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# KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

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September 2013

## Next Meeting: Sept. 13th

Friday, September 13th  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Pillsbury Library, Warner

## Presentation by Ben Chadwick State Bee Inspector

Ben Chadwick, State Bee Inspector, will talk about what he has been seeing in the bee yards that he has visited this season. In addition, he will give a general overview on how the cool and wet weather this summer has affected beekeeping.

***There will not be a raffle at the September meeting. Save your raffle items for the November holiday potluck.***

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## 2014 KBA Officers

There will be a **SHORT** business meeting before Ben Chadwick's presentation. The membership decided in January that discussion of officers will take place in the fall rather than after the first of the year...the purpose being to start people thinking about stepping forward. Troy and I will be rotating out. If you have an interest in serving our club as an officer, the September meeting is the time to express it and volunteer to run. If you have the passion for beekeeping (like we all do!) please consider serving our club as President or Secretary. Voting of officers occurs at the January 2014 meeting. Thank you in advance for thinking about it. ☺

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## July picnic re-cap

by Sally Carruth

"I had a blast. I love the July picnics, wherever they're held. I'm not sure how many new people were there, since I can't always get to regular meetings and meet (and remember) everyone, but I do know that I met one of Alan's current

guitar building students at the market while getting stuff for the picnic. His name is Rick and he has some bee hives, as well as heritage chickens and some Blue Slate turkeys. (He gave me one of his blue slate toms so my two hen turkeys would have a companion. The hens have since gone off and started nests, leaving my new tom (named Boris) high and dry with a bunch of chickens.) Anyway, I invited Rick to come to the picnic, and he did. So there was at least one new person that I know of, and maybe a potential new member. Alan's two sisters, who live next door, also invited themselves, bringing along a blueberry cake to add to all the other yummy dishes people brought.

Alan cooked the meat - hot dogs, of course, and we donated some of our scrumptious grass-fed beef from the steer that my sister-in-law raised on our pasture. Several people remarked about how good it was. Actually, I was "making a statement" for buying and eating locally produced food vs. factory farm produced food. I also showed a few of the picnickers some of the things I'm trying to do around our little farm to encourage biodiversity and sustainability, such as planting fruit tree "guilds" (fruit trees with other beneficial plants, like Siberian Pea Shrubs, chokeberry plants, stinging nettle, etc., leaving areas of the paddocks where the cow grazes with yarrow, milkweed, and other wildflowers growing to encourage beneficial insects, and so forth.) I also showed people who were interested in my veggie garden, how I am leaving some "weeds", like Bladder Campion, self-seeded mustard greens, sunflowers, and others to grow in the paths to provide forage for our honey bees as well as the wild natives. As long as they don't grow too rampant so as to stunt the veggies I'm trying to grow, I welcome them. It does make walking in the paths a bit crowded, but the benefits outweigh the inconveniences. These are all ideas I have learned in my study of permaculture. It's very rewarding and an ongoing work in progress.

Oh, yes, the cow (my sister-in-law's). Nebula came over to greet various people, including at least one little boy who came. Several people asked what kind of cow she was (milking shorthorn). The chickens milled around looking for bugs and things, seemingly oblivious to the party, until I threw an extra hot dog bun out for them. Boris, the turkey, was similarly uninterested in the picnic.

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But Maggie, our Old English Sheep dog loved all the company and offered to let anyone who would, throw her Frisbee. Our son, who was visiting us that weekend, obliged.

We never seemed to get the chance to go into the bee hives, as I had hoped we would. But no matter. People, as always, brought things for the raffle, and a lot of people bought tickets, so that went well. (I've been thinking that we ought to raise the price to two tickets for a dollar. Some of the items offered are worth so much more; it seems a shame to offer tickets for so little. But that's for the members to decide.) I think people just had a good time."

## The beekeepers lament

### *Honey bee stories in the news*

I've seen more online and print articles than usual lately about the sad state of affairs pertaining to the honey bee. It is my hope that the more people know about it, the sooner it will become a wakeup call on an increased national scale.

The plight of the honey bee made the front cover of the August 19, 2013 issue of *Time* magazine entitled "A world without bees." If you haven't seen or read it, you can probably find it at your public library. The six page article told of the unsung, unpaid heroes of the American agricultural system. The obvious suspect of colony death is pesticides, specifically a popular new class of chemicals called nicotinoids along with usual suspects like Varro mite, American foulbrood and *Nosema* fungal infections. The excellent article contained facts that we beekeepers know, but not necessarily the public at large. Here is a sampling:

- The world has *Apis Mellifera* to thank for one in every three mouthfuls of food we'll eat today.
- The lack of a clear culprit and the connection to a "second silent spring" (referring to Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring, 1962*) means it's clear something is wrong with the world around us
- Nicotinoids are used on more than 140 different crops as well as in home gardens
- There is not a total "bee-pocolypse" yet. The number of managed colonies in the US has stayed stable for 15 years at about 2.5 million.
- Wild bees are in far worse shape

The article proposed the appalling notion of feedlot beekeeping in the future, where bees are kept in confinement and food brought to them

### Here's an online article.....

ELMWOOD, Ontario—"Local beekeepers lost 600 hives and millions of bees just after corn was planted here. . "What seems to be deadly to bees is Neonicotinoid pesticides are coating corn seed and with the use of new air seeders, are blowing the pesticide dust into the air when planted.

