

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

www.kbanh.org

May 2014

NEXT MEETING:

**SAT., MAY 10, 2014
9:00 A.M.
PILLSBURY LIBRARY
WARNER**

Agenda: Reports, Get Acquainted, Package Installs, In the Hive with Troy Hall, Old Business: Sharing of member information. Reconsider meeting schedule.

Speaker: "Bee Lining" with Scott Call
Beekeeping on Vieques (if time permits)

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President's Message

Let Us Gather

As bad luck would have it, I missed our April meeting for an out-of-town religious service, and unfortunately I will miss our May meeting due to an out-of-town business trip. We are fortunate, however, to have a more-than-capable vice president who can lead the meeting. A big thank-you to my fellow 'chandler'.

The most critical—and time sensitive—issue that faces us as a club, is to determine when we should meet. I am thrilled that the members of the club decided to meet monthly. We voted at the March meeting that we would meet on the second Saturday of each month from 9-11 am; giving up the alternating Friday evenings during the Spring, Summer, and Fall and Saturday mornings during Winter. There is discussion that we should reconsider this item, particularly in light of Saturday morning conflicts that would prohibit several members from attending.

I am in favor of reconsidering this item with the hopes of reaching the broadest consensus of a time that would work best for the majority of the club. With this in mind, I see we have the following two decisions before us at our next meeting (Sat., May 10, 9-11am, Warner Library):

1. Should we meet the same day though out the entire year or shift between two days/times depending on the season?
2. And what should that day (or days) be?

Since some individuals belong to several clubs, I feel strongly we should not pick a time that directly conflicts with the meeting schedule of another NH Beekeeping Club. Listed in this newsletter are the dates and times of the other clubs for our reference.

I suggest that we meet, therefore, on the 3rd Friday of each month, or the 2nd Saturday of each month, or a combination of the two—should the members feel that inclement weather is more important than consistency. [In any case, we would not meet in December, and we would substitute a picnic in July and a harvest dinner in November for our regular meetings]. I suggest the 3rd Friday of the month since Capital Area Beekeepers Association meets on the 2nd Friday of the month, and I think there are more scheduling conflicts (Labor Day, EAS annual meeting) with the 1st Friday of the month.

With all this being said, I urge each member to give this topic careful consideration and come to the meeting on May 10 so that we can come to a consensus and march forward.

Our June meeting, regardless of date, will feature a presentation entitled "Minding your own beeswax . . . The other gift of the bee." We will follow up this theme by having our summer picnic on

Sunday, July 20 at the Marklin Candle Shop in Contoocook, where we can enjoy good food, lively conversation, and tours of the factory.

So, come to our meeting in May, and I will see you in June.

--Martin

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Kearsarge Beekeepers' Association April 12, 2014 Meeting Minutes Pillsbury Library, Warner

Vice President John Chadwick brought the 9:00 o'clock meeting to order. Meeting minutes from the March 2014 meeting approved. Barbara Burns, newsletter editor, gave an update on the NH State Beekeepers' spring meeting in Bow, NH held on Sat. March 15. Dan Conlon of Warm Colors Apiary, Deerfield Ma. gave a talk on Seasonal Apiary Management, Dr. Alan Eaton on ticks, and Steve Weber E.M.T. on allergies and the proper use of EpiPens. The fall meeting of the NH State Beekeepers' will be held on October 25 in Dover featuring Dr. Dewey Caron, Extension Entomologist, University of Delaware. Caron is the author of Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping revised edition with Lawrence John Connor.

In the beeyard: Richard Brewster reverses his hives between the 10th and 15th of May which is timed with the dandelion bloom. He always brings one extra bottom board out with him when he reverses a hive so that he can switch out the used one and take it back to be cleaned or repainted, if needed. He doesn't wrap his hives for the winter and uses 8- frame equipment primarily because a filled medium honey super has a manageable weight of around 35 lbs. As of April 12, he had been feeding 1 ½ (sugar) to 1(water) syrup and pollen patties for 2 ½ weeks. He feeds this same sugar syrup mixture whether spring or fall. Mike Bayko commented that Honey-B-Healthy will keep sugar syrup from fermenting and that you do not need to make the solution as strong as what's recommended on the label. This is different from any other treatment for bees such as miticides. Pesticides, by law, must be applied

according to the label whether it is a natural pesticide e.g. Mite-Away strips or a chemical pesticide such as Apistan. Richard does a lot of splitting around the 20th of May with purchased queens and queen cells from the existing hives. He says that you have a 50-50 chance of being successful with a split using a queen cell. If the queen cell fails to result in a successfully mated queen, you can always recombine the split with a queenright hive.

New business: there was interest in whether the club could share the members' list for ride-sharing etc. Barbara Burns volunteered to sort the list of those members who checked that their contact information could be shared on their membership forms from those who did not want their information shared. Vote to postpone discussion until Robin (Treasurer) returns. Also, we voted to place on the agenda for next month a return to the decision on Saturday meetings as the new schedule conflicts with local Farmers' Markets.

