

# Clinch Valley Beekeepers Association Newsletter

Next Meeting: October 20, 2022  
Treadway Fire Hall  
189 Hwy 131  
Treadway, TN 37881

Food Theme is Noodle Mania

CVBA Newsletter  
Volume 13, Number 9  
October 1, 2022  
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## *Speaker:*

The October is a question-and-answer session.

## *Upcoming Events:*

Festivals: We will have a booth at each of the following festivals:

October 1 & 2: Hancock County Mountain Memories Fall Festival in Sneedville.

October 15 & 16: Heritage Days in Rogersville

October 22 & 23: Mountain Makins Festival in Morristown.

Officer Elections:

Officer election is this month. Officers of the club include President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, 3 Board Members, and a Librarian. All single memberships have 1 vote. Family memberships have 1 vote. Youth members do not have a vote. Voting parties must have paid their membership for 2022 before July 31, 2022. Jr. Snelson has a list to confirm your voting privilege if in question.

## *Notes from the last meeting:*

The Clinch Valley Beekeepers Association met on September 15, 2022, at the Treadway Fire Station. The meeting opened with prayer. Seventeen persons were present.

The minutes of the August meeting were read and approved. The resignation note from Candy Halford, Secretary, was read. Jr. read the balance for the treasurer's report and reported the TBA funds of \$400 have been received.

The President, Jr. Snelson, discussed the festivals that are upcoming and a sign-up sheet for volunteers was passed around.

Officer Elections are coming up in October. Nomination forms were passed out to the members that came and a box for them was provided at the front table.

The next topic was the upcoming Upper East Tennessee Convention on October 15. As he understands now, the pre-registration will include the meal, but not at the door. There is no refund if you pre-register but do not attend. A vendor will be outside for those who did not pre-register. The time has also changed to 7:30 AM – 6:30 PM. There will be several different speakers. The handling of this conference will determine the involvement of our club with them in the future.



With no further business, the meal was served.

The speaker for the meeting was Wade GeFellers, with Heritage & Habitat LLC. He discussed with a slide presentation “Creating Pollinator Habitat “Naturally” in fields and forest. This was one of the best presentations we have had on pollinator habitats. This takes time and patience, but the results seem to be well worth the effort. Plus, this is a cost-effective way to recover native species to our area as well. Creating this type of habitat would also go a long way past just the honeybee and other pollinators and include our natural wildlife such as deer, turkey, songbirds, and many others. For more information your can discuss it with the NRCS agent for your county and Mr. GeFellers also provided his email address. Anyone could stay to ask questions following his presentation or email him later.

Website: <https://www.heritageandhabitat.com/> Email: [wgefellers@gmail.com](mailto:wgefellers@gmail.com) Phone (423)470-4795

### *Beekeeper's Calendar:*

October- Remove any excess frames or supers – reduce hives down to the size that you want them to be for winter. Continue feeding light hives. Brood production and hive populations will continue to diminish.

Do your last inspections while the weather is fair – try not to set off robbing when you open hives. Options are limited if you find any hives that are in trouble. Killing frost usually happens in late October.

Install mouse guards and configure hives for winter – top ventilation – but don't accidentally open up a back door for robbers or wax moths.

*Bee Funny:* (answer on last page) BEEWARE! (sign)

### *Club News:*

#### *Support:*

T-shirts are available Small, Medium, Large, XL sizes \$10 and XXL and larger sizes are \$12

Hats are \$8

Cookbooks are \$10.

These can be purchased at any regular bee meeting; they are in the building onsite.

#### *Membership:*

CVBA dues: Renewal Dues become payable January 1st of each year. Dues are not pro-rated.

Single membership \$10; Family (one vote per family) \$15; Youth Single (No vote) \$5.

Please see the club Secretary to pay your dues at any meeting. Checks should be made payable to CVBA. Please let us know if any of your information has changed. You can mail checks to the address on the last page.



## *Bee Insights:*

### How to Deal with Burr Comb in the Hive by Charlotte Anderson

(Adapted from: <https://carolinahoneybees.com/what-is-burr-comb/> ) September 6, 2022

Honey bees do a remarkable job of building wax sheets of honeycomb for their home. In fact, they do such a great job that sometimes bees build comb in undesirable places (at least from the beekeeper's point of view). We call this "burr comb" and it can be a big problem. Luckily, there are some things beekeepers can do to reduce the amount of excess comb in the hive.

#### Do You Have Burr Comb in Your Hive?

Burr comb and bridge comb are simply extra bits of honeycomb that is built in places that beekeepers do not wish.

These wax structures make hive inspections more difficult. Yet, the bees do not think them unnecessary – as they do not do things without a darn good reason.

#### Normal Comb Construction

Honey bees are the only insects that produce and shape wax for their home. The beehive contains many sheets of honeycomb. And each sheet contains thousands of beeswax cells.

These wax structures make hive inspections more difficult. Yet, the bees do not think them unnecessary – as they do not do things without a darn good reason.

