

# KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

[www.kbanh.org](http://www.kbanh.org)

MAY & JUNE 2017

## NEXT MEETING:

**SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2017  
9-11 A.M.**

**@ KBA APIARY, 223 NORTH RD.  
SUNAPEE, NH**

Directions to apiary on Page 7

**Short business meeting followed by  
HANDS-ON BEEKEEPING! LEADER:  
KEVIN SARGENT, TOPIC:  
INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**

Last day to order KBA embroidered shirts. Date for picnic to be set.



## President's Message:

Hello KBA Members,

Hopefully the cool and rainy weather is behind us and our bees can get down to the business of making more bees and honey. It seems that in prior years it has warmed up earlier and the bees were ahead of where they are now. A few years ago I had built a hive scale from a set of bathroom scales and while it worked ok I only used it for the one year. A week or so ago I dusted it off and got it under the one hive I have at the house. With a bit of discipline, I can faithfully record the weight

and then maybe I will have some actual data to be able to compare from year to year. I try to keep records on each hive that I have but often I get lazy or sloppy and don't record all my activities and manipulations. There is room for improvement in that area for this beekeeper.

My recording method is to use a free app, Onenote on my phone and record what I see and do as soon as I close the cover on the hive. If I forget to record my notes and I have already gotten into the next hive I really have a hard time remembering what was going on in the previous hive. Sometimes the phone does get propolis on it but the case and screen protector clean up easily. So, one of my goals is to be a better record keeper and that might make for a better beekeeper!

In late winter I was contacted by a man that had bees in a wall in a house in Newport. He wanted help getting them out and starting a hive with them. I was quite excited to work with him in cutting them out and hiving them. As the date drew nearer for the extraction I receive a report from him that the bees had died! Rats! Alden Marshall had cautioned me about this when I mentioned it at a meeting in late winter. The homeowner said the bees had been there for a year and a half with no help from anyone so I figured they would make it until Spring. It didn't happen that way, maybe next time.

Our gatherings at the club apiary seem to be going well with interested members showing up. This is a wonderful way for us to learn how others work their bees and do things differently from each other.

Please come and join us at the apiary on June 10.

Bee well,

John Chadwick

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

Minutes of April 8 meeting.....Page 2-5  
News and Links.....Page 5  
Pictures from May 13 at KBA Apiary.....Page 6  
Apiary dates and more pics.....Page 7  
Upcoming Events.....Page 8  
Membership form & Club info.....Page 9

**Kearsarge Bee Association Meeting** April 8<sup>th</sup> 2017

President John Chadwick welcomed all and opened the meeting. Introductions were made and a special welcome was extended to all the new members from the KBA Bee School. It was noted that this was the largest meeting of KBA ever with 41 attendees and standing room only.

**Secretary Report:** Minutes were approved for January meeting as posted in the newsletter.

**Treasurer Report:** Robin Gray reports that there is about \$7800 in club's account mostly from membership dues and raffles.

**Bee School Report:** Bill McDonald, bee school organizer, welcomed new members from the bee school and noted that some club members were getting bee packages soon.

**President Report:** John Chadwick noted that the last meeting was in January and that the February and March meetings were suspended due to bee school conflict.

- John noted that there is a new state representative to the Eastern Apiculturist Society. The annual meeting is in Delaware on July 31 to August 4. Members were encouraged to attend this meeting as there are workshops and great things to do.
- Winter Loss Survey - A winter loss survey was sent to all state members. Please fill this out. <http://nhbeekeepers.org/>
- Muster Field Farm meeting takes place in June.
- Thank-you, Linda Hartman for setting up this room and providing the food.
- A number of state scholarships will be given out by the NH Beekeepers Association.
- Newport call about bees in an apartment wall. John got the call and had the tools as he is a carpenter so he will assist.
- Membership Note – Thank-you Barbara Burns for all your work with the KBA newsletter. Two times the number of newsletters were sent out due to

missing e-mail addresses. Please update your email as this will save on postage.

