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# KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

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November 2013

## Potluck Supper! Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>

East Andover Grange, Rt. 11  
6:00 p.m.

**RSVP to Linda Hartman by November 1<sup>st</sup>  
456-3881**

- Tell Linda what you are bringing (salad, dessert, appetizer, starch, vegetable, etc.)
- Volunteer to help Linda Hartman and Cynthia Hayes set up (call Linda)
- Bring raffle items!
- Turkey and trimmings provided by Peter Zak & Mary Lloyd-Evans

**Next club meeting—Saturday, January 11, 2014  
10:30 a.m. to noon  
Pillsbury Library, Warner**

## Minutes of September 13<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. with 26 members present. Treasurer Robin Gray reported there are currently 72 paid members. The balance in the treasury is \$4,000. President Troy Hall stated he had confirmed that Mary Lloyd-Zak has reserved the East Andover Grange for the November potluck supper.

Discussion took place on club officers for 2014. Dave Hartman and Randy Fleury volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee and present a slate of officers at the January 2014 meeting for a vote. Robin Gray agreed to continue as treasurer. John Chadwick volunteered to serve as club Vice-President. President Troy Hall and Secretary Janet Eklund will be stepping down from their positions.

The business meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. at which time Ben Chadwick, State Bee Inspector talked about his 50+ of beekeeping in New Hampshire.

Ben has held many offices in both state and local bee organizations. As State Bee Inspector he sees many styles of beekeeping throughout the state. None are the same, but he

does not expect them to be. And for that matter, none are necessarily wrong. However, he does find problems with new beekeepers trying to improve on the tried and true. He would like to see more in-depth demonstrations at Bee Schools to give newbies a better understanding of what really works. Ben sees beekeeping as 99% common sense. Bees survive living in a tree with one hole and no bottom board, so there is no need for a fancy set-up. It is a delight for him to go into a beeyard and see KBA member Richard Brewster's signature painted hive bodies. He was still seeing swarms and actually had a call the day of the meeting to catch one.

When he inspects he finds both 10 and 8 frame hives. His experience is that 8 frame hives are not making it through New Hampshire winters, and he encourages 10 frame boxes. A high electric fence is essential with at least 6 feet from the hive to the fence.

In general honey has been light this year as a result of the wet weather conditions. But there was a honey flow up until a few days ago. Bright orange pollen is coming in right now. He likes to see a wide range of pollen color because it means the bees are getting a good variety. Ben keeps pollen patties on his hives year round to provide a variety. A strong hive requires between 50 and 60 pounds of honey to get through winter. He uses a quarter of a pollen patty in the winter and puts pieces of it in several places so the cluster can have easy access. There should never be empty comb or empty sheet foundation in the middle of a hive right now.

He talked at length about using syrup feeders in the spring. He uses inside feeders. He stressed the importance of cleaning feeders each year by scrubbing and bleaching them. He recommends removing and cleaning the screens as well on top feeders. Honey Bee Healthy helps to prevent fermentation of syrup. If bees are not taking syrup, he tastes it. If it tastes or smells bad, he doesn't feed it to the bees. The same goes for pollen patties. He feels if people find it distasteful, why wouldn't a bee?

Ben has not seen Tracheal mites in a very long time and doesn't see this as a problem for beekeepers at present. The Varroa mite is a different case. He compared the size of a mite on a bee to a Frisbee on a human. Ben uses  
*(continued on page 2)*

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## Secretary's Musings.....

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This newsletter is the last one for me. It has actually been a lot of fun. At first I thought it would be overwhelming, but I was told that I could produce the newsletter in a format of my choosing and send it to the members by email. That gave me the creative license to find what worked best for me. I have been using an MS Word template. I want to thank everyone who sent me pictures, articles and helpful beekeeping information. You helped tremendously with content. Thank you for your kind words and encouragement. Sending the newsletter by email to the majority of members has saved the club so much money! It's a cinch just to hit "Send." And with Mike Bellino posting the newsletters on the KBA website, he has helped promote our club, our activities and our mentors both locally and regionally.

If creating a newsletter six times a year seems daunting, perhaps it's time to change the frequency and the purpose of the newsletter, which is at least a ten year old practice. That will be up to the membership, of course. I'm probably rocking the boat, but I think whoever does the newsletter next should not feel bound to what has been done previously if they don't want to.

Being Secretary has introduced me to bee people, bee knowledge, bee stories, bee fun, bee health, bee activities, bee threats, bee publications, bee biology, bee behavior, bee experts, bee newcomers like me--all of which have been invaluable to me as a beekeeper. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the November 8<sup>th</sup> potluck supper and to swapping bee stories.

☞ Janet Eklund



John Chadwick and Randy Fleury help in Troy Hall's bee yard this past summer.

*(Ben Chadwick....continued from page 1)*

Apilife Var to treat for Varroa. As a commercial beekeeper he has to have super strong hives.

Ben does the following to prepare for winter:

1. Insert a queen excluder to keep mice out.
2. Closes up screen bottom boards
3. Puts on a quarter of a pollen patty
4. Wraps his hives with tar paper and bailing twine by Thanksgiving and leaves it on through Spring

He showed a new wrapping material that recently came on the market in Canada that is a thick insulated black plastic blanket that slides over the hive. He will be trying these this winter.

He ended with a story about a woman who lifted her hives all winter long and found them to be quite heavy which gave her the impression that all was well inside. In March her hive was so light that she practically threw it when she lifted it. Come to find out, the hive had been frozen to the pallet. Needless to say, the bees didn't make it. ☞

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### *Let's have fun with Bee Math!*

The number of workers found in a honey bee hive can be estimated using the following information:

About one-third of worker bees in a hive forage every day. Based on average number of flights per day by a single bee and the amount of time spent foraging, the following formula can be used to calculate the number of bees in a hive:

$$N = 3 \times (f/0.0138)$$

N = number of bees in the hive

f = number of bees seen leaving the nest in one minute

**If Joe observes 35 bees leaving a hive in one minute, how many bees are inside?**

**Answer:**  $35/0.0138 = 2,536$  bees foraging per day. This is about one-third of the hive, so  $2,536 \times 3 = 7,608$  bees in the hive.

Note: The value 0.0138 is based on average amount of time spent foraging for an average honey bee colony on an average day. This value will actually change considerably with amount of food available, weather conditions, etc.

☞*Courtesy University of Arizona Dept. of Agriculture*

**KBA welcomes your ideas to help make the club work better for you. Please don't hesitate to bring suggestions and recommendations to the business meetings for discussion. Your involvement is important and vital to the success of the organization!**