

# Essex County Beeline

The Newsletter of the Essex County Beekeepers' Association,  
an Internationally Acclaimed Award-Winning Organization

*Keeping Bees Since 1923*

**January 2008**

The Essex County Beeline is published eleven times a year and is a benefit of membership in the ECBA.

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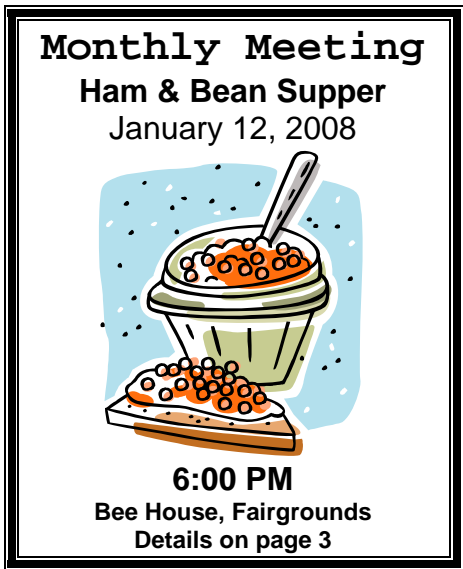
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Next meeting is our Annual meeting when we install our new President and Vice-President, please come and welcome all of the new officers. The Annual meeting will include reports of the standing committees in our association describing the various tasks they perform on your behalf. In addition this is our Ham and Bean dinner put on by the Board of Director's. Please attend with an appetite and thank them for a job well done.

Keep an eye on your bees prepare them for winter. Keep accumulated snow away from the entrances so the bees can fly on good days. Heft the hives periodically to make sure there is plenty of feed so the bees won't starve. Construct all your wooden ware during the winter months so that you are prepared to split your populous hives in the spring.

This is my last message as President, as of the Annual meeting in January Dave Meldrum will be at the helm. I have enjoyed my time as President and encourage everyone to assist Dave as he begins his term. The core of this association is the volunteers who make the whole operation function as a well-oiled machine so when an opportunity arises please provide your assistance.

Thanks for your support;  
Pete

## Club Business

### Presidents Message

Thanks to everyone attending for making our Christmas party a wonderful time. I wish each and every one of our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thanks to all the good cooks who prepared such great dishes for our party and the eggnog was delicious. Please contact Kathy Sample with your recipes so that those who want to can recreate your wonderful dish. Thanks to the set up and clean up folks as many hands made light work.

## December Meeting

There was GREAT variety at the potluck supper!

(A copy of the Bee School Committee Standard Operating Procedure was distributed to each table, along with the meeting agenda, ECBA budget worksheet, and 2008 committee assignments.)

Pete Delaney read a thank you note from Jennifer Bowes, who will be graduating in May with a degree in Nursing; she thanked the club for the scholarships. (The note is now hanging on the bulletin board in the kitchen.)

### Old business:

It was moved - seconded - and voted to accept the minutes as published in the newsletter.

Jan Gaglione read the list of bills - moved, seconded, voted to pass.

Pete reviewed the budget worksheet with some discussion and explanation. Bill Denhard asked that we correct the title to "Balance" for the next to last column; done. Pete asked for a motion to accept "2008 budget" column figures. Moved and seconded. There was some more discussion (among which, that free cash is estimated, not a budget line item). Eric Josephson moved the question - so voted.

Jan said we should write the check to the American Beekeeping Federation for the Honey Queen/Princess program (so it clears this year).

Chris Delaney said the Fair Committee will meet Tuesday, December 11 at 7 p.m., for the first scrub of the premium book. We need a good size committee, like about 18 people.

Pete said Larry Goldstein had located a new honey candy supplier BUT the candy is honey flavored (not honey

in the center) and more expensive than Peerless had been. Larry has some samples for us to evaluate.