[www.thepost.on.ca/2013/06/19/bees-dying-by-the-millions](http://www.thepost.on.ca/2013/06/19/bees-dying-by-the-millions)

The article notes that the European Union has voted to ban Neonicotinoid insecticides for two years, beginning December 1, 2013, in order to study how it relates to the large bee kill they are experiencing.

### Check your bee math

If a queen is killed and the bees raise a new one, how much brood will be left in the hive just before the new queen starts to lay?

In 21 days all the workers will have emerged and in 24 days all the drones will have emerged. It will take 24 or 25 days for the new queen (raised from a four-day old) to be laying. (*The answer is None*)

## 2013 Holiday Potluck in November

☞ Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Holiday turkey dinner and potluck  
East Andover Grange

This is always a great way to end the KBA year. It's nice to spend an evening with members we know and those we haven't met yet. Catching up with people on their beekeeping year over a delicious meal makes for a very enjoyable meeting. There are always neat things in the raffle, too. Put it on your calendar. You don't want to miss it.



Before and After

## Secretary's musings....

What a summer we've had. Seems like nothing but rain in June and July. Some days there was over an inch in our rain gauge in Andover. It hasn't been a good summer for our hives either. We started with a strong over-wintered hive and two packages. One of the packages never took off and we ended up joining it with another package that had better population, but not as we hoped. Brood production in the packages was pretty lousy. Last check two weeks ago, we found only wet nectar and no capped honey, but a sparse amount of brood in the joined hive. However, the over-wintered hive has excellent brood right now. We started feeding the weak one right away, which the bees took fast. As we cross our fingers they will make it through the winter, our plan is to insert frames with partial honey left over from 2012. Tom ran into Peter and Mary Zak at the post office who told him they lost one of their packages too. I read a post on the KBA listserv about poor packages and queens. I'm curious to know how NUCS and colonies with local queens fared.

While inventorying our stash of drawn comb recently, we found lots of moldy frames. Probably not a good idea to store them in our shed. We put them outside in the sun and air for a couple days, and the mold vanished. Lesson learned. They'll be

We attended the Cornish Fair in August. Hannah Falcone, winning essayist in the NH 4-H content won a blue ribbon for her display on honey bees and pesticides. Her display board had photographs of Richard Brewster and her installing a package. The blue ribbon for honey and comb honey went to the Cuttings.

I'm looking forward to the September club meeting. Ben Chadwick has so much beekeeping knowledge and experience. I know I'll learn something. Here's hoping I see you there.

~Janet Eklund

### 3-Frame Extractor Available for Loan

This is a 3-frame tangential extractor, great for small batches. Lots of KBA members have used it. It was marketed by A.I. Root Company back when they were doing bee supply business, so it's not a new machine. It's clean to start with, and it should be cleaned before returning it to me. Contact David Hartman at 456-3881 (Warner, NH) to make arrangements for borrowing it. Available to any and all KBA members.

## Is this for real?

### Bee sniffing dog or Cone of shame??

A dog in Australia who sniffs out American foulbrood in his custom made bee suit! If it's on the Internet is it true?

Read the article about Bazz

[www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-03/beekeeper-dog/4795960](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-03/beekeeper-dog/4795960)



### Healthy Benefits of Bee Products

[www.spiritfoods.net](http://www.spiritfoods.net)

Pebbles Fleury called attention to this website. She thought folks might be interested in the health properties of Propolis such as cancer-fighting, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and others.

## Be Bee Friendly

Although we sometimes forget, native bee species are a big part of the pollinating insect picture. It's important to keep in mind support for the native bees as well the honey bee. Below are some facts from Eric Mader, Assistant Pollinator Program Director of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. [www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org)

- In North America, there are > 4,000 species of native bees. In NH, there are 500—600 species
- There are 45 species of bumble bees out of 4,000 in the U.S. New England has 12 species.
- NH lost 25% of its bumble bee species in the last ten years due to disease and pathogens. Two sister species of bumble bees have disappeared in NH: Yellow banded and Rusty patched.
- To reduce negative impacts on ground nesting bees, reduce tillage, avoid fumigants and minimize use of thick and/or plastic mulches.
- Native bees are active earlier in the season than honey bees and travel between 500 ft. to a half a mile from nesting sites to forage.