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## October 2017 LCBA Newsletter

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- **November 9 Monthly Meeting – Adventures in Commercial Pollination -Dan Maughan**
- **Saturday, December 9 – Holiday Potluck & Annual Meeting/Elections**

#### **LCBA's September 14 Monthly Meeting (5 – 12)**

- **Notes on Fall Management Strategies – from Kevin Reichert's talk**
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#### **Guest Column: "FALL – Our New Bee Year Has Arrived!" by Dr. Dewey Caron (12 – 14)**

#### **Highlights: LCBA's September 16 Fall Management Workshop a New Club Apiary (15)**

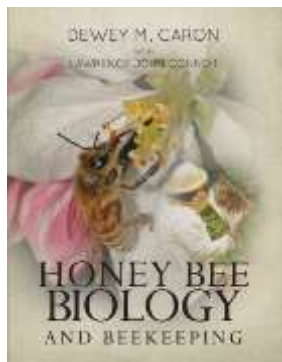
#### **Recipes of the Month: (16-17)**

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*Questions? Suggestions? Resources you'd like to share, stories you'd like to tell? Please contact LCBA Secretary Susanne Weil: [secretary@lcba.community](mailto:secretary@lcba.community) or call 360 880 8130*

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### **Thursday, October 12: LCBA Monthly Meeting**

#### **Dr. Dewey Caron: Southwest WA Bee Losses & Management Practices**

Social Time 6 – 6:30 p.m.; Talk & Q&A, 6:30 to 7:30; Break & Business Meeting, 7:30 to 8:45

Centralia College, Washington Hall 103, 701 W. Walnut, Centralia WA 98531

Dr. Dewey Caron will share results from the Pacific Northwest Survey of Honey Bee Health & BeeInformed Partnership's national study – we'll hear where Lewis County fits in the regional & national picture, plus updates on how we can help our bees to thrive. Dewey will build on our president Kevin Reichert's September presentation with additional ideas about fall management for winter survival. Please see his guest column in this newsletter, bee-low!



*Above left, Dan Maughan with some nice honey frames; right, Dan's son Tim helped him bring the bees to the almonds this past February.*

### **Thursday, November 9: LCBA Monthly Meeting**

#### **Dan Maughan: Commercial Pollination – Taking Bees to Almonds, Apples, & Cherries**

**Where: Centralia College, Washington Hall 103; When: 6-6:30 social time; 6:30 - 7:30, speaker; 7:45 - 8:45, business meeting & Bee Q&A**

Interested in learning what's involved in commercial pollination? Come hear LCBA Mentorship Coordinator Dan describe how he added pollination & honey sales as a sideline to his family farm business. Also: short business meeting with updates on LCBA's December board of directors' elections.

**Friday, November 17:**

**2018 Youth in Beekeeping Scholarship Application Deadline**



*Above left, 2017 LCBA Youth Scholar Rylea Shan Powell holds up a nice top bar honey frame with mentor Gottfried Fritz; right, 2017 Youth Scholar Adam Claridge wields a knife at an LCBA carve-out this past June, guided by mentor Cody Warren (not pictured).*

***Do you know young people from families new to beekeeping who'd like to get started with bees? Please tell them about LCBA's Youth Scholarship Program!***

LCBA hopes to sponsor three young beekeepers in 2018. We're seeking students between 6th and 10th grades in 2017-18 - home-schooled students are welcome to apply, too.

Students who win a scholarship are loaned bees and all necessary gear; if they complete the scholarship commitment to attend our beginning beekeeping class, workshops, some meetings, and to volunteer at LCBA's exhibits at the Spring Youth Fair and Southwest Washington Fairs, then they keep their bees and gear. Each Youth Scholar is matched with an experienced beekeeping mentor to guide them through their first year as beekeepers.

More info & the application materials are on our website:

[http://lewiscountybeekeepers.org/youth\\_scholarship\\_program/want\\_to\\_apply\\_2018\\_lcba\\_youth\\_in\\_beekeeping\\_scholarship\\_program\\_application\\_forms](http://lewiscountybeekeepers.org/youth_scholarship_program/want_to_apply_2018_lcba_youth_in_beekeeping_scholarship_program_application_forms)

Students and parents with questions are welcome to contact Susanne Weil, secretary@lcba.community or call 360 880 8130.



*Above left, members at last December's potluck; Cody Warren won pollen patties in the Youth Scholarship drawing; right, 2016 Youth Scholar Josiah Cowin described his first year of beekeeping.*

**Saturday, December 9:**

**LCBA Holiday Potluck at Fort Borst Park Kitchen #1**

Time TBA: Fun, fellowship, & a drawing to support our 2018 Youth in Beekeeping Scholarship Program; also, our 2018 elections. We are working on arranging a soap-making workshop before the potluck - more details in our November 2017 Newsletter!

