



SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER - JULY 2018

THE BEE PULPIT

Dave Hill

June has been fairly quiet in the beeyard. We haven't had (or made) time to do a lot of checking on the hives. Still have the 5 at the farm and 2 at the house. Things looked pretty slow during the spell of heavy rainfall as the bees hunkered down inside. When the sun did come out it was really hot so saw a fair amount of bearding. Hoping that none of the hives swarmed, but we'll know later, perhaps on the next inspection. All hives have supers, and there seems to be quite a bit of activity.

We'll do mites checks when time allows and treat if necessary. Only option with supers on will be the Mite Away Quick Strips and will have to wait until the temps are low enough. Hoping to check the supers for full frames and take some off prior to the NIBA picnic. Otherwise it's business as usual for the girls as spring gives way to summer (and likely a hot one!).

Frank Moriarty (Lake County Beekeepers – President) has been inviting Marianne and me to make one of their meetings for some time. We attended the June 7th meeting at the Lake County Fairgrounds. They had an interesting program, and it was also their open hive inspection and pizza gathering. Good to be among fellow beekeepers and to enjoy the evening. Marianne and I took the opportunity to join our sister organization. Several of our NIBA members also are on the LCBA roster and reap the benefits of dual membership.

The regular meeting on June 8th was well attended. Several newbees were welcomed to the club and introduced. We had a good discussion amongst the members on a variety of topics including recent hive inspections, successes and non-successes with members' hives, and the outlook for the summer.

Larry Krengel gave a presentation on varoa that went much farther than the normal "here they are and what should we do about them." He provided a great background on the mites and the difficulties we all face as beekeepers in combating the problem.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NIBA OPEN HIVE/PICNIC **Saturday, July 14, 2:30pm**

Phil & Caryn Konopinski
321 W Dowell Rd
McHenry, IL 60031

McBEES FRIDAY **Friday, July 20, 7pm**

McDonald's
250 S Eastwood Dr (Route 47)
Woodstock, IL 60098

McHENRY COUNTY FAIR **July 31 thru August 5**

McHenry County Fairgrounds
12015 Country Club Rd
Woodstock, IL 60098

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP **MEETING**

Friday, August 10, 7pm

McHenry County Farm Bureau
1102 McConnell Rd
Woodstock, IL 60098

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP **MEETING**

Friday, September 14, 7pm

McHenry County Farm Bureau
1102 McConnell Rd
Woodstock, IL 60098

Corky Schnadt talked about the upcoming honey showing at the McHenry County Fair. Corky will again be heading up the honey competition this year. He indicated that Ron Fisher will be the judge, and encouraged members to not only enter the show but to attend the judging. Ron is very good at allowing folks to observe his judging and to give feedback to those who have entered their honey. The deadline for submission of entries is July 15th.

Jim and Karen Belli gave an awesome presentation about showing honey. The Bellis have shown honey for many years and have won many local, state and national awards for their honey. They discussed the joys and rewards of showing honey as well as some of the problems they have encountered along the way. Jim and Karen brought a lot of "show and tell" items to support their long history of enjoying this aspect of beekeeping. They encouraged members to try their hand at showing the fruits of their hobby.

We will not have our regular meeting scheduled for Friday July 13th as we will be having the NIBA Open Hive and Picnic on Saturday July 14th. We look forward to seeing all members and families as we gather for fun, hive opening, and food. Details are in this month's newsletter. See ya there!





The Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association invites you to our July meeting!
Join your fellow beekeepers and their families for a good time of food and fellowship!