The highlight of the meeting was Bam's and John Chadwick's talk on natural soapmaking. The addition of beeswax makes the soap harder (1/2-1 oz. beeswax per lb. of fat) and may benefit those with psoriasis and eczema. They use the cold process method which requires some aging after it is poured into the soap molds. It was neat to see the professional looking home-made soap molds and soap bar cutting jig and get a bar of soap from both Bam and John to try out! Bam and John recommended the book The Soapmaker's Companion by Susan Miller Cavitch which the club will purchase to add to our library. Next KBA meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 10 at 9:00 a.m. at the Pillsbury Library in Warner. See you there!

Submitted by Kim Tuttle, Secretary.



At our April meeting, John Chadwick and Randy “Bam” Fleury gave us a very entertaining, yet fact-filled demo on their bee-related hobby: SOAPMAKING. They both make a nice variety of soaps, which they use, sell, and give away. Even though the demo could only be a dry run due to the meeting location and time constraints, the process was well explained. Sounds like a great summer-time project and a do-able sideline for creative beekeepers.



John demonstrates his handcrafted soap cutting machine, which perfectly fits his soap mold. He can also tune the wires of the cutter for music making, if desired. (just kidding).



Bam explains why it is necessary to be careful while handling ingredients such as lye during the soapmaking process.

THE LIBRARY “BUZZ”

I have ordered [The Soapmaker's Companion](#) by Susan Miller Cavitch (the book that Bam and John recommended) and the library already has [Making Candles and Soap for Dummies](#). Those should help any wannabe soap makers on their way.

Cynthia

LINKS:

Thanks to Dave Hartman for suggesting that we keep up with bee-related news via free emails published by Bee Culture Magazine/Kim Flottam. Here's what the website has to say:

Bee Culture Magazine comes out once a month, but news and information is constant. To get you the very latest information from the world of beekeeping and all the things we touch as fast as possible, Catch The Buzz came to be. We routinely post articles of interest, news releases and other informational bits and pieces that never make it to the magazine. Maybe daily but at least a couple times a week. If you'd like to automatically receive these FREE POSTINGS via email, sign up by filling out the form below. Catch The Buzz ... Only From Bee Culture, the Magazine Of American Beekeeping.

Here's another great website for all things honey:
www.honey.com It's the website for the National Honey Board and it is packed with recipes of all kinds, information on labeling, research, and everything else to do with our favorite sweetener.

Thanks to the members who handed me interesting bee and honey articles at the April meeting. Here's a synopsis of the 4 articles:

A newspaper column by Drs. Oz & Roizen from the **4/11/14 NH Union Leader** entitled "**Consumer, beware fake honey**".

It brings up the problem of imported honey which has been repackaged and filtered, sapping any health benefits. Senate bill 662, which would provide some protection for US producers and consumers, was mentioned; but I couldn't find any evidence that it has passed. **My research on the bill led me to a very interesting article which I have scanned (Pg 5 &6)**

The doctors also recommended a drink of honey, lemon juice, and hot water to "suppress a cough, ease heartburn, promote sleep, and boost immunity." Another recommendation was opting for local, raw or unfiltered honey.

A magazine article from **Spring 2014 Northeastern Magazine "Building a Better Bee"**. This article describes the work of alumnus Noah Wilson-Rich who is researching why bees are dying and how to make them healthier. Here are some interesting facts from the story: City Bees vs Country Bees. Bees like it in the city. The overwinter survival rate is 62% in the city vs. 40% in the country. (He is near Boston.) Weight of harvested honey per hive in pounds per year is 26 in the city and 17 in the country. These differences are attributed to fewer pesticides in the city and more community gardens and parks which provide access to diverse sources of pollen.

Let me know if you want a copy of the full article or visit the website of The Best Bees Company. It is located in eastern Mass.

Two articles about the use of black walnut leaves in smokers and black walnut sawdust under hives to promote increased varroa mite drop. The smoker article comes from a small study done by the O'Meara Farm in New Sweden, ME in 2003. They treated hives in sets of three—one with walnut leaf smoke, one with Apistan, and one untreated. Results: "In some cases, walnut leaf smoke knocked more mites off of bees than a widely used chemical treatment. Hives treated with walnut leaf smoke produced more honey and tended to survive longer than those treated with the chemical or those not treated at all." It would be interesting to investigate whether the study has been continued and what the results over time have been.

The second black walnut story concerned the use of the sawdust on a tray underneath the hives. This article

was more recent (2009) and was written by David Kline. It may have come from **Bee Culture Magazine**. He reports using only black walnut sawdust to control mites with no loss of colonies. The method used was to replace the sawdust monthly and wet down the sawdust if it dried out. Most of his hives were mite-free. (Location of the apiary was not stated.)

Are there any beekeepers in the KBA who have a black walnut tree? How about your neighbors?



Here's the article I mentioned on Page 4 , Col. 2 BBB

July 25, 2013

Phony Honey A Sweet Deal For Counterfeiters, Bad For Consumers, Says Prof

Consumers buying honey might not be getting what they pay for according to a Texas A&M University professor and one of the world's leading honey experts, who is supporting a U.S. Senate bill that would, if passed, put more stringent requirements on the federal government to ensure the origin of imported honey and compel sellers to label it accurately.