- Richard Brewster is offering free classes on Saturday for BEEginneers bee keepers. He will show you what you. He says, don't worry about the adage that "If you don't charge for it is no good", as this will be good! Richard pulls out a deck of cards and distributes these to the new bee keepers for a quick random offer for an electronic smoker. Someone asked if the "deck was full" and he replies "yes, but I am not". He admits he has used an electronic smoker for years as he finds it difficult to keep a smoker lit. An electronic smoker is given out to the card winner and all the losers got a coupon for a discount.

**Bee School Report from Robin Gray**

There were 28 new memberships who came from the 2017 Bee School.

Total income was \$1939. Expenses were \$600 for speakers, refreshments and some equipment. Four to five current members came to school consistently. Bill McDonald asked for school feedback as he forgot to share an end of class survey. Most clubs have a school every year but KBA does every other year. John suggests that we do every year and Bam Fleury volunteered to put together a committee together to see how to we can do this annually. There was some talk that a second year school should offered and there was discussion as to whether to have it in the spring or the fall.

**KBA Club Apiary Report from Dana Ramspott**

Dana has a spot on his property for a club apiary in Sunapee. There is wide support for this. Dana has two hives he can offer. Bam offered some equipment and it was recommended that plastic frames be used. A suggestion was made to hold a meeting at this location. Experienced bee keepers would be there to open the apiary to interested folks. Call Dana at 398-8116 if you can help support his endeavor. Bill McDonald offered to donate a top bar hive. Discussion ensued about scheduling. Anyone working with the club hive will sign a liability release. Club insurance does cover club activities.

**T-Shirt Order - Barbara Burns**

T shirt order will be placed early June. Barbara has the catalog and samples for today. Suggested the club buy some extras to have on hand for raffle or sale. Last order was made in 2013.

**Raffle**

A May meeting raffle was discussed as two nucs have been donated. One will go to a new beekeeper from the bee school. Kevin was thanked for arranging this.

**Presentation on Sustainable Beekeeping by Andrew Munkres**  
Cornwall, VT

Andrew is an experienced bee keeper with lots of bees and frequently talks to bee clubs. His talk today is about the problems that plague bees but will help us learn how to be sustainable.

We are really not sustainable if we have to continue to buy packages from the south and use harsh chemicals. He uses the following analogy for his talk today.

"The four horsemen of the apocalypse" are:

1. Environmental contamination
2. Nutrition
3. Weather
4. Pest and disease

**I. Environmental Contamination**

- Orchards are difficult locations due to the spraying. Some research suggests that fungicides affect bee bread. Most directions say not to spray when pollinators are present.
- Ariel spraying is done in some counties in Vermont. This is clearly hazardous.
- Corn and BT -Some corn is genetic modified with BT. This is done to kill corn borers but can be hazardous to bees. In Vermont there are some genetically modified soybeans with BT. A question was asked about homeowner hybrid sweet corn. He does not know about GMO home grown seed corn.
- Treated Seed - Seed treatment can be systemic in plants and also spread into the adjacent soils. Bees do collect from corn and adjacent plants. Bees may even collect toxic water that collects in leaf bases of the treated corn.
- Applied Home Pesticide use is hazardous.
- Mosquito Control Districts - In VT they use a pyrethrin base and in other years have used Malathion. The latter is extremely toxic. Vermont has done some spraying due to EEE. The state will work with bee keepers won't spray within a 1/4 mile of hives. Other mosquito applications can be directed at the larval stages which is better to do. NH residents should register bee hives as if spraying had to happen, they can avoid this. GPS can turn off spray for bees or organic operations.

- Herbicides like Roundup Ready are detrimental. Keep the weeds. Beekeepers see weeds as bee food.

What to do:

- Talk to local farmers about treated seed
- Work with state about spraying
- Make your own food yard for bees. Lots of good tree species available.
- Support organic farmers as they are not killing bees. Andrew tries to put hives on organic farms
- To treat or not to treat? He does not treat as he has a breeding program with mite resistant bees. The homeowner should treat.
- Beware of pressure treated wood. He showed a beautiful hive stand made from treated wood and with a screen bottom board, bees died.
- Mites – generally a good idea to treat but Andrew showed a list of commercial agricultural chemicals that bees might encounter on crop land. The high levels of chemicals found in wax were actually from mite treatments.