**January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17, 2018, 9 a.m. to noon**  
**LCBA's Beginning Beekeeping Class – “Your First Year of Beekeeping”**



*Above, 2016 LCBA Beginning Beekeeping students with hands-on displays during class breaks*

**Place: Centralia College, Washington Hall 103, 701 W. Walnut, Centralia WA**

***For beginners:*** learn to keep bees successfully in southwest Washington’s unique conditions. Topics: basic bee biology/behavior, equipment & apiary set-up, seasonal management, identifying & managing parasites & diseases, honey harvesting, over-wintering, & more. Students completing the course earn LCBA’s diploma.

***Course Materials:*** Lewis County Beekeepers’ Association’s manual lays out basics for beginners; LCBA’s PowerPoints & demonstration materials supplement manual with visuals. In-class Q&A welcome; children are welcome, too.

***How to Register:*** This class is offered through Centralia College's Continuing Education Program. Registration costs \$40 and goes through Centralia College by phone, mail, or in person - sorry, no online registration. Registration starts late November 2017. Here's how it works: First, get a registration form at <http://www.centralia.edu/academics/cont-ed/>. Course Code: available November 2017. Students can register & pay by phone w/credit card: call (360) 623-8940, ext. 427 or 623. ***Questions?*** Email [secretary@lcba.community](mailto:secretary@lcba.community) or call 360 880 8130.

**SMALL FARM WORKSHOP SERIES –L.C. EXTENSION**

**October 26: Mud Management with Gary Fredricks, Cowlitz County Extension**

**November 30: FSME (Farm Safety Modernization Act) and Your Farm**

The WSU Lewis County Extension is hosting workshops for small farm agribusiness owners. Great information for experienced farmers or those thinking about getting started.

Workshops will be held at the Lewis County Courthouse, 351 NW North Street, Chehalis, on Thursday evenings 6pm – 7:30pm.

Cost & pre-registration: \$5 per family at the door (Cash and Check only). Pre-registration is requested to assure handouts, Call 360-740-1212 Walk-ins Welcome too.

## Notes from LCBA's Thursday, September 14: LCBA Monthly Meeting



*The two-foot-square wasp nest.*

**Hornets, yellowjackets, & robbing:** With an audience of about 70 present, Kevin started with a story of a different insect – hornets! Kevin's son, brush hogging, ran into a nest of hornets bigger than a basketball in tall grass: "he found out that Kubota tractor doesn't have a fast speed." Kevin and his son sprayed the nest, then got it out of the grass and saw that the hornets had integrated berry vines into the hive! They managed to cut these out, then put the dead hive in Kevin's freezer: it will go in his son's man cave. Kevin noted that hornets will snip the heads off bees: he asked if members have seen many hornets, yellowjackets, or wasps around: many had. Kevin warned that as we feed our bees in fall, the sugar syrup will promote robbing, both by bees and predators. If a colony is strong, pointed out that usually if a bee colony is strong, they can protect themselves, but not if the colony is weak.

**What can we do to help save a hive from these predators?** First, we can reduce the entrance restrictor to its smallest opening. Walt Wilson recommended robbing screens to protect the bees: he's watched and seen that yellowjackets and others cannot get into his hives, though the bees come and go easily. In extreme cases, the hive can be moved. Another method is covering the hive with a sheet for a couple days. Harold Mullins reported that one day, he saw hundreds of bees out in front of his hive – he wondered if a late swarm were in progress, but when he checked, he saw that the bees had balled a yellowjacket and had stung it to death.

**Fall Assessment – starts in summer!** Kevin started his fall assessments in July when they extracted honey. After letting the bees clean out the wet supers, they moved them into the barn and put them on top of a corrugated plastic political sign for a base: they then stacked the supers 6 or 8 high on top. Some beekeepers use moth crystals; Kevin does not find this necessary because he and Jeanne seal the supers in from below and above with the signs, then use duct tape to cover any cracks to prevent wax moths getting in. Dan Maughan noted that as paramoth fumes sink through the hive it kills wax moths that can destroy the comb; Kevin cautioned that if using paramoth, be sure to air the supers out before putting them on bees the next season. Dan noted that he also keeps a light on because light repels moths; finally, Dan also wraps his supers in plastic wrap.

***Do your colonies weigh enough?*** The next step after supers are removed is to assess colony weight in late July/early August, with a target weight being 60 to 80 pounds. If colonies are light, we need to start feeding in August. By September, we can keep feeding them, but need to shift to 2 parts sugar:1 part water, or to dried sugar.



