out with limited success, but two more were in line as of the meeting.

After discussing new business, Fred and Anna gave a demonstration on refractometers and tool kits. They showed us how to calibrate refractometers, and how to use them, all the while comparing a cheaper version to a more expensive one. Fred and Anna then showed us the items in their hive tool kits. Many items were the same, like hive tools, bee brushes, queen catchers and markers, lighters and smoker fuel, but Anna's kit was a bit more comprehensive having sharpies, scissors, rags and much more. Despite these differences, both kits are very effective and work for their respective owners. Anna had a very neat ventilated bee jacket that she purchased from Pigeon Mountain, which would be great for these hot days we've had. She also passed around her gloves, which are a child's size, but may fit a woman better than the typical bulky adult gloves. Alan brought in a hive scale that he built by using wood, mirrors and a simple bathroom scale. Plans to make your own will be available on the website. This is a great tool to see how your hives' stores fluctuate day to day.

Once again we had a great informative meeting. Please don't forget about the upcoming [Eastern Apicultural Society 2013 Conference](http://www.eas2013.org/) from 8/5 to 8/9. Also, don't forget to enter your honey and hive products in the Maryland State Fair. Entry information can be viewed at http://www.marylandstatefair.com/marylandstatefair/uploads/File/2013_FG_D_Honey.pdf

Stephanie Krome



Maryland State Fair – Section D Honey and Wax

Product entry days and times – Tuesday, August 20th from 1 PM to 8 PM and Wednesday, August 21st from 9 AM to 8 PM

For those of you who may have missed the wonderful [Carroll County Times](#) article about CCBA, Margo Cocchetto and Larry Truchon, I've copied pictures from the article:



***Cleome serrulata* Pursh - Rocky Mountain beeplant**

Native to the United States, Cleome is of special value to all bees, especially honeybees. The flowers produce copious nectar and attract many kinds of bees, hence the common name Rocky Mountain beeplant. Cleome is also valuable in that its bloom time is July, August and September, when there is a dearth of nectar. Bees busy gathering nectar and pollen can be seen, and heard (just be sure to turn up the volume), in Stella's garden at <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10151781864844095&l=1494586449685180636>



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Stella Fouts, editor