What – 2018 Open Hive and Pig Roast

When – Saturday July 14, 2018

Arrive 2:30 pm, Dinner 5:00 pm

Outdoors – Rain or Shine – Bring a lawn chair

Where – Phil & Caryn Konopinski's Place

321 West Dowell Rd

McHenry, IL

Events

Smoker Contest

Hive Opening & Inspection

Mite Count Demonstration

Extractor Demonstration

Honey Dessert Contest

Pig roast, provided by NIBA

Drinks – Regular/Diet Soda and water, provided by NIBA

Please bring a side or dessert to share (your contest entry will be your dessert)

**Who's invited – All current members of NIBA, spouses,
significant others, and immediate family.**

Cost – \$5.00 Member - \$10.00 Non-Member

Age 5 and under are free

Payment accepted at the door. However, please RSVP via email to newsletter@nibainfo.org.



NIBA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Tom Allen

Happy July! I don't know about you, but boy, the summer is really going by quickly for me. Before we know it, the McHenry County Fair will be here.

And on that note, I'd like to share a quick reminder about our upcoming needs for volunteers at the Fair, which is taking place between July 31st and August 5th at the McHenry County Fairgrounds. As you can imagine, a six-day event requires a lot of volunteers!

First, I want to thank Marianne Hill for getting us connected with SignUp Genius. It has made signing up to volunteer for events like the Fair easier for all of us. The best part is that the calendar is kept in real time, so when you go to the website you'll see open shifts. With that in mind, we still

have shifts to fill. In particular, we need several volunteers for the last shift on Sunday the 5th. We will need to take down both booths and pack everything up at that time.

A BIG THANK YOU TO THOSE MEMBERS WHO ARE ALREADY SIGNED UP!

Please consider signing up for one of the open shifts. If you could spare a few hours of time to support the club, it would be greatly appreciated. I hope you feel as I do that it's important for us to each devote at least a few hours each year to volunteering for the club to ensure its sustainability. If so, this is a great opportunity to do just that.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the club picnic on July 14th!



MEMBER DONATIONS



Thank You for refreshment donations to the following members:

- *Art Hickman
- *Angie Bradley
- *Jan and Joe Magyar
- *Donna Taliaferro and John Leibinger

An additional huge **Thank You** to these members who made raffle donations:

- *Sue Dietz (*Harvard Eggs and Feed*)
- *Carl Christiansen
- *Gene McCray
- *Dave and Marianne Hill

A general thanks to **Harvard Eggs and Feed, Spencer's Apiary Specialties, and BL Plastic Containers** for their generous and continued support. When you have some beekeeping needs, please consider supporting these member-vendors as they support us.

I think that I captured all the donations but if I have missed someone, my sincere apologies.

Like the bees we study, we accomplish more together.
John Leibinger

MCBEE'S FRIDAYS

MEETING AT McDONALD'S

Let's gather to chat. No agenda, just time for us to get together. Time to get to know our fellow beekeepers. Time to compare notes. Time to ask questions.

Interested? Just show up. No need for reservations.

Third Friday of the Month – **July 20, 7 pm**

McDonald's, 250 S Eastwood Dr (Route 47), Woodstock



A DAY AT PETERSEN FARM

We had a great turnout at A Day at Petersen Farm! Honey sales were great. Thanks to Ralph Brindise, Terri Reeves, John Leibinger, Jerry Gudauskas, Rebekkah & Sydney Burtcher. We had a few members stopping by for visits as well. The observation hive was a hit.



CHORES OF THE MONTH – JULY

John Leibinger

What's happening in the hive?

The colony population will have reached a peak by this month. You should be observing lots of bees and still see plenty of brood at all stages being raised to replace the older bees in the colony. The rate of laying of the queen will typically start to taper off from the rate that has been experienced through the spring season.

The bees should have stored some nectar from May and June and you will likely be finding capped frames of honey in your supers. This is the month to start harvesting those capped frames. Nectar flows continue into July and then taper off as we enter August. When removing honey to harvest, make sure that there is still plenty of honey left for the bees to survive the dearth in August.

Temperatures are heating up so ventilation and available water sources are 'must haves' for your bees.