*Above left, beekeepers tilting hives at our club apiary at our September 16 workshop to assess colony weight; right, wax moth larvae on super at the apiary. These frames were removed.*

***Can honey supers with partially capped honey frames be left on hives?*** Kevin answered that with a strong colony, you could leave a honey super with honey on, but don't leave an empty one. Kevin had a few hives with so many bees that, with supers off, the bees did not have enough room, so he put the empties back on to prevent swarming. After they start treating for Varroa later in September, they will probably take off some empty supers and consolidate them, moving full frames down into other boxes. Maranda asked if the bees will have time to cap uncapped nectar at this point in the season: Kevin said that leaving a little uncapped honey is ok, but if there's too much, the moisture content will be too high, and it could ferment, which is not good for the bees. Kevin recommended that if there's not a lot of shake, keep it on: it's hard to keep frames like that from molding outside the hive.

***Leave supers on in winter, harvest honey in spring?*** Cody Warren and Bob Harris both harvest in spring and leave their supers on through winter. Cody commented that we had a harsh, long winter, and he felt they needed the food. Kevin Mills asked if we were speaking of two deeps plus a medium super; Cody said he leaves whatever they have, both for his top bars and his horizontal Langstroth hives: he uses all deeps so as to be able to swap out equipment.

***Get rid of those queen excluders before winter!*** Kevin also asked who uses queen excluders: a few do, and he warned to be sure to pull those out: the queen can't get up to food stores with excluders on, and either the bees will go up and she'll starve and freeze, or the bees will stay with her and starve.

At this point, we moved to Kevin's Power-Point presentation, which is available on LCBA's website under the Mentors/Classes/Workshop link: on that page, click on the Fall Management sub-page. Re; the slideshow, Kevin noted that this year, he has been doing everything a little later – from spring onward, everything has skewed later this year.

## 10 Things to Do Now [September] To Help Your Bees Survive Winter

**1. If you have tested your bees and know they have mites, now is the time to treat them** (unless you have a non-treatment philosophy). Queens are winding down laying as the colonies prepares to over-winter, so a hive with a mite load can get overwhelmed by mites. With the cooler weather, now there are probably about 2 brood cycles left. Kevin also noted that oxalic acid fume vaporizing works best in cooler weather during the broodless cycle. Kevin himself did not use to treat his bees, but now that the FDA has approved oxalic acid, he fumigates his bees and believes it helps. Referring to Dr. Danny Najera's talk this past August, Kevin believes that it is better to treat than not. What's an acceptable mite count after you treat? Susanne noted Danny N's data: you want to see under 7 mites per 100 bees.

Question: how many people test for mites before treating? This was split: about half test using either sticky boards, alcohol wash, or sugar shake; others just treat, assuming that mites are there. Rick is using thymol and eucalyptus oil wafers. After he treats, he puts in clean slider boards so that he can look to see how many mites drop after treatment: those that show the highest mite drop, he will treat again. Almost everyone is using screened bottom boards.



*Above left, Rick Battin shows Sept 16 workshop attendees how to find mites on a sticky board; right, preparing to use oxalic acid fume vaporizing on one of the apiary colonies.*

Cody found a video on Facebook of a beekeeper who accidentally set his hive on fire when treating with oxalic acid. There had been burr comb on bottom of box, and as the wax melted, it set the wood of the box and frames on fire! What should we do if there is burr comb on bottom super, Ed Odell asked. Kevin suggested tipping it up, scraping off any comb, then coming back the next day, when bees would have settled down. He also noted that we can vaporize from below the bottom screen. Harold Mullins built a special screened box into which he can insert his vaporizer: he sets his bottom board on top of it and then adds hive boxes as usual, and always has an easy, safe way to vaporize his bees without the vaporizer itself ever coming into contact with bees, wax, or wood.

**2. Look for Nosema, and if you see it, treat for it using Fumagillen.** Nosema, a microsporidian that infests honey bees' guts, promotes dysentery - that will debilitate bees and make it hard for them to make use of food supplies effectively. You can pre-treat by infusing a dose of Fumagillen into the last couple of gallons of sugar-syrup you put on your bees: however, if you pre-treat, the organism can become resistant. Kevin only treats when he sees signs of Nosema, which are typically large streaks of poop on the outside of the hive, more than from normal cleansing flights. Nosema is more prevalent in the spring, but we still should watch for it

now. Dan commented that maybe there are other reasons the bees may be “poopstorming,” such as viruses.

Peter noted that if you dissect the bees, you can see spores with 300x microscope. There are now two strains of *Nosema*, apis and cerana: it is not clear whether cerana is here yet, and the dosage for cerana is not certain yet. Kevin Mills noted that he used to manage 5000+ colonies: they switched to apple cider vinegar (2 tablespoons per gallon), and it worked just as well as fumagillin as a preventive treatment; however, he is not sure if it would work for an active *Nosema* infestation. Dan noted that he uses apple cider vinegar in his winter patties, and it seems to have a similar effect.

