



SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Noel Williams

Hi Folks,

It's beginning to cool off and our bees are taking every jar of sugar feed we give to them. We are feeding each hive a jar a day and plan to keep it up until our girls stop taking it or it gets too cold at night to leave it out. We've pulled all the supers and we're done treating for mites. April and I plan to spend a good part of the weekend extracting honey. I think it's been a pretty good year as far as beekeeping goes, it sure has been a busy one.

We don't have a date yet, but NIBA is planning one more mentoring session at the MCC apiary in early to mid-November. This time John Leibinger plans to do an Oxalic acid dribble demonstration for treating varroa mites. Working with Oxalic acid is considered tricky by many experienced beekeepers, so if you've been thinking about giving it a try then John's demonstration is a must-see.

This year NIBA once again exhibited at Planet Palooza in Woodstock. We had a nice showing, talked to a lot of people about bees and sold some honey to boot. Thanks to Al Fullerton for taking point on this event. Thanks also Larry Kregel, Lindy Salvi, Jerry Gudauskas, Jeff & Jackie Tessar, Keith Sindelar and Robin Tibbits for helping out during the day. Great job everybody!

The club also tried something new in September with Tom Allen and Willie Pankey setting up shop at Lake Zurich History Days. Despite the rainy weather, Tom says the event was a success and more people know about bees than they did the day before. A big thank you, gentlemen!

Our next NIBA club meeting will be held on Thursday October 12th at McHenry County College. The program for the evening will start promptly at 7:00pm and is entitled "Encaustic Techniques for Beginners". Presented by Amanda Bulger, this program covers the interesting and unique artform of painting with beeswax. Very cool stuff!

The annual NIBA Honey Tasting event will also take place during the October meeting, but unfortunately it is only open to those who show up to the meeting in-person (technology hasn't advanced that far yet). Remember to bring a jar of your honey along to the meeting. Please, no alcoholic honey products!

We are looking for a member to act as coordinator for the 2024 Mentoring program, which is an important part of the work NIBA does to help educate its members in the art and science of beekeeping. If you feel that you could help us with this vital program, please contact me at nwilliams1250@yahoo.com.

Please remember that elections will be held during the November meeting. If you or someone you know would like to participate more fully in the operation and direction of NIBA, becoming a club officer is one way to go. Very shortly we will be opening nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer for 2024. Keep an eye out for this important notification!

All the Best,

Noel

October Meeting Presentation

Our October meeting will have a presentation by Amanda Bulger entitled '**Encaustic Techniques for Beginners**'.

Amanda Bulger bio:

Amanda Bulger grew up on her family's farm in northeast Wisconsin. She received her MFA in Studio Art from the University of Connecticut and her BFA in Art and Design from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire. She has exhibited nationally, in venues such as The William Benton Museum of Art in Storrs, Connecticut and Sideshow Gallery in Brooklyn, New York, as well as abroad in British Columbia and London. Her artwork resonates with the lifework of farming. It draws upon her connection to cultivated landscapes and the people, tools and systems that transform them. She currently splits her time between Northeast and Northwest Wisconsin.

What is Encaustic painting???

According to Wikipedia:

Encaustic painting, also known as **hot wax painting**, is a form of painting that involves a heated wax medium to which colored pigments have been added. The molten mix is applied to a surface—usually prepared wood, though canvas and other materials are sometimes used. The simplest encaustic medium could be made by adding pigments to wax, though recipes most commonly consist of beeswax and damar resin, potentially with other ingredients. For pigmentation, dried powdered pigments can be used, though some artists use pigmented wax, inks, oil paints or other forms of pigmentation.

Metal tools and special brushes can be used to shape the medium as it cools. Also, heated metal tools, including spatulas, knives and scrapers, can be used to manipulate the medium after it has cooled onto the surface. Additionally, heat lamps, torches, heat guns, and other methods of applying heat are used by encaustic artists to fuse and bind the medium. Because encaustic medium is thermally malleable, the medium can be also sculpted. And/or, materials can be encased, collaged or layered into the medium.

