



# SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2018

## THE BEE PULPIT

Dave Hill

The first frost of winter will be coming soon, and we all know what that means – bee activity will slow down as our colonies prepare for another cold spell in Illinois. Marianne tries to “embrace” winter every year, and so do our bee families. For some reason, her love doesn’t seem to last until spring. But we will remain ever optimistic that spring will bloom early this year.

We are hoping for a mild winter, but if that doesn’t pan out we’ll trust that nature is kind to our hives. Our bees cleaned out the supers, and we were able to store them “dry” this year. All of the equipment is put up safe and sound for the winter.

Mike Conner’s “Save a Bee, Plant a Tree” presentation was held on Friday, October 19th at McHenry County College. The bee quilt, which was donated at the McHenry County Fair, was raffled off at the event.

The October meeting was well attended. The first order of business was to elect NIBA Officers for 2019.

Joe Scherb presented the slate, which consisted of Dave Hill – President, Tom Allen – Vice President, Ralph Brindise – Treasurer, and Angie Garrod – Secretary. There were no nominations from the floor and the slate of officers was accepted unanimously. NIBA directors are appointed each year and two will be returning for 2019, John Leibinger and Marianne Hill. We have one director position open. I would ask that anyone who has an interest in serving in that capacity would contact me.

It was announced that Corky Schnadt, a longtime member of the club and a past President of NIBA will be nominated to serve as President of ISBA (Illinois State Beekeepers Association) for 2019. (Elections to be held at the annual ISBA meeting in

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Friday, November 12, 7pm**

McHenry County Farm Bureau  
1102 McConnell Rd  
Woodstock, IL 60098

### McBEES FRIDAY

**Friday, November 16, 7pm**

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

### NO DECEMBER MEETING

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Friday, January 11, 7pm**

McHenry County Farm Bureau  
1102 McConnell Rd  
Woodstock, IL 60098

Springfield on November 10.) Congratulations to Corky!

Ron Zimmerman gave his “bee bio” and was entertaining as he recounted how he got into beekeeping and how much fun it has been. Brian Blaauw also gave a recap of his entry into beekeeping and prompted a lively discussion.

The “Ted Talk” presentation “Why Bees are

Disappearing" by Marla Spivak was viewed by the membership. "Honey bees have thrived for 50 million years, each colony of up to 50,000 individuals coordinated in amazing harmony. So why did colonies start dying en masse?" Marla Spivak revealed four reasons which are interacting with tragic consequences. This is not a simple problem because bees pollinate a third of the world's crops. Could this incredible species be holding up a mirror for us?

Many club members brought samples of their honey for everyone to enjoy. Frank Moriarty brought a fine

representation of his creamed honey. He shared several varieties (and flavors) and even brought some "honey butter".

I'd like to thank Joe Scherb for serving the club as Vice President. He has done an outstanding job in helping lead the club. His insight and thoughtfulness has moved the club forward. He took a lead role in the club bee package and nuc program, and it has gone smoothly under his watch. We are hopeful that he will continue to provide this very valuable service.

Thanks also to Dan Rank and Rebekkah Burtcher for

their roles as club Secretary and Director. Dan has served as our Secretary and Rebekkah has coordinated our club events and educational activities.

Welcome to Tom Allen who steps up to the Vice President position after serving as a director and coordinating club events. And welcome to Angie Garrod who will assume the duties of Secretary.

The last regular meeting of 2018 will be Friday, November 9th. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Happy Winter!!!!



## BAKING FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

### DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN SUBSTITUTE HONEY FOR SUGAR?

From bold and musky, to herbal and aromatic, honey is a versatile must-have for every baker's pantry. Satisfy your sweet tooth, and swap your favorite honey for sugar in your next batch of baking. To help you make the switch, follow our top five tips for baking with honey:

- The darker the honey, the stronger the taste. Choose something light and neutral that won't overpower the flavor of your delicacies.
- Use  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of honey to replace 1 cup of sugar. If your recipe calls for less sugar, let our handy honey calculator below guide the way.
- If your recipe doesn't include baking soda, add  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp of baking soda for each cup of sugar replaced.
- Using more than 1 cup of honey? Lessen additional liquid ingredients by  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup per cup of honey – it retains more moisture than sugar.
- Slow it down – baked goods made with honey will brown faster in the oven. Lower your oven temperature by about 25°F to prevent browning.