**3. Evaluate honey and pollen stores for winter (see comments above):** You can look in the hives and strategically position food frames above the brood chamber - the bees will move up through winter and hopefully find these frames. For brood boxes, the best order, from the outside to the center, is frames of honey on the outside, then pollen frames, then brood frames in the center where the cluster will keep the brood warm.



*Above left, Gottfried Fritz checks a bucket feeder at the apiary; right, Harold Mullins' ingenious oxalic acid fume vaporizing box.*

**4. Feed bees now if they are light on stores.** Kevin is now feeding one gallon per hive per week to hives he thinks needs it. However, he's not feeding all the bees – it's best if they build up more naturally. As the temperature drops in late September/early October, it's time to shift from 1:1 sugar:water mix to 2:1. Kevin cautioned that although the queen is slowing down in laying at this time of the year, if the bees get too much feed, they may backfill brood boxes and could provoke a swarm if no place for her to lay, so monitor whether bees have room for food storage when you feed in fall. Dan Maughan has a winter patty mix that incorporates pollen patties: this, too, is on the website under Mentors/Classes and fall/winter management.

**5. Make candy boards now to get ready for the transition to dry feed for late fall and winter.** Moisture in hives during cold wet weather can chill bees and kill them, so prepare for dry winter feed. For candy board recipes, visit LCBA's website, click on the Mentors/Workshops/Classes link, then Overwintering Bees. To see a video of Kevin & Jeanne making candy boards, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsw08r5B26o&feature=share> (thanks to Cody Warren for filming!) Kevin replaces hard candy in December and February. Steve Howard then told how he gave honey from a strong hive to a weaker one, and how that fed them all winter. They made it through: when Steve checked them in spring, they were down to 2 or 3 frames, but they survived. (One possible danger of this is that viral particles can transmit



viruses through honey and pollen; but if the alternative is a hive starving, this gamble could be well worth taking.)

Cody Warren noted that no-bake methods, like Lauri Miller's (see website page noted under #5, above) and they work fine. Peggy Hammer said that she had used that approach and found it less intimidating. Kevin also noted that you could also spray a sheet of newspaper with water and sprinkle dry sugar on it to layer it up, then put another newspaper piece on top to flatten and cover half the frames with this. Phil Wilson likes to do this in 9 inch pie tins. Instead of candy boards, Cody also makes fondant: basic fondant recipes are available online. He uses pure cane sugar and puts the fondant on vegetable baking sheets from Walmart, which have little holes in them: the bees then come up and eat the fondant.

**6. *Protect hives from the wind and rain.*** Some move bees under shelter; others use covers (like political signs) that overhang the top by a foot or more all around. This helps keep moisture out of the hives and also provides bees with a space for cleansing flights in rainy weather.



*Above left, Dan “the Bee Chef” Maughan with his winter patties (recipe on website at link noted above); middle, Kevin stapling hardware cloth into moisture control box at September 16 workshop; right, Cody shows how the telescoping cover should fit to avoid covering ventilation holes.*

**7. *Place moisture control boxes above the hive boxes:*** these boxes act like sponges, drawing moisture off the colony. For details of how to make and install a moisture control box, see the slideshow of Kevin's moisture control box method on LCBA's website – it is linked under Mentors/Workshops/Classes – click on the Overwintering Bees page. Kevin is putting them on within the next week or two, maybe later if we continue to get warmish weather. Harold noted that since he started using these boxes he has had no more moisture problems. Cody noted that in Warre hives, it's called a quilt box: he keeps them on year round and ruffles up the chips periodically. For the moisture absorbent, Kevin recommends cedar chips like Kennel Care: they're not that expensive, smell good, and bees seem to like it. Question: would cedar help repel wax moths? No one was certain, but it is possible. Gottfried said there is no conclusive evidence, but no harm in doing it. Alternatives include chopped straw, corn cobs, shredded newspaper – bob said – anything with absorbency someone said, how about diapers (why not?).

Polly Mackenzie asked what to do about hives with garden roof tops: you can't use political signs. Kevin asked Gordon Bellevue what he does with his garden tops: Gordon said that with the garden lids, you don't need extra coverage because the extended porch guards the entrance, and rain flows off the sloped roof. A member asked whether bees build comb inside the roofs, and Gordon said only minimally. He also noted that he has not needed moisture boxes with

garden top roofs: Gordon lives in a very wet area, and has had far fewer winter losses since implementing garden tops.

