

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

www.kbanh.org

OCT/NOV/DEC 2015

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

POTLUCK TURKEY DINNER

Friday, November 6, 2015, 6:00 pm

New location: North Sutton Church

On Rt. 114, North Sutton village, across from
Vernondale Store

If taking I-89, take Exit 10 and follow signs to Wadeigh
Park until you see the church

Parking & entrance in rear near Follansbee Inn

PLEASE RSVP to David & Linda Hartman *by Wed.*
Nov 4

Phone: 456-3881 Or email:

davidehartman@hotmail.com

Let them know what you plan to bring: side dish,
dessert, bread, appetizer, etc.

If you can come early to help set up (5-5:15), please
let Dave and Linda know that. Please bring items
for the raffle. See you there!

A Lame Duck's Presidential Message

This is the last message I will be writing as president of Kearsarge Beekeeper's Association. Beginning next year, our Vice-President John Chadwick will be stepping up to lead us as president of our club. It has been a delight to work with John these past two years, and I am confident that his love and enthusiasm for beekeeping will serve us well.

While I will be stepping down as president, I plan to continue to be an active member of the club insofar as I can. As you know, my candle business requires a good deal of travel, which many times conflicts with our

monthly meetings. John has been gracious to cover for me during my absences these past two years. I can foresee that I will need to travel more in the years to come, which is why I am stepping down.

I want to personally thank the club volunteers of KBA who helped make the Fall Meeting of the New Hampshire Beekeeper's Association at Camp Methodius in Contoocook such a success. I have received numerous comments from beekeepers across the state that it was one of the best meetings ever. The hospitality was delightful, the conversations enlightening, and the food was out the park. Well done, my friends!

As the seasons change and we prepare for the holidays, let us be mindful of our blessings this year and look with hope for promises yet untold. I look forward to sitting down and sharing a meal with you all at our Harvest Dinner on Friday evening, November 6, 2015 in Sutton. Our annual tradition is a wonderful opportunity for us to enjoy each other's company as we celebrate the bounty of creation.

May our hands help to preserve what has been entrusted to us, and may our feet always be on the path of peace.

Blessings,

--Martin

**NEXT REGULAR KBA MEETING: SATURDAY,
JANUARY 9, 2016 AT PILLSBURY LIBRARY,
WARNER, NH 9 AM – 11 A.M.**

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NHBA Fall Meeting 10/24/15

Hosted by Kearsarge Beekeepers Association at St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Ctr. in Contoocook, NH

Opened by Martin Marklin, President of KBA with welcome

Barbara Lawler, President of NHBA:
Record turnout. New beekeepers welcomed and clubs identified.
Meeting logistics reviewed.

Signed books by Bill Mares, today's speaker, are available.

After the meeting, there will be tour of the Marklin Candle Design manufacturing facility in Contoocook.

Bill Mares, guest speaker, is from Burlington, VT. Former President of EAS. Author of 15 books on various subjects. Sings, fishes, runs, and more.

Bill's first talk: "COMB HONEY PRODUCTION in the Northern Champlain Valley"

The way people ate honey before extractors

- Standard books/authors on comb honey:
Morse, Richard Taylor, and Killion
- Method 1. Ross Rounds. Takes big population and honey flow
Ross Rounds: Generally needs first year queen, "busters" (large bee population), no swarm

cells, one deep box & a medium below; add comb supers early and pray.

You are keeping ahead of the swarming....crowd the bees but don't let them swarm.

They (Ross Rounds) are a little less than a shallow;(you must buy or create a special sized box), plastic rings that fit around foundation; tops and labels go right on; only tool needed is a sharp knife to cut off excess comb.

One and ½ stories (deep on top & med on bottom) is ideal. Remove and replace some brood frames in center, two at a time. Use strongest colony for comb honey production. Check once a week; not a complete inspection, but to get a sense of what is going on. "Super up"

Ross rounds get filled well because bees don't like to go in corners. You can get opaque or clear covers for the rounds. Use a good label to seal well and make a nice presentation. Don't use queen excluder; not needed.