SUGAR	HONEY	REDUCED LIQUID	BAKING SODA
1 Tbsp (15mL)	2 tsp (10mL)	no need	no need
2 Tbsp (30 mL)	1 Tbsp 1 tsp (25mL)	no need	no need
1/4 Cup (50mL)	2 Tbsp 2 tsp (40mL)	no need	1/8 tsp (0.5mL)
1/3 Cup (75mL)	4 Tbsp (60mL)	no need	1/4 tsp (1mL)
1/2 Cup (125mL)	1/3 Cup (75mL)	2 tsp (10mL)	1/4 tsp (1mL)
2/3 Cup (150mL)	1/2 Cup (125mL)	5 tsp (25mL)	1/4 tsp (1 mL)
3/4 Cup (175mL)	2/3 Cup (150mL)	2 Tbsp (30mL)	1/2 tsp (2mL)
1 Cup (250 mL)	3/4 Cup (175mL)	2 1/2 Tbsp (37mL)	1/2 tsp (2mL)
2 Cups (500mL)	1 1/4 Cup (300mL)	5 Tbsp (70mL)	1 tsp (5mL)

## EVENTS UPDATE

Tom Allen

Hello everyone, I hope your bees are settling in for the upcoming winter. This month is a slow one as far as our events go with our only one being the Green Living Expo.

The Green Living Expo is held at McHenry County College and is sponsored by the college's sustainability center. It has lots of energy-efficient products, gardening, and natural items for sale, along with lots of exhibits to help you be as green as you want to be.

This year there was a 2,500-gallon fish tank mounted on a trailer with fish that are found in the Fox River. The water in the tank is clear so you can see them.



A big **thank you** to Jen Allen for setting up the booth, as well as to Jerry Gudauskas, who worked from 10-3 and Diane & Joe Shoemaker who worked from 12:30-3. Our honey sales were low, however, there was a booth one aisle over also selling honey, including flavored honey.

We won't have any events for the next few months, so you won't be getting any emails from me looking for volunteers. **Enjoy it while it lasts.**

Jerry did a radio interview with Mike Nowak of WCGO 1590AM on Sunday morning. He talked about honey bees and how they're doing. Who better than Jerry to do that! There is a podcast of the interview that will be available at [www.mikenowak.net/podcasts](http://www.mikenowak.net/podcasts) later this week. I hope you all take a few minutes to listen.

## THE BEE SKEP QUILT RAFFLE

This year we received a special donation from one of our member beekeepers and quilt artisan, **Debra Wakitsch**. Debbie made a beautiful, bee-themed quilt and generously donated it to the Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association.

We initially offered it for sale during the McHenry County Fair but did not sell it. We then decided to create a raffle and offered the raffle opportunity to several local beekeepers clubs (Northern Illinois, Lake County, and Walworth County) and also to attendees of the annual Quilt Show at Countryside Garden Center.



We held the raffle drawing at the **Save a Bee, Plant a Tree** seminar on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Debbie drew the winning ticket, which was purchased by Audrey Yeath who happens to be an avid quilt collector.

Audrey sent a wonderful thank you note to our club and also a donation check to help us continue to educate beekeepers and the public on keeping bees and the importance of honey bees in the ecosystem.

The raffle generated \$950 for the club. **First and foremost, many thanks to Debra for making this fundraising opportunity possible.**

Thanks also to the members of the three beekeeping clubs and the quilt show attendees who supported our efforts by purchasing tickets.

Additional thanks to Ralph Brindise, Terri Reeves, Jennifer Cavka, Erin Wagner, Tom Allen, Donna Taliaferro, and John Leibinger for manning our booth at the Countryside Quilt Show. An extra special thanks to Donna Taliaferro, who presented the quilt to the other clubs and was the driver of ticket sales at those meetings.



