



**Welcome to the HIVE!**

**MAY 2022**

**The Beekeepers Association of Central Arizona**

**(azbeekeepers.org)**

**Next Meeting- May 19-**

**(Always the third Thursday of the month)**

**7:00pm (Doors open at 6:30)**

**Valley Garden Center (1809 N 15th Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85007)**

**Our presentation will be by**

**Ben Cheney**

**from Scale and Feather Meadery**

**discussing their process of mead making.**

**So come and gather all the trade secrets Ben will be sharing on making MEAD.**

**Believe me, you don't want to miss this one!**



***It's Swarming Season!***

***“Swarming is a natural process in the life of a honey bee colony. Swarming occurs when a large group of honey bees leave an established colony and fly off to establish a new colony, essentially creating two from one. Swarming is a natural method of propagation that occurs in response to crowding within the colony. Swarming usually occurs in late spring and early summer and begins in the warmer hours of the day.***

***Honey bee swarms may contain several hundred to several thousand worker bees, a few drones and one queen. Swarming bees fly around briefly and then cluster on a tree limb, shrub or other object. Clusters usually remain stationary for an hour to a***

*few days, depending on weather and the time needed to find a new nest site by scouting bees. When a suitable location for the new colony, such as a hollow tree, is found the cluster breaks up and flies to it.”*

*(Donald Lewis, Department of Entomology, Iowa State University)*

*People view bee swarms in many ways. Those unfamiliar with bees and raised to fear them, will either run for the hills, call an exterminator, or try to kill the swam themselves.*

*Beekeepers see a swam as an opportunity- free bees! Note; Always call a beekeeper, NOT an exterminator to re-home a swam if you want to save the planet. And- unless you know what you're doing, don't try this yourself.*

*This is what we did.  
(Another Moody story)*

*Many years ago when Dave and I were just starting into bees- (mostly me, he had bees when he was a teenager,) a swam of bees took up housekeeping under the eave of our house. They picked a spot that was around the side and well hidden. They had been there for months- until I found them one day. Here was this glorious collection of the healthiest combs I had ever seen (and since I had never seen any comb before, this was an easy win)*

*Bees were everywhere and like an eager, ignorant child, I stood underneath the comb for several minutes and marveled. These guys were in full honey production! And not one of them even so much as asked if I had permission to be there, so I decided they were fine, and let them stay.*

*Well, as it turns out, that probably wasn't the ideal location from the human standpoint. Our house wall was less than 25 feet from the chain link fence that divided our property from the family next door. A family with several small children who played in that side yard. What if the boys decided to see what the bees would do if they threw rocks at the combs? What if the dog barking riled the bees up into*

*defense mode? What if? What if? What if???*



*Dave got into the picture and decided the bees would be better off (and the neighbor kids AND our nerves,) if they lived in an actual box hive. (the bees, not the neighbor's kids, although that idea DID come to mind.) so he made plans to relocate them.*

*Dave had not done this before, but we both wanted to save the hive and have the bees carry on their honey production where it was safe and we could take advantage of it. We had an empty hive way out back where they could live and not bother anybody. So we decided to put them there. I don't remember all the details exactly, but I do remember that Dave – always the scientist (he's a high school chemistry teacher, after all,) devised a plan to suck the unsuspecting insects up using a (poor substitute for a) bee vacuum; a shop vac. He would spray the bees with sugar water to keep them occupied then suck them into the shop vac canister then just dump them into the waiting hive box. Sounds reasonable and simple. Right.*

*So Dave sets up a table with the empty hive box on it right underneath the hive- all this while fully suited up just in case the bees didn't like what he was attempting to do. At least that part was smart. Then he lays out a large sheet under the hive, and opens the top of the box. To that he attaches a lamp shade that forms a sort of funnel to channel the bees down into the hive box. The shop Vac has "IN" and an "OUT" ports on either end, so he hooks up the "OUT" port to the lamp shade, and aims the "IN" port at the now sticky bees. Then presses the "ON" button.*

*What we got was a big caramelized BEE BALL. Yum. Inside the canister was the entire bee colony wadded up into this gooey, sticky black and yellow BALL. Very efficient- we got every*

*one of them! Dave could have gone into bee extermination as a career successfully. Needless to say, no one except Dave survived.*

*I, who was safely watching and taking pictures through the bedroom window, was devastated. I really loved watching those busy little buggers work so hard on their combs.*

*Now my entertainment was gone with the bees. Sniff!*



***But what we DID save were 13 wax combs – most over a foot long-! And they were heavy with honey! Dave cut each one down and laid it on a large board on a table. We saved as much of the honey as we could- but later found it is was mostly nectar that hadn't been turned in to honey yet. It was still sweet though, but had to be kept in the fridge because Nectar doesn't last. We were just a little too early.***

***Though it was well thought out, it broke my heart when we found that our little bee relocation method didn't exactly work like we planned. We did take down the hive, but we didn't save anyone that day, and we didn't get much for it. But hey- this was way before YouTube! Next time we'll watch and learn BEFORE attempting this ourselves.***



***Watch this YouTube video to see how to relocate bees the RIGHT WAY-!***

***“Relocating a Feral Honey Bee Colony” by UAEX Beekeeping***

***[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= qtEuI4H80](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtEuI4H80)***

***Then be sure to check under the eaves of your home-!***

***GOT A STORY TO SHARE?? WE LOVE BEEKEEPING STORIES!!  
CONTACT KAT MOODY AT <[be.a.light12@gmail.com](mailto:be.a.light12@gmail.com)>***

***Tell me over the web, the phone, or however you're comfortable- I will write it up and share it with you for your approval before releasing it into the wild in the newsletter-!  
Can't wait to hear YOUR STORIES!!!***

