



SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2018

THE BEE PULPIT

Dave Hill

So, if you've ever read *The Family Circus* (formerly *The Family Circle* or *Family-Go-Round*), you know when Bil or Jeff Keane take time off, 7-year-old Billy fills in. This is similar. Dave is on a business trip, so I'm filling in—strictly a substitute, never a replacement!

We had a very interesting honey harvest this year. We were able to pull 60 lbs off one hive at the house. The second hive had nothing to extract. As for the five hives at the farm, only two produced much honey. We pulled all 18 frames off one and 15 frames off the other. One other hive had some capped honey on two or three frames, though not completely filled, so we didn't extract those. The last two hives had nothing. Interesting how different hives are, even right next to each other. Much like children in the same family?

Last month, in Larry's *Beeline*, he mentioned the personality of his hives and how they change from happy bees in July to defensive in September. Dave got a taste

of that, unfortunately. After we were in the five hives at the farm, he decided to weed-whack around them. Amazing how the girls found the openings in his jacket/veil. He was stung, probably 10 times, many times in the head & around his ears. He wasn't feeling well after that. I thank God he doesn't have a severe allergy.

We're making plans to remove the supers and treat for mites soon, before the cold of winter sets in.

How was your season? Are you beekeeping for the honey, for the bees, or for the hobby? For most of us, I suspect it's a bit of all three.

Remember, we're preparing to vote in a new board next month. We have a couple openings on the Executive Board, and then that board appoints Directors. If you're a leader, if you want to see change, or if you just want to know the behind-the-scenes of our club, please consider being on the board. I promise you won't regret it.

Friday, September 21, is *McBees* in Woodstock. It's a great evening, getting

UPCOMING EVENTS

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, September 14, 7pm

McHenry County Farm Bureau
1102 McConnell Rd
Woodstock, IL 60098

McBEES FRIDAY

Friday, September 21, 7pm

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

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, October 12, 7pm

McHenry County Farm Bureau
1102 McConnell Rd
Woodstock, IL 60098

SAVE A BEE, PLANT A TREE

Friday, October 19, 7pm

McHenry County College
8900 US Hwy 14
Crystal Lake, IL 60012

together and talking bees. Unfortunately, Dave & I will be out of town, but based on past *McBee's*, it's been a great and informative evening.

The general meeting is this Friday, the 14th at the Farm Bureau at 7pm. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Marianne

BOARD ELECTIONS



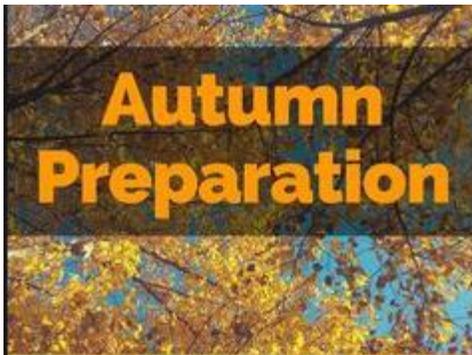
The board will be going through a lot of changes this year, and there are a few holes in the slate. We need people to step up. If you are interested in making a difference by serving, please contact Joe

BECOME A BOARD MEMBER

Scherb (815) 861-5210, sbscherb@gmail.com) as soon as possible. Elected positions include President, Vice President, Recorder, and Treasurer. Director positions are appointed, but we need to know of your interest.

Beyond the board positions, we're looking for event chairs. If you have an interest in any of OUR activities, let a current board member know. Your support would be most welcome. Ultimately, this is where it matters. It's your club. If you don't actively participate, the activities you appreciate the most might not be available next year. Our club is here to Promote an Interest in Honeybees and Beekeeping. If you share that interest, support the club and participate. If you feel the club should change directions, please consider joining the board.

FALL WINTER PREP – SOME THOUGHTS



Successful overwintering can be improved by 4 major issues:

- 1) Strong, healthy, disease free colonies
- 2) Young Queens...what is young?
- 3) Plenty of winter stores
- 4) An environment that supports survival opportunity

Some of these factors are primarily about the Bees and some are about the Colony Environment

Let's breakdown the Fall/Winter prep into these two components: Bee Prep and Environment Prep.