## MEMBER DONATIONS – THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

**Thank You** for refreshment donations to the following members:

- \*Jody and Bill Snyder
- \*Mary Hubert
- \*Sue Rancak
- \*Kathy and Scott Davis
- \*Erin Wagner
- \*Warren Spencer
- \*Jan and Joe Magyar
- \*Donna Taliaferro and John Leibinger

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

- \*Warren Spencer
- \*Gene McCray
- \*Mary Hubert
- \*Tom Montavon
- \*Al Fullerton
- \*Mike and Annette Crouse

A general thanks to **Harvard Eggs, Feed & Produce, 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 – **November 16, 7 pm**

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



## CHORES OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER

John Leibinger

### ***What's happening in the hive?***

**Unless we get a warm spell, you are not likely to see much activity in your hive(s).** Winter is just around the corner and the bees are settling in for the season. The nighttime temps will be running between the 20s to low 40s. Daytime temps may reach very low 50s occasionally. The bees are clustering to save some heat. They will be starting to consume their winter stores and will not be taking in sugar syrup at these temperatures.

### ***For All Beekeepers, it is time to:***

#### **Finalize your colony activities for 2018\*\*:**

**\*\*Note:** These are much the same as October chores, with a few deletions. The deletions are primarily to avoid cracking open the hive bodies and breaking the propolis seals that the bees have created to reduce infiltration of the winter winds. I'll repeat for emphasis..... ***This is not the time to be breaking into the hive bodies and disrupting the seals or the winter cluster.***

**Consider an Oxalic Acid sublimation treatment** to eliminate any remaining varroa mites that may have been in the colony or brought in by a late season robbing episode. One advantage of an OA sublimation this time of year (besides the obvious effectiveness it has when treating a broodless colony) is that you will not need to crack open the hive bodies and ruin the hive's propolis seal that was created to keep out the imminent winter winds.

#### **Tilt hive forward a little bit to assist moisture drainage.**

**Rake up leaves and debris from around the hive** to lessen the opportunity for mouse and pygmy shrew problems.

**Add mouse guards.** If you have Pygmy Shrews the openings will need to be reduced to about ¼" to 5/16". Don't forget....mice can climb, so protect upper entrances also. If you use entrance reducers as your mouse guard, make sure that the egress slot is at the top not the bottom. It seems counter intuitive, but if the slot is at the bottom it is easily plugged up with dead bees thus rendering it useless. When placed 'upside down' it allows the live bees to climb over the dead bodies to exit. A little inconsiderate and heartless of the bees if you are given to anthropomorphism.

**Make sure you have an upper entrance/exit.** It helps with ventilation and it is an easy egress point for bees to take cleansing flights in the winter. Sometimes the lower entrances get plugged with ice or snow and even with dead bees.

**Add an appropriate feeding shim and some solid feed** in the form of winter patties, a candy board, sugar bricks or cakes, or dry sugar above the top hive body. You may want to add emergency feed in later winter and having a spacer already in place will make that effort possible. Prepare ahead of time.

**Make sure there is adequate ventilation** to remove moisture from the hive. Bees breathe and metabolize the carbohydrates they consume to produce heat. A by-product of that metabolism is moisture, and it must find its way out of the hive to reduce dripping from condensation. **Cold wet bees are dead bees. It is preventable.**

**Consider adding a moisture board or quilt box** or some other method of capturing the moisture and preventing it from condensing and dripping on the bees.

**Consider adding insulation at the top of the hive** to further reduce the opportunity for condensation.

**Consider wrapping your hive** to insulate or at least to eliminate infiltration of cold winter winds. Wraps are often done in black to provide a little solar heat gain on sunny winter days.

**Consider creating a wind block** with snow fencing, straw bales, large lawn bags filled with leaves ( word of caution: straw bales and to a lesser extent, bags of leaves may be attractive to mice, so use them with that warning in mind), or basically anything that you can position to break the force of the direct wind against your hive.