These cells are used by the colony for storing food such as pollen and honey for later use. Some areas of the comb are used for raising young bees. They will become the new workforce for the hive.

Worker bees are constantly monitoring the condition of the honeycomb structure. They build new comb where it is needed and repair any breaks. If they need an opening to make travel around the frames easier – they will chew out a hole.

Wooden frames (or sometimes plastic) inside the hive are used to hold the comb. Most beekeepers use either beeswax or plastic foundation in the frame.

The purpose of putting foundation in frames is to encourage bees to build wax inside these removable frames.

After several years, it is common for a beekeeper to rotate out old brood comb. Comb rotation helps to keep a healthy environment inside the hive.

#### Is Your Bee Space Wrong?

The most common reason for an excess burr comb is an error in "bee space". The early beekeeper responsible for bringing the idea of bee space to our attention was Lorenzo Langstroth.

Our modern hive design is the work of Rev Lorenzo Langstroth. He and other early bee researchers noticed that bees built their honeycombs using a special method of spacing.

Each sheet of comb would be about 3/8" apart- this became known as "bee space" because it gave the bees just enough room to travel between the combs.

The classic Langstroth hive is designed with the concept of "bee space" in mind. However, most hive parts are not cut to strict specifications. The size of boxes or frames may vary just a little bit from one manufacturer to the next.

With mixing and matching of hive parts, even boxes built to precise measurements can be off by a bit. This results in bees having a bit too much space here and there which they don't want to waste. They will attempt to fill that space with extra wax.



This is one reason is important to keep bee space in mind when building your own hives. If you don't follow the recommended measurements, you will have more problems with burr comb.

### Where Can You Find Burr Comb?

Burr comb can show up in some weird places, but some areas of the hive are more likely to have extra wax. One of the most common places a beekeeper will find this type of wax is on top of frames. When the measurements between the bottom of the frames in one box and the top bar of the box below is off. Worker bees attempt to build a few cells of wax in the extra space.

Is this a really big problem? No, it is mostly an inconvenience. However, it is a good idea to remove the burr comb during inspections. If for no other reason, it makes future inspections difficult, and the hive parts become more stuck down.

Another reason to use your hive tool to scrape off burr comb is pest control. Excess wax gives Small Hive Beetles or other honey bee pests a place to hide.

Beetles and Wax Moth larva may be able to hide from patrol bees in the tight confines between boxes. Here they lay eggs and try to get a start in your hive.

You may also find burr comb in extra space between the frames and inner side of the hive wall.

Sometimes this will be a small amount that causes no problems.

I rarely scrape excess wax off the inside walls of hive. There are times we should let the bees do what they want – that's good beekeeping. But remove any large amounts of wax that would prevent good management.

### Beekeepers Contribute to Excess Comb

No beekeeper is perfect, and we sometimes make mistakes. Hive frames are designed to be pushed firmly together – any extra space can be divided on the outer sides.

Failure to push all of your frames close together at the end of an inspection can result in messy comb between the frames.

Did you forget and leave a frame out of the hive box by mistake? Oh no, that's not good but it does happen. In fact, I have done so myself when I had many hives and too many things on my mind.

In this case, it is best to correct the situation quickly. Remove any extra wax the bees may have started and place a frame in its place.

Remember, your bees will use all of the available open space for comb construction. Check to ensure you have the correct number of frames in each bee box of your hive.

### Bridge Comb and Cross Comb

In addition to extra wax located on the top bars, we sometimes find bridge comb or cross comb (brace comb).

These are sections of comb that connect 2 frames together. This is the most dangerous type of excess wax. It can cause comb to be torn from the frames during hive inspections.

This can occur in any hive but is seen more often in hives with new plastic foundation. Sometimes, the bees attempt to add another sheet of wax in between the frames.

Bees often build this sheet instead of building out wax cells on the foundation itself-which is what we want to them to do.



When using any new foundation in the hive, monitor the comb building progress to ensure your bees are building comb properly. If they are getting started wrong – remove the misplaced wax. Hopefully, they will build correctly next time.

### Removing Burr Comb in the Hive

Realize that the bees will most likely build it back if your bee space is off. And that's okay. Bees will put wax in places you find undesirable-it happens.

I would not replace my equipment or go to any extreme measures. Clean it up when you see it. The longer you leave the extra honeycomb in place the bigger mess it is to clean.

### Why is Burr Comb a Queen Killer?

Another reason burr comb is undesirable is the risk involved for the queen bee. She will lay eggs in these sections of misplaced comb.

As you clean away the comb, it is possible that the queen will be in there. She can be damaged or killed in the process of removing frames for inspection or discarding extra wax.

### Comb with Drone Larvae

It is common to find bee larvae or brood in comb between the boxes. This is very upsetting to many new beekeepers. In most cases, this bee brood will be drones.

Drone bees are needed by the colony. However, they are usually located on the outside perimeter of the brood nest because they are not as valuable to the colony as female worker larvae.

It is always sad to think that our actions resulted in the death of any bees. However, take advantage of the opportunity to look inside broken brood cells.