We viewed the slideshow re: the how-to of the moisture box: this is on the website (see above). Kevin pointed out that you must be sure to put the hardware cloth or mesh in the middle, but not too high, so that the bees don't build bridge comb. Also, Kevin noted that in early boxes, he made the vent holes too small: about an inch is better. Holes are drilled above the hardware cloth so they help ventilate the cedar chips. Also, be sure to drill holes in at an angle so rain doesn't integrate into the box, and measure to be sure that the telescoping lid doesn't cover vent holes. Re: the slideshow photos, Bob commented that in all the pictures, Jeanne is working; he wanted to know what Kevin does. . . .

Kevin noted that at the workshop on the Saturday following this meeting, we would show how to make the boxes as we make them for apiary bee colonies.

**8. Give good ventilation: be sure that there is space for moisture to rise and exit the colony** (see the slideshow noted in #7).

Do you need to close up the screened bottom board in winter? Kevin and others thought this is only necessary when it is very cold. Leaving bottom slider boards out aids ventilation. Dan showed a moisture board that is a kind of pressed material, called a sounding board, made from a material like pressed sawdust. This goes on top of the inner cover and could also be used with garden lids. Walt Wilson noted that beekeepers should periodically check during winter to be sure the bees don't propolize the holes in the top: they won't get ventilation then, so you may have to open plugged holes up.

**9. Add an entrance reducer to protect the colony from mice:** these little rodents sometimes seek shelter in a nice warm hive for winter and can do a lot of damage to comb, as well as urinate inside the colony.

**Kevin noted that we need to take the entrance reducer off periodically and scrape out natural dead loss bees so that they don't plug the entrance with corpses and suffocate the hive,** especially if you don't have a top entrance. You can do it on a day when it is cold: the bees do not like sticks poked along the bottom board, and guard bees will come for you. Rick noted that turning the entrance reducer upside down so that the entry hole is on the top of the restrictor can let bees climb out over dead bees.

**10. Get hives up off the ground to help combat moisture problems:** you can put hives up on pallettes, cinder blocks, etc. if you do not already use a hive stand.

**Don't neglect smoke and wear protective gear during fall management:** Gottfried told a cautionary tale, reminding us that our bees have a different attitude this time of year. The day prior to this meeting, he was going to put on Mite-Away Quick Strips, and to do that, you have to get into brood box. He did smoke them, but did not wear his protective gear: all he had to do was "breathe on them," and they were on him. He got about 20 stings on his arms and about a dozen on his head and face. He had to finish the job before he could get the stings out. He drove past Providence Hospital and sat in parking lot for a while to be sure he was ok, then went home, and his wife thought he had been in a street fight! Arrogance goes before a really humbling lesson, Gottfried quipped – so wear your protective gear.

## LCBA September Business Meeting

**Announcements:** Bob Harris announced the last call for honey spinning: he is going to clean gear and put away for season soon. Pamela Daudet found an excellent, inexpensive source of burlap coffee sacks to cut up for our smokers: a sign-up sheet was passed around so that she would know how many to bring to the October meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rick Battin announced that LCBA's total account balance was \$8867.44. Of this, Kevin, Susanne, and Rick met with the bank manager and moved \$ 5000 to a separate savings account for greater security, so now, the checking account has \$3867.41 and savings \$5000. However, Rick noted that expenses from the Fair still need to be reimbursed. The Youth Scholarship fund has \$1972.49.

**Apiary update:** Kevin thanked Kevin Mills for his donation of 3 nucs, then an additional nuc after one of those colonies died. Apiary Manager Cody reported that the 5 hives have been doing pretty well, putting on weight. He and his committee members have been feeding on schedule. On the last night of the Fair, he picked up many gallons of 2:1 syrup from the Rotary stand. On the upcoming September 16 workshop at the apiary, we will build moisture control boxes and do oxalic acid vaporizing, as well as demonstrate several other treatment methods. Kevin thanked Cody and his committee for their work maintaining our new club apiary and encouraged members to come to the workshop and check it out.

**Youth Scholarship Program:** Education Coordinator Peter Glover reported that our 2018 application forms have been on our website since June: the deadline is November 17. We are hoping to award three scholarships, provided that we can find enough mentors, people who are comfortable working with teens. If you would like to mentor a young person next year, please let Peter know. Also, Peter commented that the Youth Scholars did a great job talking with visitors to LCBA's Fair exhibit, particularly Rylie Powell and Sam Mittge on Children's Day: children really listen to young people and realize that they too could be beekeepers. This is why we require this volunteer service of our Youth Scholars.