**Consider strapping down your hive** for the winter to prevent winter winds from toppling the hive.

**If you have been a conscientious beekeeper** throughout the 2018 season and have monitored and controlled varroa mites, left the bees with sufficient stores, ended the year with healthy bees and a young queen (less than a year old), you have provided your bees with the chance of thriving in Spring 2019. Still no guarantee, but you have tilted the odds in their favor.

Start preparing for the 2019 season:

Renew your annual Apiary Registration with Illinois Department of Agriculture.

Clean up any dead outs that you have experienced this season.

Continue to increase your knowledge of bees and beekeeping:

- Read and study about bees and beekeeping
- Attend beekeeping meetings
- Increase your knowledge of local plants and trees.
- Form a small group of beekeepers to meet for lunch and talk bees.

Inventory your equipment, tools, and supplies.

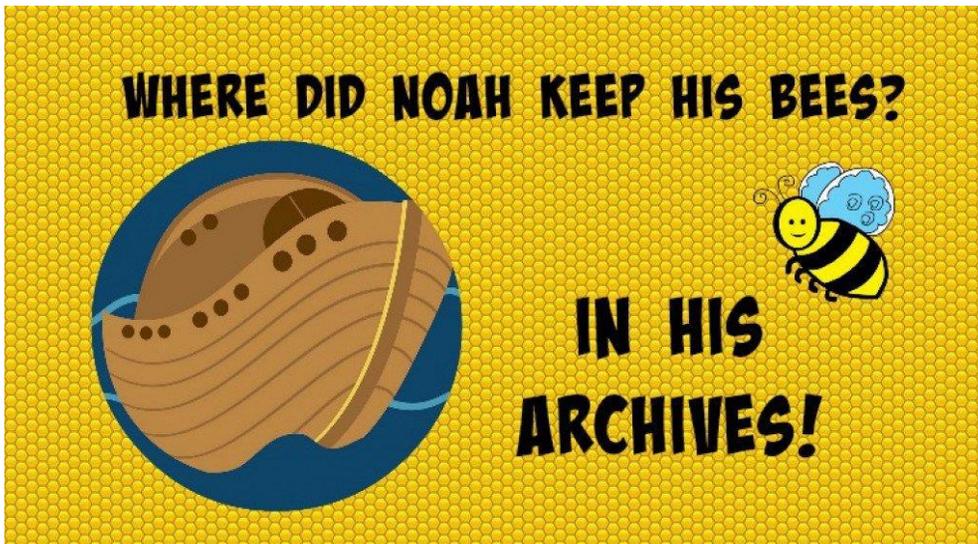
Review your 2018 season (and your notes) for successes and opportunities.  
Set new goals for 2019.

### **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)



With all this rain we have been having, I am reminded of some Bee-Humor.



The Walworth County Beekeepers  
is pleased to announce

## “A Weekend with Keith S. Delaplane, PhD”

Professor and Walter B. Hill Fellow - Department of Entomology University of Georgia

### Author of “First Lessons in Beekeeping”

Want to know about Keith Delaplane? <http://ent.uga.edu/people/faculty/keith-delaplane.html>

Where: Army Lake Camp & Retreat Center  
N8725 Army Lake Rd.  
East Troy, WI 53120  
<http://www.armylakecamp.org/>

<p><b>Saturday, January 26, 2019</b></p> <p><b>“Beekeeping Skills for Success”</b></p> <p>Registration 8-9 AM 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM</p> <p><b>\$55</b> (Paid <u>by</u> December 31, 2018) <b>\$65</b>(Paid <u>after</u> December 31, 2018)</p>	<p><b>Sunday, January 27, 2019</b></p> <p><b>“Continue Building Your Beekeeping Knowledge &amp; Techniques”</b></p> <p>Registration 7-8 AM 8:00 AM – Noon</p> <p><b>\$55</b> (Paid <u>by</u> December 31, 2018) <b>\$65</b> (Paid <u>after</u> December 31, 2018)</p>
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**Want to attend both days?**