Bee Prep

Hopefully, a good portion of this was done starting much earlier in the year. Yearlong monitoring and controlling of Varroa should have been done. It was important to have healthy, disease free nurse bees to raise the winter bees that are just now hatching out.

That said, you can still mitigate Varroa damage by treating with Oxalic Acid, MAQS (current temps are ideal), or Apivar (Amitraz), or one of the Thymol treatments (ApiLife Var or Apiguard) among others.

Check hives , to make sure that there isn't any other disease issue, i.e. foulbrood issues(don't be distracted by the oftentimes foul odor of goldenrod pollen) or chalkbrood. **Consider treating with DFM (Direct Feed Microbials)** as a pre winter treatment.

Consider combining weak hives with stronger ones to support getting more bees through the winter. You can always split in the Spring to increase colony count.

Your bees should start the winter season in the lower box. This generally occurs naturally as they fill the upper frames with honey or sugar syrup. Consider a fall rotation of hive boxes if needed.

Feed, Feed, Feed, until they won't take anymore. 165 # total weight is considered about right for double deep colonies in our climate.

Environment Prep

Feed, Feed, Feed, until they won't take anymore. Move full frames to outside and more open to the center to promote getting all frames filled. Consider using Winter Patties (95%-97% sugar) across the top of frames.

Mouse proof your hives. Be aware of a pest that has been making itself known in the last couple of years....the Pygmy Shrew. This little critter can get in through small spaces. 3/8 in openings are purported to work to keep them out. They tend to be most prevalent in weedy, leafy areas, so rake debris away from your hives as part of your prep.

Ventilation – Make sure that your hives have sufficient ventilation to remove moisture generated by the bees metabolic activity. Consider adding a quilt box, moisture board, or similar to absorb moisture generated by the bees.

Hive top insulation – Foam insulation under outer cover. Maybe use a quilt box or similar with insulation and/or moisture absorbent material.

Windbreaks – Establish some sort of windbreak for your hives. Straw bales, snow fence, location by hedges, etc.

To Wrap or not to Wrap - Your choice. At a minimum it is at least a windbreak. Do not block the upper or lower entrances.

Set up your hives to be able to add Emergency Feed during the winter. It is much easier to be prepared ahead than trying to add shims or feed spacers in the winter.

Remove residual chemical Varroa treatments from your hives. Allowing them to remain may contribute to developing Varroa resistance to the treatments.

Consider strapping down your hives.

Reregister your colonies with the state.



THE QUILT IS UP FOR RAFFLE.

Many, many thanks to Artisan and Beekeeper Debra Wakitsch. Your talent is amazing, and your generosity is much appreciated.

Quilt 54" x 60"

Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10.

Opportunities to buy raffle tickets at NIBA meetings; Lake County meetings; Walworth County meetings; Countryside Garden Center Annual Quilt Show Sep 15 & 16; and NIBA's "Save a Bee, Plant a Tree" presentation Oct 19th. Drawing at the Oct 19th event at McHenry County College.

Need not be present to win.



COUNTY FAIR NEWS

Tom Allen

Hello and happy September! Where did our summer go?

I have so much great news about the County Fair to share with all of you! It was GREAT! The best part was witnessing all of you who stepped up to help in so many ways. From planning and coordination, to booth design, setup, and takedown, to manning the booths and promoting our club to the many attendees, our volunteers ROCKED! But more on that later....

This year we decided to have two booths to give NIBA more exposure. We had one booth set up to sell honey and raffle tickets and to display the observation hive. The second booth served to educate the public on bees and beekeeping. Thank you to Rebekkah Burtcher and Jen Allen for designing the booths! They looked AMAZING!

There were about 80 four-hour shifts to fill, and we filled about 75 of them. We had several members do multiple shifts to fill in where our volunteer numbers were low, and I'm very appreciative of them doing that. The members enjoyed interacting with the public, and they also enjoyed meeting club members they hadn't met before – and, of course, talking about bees.



Jerry Gudauskas brought his honey bear costume and a variety of beekeeper suits to help draw people to our booth. Jerry walked around wearing the honey bear costume during his shift on Friday. He was a big hit with the fair goers. He also had a

small bottle that contained a few bees. When he stopped to talk to people, he would show them the bottle of bees. People loved it!