Youth Scholar Adam Claridge reported that he had a problem when he left a box empty: the bees built comb, so he and Cody did a mini cut out to get this colony back on track. Adam had some honey in his bucket, but reported that the bees stole it all! Peter asked mentor William Pittman how Emily Ecklund was doing: William reported that she now has up to 5 medium hive boxes. They put on a fume board to drive the bees down, and it turned out that there was little build in the top box, so they consolidated the colony down to 4 boxes. Gottfried reported that Rylie now has both a top bar hive (which he gave her) and a Langstroth (from the scholarship): Gottfried noted that Rylie is really good about documenting how her bees are doing, and they are going strong with 4 medium boxes on the Langstroth. Her top bar did well: they took a gigantic bar out and she got about a gallon of honey about a gallon: Peter noted that Rylie won a blue ribbon for her chunk honey and a red ribbon for her cut comb honey at the Fair. Gottfried reported that Rylie's siblings are fascinated by the bees and come out to watch whenever she works the bees.

**2018 Beginning Beekeeping Class:** LCBA's beginning beekeeping class will be held this January 13, 20, 27 and February 3, 10, and 17, again 9 a.m. to noon each of those Saturdays. We are again holding the class through Centralia College's Continuing Education Program; the class will be in our meeting room, Washington Hall 103. Please let interested friends know about it! The registration details are on our website under Upcoming Events.

**Fair Report:** Susanne gave the Fair update, reprising what was in the September newsletter, so for the sake of space, please check that newsletter ☺

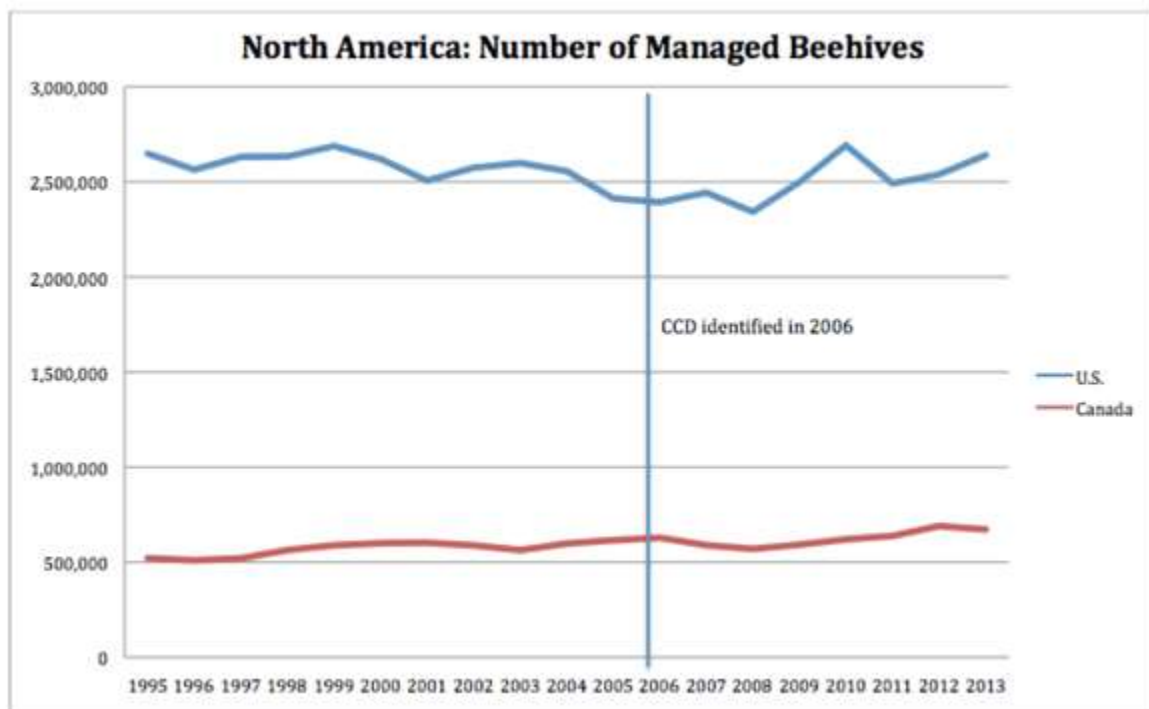
**Mentor Program:** Dan gave a pep talk: he urges mentors and mentees to stick with it down the home stretch of the fall season. “Let’s get ‘er all done before Columbus Day!”

**New Business:** Phil Wilson made a motion that LCBA acquire a 4 frame loaner extractor for people to use at home, maybe with a damage deposit, so that members could avoid hauling honey from Bob’s farm. Ed Odell, Mel Gregorich, and others agreed. Rick noted that in past, when major purchases have been proposed, the board researches costs and vendors, then comes to the membership with specific prices, and then we vote. Kevin noted that we do have a 2 frame hand extractor for the club that could be loaned; he will put this on the board agenda, as well as look into acquiring a loaner uncapping tank, knife, and fork. Kevin noted that up till now, at our workshops, board members loan those gear: the club has not bought them.