- Method 2, Mike Palmer's Method
Doesn't try to crowd bees; supers normally on strongest colonies
No wires.
Uses mediums.
Three things needed: brush, bee escapes, and fume board
Cutting and packaging:
Knife, electric iron and square cutter (four per frame)
Let cut pieces drain overnight after cutting. Box up in square boxes. May be frozen.

Bill answered questions from the audience.

Martin Marklin, NH rep for Eastern Apiculture Society (EAS) spoke about that organization. (Eastern seaboard states including Canada....there are 3 divisions in US) The Eastern Apicultural Society of North America, Inc. (EAS) is an international non-profit educational organization founded in 1955 for the promotion of bee culture, education of beekeepers, certification of Master Beekeepers and excellence in bee research. EAS is the largest non-commercial beekeeping organization in the United States and one of the largest in the world. Annual convention: Weeklong with educational days and convention days. Usually held at a college. Next year it will be in NJ (Stockton) in the summer (7/25-29). Beekeepers from around the world go to it. Bill Mares, past President of EAS added: the state that hosts it

benefits because you can do the planning and gear it to what you want and need. The best beekeepers and researchers go there to speak. The socialization that takes place is great too. There is an extensive honey show, vendors, crafts as well as the latest research, an apiary, and technical topics. He encouraged NH to offer to host it. VT hosted it with about 75 volunteers in 2012.

About the meeting place. St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center is the summer camp for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Metropolis of Boston. Mike Cintros, director, explained the lunch menu which was authentic Greek dishes and some American dishes. The chef and staff performed a Greek chant before the lunch was served and Martin Marklin said grace.

Martin Marklin talked briefly about wax and some of the logistics of his candle making business and the other businesses that use beeswax.

After lunch, Martin presented gifts to the priest and camp kitchen staff and they received a standing ovation.

Business meeting/Announcements/Discussions

- NHBA will have a booth at the 2016 Farm & Forest Expo in Manchester Jan. 22 and 23. Volunteers are needed for 2 hr. shifts. Kevin and Cecile Lefebvre, Chairmen.
- \$500 in scholarship money is available in 2016 for those pursuing a post-secondary degree in agriculture.
- In response to an inquiry: NHBA does not take positions on any pending legislation on bee related topics such as pesticides. (See mission statement). Focus is on education and research.
- The Research Committee reported it has donated \$1600 to Randy Oliver for "Bee Informed." Suggestions for recipients are always welcomed by the committee.
- Barbara Lawler mentioned that NH's bee clubs are sharing resources now more than ever.
- In March 2016, the position of Secretary for NHBA will be opening up. Board meetings are always open.
- WATCH OUT FOR BEARS! There was a general discussion of bear-related problems, fencing and so forth.

Second talk by Bill Mares: "KILLER BEES, PERIL OR PROMISE"

Bill Mares and Rick Peyser of Green Mountain Coffee Roasters wrote the book "Brewing Change" about the problems facing Central American coffee growers including seasonal hunger. They started projects to improve their lives. See www.food4farmers.org and www.cafeymiel.org.

- Bill went to Central America to give back, but found out there was already a well-developed beekeeping culture.
- All honeybees in Central America are Africanized. They are more resistant to varroa mites. Oxalic acid is used as a varroa treatment.
- Same bee products there as in the US, but the byproducts (such as pollen, propolis, etc.) are used even more
- Bill Mares and Dewey Caron (?) have set up a training program for coffee farmers to learn more about beekeeping.
- Beekeepers there are both men and women
- Bill believes bees help pollinate coffee, increasing production and quality. However, this is contested as coffee is primarily wind pollinated.
- Benefits of beekeeping in Central America and Mexico
 - Reduces migration and creates jobs
 - No land ownership needed. No electric fence. Low tech.
 - Maintaining native, stingless bees (also called Mayan) is compatible with cultural traditions
 - Swarms can be captured; a free resource

Dewey Caron has written a beekeeping manual in Spanish. But, not everyone reads, so lots of learning is hands-on.

Bill answered questions from the audience.