On Saturday morning Jerry convinced Jennifer Cavka and Erin Wagner to dress up, Erin as the honey bear and Jennifer in the beekeeper suit. The three of them walked around the fairgrounds talking to people about beekeeping. This led to a radio interview with 101.3 WHIW, Harvard Community radio on Facebook Live. It was a great opportunity to spread the word about NIBA! They did GREAT! Jerry also talked Ron Navlyt into wearing the costume around the fair on Saturday. Thank you to all of you for spreading the word!



Inside the booths we had the usual questions about the observation hive. Where is the queen? Is there only one queen? How many bees are in there? What would happen if they got out? The volunteers did an awesome job answering these questions and more!

We handed out wildflower pollinator seed packets and a lot of print material that should help people learn more about bees.

The Fair was a huge success! I can't thank Ralph Brindise, Terri Reeves, John Leibinger and Donna Taliaferro enough for all of their help and guidance leading up to the Fair. I would've been lost without them. Thank you, Marianne Hill, for loading all of the information into Signup Genius for me and

then continuing to keep track of people signing up. Finally, a HUGE thank you to everyone who volunteered! We couldn't have done it without each and every one of you!

Looking forward to next year!

McHENRY COUNTY FAIR HONEY SHOW RESULTS

	1 st Place	2 nd Place	3 rd Place	4 th Place
Light Honey	Ron Besserud	Marianne Hill	Richard Rolland	Rich Tobiasz
Amber Honey	Caryn Konopinski	Marianne Hill	Ralph Brindise	
Cut Comb	Rolland Filmore			
Light Chunk Honey	Rolland Filmore			
Frame for Extracting	Caryn Konopinski			

CONGRATULATIONS to our own Caryn Konopinski, who won Best of Show for her Amber Honey. In all the years that Corky has been involved, the judge has never awarded a Best of Show for a honey entry. It's always been for cut comb or another category.



Unfortunately, we don't have a picture of the final, with the ribbons. This was taken prior to judging. (It doesn't include the comb honey or frame entries.)

Congratulations to all ribbon winners!

If you've never shown your honey—it's a wonderful, satisfying experience. Try it next year.

Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association
invites you to
“Save a Bee, Plant a Tree” featuring Mike Connor



Trees are the leading source of pollen and nectar in the United States—more than all other plants and flowers combined!

Mike Connor has been a beekeeper for more than 50 years and an ISA Certified Arborist since 1998. His presentation will enlighten people interested in helping pollinators.

You may order trees directly from his website honeytreenursery.com, and they will be delivered the night of the presentation. Please enter code NIBA10-19, this will enable Honey Tree Nursery to deliver the trees to the event.



Friday, October 19, 2018

7:00 pm

McHenry County College

Auditorium

All are welcome to this free event!

Questions? Email: rbrindise@att.net



MEMBER DONATIONS

Thank You for refreshment donations to the following members:

*Donna Taliaferro and John Leibinger

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

*Sue Dietz (*Harvard Eggs, Feed, & Produce*)

*Carl Christiansen

*Isabel's Restaurant

A special thanks to Tom Montavon (*BL Plastic Containers*) for developing and executing the idea of providing members with containers to fill and return to the club with honey donations. BL Plastic Containers donated and distributed 12 oz bears to get this program started. Thanks also to Donna Taliaferro for her thoughts and words to help rally members to support the program. April and Noel Williams, Ron Navlyt, Paul St John, and Frank Moriarty were ahead of the curve with donations provided at the August meeting. Thank you.

Thanks Tom, thanks Donna, and thanks to all the members who participate in this program to support our club.

Don't forget to bring your red cap bears to the September meeting!

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 – **September 21, 7 pm**

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



WEIGHING IN ON BOTTLING AND LABELING HONEY

Ramblings from an Errant Beekeeper

If your beekeeping fortunes went your way, you should be harvesting the fruits of your and your bees' labor....delicious golden honey, liquid gold, the nectar of the gods. There are lots of bottling choices, some elegant and some functional. This rambling is not on how you bottle, but on how much goes into the jar.

