

Cabarrus County Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Association

August 1, 2017 Meeting Minutes

- President Wendy Tate called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium of the extension office
- Wendy began by circulating sign-up sheets for both the County Fair booth and For Ag Business days
- Two guests were introduced and welcomed
- Guest Speaker: Bob Blackwelder, long time beekeeper and a member of NCSBA (North Carolina State Beekeepers Association). Beekeeping started in NC in 1917; this year is the 100th anniversary and was celebrated at a conference in Winston-Salem last month. The NC Association has 4,417 members; statewide there are about 100k hives. Most NC beekeepers have a backyard set-up; they are not involved with commercial production. Hives have been collapsing since the mid 40's when it was noticed but not of concern. Recently this has been a major problem therefore there has been a lot of research to understand this problem. What has been discovered is that there are multiple reasons for losing this population. Mainly this is a nutrition issue. Bees in commercial production only feast on a monoculture source of nectar. Bob said honeybees, same as with people, when diet improves health improves as the diet becomes stressed then health declines. The proteins in the pollen are a key factor to bee health. Honeybees forage in a 1 to 3 mile range with 1 mile being optimum. The quality of the amino acids in the flowers nectar determines the value of the energy it provides to the bees. If the preferred source of nectar is not available (Dandelions are most desired) bees will forage on what is at hand. Currently there are companies manufacturing artificial pollen, Bees need nectar and pollen to raise the brood and develop the hive. Wildflower seed mixtures are becoming popular due to the wide variety of flowers providing different types of nectar. Additionally, bee populations are decreasing due to the loss of natural landscapes; there are no longer any feral bees. The bees are suffering due to the loss of hardwood forests, when hardwoods

are harvested or burned what grow in their place are non-flowing pines. Finally, the decreased numbers are due to new pests and the mites that plague the bees which vector twenty viruses. Bob said we all know the huge economic value of bees and importance to our food supply; now with our knowledge we must have action. Bob was questioned about Africanized bees and the research being done regarding sting therapy for arthritis relief.

- Wendy called for the meeting minutes to be approved it was so motioned by Scott Maxwell and seconded by Renee Hedrick.
- Gerri Harris cited the Treasury transactions to date.
- Renee Hedrick reports the annual Christmas party will be 12.15.17 she will be forming a committee to undertake the details. Renee shared details of the volunteers who have been working at Stonewall Jackson Correctional; about twelve boys had been able to eat the fruit of their labor, fried green tomatoes.
- Wendy is still urging members to develop their topics of interest into a presentation for the group and if possible for the Speakers Bureau. Chris Fletcher said that he has one speaker, Karen Lankheet, presenting Essential Oils. Harry Stanhope has volunteered to speak on growing Spinach to MG only and Bob Wilber was volunteered to speak about seed propagation.
- Lauren unveiled the newly created NC State Extension Logo which will be used on all materials going forward. It is time again for The County Fair and Ag Business Days. Please volunteer where you are able. Contact Gerri Harris or Renee Hedrick to volunteer for the fair; contact Pat Gladden or Marianne Scully to volunteer for Ag Business Days. Lauren will be giving four presentations at four different county libraries in September and October the topic will be fall gardening. Again this year Lauren will work on the Rhubarb project at the Piedmont Research Station and she said that the Barbee Farm is going to trial this crop here in Cabarrus County. Lauren is teaching “Let’s get growing” at the 4-H camp for two days along with Renee Goodnight who is providing the 4-H kid’s with hands on cooking experience. Lauren asked the senior member of a team for the Ag Business Days to take

the lead in setting up the station and dressing the table for the children's visit. Nelson May is procuring corn stalks for each station.

- Aurora Ormsby brought in the Scrapbook for viewing and requested that pictures be sent to her for inclusion. There was a request from Mitchell Hagler that pictures be taken of the people and work during the fair booth set up.
- Tickets were drawn for the kitty and prizes awarded
- Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.
- 43 members in attendance

Respectively submitted,

Karo Nerenberg, Secretary