Pete asked Larry about Bee School. 414 people signed up for Bee School during the Fair (up 10% from last year). There are 3 elected and 6 appointed members for the Bee School committee - then additional volunteers. Pete encouraged anyone with interest to let him know and he will appoint them to the committee.

Roberta Swift won the door prize of an ornament

Pete read a list of overdue books, owed by members. There are also some books missing, after the library inventory was taken.

### New business:

Bee School Standard Operating Procedure was developed so that each student, from year to year, is exposed to the same criteria; standardization of syllabus. After discussion, moved - seconded - voted to accept.

Chris said she had information for the Heifer Project (which Phyllis and Parker Gifford had started our club involvement in; and coincidentally, they were present at this meeting). She wanted to get a motion to approve a club donation (which will cover the expense of starting 10 hives). Moved - seconded - voted.

Pete wants 45 people to SWARM Dave Meldrum to volunteer for our various committees.

### News of members:

Alan Wilkins' sister died.

Bill Bleem talked with Dick Turner today.

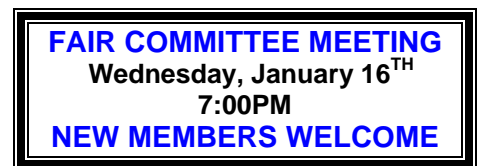
Joan Price is taking membership renewals.

Diane Severin said her company sponsors the website Foodsville.com (password is EAT) and Diane is sponsoring a beekeepers' group on that site.

Vin Gaglione said Pete has been president for 4 years, we all know it takes 2 people - applause and standing ovation for Pete and Chris.

Moved to adjourn - seconded - voted. (8:05 p.m.)

Gift exchange was done by RANDOM month of birthday.



## Miscellaneous

Leftover bags of honey candy will be sold at cost to interested members during the January meeting. (We have 125 bags of candy, total.)

## Thank you

Linda Boylan thanks the club for the beautiful basket of flowering plants that was sent to her in sympathy for the death of her mother.

## Calendar

**December 14, 2007**

Newsletter Deadline

**December 31, 2007**

Membership Renewal

**January 12, 2008, 7 PM**

Monthly Member Meeting, Ham & Bean Dinner, 6pm

**January 18, 2008**

Newsletter Deadline

**February 4, 2008**

BOD Meeting

**February 9, 2008, 7 PM**

Monthly Member Meeting, Spaghetti Dinner, 6pm

## Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for getting information into the next newsletter will be **January 18, 2008**. Please make submissions to Candy Leva by email at: [Candice.leva@avnet.com](mailto:Candice.leva@avnet.com)

## Library News

The library book/DVD order was placed a few weeks ago. So far, I have received...

## New Books:

- Increase Essentials-Connor, Lawrence John
- Cooking with Honey-Barrett, Joanne
- The Life of The Bee Maurice- Maeterlinck, Maurice
- Fifty Years Among the Bees-Miller, C.C.
- Great Masters of Bee Keeping-Brown, Ron

## New DVDs:

- Bees-Takes From The Hive-Nova Series from WGBH
- Hive Splitting & Honey Extracting and Bottling-Bee Keeper's Educational Series

## New CD ROM:

- 21st Century Complete Guide to Bees-USDA Government Research

## Missing Books:

First, I want to thank Abby Heim, Marilyn & Will Graves for helping me take a complete book inventory.

Below are the books & magazines that are no longer in our library. If you have an extra copy of one of these books, please, donation that copy to the library. Thanks!