**2. Nutrition**

- "One acre of bloom supports one hive."
- Soft maples and dandelions are good spring sources. We would all wish for fields of dandelions.
- Main flow in Vermont is clover. A few good locust flow and some others are basswood. He suggests sowing white clover in the winter. Red clover has too deep florets so the only the bumble bees use this. In Vermont, seeding white clover is beneficial. Best if grass is cut the fall before so the grass does not compete with the legumes. There are a number of varieties of clover seed.
- Andrew feeds using an empty mason jar on top of the deep. He puts 2:1 syrup and stops at Sept 15. If you feed longer, bees fill in all spaces so it is too full to cluster properly and continuous feeding makes bees make more bees.

**3. Weather**

- In Vermont, the weather last fall was a disaster. Due to little rain, there was low pollen and bees went into the winter with small clusters. In VT, nectar is variable but pollen always something you can count on. Make sure colony has

enough honey stores. He missed the fact that the pollen was low.

- In Vermont, 15 August - 15 Sept is the fall flow so honey production is done by Sept 15. With no significant honey after this time it is good to get honey off early, check for mites and check honey production. Two ways to weigh a hive using a scale was described by tipping hive on to scale.
- Wrapping – Andrew described how he wraps using bee cozy or tar paper leaving an upper entrance. He noted he slept better if he closes the screen bottom board for the winter with a blue foam bottom board. He shared convincing evidence that Bee Cozy is very helpful. These are reusable for a few years and tar paper lasts 3-4 years. He also suggests corrugated boxes that you slip over the hive but have to cut a vent hole.
- Question – Does it help to do some buffering around the bee yard? Andrew says he sees snow fences and hay bales used as wind fences. Wind would decrease the outside of the outer layer of a cluster.

#### 4. Pest and Disease

- Discussed some symptoms of Chalk brood and European Fowl brood.
- Treatment for some is Tetramycin which is an antibiotic. This is not sustainable to keep adding antibiotics and one is now required to have a prescription.
- American fowl brood hives evidence requires burning of hives in Vermont. This is spore forming and spores can live for 70 years. There were 7 cases in VT and 2-3 were from used equipment. Old equipment and movement of bees are the cause of some of these diseases. It was noted that New York State released all apiary inspectors so there are issues with moving bees.
- Varroa mite was described with the analogy that if the bee was the size of a human, then mite would be a house cat. Would you want a cat hanging on you all day? He is not a fan of cats so he likes this analogy. Mites are big enough to see with the naked eye so look at adults and on developing larvae. Mites prefer drone larvae so use a drone frame but make sure to get it out of the hive by 21 days. Mites carry viruses so treatment is recommended. Mites also move on drifting bees. Every one basically has mites and the goal is to control them with integrated pest

management (boards, sugar rolls, drone boards, etc.)

- Beekeepers need to understand that mite levels are low in spring as there is less brood. As the population of the hive increases, brood increases and mites increase. There is a peak in mites with the summer peak in bees. As the fall growth curve slows with fewer bees, there are high levels of mites. Treat when the bee population is coming down so bees going into winter with less mites will have fewer viruses.
- A sugar roll was discussed by using ½ bees, confectionary sugar, Mason jar with hardware cloth top. Shake this into a white dishpan and count the mites.
- One can also use an uncapping comb to open up drone comb to get an estimate of mites in a hive.
- A lengthy discussion ensued about commercial bee treatments. Andrew recommends the use of drone comb and removing it appropriately. You need to stick to a schedule. Drone combs should be in 3rd space in a 10 frame box. He sometimes uses a short frame in a deep so the bees make their own drone comb. Then you just cut it off.
- He suggests beekeepers pay attention to the mite count especially in August. I bees survive the winter, with low count then don't need to treat in spring. He monitors for mites but will not treat as he breeds from hives with lowest mite counts. He sells his queens to Better Bee.
- Treatments were discussed:
  - Thymol – Apiguard
  - Oxalic acid dribble and vaporizer hazardous
  - Hopguard
  - Does not recommend Apistan
  - Formic Acid - Hard on the bees and will kill some bees so off set boxes. Formic hard enough to kill some of the grass in front of hives.
  - Miteaway quick strip - bees chew it up so make sure to remove residue
  - Sugaring the bees can be effective for external bees. Do this with a screen bottom board and beware of attracting skunks. This can be done with a chemical free regiment combined with a drone comb.
  - Use hygienic bees. Some bees bite the legs off of mites or otherwise have behaviors to keep mite population low.

