

2024 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #19a

I hope the weather this week allowed you to get out and inspect your bees. Here in Raleigh bees are still flying well but it looks like our honey flow is ending. I have been really busy this week and will need to check my bees to see what the bees brought in. Next week will be time to take off capped honey supers, extract, and check the brood nest of those hives I have stacked high with supers.

I spent mid-week in the far northern part of North Carolina. I had a talk to give to Ashe County beekeepers and some personal visits to family and friends. I also visited Hidden Happiness Bee Farm and spent a few hours with H.S. Greene. I have driven by his sign on 421 many times as I travelled to West Jefferson, a favorite place of mine in the mountains. He has inspired me to come back. His store should be on every beekeeper's got to see list.

It was fun to visit a club that starts meeting at 5:30 p.m. providing pizza and drinks to members. This is a growing club with a good mix of old beekeepers and new beekeepers. I picked up the Ashe Post & Times when I arrived at the hotel and noticed a picture of club members on the front page with this heading "Ashe County Beekeepers Association "on the move". They have had to move club meetings from the County Ag. building to a larger venue. The community was invited to the meeting at a local church. They have a great way of making everyone present feel special. Every new member of the beekeeping class who had a desire to have a mentor got one. And they feature a member at each meeting -- a way of introducing club members to each other -- and offer a helping hand.

I have visited a number of club meetings but I was impressed that this club is a teaching and learning experience for anyone that comes to the meeting. Even those non beekeepers were welcome with open arms and in fact, given the opportunity to feel part of the group. This is sourwood honey country. Several of the beekeepers present manage well over 100 colonies of bees and some say something like, I only have 5 hives. And this is bear country. They have given me the opportunity to come back and I have so much to learn about keeping bees in Ashe County. If you want to see a bee yard in Ashe County, it would be good to have a 4-wheel drive vehicle. In fact, anywhere in the mountains. Their major concerns were tree farmers spraying trees and bears.

They have given me a mountain of stuff to write about.