- Beewax-Brown, R. H.
- The Observation Hive-Showler, Karl
- Honeybee Diseases-Waldron, Evans

- Bee Keeping Industry-Waldron, Evans
- Toxicity in Honey Bees-Waldron, Evans
- Honey in the Comb-Killion, Eugene
- Honey Bees & Bee Keeping-Delaplane, Keith S.
- Honey Bees-Lecht, Jane
- Award Winning Honey Recipes-ECBA
- Bee Pollen, Royal Jelly, Propolis and Honey-Elkins, Rita
- Swarming-Biology, Prevention, Control & Collecting-Best of Bee Culture
- How to Keep Bee and Sell Honey-Kelley, Walter T.
- One Hundred Years of Cooking With Honey-Worcester County Bee Keepers
- Robbing the Bees-A Biography of Honey-Bishop, Holly
- Insects-A Portrait of the Animal World-Sterry, Paul
- Bees Don't Get Arthritis, Malone, Fred
- How to Raise Beautiful Comb Honey-Taylor, Richard
- National Geographic Magazines articles:
  - o Raji Honey Hunters
  - o Bee Keepers, Hives for Hire
  - o Honey Bees

## Outstanding Books:

Please return these your books at the January meeting. If you are unable to come to that meeting, please mail back your books. Again, thank you.

Liz Anderson

Complete Guide to Bee keeping  
Honey-The Gourmet Medicine

Super Formulas-Arts & Crafts  
Linda Barrick  
Hive Management  
The Honey Thief  
Theresa Capodilupo  
Traditional Candle making  
Gretel Clark  
Let's Find Out About Bees  
Insects and Gardens  
Ham Glass  
The Organic Garden  
The Natural Habitat Garden  
Melora Goosey  
Beekeeper's Garden  
Bee Venom  
Honey and Health  
Isabell Marren  
Book of Bees  
Back Yard Bee Keeper  
Hibernation Diet  
Robbing the Bees  
Michael Ryan  
Langstroth Hive and Honey Bee  
The Secret Life of Bees

Please return books at the January meeting. If you are unable to come to that meeting, please mail back your books. Again, thank you.

Barbara



## Bee School Committee Minutes

In attendance:

Larry Goldstein - Chairman

Will Graves - Vice chair

Brian Glass – Asst. Vice chair

Dave Meldrum - Outgoing Chairman

The Bee School Committee held its meeting at the Bee Building on Wednesday the 28th of November. They reviewed last year's syllabus and made a few changes to help bring it more in line with the standard operating procedure. They also divided up the upcoming tasks of advertising, vendor contacts and sending out the sign up mailings.

Dan Conlon President of the Mass Bee the State Association.

Times are changing and with these new days come a reordering of beekeeping priorities. Beekeepers and honeybees continue to struggle with threats to our mutual survival. Colony Collapse Disorder remains the media’s top bee story. If the Farm Bill gets passed in the Senate we might see funding for research that finds answers to our growing list of questions. The CCD working group has made important gains, and researchers are close to moving theories into the factual column, connecting cause to CCD. One conclusion we can all agree on is that beekeeping practices must change if the honeybee is to continue as the primary pollinator in agriculture.

Viruses have been the most recent media favorite as the cause of CCD. Of Particular interest is the Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV). Much of this has been the result of improved diagnostic techniques and the recruitment of non-traditional research facilities (medical). Although IAPV is another new threat and serious concern to U.S. beekeepers, the ability of labs to detect viruses has been a revelation. Scientists from the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (April 2007) used new technology, designed for the military, called the Integrated Virus Detection System to isolate the presence of viral and parasitic pathogens in honeybees. Further work was conducted by teams at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and the 454 Life Sciences Labs under the direction of Ian Lipkin MD (September 2007). They used DNA sequencing to search for viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites common in hives with CCD. IAPV not previously reported in the U.S. (Transmitted by Varroa mites) and the Kashmir Virus were found in CCD hives. IAPV was positive in 96.1% of samples from CCD colonies. The introduction of this new virus to the U.S. came with imported Australian bees, and royal jelly from China (used in queen production). The importation of Australian packages in 2004 coincides with early reports of colony declines. Jeff Pettis (USDA) and participants of the CCD working group are describing IAPV as an important marker that may identify colonies at risk for disease. Next steps will be experiments to confirm the connection of IAPV to CCD.