History



Fayum mummy portrait

The word encaustic originates from Ancient Greek: ἐγκαυστικός, which means "burning in", from ἐν *en*, "in" and καίειν *kaiein*, "to burn", and this element of heat is necessary for a painting to be called encaustic. Encaustice or Encaustike (ἐγκαυστική) was the art of painting by burning in the colours.

The wax encaustic painting technique was described by the Roman scholar Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History* from the 1st Century AD. The oldest surviving encaustic panel paintings are the Romano-Egyptian Fayum mummy portraits from Egypt, around 100–300 AD, but it was a very common technique in ancient Greek and Roman painting. It continued to be used in early Byzantine icons but was effectively abandoned in the Western Church.



The Mummy of Demetrios, 95-100 C.E., 11.600a-b, Brooklyn Museum

In the 20th century, painter Fritz Faiss (1905–1981), a student of Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky at the Bauhaus, together with Dr. Hans Schmid, rediscovered the so-called Punic wax technique of encaustic painting. Faiss held two German patents related to the preparation of waxes for encaustic painting. One covered a method for treating beeswax so that its melting point was raised from 60 to 100 °C (140 to 212 °F). This occurred after boiling the wax in a solution of sea water and soda three successive times. The resulting harder wax is the same as the Punic wax referred to in ancient Greek writings on encaustic painting. Other 20th-century North American artists, including Jasper Johns, Tony Scherman, Mark Perlman, John Shaw and Fernando Leal Audirac, have used encaustic techniques.

Encaustic art has seen a resurgence in popularity since the 1990s, with artists using electric irons, hotplates and heated styli on different surfaces, including card, paper, and even pottery. The iron makes producing a variety of artistic patterns easier. The medium is not limited to just simple designs; it can also be used to create complex paintings, just as in other media such as oil and acrylic. Although technically difficult to master, attractions of this medium for contemporary artists are its dimensional quality and luminous color.

Hello Fellow Beekeepers:

A Mentor session will be scheduled for Saturday, October 15th has been cancelled.

John Leibinger Liebinger will be holding a session the 1st or 2nd week of November for Oxalic Acid dribbles. That will complete this year's NIBA Mentor program.

Thank you.
Regards,
Bob Hillman



CHORES OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER

Like the bees we study, we accomplish more together.

John Leibinger

What's happening in the hive?

Hive activity will be markedly reduced this month. Winter is just around the corner and the bees know it. The "Ousting of the Drones" has started and should be winding down as the month progresses. On warmer days, the foragers are still scouting for natural nectar and pollen sources or other sources to pillage. Beware of robbing.... from both ends of the process. If your hives are **getting robbed**, the result is obviously disastrous. If your hives are **doing the robbing**, though it may seem less obvious, the results can be equally as disastrous. The weak hive that they may be robbing could be weak as a result of varroa mite infestation. When your bees are in the weak, infested hive, the parasitic varroa will be looking for a way out so they can find a healthier host. They will hitch a ride on your bees and find their new home in your apiary. **Now you have the mite problem!** Difficult to prevent, but you can mitigate the likelihood by making sure that you are providing plenty of sugar syrup at 2 parts sugar to one part water (four pounds of sugar to each quart of water). If your bees have plenty of access to food, their need to rob other hives will be lessened (but not necessarily eliminated).

There are still some winter bees being raised though the numbers will be fewer than last month as the days cool down. We have already had some cool nights that would lead to clustering at night. The bees will recognize the need for establishing appropriate space for clustering and the need for food stores nearby. They will move and store their provisions accordingly.

For All Beekeepers, it is time to:

Get the Bees ready.

Get the Environment ready [two options : Ventilation Hives- hives that utilize top ventilation (currently the most common method utilized)and Condensing Hives-hives that do not utilize top ventilation].

Bees:

Feed, Feed, Feed! 2:1 sugar syrup (4 pounds of sugar for each quart of water) to maximize the concentration of carbohydrates and minimize the excess water they need to remove from the solution. It's getting cooler and it is harder to evaporate that excess moisture.

Consider an Oxalic Acid sublimation or dribble treatment in later October 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.

Consider a Direct Feed Microbial treatment to improve the gut microbiome of the bees.