Do you see any mites? Varroa mites prefer drone brood. Any time you expose drone brood take the time to look carefully at the white larva for reddish spots. If you see mites, it may be past time for a varroa mite test.

### Burr Comb Around Queen Cage

It is also common to find some burr comb constructed around the queen cage of a new package bee install. This is not a problem. Just remove the excess comb when you remove the queen cage from the frames.

### What to do with Extra Wax?

You might be tempted to casually throw the extra wax on the ground. This is not the best practice. The aroma of honey and wax attracts more pests to your bee yard.

In fact, that excess wax is valuable. You can save the small pieces of comb in a container and eventually you will have enough to clean and make a small beeswax craft project.

Finding burr comb in your hive is not a big problem. This common issue can be handled easily with routine hive maintenance.

Remove excess wax while the problem is small and always check carefully to ensure the queen is not in danger.

Using beekeeping equipment that is standardized and true to size will reduce the amount of extra burr comb built by bees.



### *Recipe of the month:*

(adapted from: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/honey-pumpkin-pie/> )



### **Honey Pumpkin Pie**

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 20 min. Bake: 50 min. + cooling

YIELD: 8 servings.

#### **Ingredients**

Dough for double-crust pie

1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin

1/2 cup honey

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/8 teaspoon ground cloves

3 large eggs, room temperature

1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk

1/2 cup 2% milk

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#### **Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 375°. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to a 1/8-in.-thick circle; transfer to a 9-in. pie plate. Trim crust to 1/2 in. beyond rim of plate; flute edge.

2. In a bowl, combine pumpkin, honey, cinnamon, salt, ginger, nutmeg and cloves. Add eggs, evaporated milk and milk. Pour into crust. Bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, 45-50 minutes. Cover edge loosely with foil during the last 15 minutes if needed to prevent overbrowning. Remove foil. Cool on a wire rack.

3. On a lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough to 1/8-in.-thick. Cut out three 3-in. leaves and three 5x1/2-in. strips. Using a sharp knife, cut veins in leaves. Wrap each strip of dough around the handle of a wooden spoon; place spoons upside down on a baking sheet. Place leaves, vein side up, on the rounded side of spoons. Bake until golden brown, 8-10 minutes. Arrange on cooled pie. Refrigerate leftovers.



### *A note from Candy Halford:*

As we welcome the arrival of falls cooler weather, we say goodbye to many songbirds, butterflies, flowers, and leaves until the beginning again in the spring. We hang up some summer activities and busy ourselves with the next step of preparing our lives for the cold and more barren months of winter.

In our club, October is a month of working the festivals. There we can tell others about the wonder of the honeybee. We see young and old find respect and a sense of awe at the design and creation of the honeybee, and we can share the bounty from its work in honey, wax candles, lip gloss, salves, etc.

We also elect new officers. I have had the privilege this past year to be a part of this club in a most fascinating role, the secretary. I have enjoyed almost every aspect of my role and in so doing, I pray it has blessed our group in some way. While others may not see the progress we have made, I see many working to make it better each time we come together. Several younger and older people are working together, they are not just seeing a need, but filling it. It may be by serving and cleaning up, to helping with the library, filling in when I couldn't be there, or even suggesting improvements we can make or being our speaker at meetings to help others.

I have responsibilities with my family that will prevent me from continuing this role as secretary. Yes, there is work to it but anything that is worth your time is worth the effort to do a bit of work. It is my prayer that someone who really wants this club to grow and move forward will nominate themselves to do the secretary role. I would earnestly encourage it as it has truly blessed me. Male or female, you are who the club needs for the next secretary. If it comes to your heart, it is the role you can do.

The September meeting will be the final meeting for me as your secretary and most probably my last meeting to attend. This is a role that I will miss. This is a club I will miss. And each one of you have been a blessing to me. I will miss each one of you. Thank you for letting me be a part of your club.

Sincerely,  
Candy Halford





### *CVBA Board of Directors and Officers:*

President: Lloyd "Jr" Snelson 432-626-5538 Cell 423-526-7742

Vice President: David Sams 423-693-6846

Board Members: Tim Andrews 423-272-5492

Bobbi Smith 865-360-7373

Secretary: Candy Halford 865-310-0120

Treasurer: Lynda Eskola 423-733-2017

### *Bee Inspectors for CVBA:*

Claiborne County:

Lloyd "Junior" Snelson 423-626-5538

Debbie Clayton 865-310-2421

Bill Clayton 423-626-8786

### *Club Addresses:*

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PO Box 736  
Sneedville, TN 37869

CVBA Secretary  
Candy Halford  
188 Davis Road  
Luttrell, TN 37779

CVBA encourages each person to further their education by reading books, checking out various websites, and watching the videos that are available on bees and beekeeping. We also encourage everyone to have a mentor, especially if you are new to beekeeping. If you need a mentor, please let Jr. Snelson or David Sams know at the next meeting and they will try to find one.

Remember all apiaries must be registered with the State of TN. Forms are available at the meeting or they can be downloaded from the internet. <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/bees/forms.html>

Answer to Bee Funny-