Another method of identifying viruses is a process called Reverse Transcription-PCR (RT-PCR). I am only now learning how this is done and do not pretend to comprehend the specifics of this process. It has proved to be rapid, specific and sensitive for the detection of Sacbrood virus in the nucleic acid of infected honeybees. It is now possible to identify eighteen viruses using this procedure and can identify multiple viruses in the same sample. I found it interesting that samples of queens, workers and drones found one or more viruses in every sample tested. Viruses have been common in honeybees for years, and most have not been considered serious problems in the past. Until now viruses have been difficult to identify. Only the Deformed Wing Virus (DWV), and the Sacbrood Virus (SBV) can be identified by their physical characteristics. Advances in testing will open the door to a better understanding of the true impact on bees, and hopefully provide practical outcomes for reducing viral infections.

Massachusetts beekeeping is in the midst of several important changes. The first is to adopt a set of "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) for beekeeping. BMPs will provide guidelines for responsible beekeeping in Massachusetts. This will involve reviewing available information, updating the information, writing the BMPs, asking for peer review from members and county associations, and finally a vote to accept the BMPs. This will take considerable time and effort. It will be an important document only if everyone will contribute his or her suggestions. Our past two surveys indicate our members have an average of 10-12 years as beekeepers. With that much experience there should be plenty of useful ideas.

A few of you have expressed concern that BMPs would somehow limit or hinder beekeeping. Understand that BMPs written by the state association are not law. The state regulations (Apiary Inspection Regulations 330 CMR; sections 8.01 – 8.07) currently on the books are the only mandatory and legally enforceable regulations that apply to all state beekeepers. BMPs are voluntary. They will work only if they are sensible and using them will improve beekeeping. So why put so much time and energy into writing them? The simple answer is that BMPs will improve beekeeping, protect the public and demonstrate to regulatory agencies, and the public, our desire to set standards without the need for new laws (written by non-beekeepers). BMPs are written to define most activities, including business practices. As beekeepers, we will focus on management practices that improve safety, promote healthier honeybees, and that result in clean high quality products.

Beekeeping is a critical agricultural activity. Massachusetts is increasingly urban (non-farming residents). With over 6 million residents (twice the population of Connecticut) Massachusetts is the most densely populated state in New England. Beekeepers are keeping bees closer to neighbors and in areas densely populated. The beekeeper and the public have a developing relationship that may not always go smoothly. The beekeeper needs to be able to reassure non-beekeepers that honeybees are being managed safely, and within accepted guidelines. Endorsement by the state and county associations goes a long way to add to the public's reassurance. This is the best defense when a disgruntled resident petitions to ban beekeeping, or tries to impose restrictions on beekeepers that will regulate our ability to keep colonies in the best locations. Best Management Practices can provide instructions for defining relationships, and resolving disputes, between the beekeeper, neighbors and town officials.

At the fall meeting, I announced that the state association would begin coordinating an Equipment Irradiation Program. In the past individuals and county associations have offered this service for the benefit of beekeepers. Unfortunately, it has sometimes been difficult to collect the minimum number of boxes (pieces of equipment) to offer the service annually. It is my hope that the state

association can help coordinate with county associations. The goal is to put in place a predictable and on-going program. Irradiation can be a valuable tool in preventing and eliminating disease, particularly American Foulbrood. Old equipment, once irradiated, can be used without fear of contamination. It kills pathogens and can eliminate the need for chemical treatments. As we plan for 2008 there is a renewed interest in getting back to basic beekeeping. Many articles are popping up asserting we have pushed the bees too far by modern management practices. Management practices have become too stressful for the bees, resulting in lowered resistance & immunity to disease. Tom Seeley PhD (Cornell University) will be one of our guest speakers at the spring meeting in Topsfield, MA. His research focuses on studying honeybees in their natural environment. Working with the honeybee's behavior improves beekeeping, but first requires an understanding of the feral colony. Dr. Seeley will be talking about the feral colony, and his second talk will focus on applying this knowledge to beekeeping. This is a rare opportunity to hear from an expert on honeybee behavior, communication, and wild colonies. See you there.

