



# *Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore*



## *The Shore Swarm*

### *Newsletter*

**March 2018**

#### BGES Leadership

George Brown --president.

Ann Snyder-vice-president.

Carol Zuccarino -secretary

Phil Harris -treasurer

Tara Southard- Outreach Coordinator

Estelle Spachmann- Newsletter Editor

#### *A Message from our President*

Hello BGES Members

Firstly, let me give a big shout out to all who assisted with our beginning beekeepers class held on 10 and 17 March. The class was a huge success with over 30 students trained, many of whom intend to get a hive started this Spring! Remember, we want to do all we can to assist these "newbeeks" so they become successful, long time beekeepers on the shore. Many have requested a mentor and Leilani, now my fiancée, is maintaining a list so please get with her to see if there is a newbeek in your neck of the woods seeking your sage advice.

Spring has been somewhat delayed by cooler and wetter weather. Nevertheless, the dandelions are now blooming so it is time to start looking for swarming signs in your hives. Look for drone brood or live drones and of course queen cells the next time you get a chance to open up your hives. I plan to use the on the spot (OTS) queen rearing method, popularized by Mel Disselkoen, to split my hive in the very near future, as soon as I start seeing drones and know that the bitter nights are a thing of the past. It's always a bit of a guessing game because of the weather. Ideally, I want to make my OTS splits before the bees decide to swarm on their own. On the other hand, if I make them too early, I'll end up with nucs that have an insufficient number of bees to keep the cluster warm, should we get a stretch of cold nights. And of course, I also have to work around my travel schedule for Honeywell too!

We have some great meetings coming up so as always please check the web page ([www.bgesva.org](http://www.bgesva.org)) for the latest. I look forward to seeing you soon!

George

## The Newbeeks Class March 2018

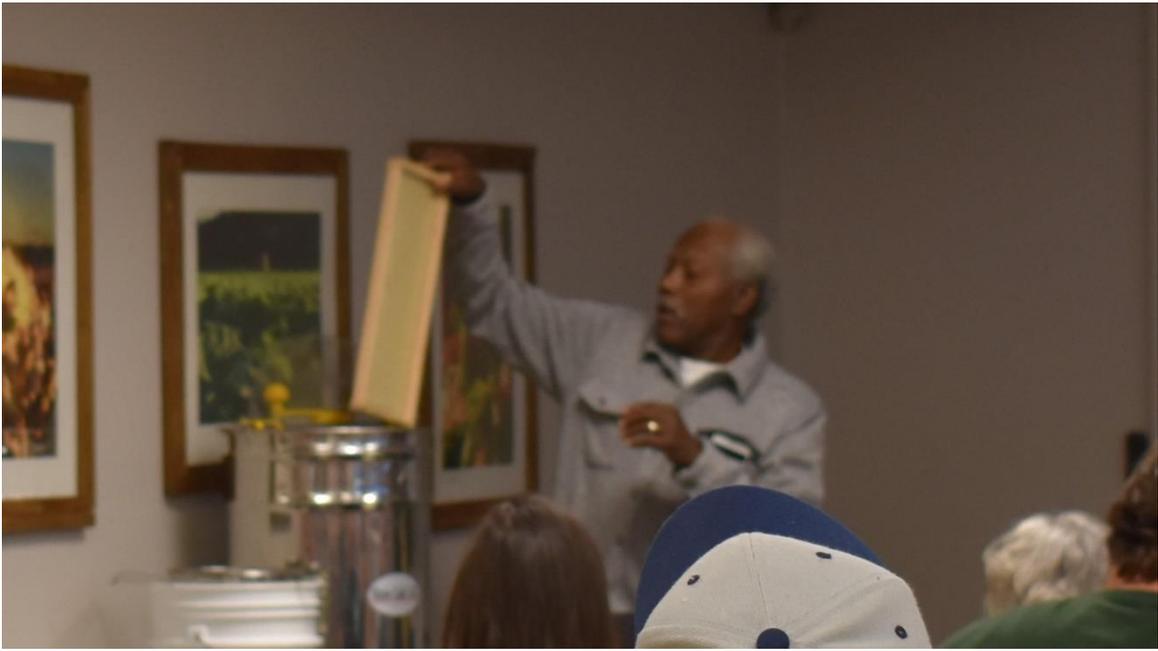
(Thanks to Sandy Sterling for these photos)