Environment: For those who utilize Ventilation Hives

Remove queen excluders if present.

Tilt hive forward a little bit to assist winter moisture drainage.

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

Add mouse guards. *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 in 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 lean towards 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/spacer and maybe 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 (very strongly) 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 with the thought of providing a little solar heat gain on sunny winter days.

A quick search on the internet will provide you with a plethora of information on many approaches to hive insulation. In any case, add insulation to the top of the hive as a minimum approach.

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.

Environment: For those who utilize Condensing Hives (see General info for link to info on Condensing Hives)

Mostly the same as above (Differences italicized and marked with *):

Remove queen excluders if present.

Tilt hive forward a little bit to assist winter moisture drainage.

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

Add mouse guards. *No upper entrance or ventilation hole in a condensing hive. 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 in is easily plugged up with dead bees thus rendering it useless. When place '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 lean towards anthropomorphism.

***No Upper Entrance.** Sometimes the lower entrances get plugged with ice or snow and even with dead bees. Since there is no upper entrance, you should check your hives periodically and specifically after a snow to see that the bees have egress to make cleansing flights.

Add an appropriate feeding shim/spacer and maybe 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. Alternately, you may want to put this emergency feed in place prior to closing out your hives for the winter.

***Add extra insulation at the top of the hive** to reduce the opportunity for condensation on the lid.

***Wrap your hive with insulation** to insulate and to eliminate infiltration of cold winter winds.

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.

General Info

[More on Condensing Hives](#) (Ctrl+Click link)

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)

Formulas for making 2:1 syrup for fall feeding:

Sugar (lb)	1	2	4	8	16	32
Water	1 cup	1 pint	1 quart	1/2/gal	1 gal	2 gal

Note 1: Do not boil sugar syrup (it's OK to boil the water prior to adding sugar but not after). Boiling can lead to the creation of HMF (Hydroxymethylfurfural) which is toxic to honeybees.

Note 2: Some people are concerned about using sugar from beets. There is no difference in the sugar (sucrose) from beets vs cane sugar (sucrose). Sucrose is sucrose. Genetic modification (GM) in beets modify the proteins in the plants, not the sucrose.

Note 3: Use white table sugar (sucrose) only. Do not use brown sugar or molasses. Do not use organic sugar.

[How to make one type of candy board.](#) (CTRL + Click)

ROBBING SCREENS



MOUSE DAMAGE



MOUSE GUARDS



VENTILATION



WIND BREAKS




HIVE WRAPS



NEWSLETTER EDITOR

If anyone has anything they would like to contribute to the newsletter or if they have any ideas of things they would like to see in the newsletter, please email me at

spinkawa@gmail.com 

THOUGHTS FROM LARRY

Greetings Beekeepers –

I had my first fall “it smells funny” call. For many new beekeepers the smell of goldenrod nectar is alarming. Does it smell like American Foulbrood Disease (AFB)? Not really, but we seldom smell AFB and this fall odor is not like anything we smelled earlier in the season.



The question came up last weekend... is this too late to combine colonies. Well, I just did a combine today. Last July I took frames with eggs and young larva and moved them to a nuc box with a couple of frames of honey and pollen and placed them in a five frame nuc box. I sat the nuc on top of the mother colony. I might, thought I, need a spare queen just in case I have a failing queen in a colony this fall and I would like to help it over winter. It is hard to find a mail order queen in September. The nuc nicely raised a queen that ultimately began laying a respectable brood pattern.

Due to great beekeeping luck, I had no need for this queen.

What to do with the spare queen? Nursing a nuc through the winter is possible but does not call to me at this time. I combined it with the down-stairs parent colony yesterday.

Twenty-four hours ago I made a two-queen colony. I suspect (and sometimes the bees surprise me) only one will be in be there soon. Because the queens are uniquely marked, I will be able to tell if the spring queen or the fall queen will reign in April. I am betting on the new kid. (??)

For anyone who is in limbo about attending the October NIBA meeting, **do it**. The presentation at the meeting is on encaustic painting... using paint made with beeswax. I had the opportunity to take a short class on encaustic painting. I had no idea what to expect. I enjoyed it greatly. There are no rules... but there are techniques. With a little practice and an ounce of creativity one can create works that will amaze family and enchant friends. Want to know what to do with the cappings wax? I have a suggestion. Check out this short introduction - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8O8_VdDv_B4.