**\$100** (Paid by December 31, 2018)

**\$120** (Paid after December 31, 2018)

*Continental breakfast and lunch provided on Saturday*

*Continental breakfast provided on Sunday*

*Limited seating, Act today!*

Limited on-site modest lodging available: \$30/night/pp, \$15/additional guest/per room

Off-site area hotel: Quality Inn & Suites, 262-642-2100 (call for availability and rates)

**Yes, I’m in! Here’s my check for:**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, January 26th          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday, January 27st            | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday and Sunday        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-site Lodging: Fri, Jan. 25th | <input type="checkbox"/> On-site Lodging: Sat, Jan. 26th | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian lunch preferred |

**Please Print**

Name:	Mobile No:	Emergency Contact:
Address:	City / State / Zip:	Emergency Contact Phone No:
Beekeeping Club:	Email:	Emergency Contact Relationship:

Please make check out to: **Walworth County Beekeepers**

Mail to: WCBK  
C/O Scott Kosteretz  
N9025 Army Lake Rd. East Troy, WI 53120  
Questions/Comments? Send to: [skoz@wi.rr.com](mailto:skoz@wi.rr.com)

## FALL IN THE BEEYARD

Larry Krengel

Good day, Beekeepers –

Have you got hungry bees? I do. I think they realize winter is on the way, and they need to lay in the stores before the snow flies. My bees are eating well.

I am going through a lot of sugar. Mixing it two parts sugar to one part water uses a lot of sugar, but I like to mix it thick for fall feeding. Honey is about 18% water. My mixture is about 33% water so the bees have to evaporate some, but not as much as with real nectar that comes in at about 60% water.

This is also robbing season. I have lost one weaker colony to the robbers. I try to catch a potential candidate for robbing before it starts and reduce the entrance to just an inch or so. You can also buy robbing screens – fancier, but they accomplish the same thing. When a colony is targeted by robbers and the frenzy starts, it is difficult to stop.



At this time of the year, there is always debate about whether or not to insulate hives. I don't know if there is a real "right" answer. If you do something that works, don't stop doing it! I tried the Hive Cozy with indifferent results. Some use building felt

attached to the outside of the hive to make use of solar gain. Others use ridged foam cut to fit the sides. I use this system for the hives I keep in Northern Wisconsin. I make a habit of insulating the top of all my colonies with two inches of rigid foam insulation cut to size. I also make sure my hives have a vent under the inner cover. Ventilation is very important to the wintering colony. Some beekeepers place popsicle sticks under the inner cover giving a 16<sup>th</sup> of an inch crack for ventilation.



April 1 is a long ways away!

When we join Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association, we also become part of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association. This umbrella organization is our voice at the state level. ISBA speaks up for the interests of the beekeepers. Among the numerous advantages of our united voice is the access provided to the state bee inspectors who have the resources to assist us in many ways. This costs us nothing. Thanks ISBA. What a deal.

Batten down the hatches. Winter is on the horizon.

## 2018 NIBA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President – Dave Hill  
daveahill95@gmail.com  
Vice President – Joe Scherb  
sbscherb@gmail.com  
Treasurer – Ralph Brindise  
rbrindise@att.net  
Secretary – Dan Rank  
dtrank@sbcglobal.net  
Director – Tom Allen  
tallen122@yahoo.com  
Director – Rebekkah Burtcher  
rebekkahcross@yahoo.com  
Director – Marianne Hill  
mariannehill1213@gmail.com  
Director – John Leibinger  
jleibinger@aol.com

Program Chair – Larry Kregel  
Webmaster – Terri Reeves  
Events Coordinator – Tom Allen  
Newsletter Editor – Marianne Hill  
Snack Committee – Donna Taliaferro  
Bee Package Coordinator – Joe Scherb  
Club Extractor Coordinator – Randy Mead  
Club Raffle Coordinator – John Leibinger

## Website and Newsletter Submissions

[www.nibainfo.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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!