Bottling

Here is where it gets funHow much does 16 fl ounces of honey weigh?

It weighs a pound of course.....doesn't it? An ounce is an ounce, right? 16 ounces is a pound, right? Not quite..... fl ounces (fluid ounces) is not the same as ounces (avoirdupois ounces).

Fluid ounces are a measure of volume. Avoirdupois ounces or ounces in normal parlance, is a measure of weight.

Honey jars in bee supply catalogs are listed and sold as *ounces* (**weight** of honey) not as fluid ounces (**volume** of honey). Confusion often occurs when someone bottles their honey in mason jars or something similar. Let's say you are bottling in a pint mason jar. A pint is 16 ounces, so you will charge the consumer for a pound of honey, right? Good deal for them, not so much for you. That pint jar holds 16 fl ounces (volume), but in fact holds one and a third pounds of honey (weight). It gets worse if you sell by the quart and don't understand the math. A quart is 32 fl ounces. If you sell it as 32 *ounces* of honey, i.e., 2 pounds, without understanding that the weight of the honey is two and two thirds pounds (a little more than 42 *ounces*), you are seriously underselling yourself.

OK..... I've had my fun with this! Let me give you a conversion chart for some common sizes.

This is for Honey only. It does not apply to other liquids.

<u>Fluid ounces (volume)</u>	<u>Ounces (weight) (lb.)</u>	<u>Weight in Grams</u>
6	8 (.5 lb.)	227
8 (half pint)	10.6 (.66 lb)	301
12	16 (1 lb)	454
16 (pint)	21.3 (1.33 lb.)	604
24	32 (2 lb.)	907
32(quart)	42.6 (2.66 lb.)	1.2 kg
64 (half gallon)	85.1 (5.32 lb.)	2.4 kg

-Determine your price per pound for your honey.

-Multiply the pounds of honey in your container by your price per pound to get the price of that container of honey.

Hope this helps.

If you really want to have a good time, check this out [Fluid Ounce vs. Ounce...Ugh!](#) (CTRL + Click)

Labeling

You must label your product. There are many different labels on the market that will enhance your product and provide a very neat, clean, and professional appearance. These labels can be customized to your own identity or can be somewhat generic. Either way, there are some **required** basic guidelines to be followed. Check out this link [Honey Labeling Standards](#) (CTRL + click).

CHORES OF THE MONTH – SEPTEMBER

John Leibinger

What's happening in the hive?

You will observe that the colony population will start to decline this month. There will, however, still be significant brood rearing going on as the nurse bees work to raise the 'winter bees' that will carry this colony through the winter. These are very important bees for the survival of the colony, so do all you can to assist them through their wintery journey. That means leaving them and providing them with sufficient stores to overwinter, providing them protection against robbing, providing protection against mouse infiltration, and helping them prevent disease from the ever present Varroa mite.

You are likely observing the Fall 'Ousting of the Drones'. Don't confuse this with robbing. A small group of workers will be ganging up on a drone, dragging him to the edge of the bottom board and dumping his lazy, freeloading carcass over the abyss (drama added for the smiles of our ever increasing female beekeeper population).

You may notice a significant change in the odor(not a pleasant change) of your hives (second or third week of Sept. historically). This is very common, and is a result of goldenrod pollen collection.

You may well be seeing robbing occur. With a little good weather, we may experience a Fall nectar flow primarily from dandelions and asters, but as the month progresses, food sources will become more lean and opportunistic robbing may occur. Weak hives are most susceptible, so consider taking potential losses early and combining a weak hive with a stronger one to help the combined colony make it through winter. If successful, you can split the hive in early Spring to increase your colony count.

Expect to find your bees have developed some 'attitude' as we get into the month. Reduced resources often lead to robbing behaviors and defensive behaviors. Dress accordingly.

For All Beekeepers, it is time to:

Finalize your annual harvest if you haven't already. Let the bees collect and store some natural fall food after your harvest. Return wet supers to the hives to allow the bees to clean them up. Place the supers above the inner cover (with the round or oval hole in the center) and below the outer cover. This has a twofold benefit. First, the bees can pull the remaining honey from the super and store it in the boxes below. Second, it gets the super frames cleaned up and in many cases repaired and ready for winter storage. You may be surprised at what a nice job they do. Don't leave these on for more than a couple of days to reduce promoting robbing.