Dan Conlon

**Summary of the MBA 2007 Fall Survey**

Members attending the fall Massachusetts Beekeeper's meeting gave the following answers to survey questions. Statements represent assumptions based on the responses and should not be considered a complete or all-inclusive experience of state beekeepers.

**Section I. Beekeeper information.**

52 beekeepers filled out the survey (out of 120 attendees). Years of experience ranged from 1 to 42, with an overall average of 11 years keeping bees. Participants represented Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Essex, Franklin, Hampshire, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Worcester counties. We also had beekeepers from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The number of colonies being managed increased from May (306) to September (343). Six beekeepers reported fewer colonies in September than they had in May. Of the 129 new colonies reported, 52% came from packages, 16% from Nucs, 25% splits from overwintered colonies, and 7% from swarms. The actual number of new colonies was 129. The leaves a net gain from May to September of 37. This also indicates that 30% of the May colonies were lost during the season, and the replacements recouped the losses (creating first year colonies), with an actual 12% overall increase in new colonies. This would seem a high percentage of loss during the late spring and summer. This did not include winter loss.

Races of bees (Queens) being used are 55% Italian, 25% Russian, 20% Carniolan, and one Buckfast & 1 Minnesota. Half the respondents are using more than one race of bees. We did not ask specific questions to assess Queen Performance as we did at the spring meeting.

**Section II. Honey Production & Pollination.**

Only four beekeepers reported renting colonies for pollination. Four provided colonies for Apples and May fruit, one also rented for summer vine crops (squash, cucumber, pumpkin, and gourds). Rental fees varied from \$0 to \$100. Per colony. Average price was \$42.50. Based on the number of colonies rented I have concluded that no sideline or commercial beekeepers completed this section. Cranberries, blueberries and small fruit would have been included, and fees would have averaged at a higher rate.

Honey production totaled 10,119 pounds reported by 37 beekeepers. I am guesstimating this as an average of 50 pounds per colony. Of this group, 33 produced light honey, 24 medium amber, and 7 dark amber. A few produced a variety of light, amber and dark.

Fifteen beekeepers reported no surplus honey. Only two reported producing comb honey, four collected pollen (total of 43 pounds), two sold creamed honey (30 pounds), three made lip crème (100 highest production), three moisturizer (150 highest production), fourteen collected beeswax (range 10 to 210 pounds), and eight made candles. Eleven beekeepers reported purchasing honey from another beekeeper to meet customer demand. This ranged from 20 to 600 lbs. and totaled 1279 pounds purchased for resale.

**Section III. Marketing & Sales.**

Thirty 32 completed this section.

Advertising is not a priority for members. Most have outlets for their products without spending time or money marketing. Three stated that they did some advertising; one with their website, two posted notices at work.

Honey prices showed a wide range. This reflects different parts of the state (Nantucket) and where the products are being sold.

8 ounce: Average price \$3.21 / lowest \$2.50, highest \$3.50.

16 ounce: A \$5.66 / L \$4.50, H \$10.00

32 ounce: A \$10.75 / L \$7.00, H \$20.00

5 pounds: A \$27.50 / L \$23.00, H \$40.00

60 pounds: A \$150.00 / L \$130.00, H \$180.00 (three sources).

Beeswax: A \$9.33 / L \$6.00, H \$16.00

**Where do we sell our products?**

Home – 29 sold from home. (19 sold 100% from home, 9 sold 50%, 5 sold 25%, and 3 sold 10%).

Stores – 11 sold through local stores. (2 sold 100%, 3 sold 50%, 5 sold 25%, and 3 sold 10%).

Farm Stands – 6 (2 sold all their honey at a farm stand).

Fairs & Festivals – 6

Web & mail orders – 0

Farmers Markets – 3

Work – 2

Gifts (not selling) – 2

**Section IV. Honeybee & Management Concerns.**

American Foulbrood – Two reports.