November 4 the Illinois State Beekeepers Association will have their fall meeting in Springfield (<https://www.ilsba.com/>). The keynote speaker will be Dr. Sam Ramsey, an artful speaker. “Sammie” is an expert on mites. The trip is worth it just to hear him speak. I will be back teaching bee classes at MCC next winter beginning in February. The Beekeeping 101 class, that will be hybrid (in person or online), begins February 7. Pass the word. We always have a good time. Many reading this were in that class in years past. Time to go out looking for that good bee book for reading by the fire on a cold winter night. Consider Tom Seeley's book *The Lives of Bees*. It would be a good choice.

Larry



Dear NIBA members -

It's that time of year again when we encourage you to get involved with the club. Please see the attached from with information about joining our Board of Directors either as an Officer or Director.

We need nominations to be submitted by the deadline.

Elections will take place at our November meeting.

Contact our Nominating Committee Chairperson Jim Haisler or any current Board member with any questions. Jim may be reached at jshaisler@gmail.com or 847.606.5000 (text preferred).

Kind Regards.

Northern Illinois Beekeeper Association (NIBA)

Board of Director application for Officer and Director positions

NIBA is seeking nominations for the upcoming Officer and Directors position.

View details on these positions here:

Self-nominations are allowed and encouraged.

Please only nominate another member if you have their permission.

Submission of this form is anonymous, it will only be reviewed by the Nominating Committee:

Chair Jim Haisler, Austin Lechner, Lindi Salvi.

Name

Best phone to reach you at, if needed

How long have you been a member of NIBA? _____

I'm interested in serving as: (check all that apply)

- President Vice President Treasurer Secretary Director

Why are you interested in serving or why do you feel you would make a good
Officer/Director:

(attach extra sheet if more room is needed)

Submit to Nominating Jim Haisler at jshaisler@gmail.com. 847.606.5000 cell for questions

Deadline for nominations is Monday, November 6 by 5 p.m.

The election of officers will be held at the Club meeting on:

November 9, 2023, 7 p.m. at McHenry County College.

At that meeting the members present will first elect the President, then Vice
President, and so on. Each candidate can only hold one position.

(Duties of the positions are attached below)



2023 NIBA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President - Noel Williams

nwilliams1250@yahoo.com

Vice President - Tom Allen

tallen122@yahoo.com

Secretary - Kristen Mueller

khuschitt@gmail.com

Treasurer - Ralph Brindise

rbrindise@att.net

Director - John Leibinger

jleibinger@aol.com

Director - Al Fullerton

adfhoney@gmail.com

Director - Bob Hillman

rthillman0690@msn.com

Director - Ron Willer

ronwiller38@gmail.com

Program Chair - Larry Krengel

Webmaster - Terri Reeves

Newsletter Editor - Sue Pinkawa

Club Extractor Coordinators - Randy Mead/Al Fullerton

Club Raffle Coordinator - John Leibinger

Snack Coordinator - Sally Willer

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. spinkawa@gmail.com

Manual Honey Extractor

Did you know that your membership in NIBA includes the opportunity to rent a club manual 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 and returned on time.

To reserve a date, **contact Randy by text or email at 847-571-1899 or rmeadtoys@gmail.com.**

NIBA Now has an Electric Extractor

It will handle both sides of 9 frames at the same time.

Club members may borrow it for 2 days for \$25.00 plus a security deposit of \$75.00. The deposit will be returned if the extractor and uncapping equipment are returned on time, clean, and undamaged.

The Extractor comes with everything you need to make the uncapping and extraction experience go smoothly, except of course, the honey frames and buckets.

Pick it up in Cary. To reserve, **contact Al Fullerton by phone or text at 815-382-7139 or email adfhoney@gmail.com**, Note: Al's phone doesn't always give a notification ring (He blames it on the phone or the tunnel he lives in), so if you don't get a timely response, just phone rather than text.

**The queen marking color for
2023 is RED.**