Meeting wrap-up. Results of the Honey Tasting were announced:

4th Place: (3-way tie) David & Emily Costello, Gees Bees, Bonners Pampered Pig

3rd Place: (2-way tie) Lucy & J. LaPierre, Aaron Palmer

2nd Place: Jeremy Allison

1st Place: (2-way tie) Jody Turner, Troy Hall

Recorded by Barbara Burns, KBA newsletter editor

From: Jeremy Hughes
[mailto:jeremy@pfgp.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2015 5:08 PM
To: mlloydevans@tds.net
Subject: Kearsarge Beekeepers

Hello,

I just learned about your beekeepers association and wanted to share my webpage that encourages people to plant specific native flowers highly beneficial to the bees in their neighborhood. On the page I also list additional ways for people to help bees.

I was hoping that you might be able to share the link with group members that might find the page interesting or beneficial: <http://www.beeseech.org/>

Also, if you have any feedback on how I could improve the page please let me know.

Thanks,
Jeremy

LIBRARY CORNER

Great news! We have a new librarian.

Martina Daley of Hanover has agreed to take over for Cynthia Hayes, who will be enjoying more travel opportunities. Thank you, Martina. And many, many thanks to Cynthia for her years of service.

Missing library items. In going through the library boxes to transfer them to Martina, Cynthia discovered that three titles are missing: **Candle Making for Everyone, book; Candle Making for Everyone, DVD; and The Honey Files, DVD.** Please check your shelves and stacks for these items. If you find one or more and are not planning to attend the next meeting, you may drop them at the Warner Library and Linda Hartman will make sure they get back to KBA. Thanks!

IN THE NEWS:

“NEW HAMPSHIRE CANDLEMAKER SUPPLIED GROUND ZERO CANDLE FOR POPE”

By Nicole Pellicano Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A New Hampshire-based candle maker produced the candle that was to be lit by Pope Francis at ground zero in New York Sept. 25.

Martin Marklin, who runs Marklin Candle Design with his wife, Christine, in Contoocook, also made the liturgical candles for the U.S. visits of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. And he takes immense pride in what can be considered as works of art, he told Catholic News Service by email Sept. 23.



Martin Marklin, co-owner of Marklin Candle Design in New Hampshire, holds the candle that is to be lit by Pope Francis at ground zero in New York Sept. 25

The candle, like all other candles Marklin’s shop designs, was hand dipped over the course of several days. It then took over a day to decorate the candle with two papal coats of arms, colored wax, and gold leaf.

On the bottom of the candle, Marklin carved the initials of his children, done so with this one hope in mind: “If we want a world to pass on to our children, and our children’s children, we as a people need to pray for peace,” he said.

While Marklin keeps about 100 hives, the amount of wax he can collect from them is not enough for producing the all the candles they make.

“We purchase tens of thousands of pounds of beeswax on the global market annually for our company,” he said, as it takes over 1.5 billion bees to make the wax the company uses in one year.

The approximately 50,000 bees in just one hive yield more than a hundred pounds of honey in the course of a season, yet a mere one to two pounds of beeswax in the same time frame. Since beeswax makes up over half of the six-pound, two-foot tall candle that will be lit by Pope Francis, more than 100,000 bees’ labor was part of the candle’s production, he said.

The delicate product is susceptible to damage when in transit, Marklin said, and with upward of 30 years’ experience, he has the process down to a science, fabricating two identical candles for each event and shipping them separately. But in addition to the candle to be used at ground zero, Pope Francis will receive another special shipment from Marklin while the pope is in New York.

Earlier this year following a Mass in the Upper West side of Manhattan, Marklin said he and his wife met Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Vatican’s U.N. nuncio, with whom Pope Francis will be staying during his visit to New York City.

While preparing for the pope’s stateside arrival, Marklin sent over to the archbishop what he felt was the most important package of all. “I sent two beeswax prayer candle sets, with bases that I turned myself. One for (Archbishop Auza) and one to give Pope Francis.”

While Marklin previously dreamed of making candles for St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, he now hopes that the pope will use these candles in his own private prayer.

“I would love to have Pope Francis call me up to send him more candles,” he said.

Attached to the prayer sets was a personal card and honey from Marklin’s bee farm.

“Let’s keep each other, and all God’s people, in constant prayer,” Marklin wrote to the pope. “May

this honey, also a gift from my bees, remind you to taste and see how good the Lord is.”