## FALL – Our New Bee Year Has Arrived!

by Dr. Dewey M. Caron

AH, FALL has arrived: probably my favorite season. Although I miss the abundant goldenrod and aster flowers of the eastern US landscape and the fall foliage of my native Vermont, this is still a good place to be in the fall. I did get to the mountains of northern New Mexico in September following their state fall meeting, where aspens were brilliant yellow and asters fairly abundant; I also had a chance to visit the National Historical site of Los Alamos (about an hour away on a mesa outside Sante Fe). This was the secret site Y of the US development of the nuclear bombs used in Japan – Hanford was site Z.



In addition to information about the nuclear capability of Iran and North Korea, the media this fall has contained lots of discussion of “fake news”. In my October meeting presentation, I must admit that I have a concern about “fake news” in my presentation of the Lewis County PNW survey results at the October regular meeting. WHY? Well, for starters, I had only 13 responses from Lewis County beekeepers (compared to 25 individual responses the previous year). Does 13 returns truly represent the beekeepers of LCBA? My report for Lewis Co includes the data for the larger data base of 48 Washington beekeepers. Once again I need ask the question should I have confidence in returns from 48 backyard beekeepers of Washington as representative of beekeeping for State or Lewis County beekeeping? Am I, by presenting such survey results, guilty of disseminating “fake news”?

The survey results are posted on <http://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2016-17-WABA-REPORT.pdf> Susanne has also posted this to LCBA’s website. I will summarize survey results, but leave it to interested individuals to go to the site to get further explanations because I will also discuss NEW YEAR (FALL) MANAGEMENT.

For the record: Lewis County overwintering losses (for the 13 respondents) was 57% of total fall colony numbers, an increase of 10 percentage points from the previous winter. Colony numbers were pretty low (4 fall 8-frame Langstroth hives, 42 10-frame Langstroth hives, 2 5-frame nucs and 2 top bar hives). Three Lewis County individuals (23%) had zero loss while 2 (15%) had total loss. Four individuals each lost one and two colonies, while 2 individuals lost 6 or more colonies: heaviest loss was 9 colonies.

For the total 48 Washington respondents (including the 13 from Lewis County), 53.5% of those returning a survey had 1, or 2 or 3 fall colonies; 35.5% had 4 to 9 colonies, 11% had 10 or more colonies, with 27 the largest number. 51% had 1 to 3 years of experience; 23% had 4 to 6 years’ experience, 13 (25%) had 8 to 10 years or 14 + years’ experience; 35 was greatest number of years. How closely does this truly represent you and other LCBA beekeepers?

Backyard beekeeper losses (63%) were double those of larger-scale Washington beekeepers (26%). This result has been consistent for the 4 years of my PNW survey effort.

For our remaining fall activities we might focus on feeding sugar syrup and our completion of mite control for 2017. The survey asked what was done for feeding management and overwintering practices last season as well as mite survey and control selection results. I will show the results from both Washington and Lewis county respondents and summarize the important fall management we might do. Numbers of survey returns are small so individuals should determine how appropriate they might be to their beekeeping stewardship. There is NO SINGLE WAY to properly keep honey bees.

Losses or whatever magnitude are now an annual feature of keeping bees. Is the “threat” to honey bees “fake news”? While we can’t import pollination, there are “enough” bees to meet pollination needs. Familiar crops needing pollination have not increased in price. So where is the “crises” in bees – the “beepocalypse” (from Time magazine) or “beemageddon”?

We do know that during the last 30 years – when varroa mites were first discovered in the U.S., - the number of estimated bee colonies has fluctuated only between 2.9 million and 2.4 million colonies. The most recent estimate is 2.78 million colonies. Average honey production in the

U.S. for the last 30 years was 192 million pounds/yr while in last 10 years only 172 million pounds/year and for the last 3 years even less at 165 million pounds/year (last year it was 161 million pounds). Estimate for 2017 harvest is 150 million pounds.

The reduced honey production has not resulted in honey shortages in the U.S. market, as the annual consumption per person (about 1.5 pounds/individual) has increased slightly. Imports are currently over 350 million pounds accounting for over 75% of market use. Bulk honey price for U.S. beekeepers is barely over \$2.00/pound but locally produced honey (artisan) prices are higher, even ranging up to \$105/pound (sourwood select honey from Savannah Bee Company).

Two articles I recommend all beekeepers read once the rains start and active colony work ceases are an opinion article by Shawn Regan in Aug/Sept *Reason*, where he suggests that there is no crises because large-scale beekeepers have risen to the challenge and are fully meeting pollination rental demands: to read it, visit <http://reason.com/archives/2017/07/19/how-capitalism-saved-the-bees/1>].