Make sure that there is plenty of space for colony expansion. Oftentimes, the bees will have backfilled the brood nest with nectar, reducing space for egg laying. As you inspect frames in the brood nest, be mindful of excessive nectar storage in the brood nest. Excessive storage in this area can restrict the queen's ability to find space to lay and can lead to late season swarming or reduced colony growth and even population shrinkage due to lack of egg laying space. Remove and replace excessive storage frames with frames of open drawn comb or new foundation.

The bee population is no longer expanding rapidly, but the Varroa mite population likely is. You must monitor their growth by doing regular mite checks (monthly sugar roll or alcohol wash).

For All Beekeepers, it is time to:

Maintain the space around your hive(s). Your bees work hard at thermoregulation of the hive. Help them out. Trim weeds and grass to allow maximum air flow as the temperatures rise. Maintaining a clear flight path to the hive also increases their foraging efficiency.

Provide additional ventilation to assist the bees in maintaining proper hive temperatures. This can be in the form of ventilated inner covers or as simple as propping the outer cover to allow more air circulation. The additional ventilation is also helpful in the conversion of nectar to honey. Better ventilation eases the job of moisture removal from the stored nectar.

Make sure the bees have a water source as we move into the heat of summer. Bees collect water to help cool the hive as part of their thermoregulation efforts.

Monitor for Varroa Mites monthly and take action if needed (See General Info section below for references to mite checking procedures.)

Know what you have and keep records. Keep their growth in check by utilizing a miticide, organic acids, drone comb culling, a combination of IPM methods, or a brood break. Pay attention to labeling instructions when using treatments and be mindful that you cannot leave honey supers on for all methods of treatments. The only treatments currently approved for use while honey supers are on are Hopguard II, Mite Away Quick Strips (MAQS), and Formic Pro. Your specific approach will be influenced by your personal goals and philosophy, but, if you have a mite problem, doing nothing is not an acceptable answer if you want your colony to thrive and survive.

Make sure that you keep records. This is a very important element of the learning process...whether you are a first year beekeeper or a forty year beekeeper....you should always be learning something. Record inspection dates, time and temp and weather conditions, quantity of bees, bee behaviors, signs indicating the presence of the queen (eggs, young larvae, actual sighting), number of frames of brood and stores, brood pattern and frame/comb condition, available laying space, observations of signs of swarm preparation, pollen coming in (color, type if possible), drone production, Varroa Mite count, presence of Small Hive Beetle or other pests, and a number of other issues. Record anything else that is outside of 'normal' once you learn what 'normal' is. Take notes in the bee yard. You will be surprised at how easy it is to get confused over what was observed and which hive it was observed in if you wait to record info after the fact.

Monitor the hives for queen signs. Stuff happens....the queen may be failing and the bees need to replace her. She may have died for some reason. You need to know that they have the resources to make a new queen or you will have to provide those resources from another colony. Alternately, you can buy and install a queen. Don't allow your hive to remain queenless. Doing so will likely lead to a 'laying worker' condition. This is a problem that is not easily resolved and oftentimes results in the death of the colony. Stay ahead of problems and take action when needed.

Harvest honey appropriately. Don't overharvest, there are some lean weeks ahead for your bees.

Return extracted frames to the hives for them to continue to make more honey.

Consider starting to make your splits to raise bees for next year if this is part of your goal plan.

Start to watch out for robbing later in the month. Reduce entrances or add robbing screens if needed.

General Info

Download the forms to register your bees with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Insects/Bees/Documents/beekeep.pdf> (Ctrl+Click link)

Pollen identification chart:

https://www.nsbka.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=681&Itemid=1092&utm_content=bufferdac80&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer (Ctrl+Click link)

[Hive Inspection Checklist](#) (Ctrl+Click link)

Sugar Roll Method: [varroa mite monitoring - The Sand Hill](#) (Ctrl+Click link)

Alcohol Wash Method: [Alcohol Wash for Mite Control - YouTube](#) (Ctrl+Click link)



BEE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE WAVE CLOTH

Larry Kregel

Colonies are like a living body. Each of the bees is a part of a thinking superorganism. We see their ability to perform higher-level thinking in events like swarming and the supersedure of the queen. Jerry Bromenschenk from the University of Montana has taught colonies to locate specific smells... like C4 explosive!