European Foulbrood – 0

Chalk brood – 14

Nosema – 6

CCD – 3

Viruses – 3

Mites – Varroa 35, Tracheal 5.

Small Hive Beetle – 7

Wax moths – 15

GM Crops – 1

Skunks – 5

Raccoons – 1

Bears – 4

Human problems – none reported.

**Section V Treatments used in 2007.**

Thirty-eight beekeepers reported some use of treatments. Ten or 26% reported no treatments used all season.

Although many are using a variety of mite controls, many still do not use a treatment to control mites.

Formic Acid (Mite Away II): 11 or 29%.

Oxalic Acid (not an approved treatment): 4 or 8%.

Powdered Sugar: 8 or 21%.

Apistan Strips: 6

Check Mite: 0

Apiguard: 2

Api-Var: 2

Fumigillin: 18 or 48%

Screen Boards: 21 or 55%

Small Cell Comb: 2

Drone Comb (mite trapping): 2

Menthol: 1

Crisco & Sugar patties: 3

Mineral Oil: 1

West Beetle Trap: 1

Honey-B-Healthy: 1

TM-25 (antibiotic): 3

**ESSEX COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION  
HONEY AMBASSADOR APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

School Currently Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Future Education Plans \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies & Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

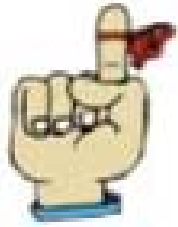
Please answer the following questions:

- 1. If selected to represent the Essex County Beekeepers' Association as Honey Ambassador, will you be willing and able to make appearances throughout the year (January 2008-January 2009) to promote beekeeping at such places as the Topsfield Fair, ECBA Annual Banquet & other events? Please explain.
  
- 2. Have you had any experience or exposure to beekeeping? Please explain.
  
- 3. In what way do you feel that you could be an asset to the ECBA?
  
- 4. How did you learn about the Honey Ambassador program?
  
- 5. Please feel free to elaborate on any aspect of your life which you feel may be important to our decision making process.

PLEASE USE THE BACK OR A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER IF NEEDED.

Please return by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007 to:  
Cynthia Croteau  
10A Rum Hollow  
Fremont, NH 03044  
(603) 679-1798

# TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!



**Dues for 2008 are due by December 31st.** Please renew now to continue your membership and stay on our mailing list. You must renew before the March meeting in order to be eligible to sell product at the Fair.

All renewals received by **December 15th** will be entered in a drawing for a free year's dues.

Thank you.

=====

## Essex County Beekeepers' Association, Inc.

### 2008 Membership Renewal Form

(Please print)

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_ First name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner name if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 digit: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Please print clearly.

Receive Newsletter by: Email \_\_\_\_\_ Regular Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check only one: Single: \_\_\_\_\_ Family: \_\_\_\_\_ Junior: \_\_\_\_\_ Senior: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$12) (\$15) (\$1) (Gratis)\*

\*Age 65 or over and have paid dues for five years.

Please add my name to a list available to the public of persons available to offer educational resources, talk at schools, meetings, etc.

Please add my name to a list available to the public of persons available to assist with swarms.

Yes, I would like to order nametags. I have included \$3.50 for each nametag ordered. Please print the name(s) as you would like it to appear on the nametag.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer my time, talent and/or assistance in the following area(s):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bee School               | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting set up and/or clean up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Banquet           | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordinate dinner             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honey Ambassador Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Host summer meeting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Topsfield Fair           | <input type="checkbox"/> Library                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web site                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship              | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo/Video                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              |   |

MAIL TO: Membership Secretary,  
Essex County Beekeepers' Assn, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 10, Topsfield, MA 01983-0010

Thank you.



ESSEX COUNTY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.  
P.O. BOX 10  
TOPSFIELD, MA 01983-0010

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January 2008



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