Editor’s note: If you missed the articles in the Concord Monitor or Manchester Union Leader about the Pope’s visit as it relates to Marklin Candle, you can connect to the Boston Globe article on the Marklin Candle Facebook Page.

After listening to Bill Mares speak about beekeeping in Central America, I recalled an article I had read in the Heifer International Magazine “World Ark”. A little more research produced the following article. Not all bees in that area are the feared Africanized type. BB

Article from the website yucatanliving.com

Bees and Honey of Yucatan

25 March 2014 Culture 6

Today we are all becoming increasingly aware of the plight of the honey bees. On every internet street corner, you can read about hive die-offs linked to pesticide use, genetically-modified foods, and monoculture planting on mass scales that are diminishing biodiversity and putting intense pressure on those tiny pollinators. The honey that many of us in the Western World usually eat comes from the European Honey Bee, *apis mellifera*. There is another honey bee, however, whose plight is more acute, whose honey is sublime, and who is teetering on the edge of extinction. *Melipona beechi*, or the stingless honey bee, is one of many species of bees that are indigenous to the Americas.

Melipona beechi has been the honey bee of the Maya for millennia. Smaller in size than the European honey bee, the *melipona beechi* also cannot sting, making it a delightful species to keep at home. Traditionally, Mayan families would often have their hives tied to the sides of their homes, and indeed, in a handful of communities scattered across the Yucatan and in other parts of Mexico, primarily Puebla, you can find this practice still alive.

The Mayan bees are famous for their docile nature, but they differ in other ways as well. Their colonies are much smaller, so while the productivity of an individual

bee is similar to that of the European honey bee, a hive of *melipona beechi* will produce only 2-3 litres of honey per year. Their stinging cousins produce a whopping 50 litres per year, a factor that has contributed to their widespread cultivation. In a world obsessed with volume, that puts the peaceful *melipona beechi* at a severe disadvantage. Until you taste the honey. Then you realize that *Melipona* honey is the closest thing on earth to the nectar of the gods.

Melipona honey is also highly bio-active, and has been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years. It is a fantastic topical antibiotic, its' use helps reduce scarring, it is used for treating cataracts, and it makes a wonderful antiseptic if you are coming down with a cold.

The *Melipona* bees co-evolved with the flora of semi-tropical and tropical Mexico. They are the bees that originally pollinated the tomato plant, and along with the bumblebee, are the only natural pollinators of tomatoes. Today, most commercially-grown tomatoes are pollinated by hand using vibrating wands. The *Melipona* bees pollinate orchids and are the main natural pollinator of the vanilla orchid. They also pollinate all the glorious wild trees that cover the Yucatan, and all plants that conventional bees just do not visit. So in addition to saving these bees for themselves, saving these bees is also of critical importance to the natural flora of the Yucatan Peninsula.

In 2004, it was estimated by researchers at UADY, in conjunction with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, that there were only 200 *Melipona* beekeepers left in the entire Yucatan Peninsula. Today, this number has dropped to just 120. Because these bees have co-evolved with mankind for so long, managed hives are often more successful and healthier than their wild cousins. Young people in the Maya communities these days do not have the time or the patience to take care of them, and the practice of their care is dying out.

We have started raising and caring for these bees in 2012, with the goal of training the people in our area, growing the bee population, and harvesting the honey. It is a challenging practice. The *Melipona* bees are vulnerable to many of the same things that plague the European bees. Because they have no stingers, these bees are also vulnerable to attacks from ants, flies, and even European bees, which try to take over their hives.

We believe that the best way to save this species is to create a market for its honey, and to take it to the world. The honey of Mexico, and of the Yucatan Peninsula in particular, is among the best honey in the world. This rare nectar is without doubt the most unique and flavorful honey that exists today. We encourage you to take the time to seek this honey out and try it for yourself. You will often find it sold in little vials at some of the many markets that pop up around Merida and in Valladolid. It is expensive, as much as \$1,000 pesos for a liter (versus \$10-50 pesos for a liter of conventional honey). This honey is worth it. We think it is also worth it to know that when you are buying it, you are preserving a culture, a way of life, an endangered species, and a threatened plant ecosystem. When you taste it, you will see that it is worth every penny.