In general, he suggests using a northern queen and requeening with a new one if you have a southern package.

Re-queen on the honey flow. A queen that over wintered is an asset. There has been some bad luck with California Carniolan queens. He also suggests having a few hives so you can replace your own losses. If you have more than one hive you can shift resources if one needs it. You can also make a nuc for a replacement. Add five frames of foundation, add a queen cell and leave for them to make a new queen. This is a walk away split.

Recorded by Deb Dunlop, Secretary



#### EMAIL BAG COMPLETE WITH LINKS:

**May 12:** Received from Martin Marklin

Barbara,

Some local bees made the news.

Martin

<http://www.concordmonitor.com/Bees-need-a-helping-hand-to-thrive-in-New-Hampshire-9674275>

**May 14:** Received from Heather Achilles of the New Hampshire Beekeepers Assn:

Thank you for taking part in the 2016-17 NHBA hive loss survey. We received great response! We collected data for 130 towns, 1004 Hives & 353 NUCs.

Unfortunately we had high losses over the winter: 65% of the Hives were lost & 40% of the NUCs.

The data gave us some really interesting insights. We've posted a summary of the data on the website:

[http://nhbeekeepers.org/?page\\_id=568](http://nhbeekeepers.org/?page_id=568)

**May 16:**

<https://www.facebook.com/NBCNews/posts/1819480921405263> This was sent to me by a non-beekeeping friend. It is about a "California Bee Heist" that took place in the almond groves. Very interesting.

**May 20:** Received by John Chadwick from Nick Catania.

Hi John,

Thank you for speaking to me about [HoneyBees911](http://HoneyBees911.com), our new online swarm reporting program.

If someone in the community sees a swarm, they can report it to [HoneyBees911.com](http://HoneyBees911.com) and they will be given a list of all of their nearby beekeepers who can come and rescue the swarm. Reporters can upload a picture, and share basic information about the swarm size and location, while beekeepers can share specific information about experience, availability, and fees.

We will be using the swarm data to gain further insight into the decline in honey bees throughout the country, and hopefully discover new ways to promote their survival.

I live in the Hudson Valley and we currently have a couple hundred beekeepers signed up throughout the northeast with strong coverage in New York, PA, MA, CT, and VT. (There are many others continuing to register throughout the country.)

Would you be able to share our mailer to your Kearsarge Beekeepers membership? Please feel free to call me to learn more about the program. [417.501.6425](tel:417.501.6425)

Sincerely,  
Nick Catania,  
Founder



*Said the ancient Greek Pappus: "Bees...by virtue of a certain geometrical forethought, knew that the hexagon is greater than the square and the triangle and will hold more honey for the same expenditure of material."*

From: Dr. Jamoke's Little Book of Hitherto Uncompiled Facts and Curiosities Regarding Bees

**At the KBA apiary in Sunapee on May 13, 2017, members inspect the new hives and nucs.** Searching for the queen is a challenge. New beekeepers also get a good look at brood in different stages. Queens are marked and clipped. Kevin Sargent leads the group and shows how he manipulates the frames for a quick buildup of brood: one empty frame from the outside gets rotated into the center every week or 10 days.



## More about the KBA Apiary...

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

### HOWS

#### (Hands-On Workshop Series)

Continues at the KBA Apiary, 223 North Road, Sunapee, NH

- Sat. June 3, 9-11 am (rain date 6/4). Hive manipulation. Leader: TBA
- Sat., June 10, 9-11 am. IPM (Integrated Pest Management). Leader: Kevin Sargent **(This will be our regular monthly meeting.)**
- Wed. June 28, 6-8 p.m. Adding honey supers and seasonal topics. Leader: TBA

Directions to 223 North Rd., Sunapee. From rt 89 take exit 12 follow rt 11 west towards Sunapee approximately 6 miles. Look for Smokey bear sign at bottom of hill in Sunapee. Take next right lower main Street follow for approximately ½ mile North Rd will be on the right follow for exactly 1 mile 223 North Rd will be on the left. Plenty of parking in yard. From Claremont area follow rt 11 east through Newport towards Sunapee bear left at 11 and 103 junction look for lower main Street on left approximately 1½ miles beyond junction follow lower main Street for ½ a mile then take North Rd for 1 mile 223 will be on your left plenty of parking in yard.