## Upcoming Meetings:

**Tuesday, April 3rd, 2018**

**Barrier Islands Center. 6:00 Meeting 5:00-6:00 pick up orders**

We will be hosting Keith Tignor, State Apiarist for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Keith will be speaking at 6:00 pm. He will review the three methods of making splits (OTS, Walk-away, and Nucs). This is the time of year, depending upon the weather, to begin implementing the split methods before natural swarming occurs. This presentation will review the methods but focus more on the steps required to actually get out and do it!

Anyone who has ordered equipment from handsonbeekeeping can arrive at 5 o'clock to collect the items from John and Kasey Jones who will have the supplies ready. If you have not yet ordered, it is not too late

### So remember:

- 1.) Orders for equipment can be picked up from 5-6 pm.
- 2.) Our meeting starts at **6:00 pm** not at 6:30 pm.

We will have "sliders and snacks" to nourish everyone through the dinner hour.

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**Saturday, May 5th, 2018** Ag Station at 10 am. Control and removal of unwanted bees. This will focus on yellow jackets, hornets, and other types of bees and wasps not including honey bees.

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Experienced beekeeper **Matt Cormons** has passed on the following advice/information:

I rarely lose a hive in winter, but lost 3, plus 2 that I manage. I found bees head-first in stored honey, so it was likely due to freezing to death when they strayed from the cluster. My hypothesis is that they just could not stay warm enough while feeding while away from the cluster before the extreme cold immobilized them in place. I don't insulate my hives, but the two I manage *were*, so it made little difference, if any.

Knowing that wax moths can enter an unguarded hive and feed on the honey, destroying comb and burrowing into the wood, which could be very discouraging to newer beekeepers, I could not in good conscience not caution all guild members to avoid a major problem by emptying

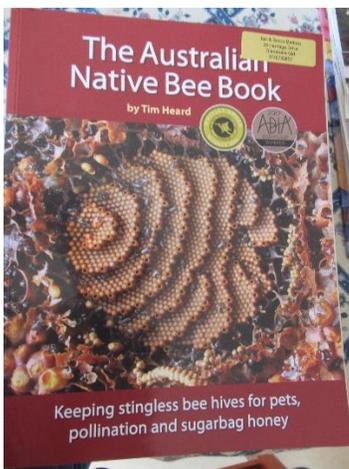
their dead hives of **any** honey that may be in their hives, before the wax moths become active. I took all my frames with even small amounts of stored honey out and extracted all I could, then left the frames out for my other hives to clean up during warmer days. I hope my bees do it before the wax moths get busy on them.

Those who lost all their bees should freeze the combs overnight to kill any moths, eggs, larvae and pupae, but still have to worry about re-infestation if they don't get the honey out of the frames (by bees or extraction). I have been warning and even extracting for the beekeepers near me. If beekeepers do not do this, they are in for a terrible time and many may just give up, so I hope they are hereby forewarned.



Did you know????

In Australia there are tiny stingless native bees that are promoted to be kept as “pets”. They are helping with pollination and can produce enough honey for individuals to make mead.



Very tiny stingless bees in a tree stump.



### Membership DUES:

BGES dues \$20      State dues \$10      Membership runs from June 30-July 1. Application is on BGES website. IF you have not yet paid your dues for this year, please mail your check to our treasurer Phil Harris at 20496 Seaside Road Cape Charles, VA 23310

*The BGES has a Facebook page. Log on to see some of the latest escapades of fellow BGES.*

*The official website for the BGES is <http://www.bgesva.org/index.html>*

*Any news worthy items-feel free to forward to [emspachmann@gmail.com](mailto:emspachmann@gmail.com) for possible inclusion in future newsletters.*