Cheap honey is often sold at a premium price because producers can remove identifying characteristics that determine the honey's origin, says a leading honey expert. (photo: Repina Valeriva/Shutterstock.com)

Vaughn Bryant, an anthropology professor at Texas A&M and a melissopalynologist — someone who studies the pollen in honey — tested honey samples from grocery and big box stores, farmers markets, and natural food and drug stores around the country and found more than 75 percent of the honey being sold has all of

the pollen filtered out, according to **Food Safety News**, which sponsored the study.

"Large importing companies take all the pollen out of honey because they claim it makes the honey clearer and prevents crystallization, therefore making it easier to sell," Bryant explains. "However, by removing the pollen, you also remove clues needed to verify where the honey was produced and what nectar sources are dominant. This means that with no traces of pollen, honey sellers can take cheap honey and claim it's a type that sells for a premium price."

Certain types of premium honey can sell for upwards of \$50 a jar, and this high price has opened the door for honey fraud.

The FDA doesn't require pollen in honey sold in the U.S., Bryant says, so importers are free to remove it. "This makes it possible for some companies to buy cheap honey with no pollen and there are no clues to know where it comes from," he asserts.

Bryant, who has a modern pollen reference collection of 20,000 types from all over the world (worth, he estimates, between \$4-5 million), uses it and his microscope to identify hundreds of pollen types found in honey samples from around the world.

By identifying the type of pollen in a honey sample, he can tell where the honey came from and what nectar sources were used.

"There are about 350,000 different species of plants and each species produces a unique pollen type," the professor explains. "Plants are best suited to specific ecological conditions. You don't find mesquite trees growing in Canada and you don't find spruce or fir trees growing in Texas. If I find mesquite pollen in a honey sample, I know it didn't come from Canada, or if I find spruce or fir pollen in a honey sample, I know it's not from Texas."

Knowing where honey comes from is important not only for accurate pricing, says Bryant, but also because different countries have different standards about pesticides and using antibiotics in hives to keep the bees disease-free. To help regulate honey safety, "We have strict import laws that apply to honey coming from certain countries," he says.



Supporting local beekeepers is critical to keeping food costs from greatly increasing, says Bryant (right), because bees pollinate the crops we eat.

The U.S. also has high tariffs or taxes on the honey from some countries, such as China.

"China is the world's leading producer of honey," Bryant points out. "They need to export a lot of it and in the past they were accused of 'dumping' their excess honey on the market at prices below the world price. This was hurting the U.S. beekeeping industry, so the U.S. put a high tariff on Chinese honey. After that, Chinese honey was too expensive to import, so one solution was to sell it to other countries. Some of those other countries then resold the Chinese honey to the U.S. claiming the honey was produced in the second country. This is called 'transshipping' and it is illegal and has been a big problem."

Bryant has come out in support of Senate bill **S-662**, a customs reauthorization bill. One of the bill's provisions will require that appropriate U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency resources exist to address concerns that honey, as well as contraband archaeological or ethnological material, is not being imported into the U.S. in violation of U.S. customs laws. That provision is designed to help stop honey transshipments by requiring CBP to compile a database of the individual characteristics of imported honey to verify country of origin and engage foreign governments for assistance in creating the database. The CBP would also be required to consult with the honey industry to develop industry standards for honey identification and

report to Congress on testing capabilities, including recommendations for improvements. Also the FDA would be required to establish a national standard for honey identification.

"If this bill is passed, it would require sellers to be accurate in terms of what they put on honey labels," notes Bryant. "There is no law now that requires that type of 'truth in labeling' for honey. This new Senate bill would ensure that consumers get what they're paying for and it will help the honest beekeepers sell their honey."

Preventing the importation of cheap, bogus honey is vital to ensuring the survival of U.S. beekeepers, says the professor. "Without them and without the bees they raise, many of our food crops would not get pollinated and produce the fruits and nuts we consume.

"If beekeeping becomes a money-losing business in the U.S., there will soon be fewer bees and hives," Bryant contends. "That, in turn, will greatly increase the cost of food. The result might be oranges or apples, both pollinated by bees, costing \$5 each because so few are produced without adequate pollination."

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KBA Newsletter editor, Barbara Burns may be reached at 927-4965 or barbarabb@tds.net. Recipes, links, articles etc. may also be sent to: PO Box 90, North Sutton, NH 03260

NH Beekeepers Meeting Schedule:

Here is what I received from Barbara Lawler regarding other club meeting schedules:

Merrimack Beekeepers – 1st Saturday evening of every month

Monadnock Beekeepers - 1st Thursday evening of every month

Pemi-Baker – 2nd Tuesday evening of every month

NH Beekeepers 2nd Thursday evening of every month

Capital Area Beekeepers – 2nd Friday evening of every month

Pawtuckaway Beekeepers – 3rd Monday evening of every month

Seacoast Beekeepers – 3rd Thursday evening of every month

As for the new club that is forming, I am awaiting details on their formation and dates.

Martin Marklin, Pres.