Please follow us on **Facebook.com/melipona**. Stay informed, as there will be events and training, and both are ways to learn more about these bees and to participate in their care.

To read another interesting story about the *Melipona* bees, look up the Summer 2015 issue of World Ark Magazine from Heifer International. You may remember that the KBA has given donations to Heifer International in the past to support their good work. BB

TO WRAP OR NOT TO WRAP... That is the question!!!!

Here are some excerpts from Michael Bush's website (blue headings) followed by two pages of instruction from the website www.honeybeesuite.com I highly recommend that you check out Mike's website bees@bushfarm.com for his take on all aspects of wintering. If you are using 8-frame mediums, as I do, you will find that he has encouraging things to say. Remember, the KBA library has his book "The Practical Beekeeper—Beekeeping Naturally" There's tons on information and pictures online at these sites and many others. BB

Wrapping

I don't. I tried it once, but it seemed to seal in all the moisture and cause the boxes to remain soaking wet all winter, so I quit doing it.

Clustering hives together

I put my hives on stands that hold two rows of seven (eight frame) hives. Basically they are eight foot long treated two by fours with four foot ends on them. The rails (the eight foot long pieces) are such that the outside ones are 20" from the center and the inside ones are 20" from the outside. This allows the hives (which are 19 7/8") to be all the way forward in the summer to maximize convenience of manipulating them, and all the way back in winter to minimize exposed area. So during the winter 10 of the hives are touching on three sides and the four on the outside ends are touching on two sides. This minimizes exposed walls. Sort of like huddling together for warmth.

Insulation

Sometimes I insulate the tops and sometimes I don't. I gave up insulating anything else. I think it's a good idea to insulate the top, but I just don't always get it done. Since I run a simple top with a top entrance, when I do insulation it's just a piece of Styrofoam on top of the cover with the brick on top of that. This will reduce condensation on the top, as does the top entrance. Any thickness of Styrofoam will do. The main issue is condensation on the lid. When I have tried insulating the entire hive the moisture between the insulation and the hive became a problem.

Top Entrances

I think this is essential to reducing condensation in my climate. It was not necessary when I was in Western Nebraska which is a much drier climate. It doesn't have to be a large top entrance, just a small one will do. The notch that comes on the notched inner covers is fine. This also provides a way for the bees to exit for cleansing flights on warm snowy days when the bottom entrance (which I don't have) would be blocked with snow. I have only top entrances and no bottom entrances.

Entrance reducers

I do like them on *all* the hives. On the strong hives they create a traffic jam in the case of a robbing frenzy which will slow things down, and on a weak hive they create a smaller space to guard. On all the hives they create less of a draft than a wide open entrance. In fact when I have forgotten to open up the reducers in the spring, even the strong hives with the traffic jams because of it seem to do better than the ones that are wide open. I do try to remember to open them up on the strong hives for the main flow.

Where the cluster is

Usually around here it's in the top box going into and coming out of winter, with or without a top entrance. Sometimes it's not, but that seems to be the norm, despite what all the books seem to say. I leave them where they are and I don't try to make them be where I think they should be. Usually they spend the entire winter there.

Is wrapping hives really necessary? I think not. Is wrapping hives helpful? I think so. A strong healthy colony with enough stores, and a home decently constructed, can survive most of the winters we have here in mid Michigan without the added protection. Then again, I'm certain that we could leave a few windows open in our home and survive the winter too. Not very energy efficient, but do-able. Shouldn't we apply this same reasoning to our bee hives? I think adding a little protection to make the bees' job of maintaining the cluster warmth a little easier makes sense.

Some beekeepers believe that insulation or wrapping (two different things) are bad ideas. Their position is that insulation will make it too warm in the hive causing the bees to be more active and, therefore, use up their stores more quickly. Also, because they consume more, they build up more fecal material, which may cause them to defecate in the hive. You can find much on that debate in magazine articles and books. In our mid-Michigan climate, I believe, insulation/wrapping allows them to burn less fuel (honey) to maintain cluster temperature. Additionally, it is typical to have a warm enough day every few weeks that allows for some cleansing flights. I will leave it to you to decide where you come down on that debate.

A wrapped hive has a layer of black roofing felt around it which takes advantage of solar gain on sunny days.