The psychology of the colony learning process is intriguing to me. In humans, psychologists talk about the "mere exposure effect." Simply, we learn to tolerate or even appreciate things by being exposed to them. Think of those commercials on TV. At first, we may be put off by a bad commercial.



Eventually, we sit back and take it... tolerate it. Some think

that we have been exposed to such bad behavior by our politicians that we have now decided to just accept it. Could we even start appreciating this poor behavior simply because we have been exposed to it? So what does this have to do with bees? Maybe something.

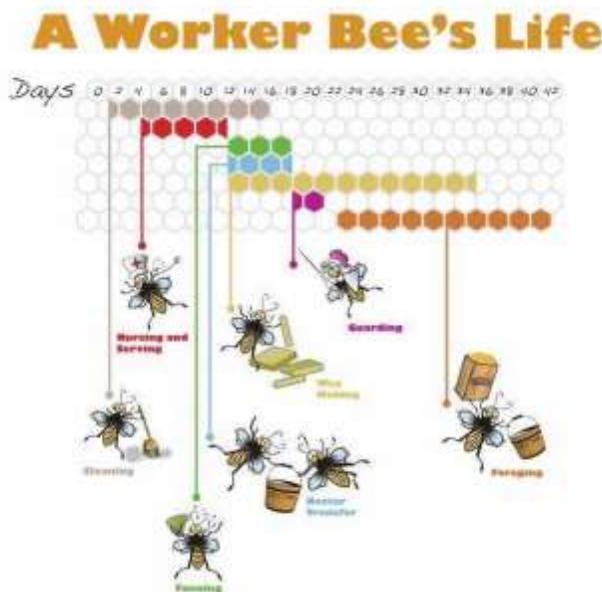
We know that bees respond (poorly) to fast motion. Try just moving your hand quickly over an open hive. The bees will show their displeasure.

Some beekeepers contend that the bees they keep in a peaceful, bucolic field eventually take exception to any motion, including the keeper entering the beeyard. How can we deal with this? It is no fun to have the bees act hostile as soon as you approach the hive. The solution was suggested centuries ago. Today psychologists might call it mere exposure effect. In essence, if there is continued motion near the hive, bees learn to tolerate it. It becomes okay. Many years ago beekeeper writers suggested using a "Wave Cloth" to provide continued motion in the vicinity of a colony.



Flying a flag or a wind sock in a beeyard allows the bees to learn to accept motion. (Maybe even enjoy the motion!) This attitude to motion provides the keepers with a certain immunity. They become just another motion in the beeyard. Life with the bees is better.

So, what do you think? Are you going to fly your colors in the beeyard? Perhaps it will calm the bees. Perhaps.



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Website and Newsletter Submissions

www.nibainfo.org – The Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association website. A wealth of information is available. Contact board members via email, download the membership form, access copies of the newsletter. Terri is asking for your pictures, stories, etc. to have them highlighted on the web page! reevestherese@att.net

This is YOUR newsletter. Please feel free to contribute. Or let us know if you have any topics you'd like to see covered. newsletter@nibainfo.org

Membership Has Its Benefits!

- By Randy Mead

Did you know that your membership in NIBA includes the opportunity to rent a club honey extractor? We have two to choose from. Rental is \$10 for a 3 day rental. \$20 (\$10 for rental and \$10 deposit) is due when you pick up the extractor.

Schedule a pick up time, extract your honey and return the equipment in 3 days. The \$10 deposit will be returned if the extractor is clean.

To reserve a date, contact Randy at rmeadtoys@gmail.com.

Are you on Facebook? So are we!

Search for Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association. It's a closed group, so you need to request to join—but we're happy to approve your request.

We're an active and knowledgeable group. We've had LOTS of pictures and videos of your hives! Share your experiences, ask your questions.

Get in on the conversation. Join the fun today!