**Bring your bee veil** (required for close-up viewing) and other protective clothing if you wish. Also bring needed supplies for any spring outdoor event such as a folding chair, tick repellent, water, camera, etc. Most of all bring all your curiosity and beekeeping questions. If you don't yet have a bee veil, there will be a few available to borrow at the apiary.

**This is only the beginning!** The KBA apiary will be open at scheduled times throughout the summer and probably into the fall so you can see the changes in the hives as we go through the seasons. This is a wonderful opportunity not available in many other clubs.



**KBA SUMMER PICNIC AND RAFFLE  
DATE AND LOCATION SOON TO BE ANNOUNCED  
WATCH FOR DETAILS**

## [NHBA Summer Picnic](#)

May 24, 2016 | By [Heather Achilles More](#)

NHBA's annual Summer outing is coming up soon! Here are the details:

- The outing is FREE for current NHBA members.
- **Date/Time** : June 25, 2016 from 10-3
- **Location**: Muster Field Farms, Harvey Road, North Sutton, NH
- **Speakers & Topics**:
  - **Les Crowder, author of "Top Bar Beekeeping"**, who has been a beekeeper in New Mexico & Texas for over 30 years. He has worked in large commercial operations, been the NM honey bee inspector as well as the president of NM beekeepers association. He has experimented with types & styles of hives, breeds queens, and has been keeping bees without chemicals or antibiotics for over 15 years. For more information about Les, please see his website: <http://www.fortheloveofbees.com/>
    - Is it possible to keep honeybees without toxic or non-toxic treatments?
      - Experiences & practices to keep healthy bees without miticides, antibiotics or chemicals by monitoring for disease and mites.
      - Challenges to monitoring for disease and mites when using different types of hives (e.g. top bar, Langstroth, warre)

**We plan to be opening some hives as part of Les' talk – to watch the demonstration you MUST wear a veil. (sorry no exceptions!)**

- **Barbara Lawler, NHBA president-emeritus**
    - labeling of honey & other bee products
  - **Panel question & answer.**
- We'll have the annual Smoker contest.
  - Lunch (Chicken, sausages, burgers, & hot dogs) & drinks are supplied by NHBA
  - We might need additional grills – please let us know if you have one available that you could bring.
  - Please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share
  - Don't forget to bring a chair!
- .....



Please be sure to come to the one of the largest beekeeping conferences in the US. It is being held at the University of Delaware, in Newark Delaware July 31 thru August 4, 2017.

On Monday and Tuesday there is a Short Course program for beginners, intermediate and advanced beekeepers. The Master beekeepers program is also given these days. The Main Conference starts on Wednesday and ends on Friday with keynote speakers Wednesday and Thursday morning. Please come for one or more days. Click here to learn more about the conference <http://www.easternapiculture.org/>



**KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

**2017 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street or PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check:  New or  Renewal

Check one:

I would like to receive my newsletter by downloading it from the club website \_\_\_\_\_  
(Saves \$ for the club) [www.kbanh.org](http://www.kbanh.org)

**OR**

Please send a printed newsletter to my mailing address above \_\_\_\_\_

**2017 DUES ARE \$20.00**

Please make checks payable to: **KBA**

**MAIL TO: Robin Gray**

**PO Box 275**

**Warner, NH 03278**

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**KBA CLUB INFO.**

**MENTORS:**

The following club members have graciously volunteered to be mentors to our new beekeepers. They are also available to share their experiences and knowledge with other members who have questions or need advice.

Richard Brewster, Andover,  
735-5457

Alan Carruth, Newport, 863-  
7064

John Chadwick, Sutton, 927-  
4327

Tom Dickson, Andover, 340-  
3029

Randy Fleury, So, Sutton,  
927-4144

Dave Hartman, Warner, 456-  
3881

Bill MacDonald, Newport,  
863-4012

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