Bottle and label your harvest. Sell some, give some to friends and family, prepare some Holiday gifts, **donate some to your favorite bee club** for fund raising.

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

It is very important to get the mite loads under control now. The brood that will be raised as winter bees are in process. Help them out. Pay attention to labeling instructions when using treatments and be mindful of temperature ranges for various types of treatments. 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 and come out of winter as a healthy hives raring to go for 2019. This is a great step towards sustainable beekeeping.

Be very aware of robbing. It happens quickly and can be devastating. Reduce entrance openings to the smallest size on your entrance reducers, or alternately, install robbing screens. If you do not use screened bottom boards, it may be advantageous to use the robbing screens instead of the significant reduction in reducer opening during the extreme heat so that you can maintain maximum ventilation. There are many types of robbing screens, some very simple and some a bit more 'inventive'. Check the internet for robbing screens and you will get an abundance of ideas. You will have to use your judgement on the direction you take. Be aware that robbing is not just honey bee to honeybee, but oftentimes involves wasps, hornets, and yellow jackets. If you are inclined to use a yellow jacket trap, do not place it near your hives as it may tend to draw more yellow jackets to your hives and cause greater problems.

Add mouse guards. Nights will start to cool off soon and mice will be looking for warm, dry spaces to make fall and winter nests. Don't let that be your hives.

Check your hives for honey stores. Consider moving existing full frames of honey to outer edges and partially filled towards the center allow bees easier access to filling them. Do not break up/ separate the brood nest to accomplish this.

Start feeding and don't stop until they stop taking it. Use a 2:1 sugar to water syrup mix. Check your feeders often enough to keep them filled. Avoid using Boardman type feeders this time of year to reduce inducing robbing.

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)

[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)

ROBBING SCREENS



MOUSE DAMAGE



MOUSE GUARDS



LAYING WORKERS AND PRESSED HONEY

Larry Kregel

We have exited summer, gone through the monsoons, and it seems autumn is upon us. Happy fall, beekeepers.

I committed a beekeeper indiscretion earlier this bee season. As a result I had a bit of burr comb to clean up yesterday. I will avoid this problem in the future.

As a consequence of my indiscretion the colony tried (and failed) to raise a queen in the top of the hive. When the new queen failed, they developed a laying worker. I had never seen this scenario before. I was not expecting to see the signs of a laying worker in a colony with functional queen in the bottom of the hive.

I could not resist pulling a frame from the territory of the laying worker – a great job of creative egg laying. As you likely know, laying workers lay multiple eggs in strange positions in a cell. All are infertile eggs that, if allowed to develop, will become drones. Likely the workers would destroy these eggs.

The attached photo will give you a good look at the creative attempt of a worker aspiring to be a queen.



Over the years I have extracted most of my honey. Centrifugal extractors were invented in Italy in 1868, and the debate between honey-in-the-comb and extracted honey began. Over the next 50 years extracted honey won. Now many laymen do not understand that the honey in that jar actually started in a comb. (I don't help the cause by telling people – tongue in cheek – that I squeeze bees to get honey.)

In the era of comb honey, cooks often “pressed” the honey – wrapped it in cheese cloth and rang the honey out – giving them wax-free, liquid honey.

Although pressed honey has gotten largely lost in time, some consider it superior to both extracted and comb honey. Honey in the comb has the problem of...well...what do you do with the wax? Extracted honey is said to lose some of its most volatile elements by being flung through the air. (But standing by the extractor does smell great!) Is the time right to again begin pressing the honey from the comb? I'm trying it. I have acquired a honey press. It is much like an apple press. This year I will produce both extracted and pressed honey. A taste test is coming up.

Are you up for a road trip? Put November 10 on your calendar for the ISBA Fall meeting in Springfield. It will feature Dewey Caron, an excellent speaker from the left coast. You might find the trip worth your while. Car pool?

Now, back to the beeyard.

2018 NIBA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Club Extractor Coordinator – Randy Mead
Club Raffle Coordinator – John Leibinger

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!