Let me clarify, first, a wrapped hive versus an insulated hive. A wrapped hive (which is what I do with full-size colonies) has a layer of black roofing felt around it which takes advantage of solar gain on sunny days. It doesn't do much to prevent heat loss like insulation does. On a sunny day, however, it can raise the temperature inside the hive a few degrees. This could make enough difference to allow the cluster to move closer to honey stores. I have seen plenty of dead-outs with small clusters that, apparently, starved with honey in the hive, but just out of reach. Wrapping also helps seal out harsh winds. Although the bees seal up the joints between boxes with propolis, beekeepers usually mess up their nice mortar job when we inspect.

Insulation, measured in R-value, works by slowing heat transfer. I provide insulation for my overwintering nucs. In this case, the beekeeper adds some material around the hive, typically foam-board these days, to make it easier to keep the heat generated by the cluster in the hive. To be clear, the bees in cluster are not attempting to heat the entire hive, only the cluster itself. When there is no brood in the cluster, they maintain the center at around 70 degrees. When there is brood in the cluster, the temperature is kept around 90 to 95 degrees. The outside edges of the cluster are kept around 41 degrees. Below this, the bees would go into torpor and be unable to move. Even though the bees are not trying to heat the entire hive, the colder the ambient temperature, the more it will wick away the warmth generated by the cluster. Insulation will help to slow this.

Two final points before I describe my simple technique for wrapping: ventilation and overhead insulation. Too much moisture in a wintering hive is certainly a danger. Be sure to include an upper entrance for your bees to help ventilate some of the moisture out of the hive and to use for cleansing flights when the lower entrance becomes blocked with snow and ice. I also am a strong believer in insulating the very top of the hive. Think of a glass of ice water on a summer day. The very cold

water inside the glass causes the moisture in the surrounding air to condense on it. The same can happen on the underside of your inner cover. The relatively warmer moist air inside the hive can collect on the underside of your telescoping cover because of the very cold temperature outside. It could conceivably collect, freeze in layers over their heads, then rain down on them when a sunny day warms the lid. Now, think of an insulated mug. Same cold water inside, same warm moist air outside, but no condensation on the mug. I highly recommend putting some type of insulation between your outer cover and your bees. A simple 1/2" – 3/4" piece of Styrofoam on the underside of your telescoping cover should suffice. I would use the stuff with a plastic coating to discourage the bees from tearing off little pieces and dragging them out when the weather warms a little in the spring. I would also take it out for the summer because ants like to tunnel into and make their home in it.

Here is my simple technique for wrapping. I will add pictures to clear up the confusion my description is sure to cause.

- Cut a piece of 15# roofing felt into a piece about 80" long (I am assuming a standard Langstroth hive). Its height should match whatever number of boxes you have between your bottom board and telescoping cover. I leave the option available to pop open the top of my hives to peek in on the girls during the winter. I use candy plates as an emergency feed measure and want to be able to add more if need be.
- You will need a 1/2" pan-head screw, or some other short screw with a washer, and a 3/4" X 3/4" piece of wood nearly the same length as the height of your roofing felt. I start a few 1-1/4" drywall screws into this piece of wood to make the job easier. It's also a good idea to drill holes where these screws are going to go to prevent splitting the wood.
- I start by screwing the pan head screw through one end of the felt near the top and side of the hive to hold it in position while I wrap the felt around.
- Once wrapped around, the felt should overlap a few inches. I then place the 3/4" piece of wood along this overlap and screw it into position.
- That's it! It takes only a minute or two. The nice thing about this technique vs stapling is the ability to recover your wrapping to use again next year. It's also much quicker and easier than tearing the felt off in pieces the following spring. Trust me on this one. I learned it the hard way.
- I have included a couple of pictures of my hive top set-up, which is a candy board with solid top, a piece of 3/4" styrofoam, my inner cover on top just for a spacer, and the telescoping cover. Note the upper entrance is part of the candy board. This gets a lot of use throughout the winter. It is also a good idea to place a nice rock or something heavy on your lid to prevent it from blowing off—another unfortunate incident my bees have endured.

Good luck to all this winter.

Jim Withers

[Withers Mountain Honey Farm](#)