A second article you might look at discusses how media headlines about demise of bees from neonicotinoids, most recently from a \$3.6 million study from Europe, found a less than 5% negative correlation but also some positive effects of neonicotinoids on bees. This article in *Slate* was written by Jon Entine of Genetics Literary Project” to read it, visit: [http://www.slate.com/articles/health\\_and\\_science/science/2017/06/the\\_data\\_do\\_not\\_support\\_the\\_idea\\_that\\_neonics\\_hurt\\_bees.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2017/06/the_data_do_not_support_the_idea_that_neonics_hurt_bees.html) .

There is little doubt backyard beekeepers have been losing large numbers of colonies. However that may mean LCBA and other Bee associations attract large numbers of engaged meeting participants, our bee courses and apiary demonstrations attract large numbers, our outreach attracts large crowds and we have enthusiastic volunteers helping educate the public. While individual bee losses are heavy, beekeeping does not seem to be suffering – in fact some label the media attention to our losses as a “positive” for example in sale of bee products, planting of flowers for bees and pollinators and interest in beekeeping and pollinators in general.

For a different take on bees losses I recommend you look at 3 additional recent articles. Jason Levan titles his article, “Novices Pose Biggest Threat To Honey Bees, Local [PA] Keepers Say”: to read, visit: [https://www.indianagazette.com/news/novices-pose-biggest-threat-to-honeybees-local-keepers-say/article\\_21791338-6459-11e7-9fe2-eb4a5a3f012d.html](https://www.indianagazette.com/news/novices-pose-biggest-threat-to-honeybees-local-keepers-say/article_21791338-6459-11e7-9fe2-eb4a5a3f012d.html).

For an opposite viewpoint - i.e., that hobbyists can be part of the solution - see John Russo’s comments in a *Sierra Magazine* article entitled “Can Hobby Beekeepers And ‘Bee Evangelists’ Save The Ecosystem?” To read, visit: [www.carmelvalleyranch.com/play-for-all-ages/bee-experience](http://www.carmelvalleyranch.com/play-for-all-ages/bee-experience) .

One final article to check out - on the Blog *Thoughtscapism*- may be even more thought-provoking, suggesting that treatment-free beekeepers promote varroa: visit <https://thoughtscapism.com/2017/04/10/treatment-free-beekeepers-give-varroa-mite-free-rein/>

“Fake News” – we certainly hear that term a lot these days. Are beekeepers and media reporting about the reasons for our beloved honey bee’s poor health a spreading of “fake news?” You be the judge. Interesting but downright confusing reading!

## LCBA Fall Management Workshop Highlights

For LCBA's Sept 16 Fall Management Workshop, about 30 beekeepers & mentors met at LCBA's new club apiary! We covered two key problems beekeepers must tackle to help bees overwinter successfully: Varroa mite control & moisture control. Mentors Kevin Reichert, Rick Battin, & Cody Warren demonstrated oxalic acid vaporizing, Api Life Var treatment, and Cody's interesting mineral oil/wintergreen extract mix for his fogger. It is strong smelling but not toxic to the bees - or to humans! - and very cheap to make. Cody shared his DIY mix: 1 sixteen oz bottle of mineral oil to 1 capful of wintergreen oil.



*Above left, beekeepers gathered round the Club Apiary hives for a demonstration of multiple Varroa control methods; middle, Rick's Api Life Var demo; right, Cody fogs the top bar hive.*

Kevin demonstrated how to make a moisture control box, and members pitched in to make the moisture boxes needed for our 3 surviving apiary colonies, and Youth Scholar Adam Claridge and mentor Cody put together Adam's moisture box, too. For a detailed writeup, visit our LCBA Facebook page and check the September 17 posts.



*Above left, Kevin demonstrating how to make a moisture control box; middle, LCBA members pitching in to make the moisture boxes for our apiary bees; right, Cody and Adam with their finished product for Adam's bees.*

## RECIPES OF THE MONTH ~ Starring *HONEY*

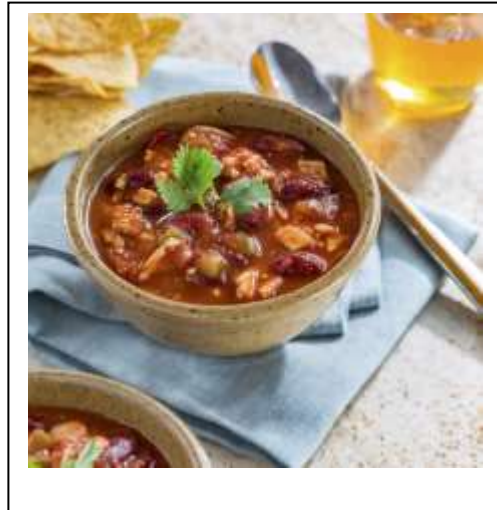
*Fall Is Here With Cooler Weather, So It's Time To Warm Up With Comfort Food!*

*The National Honey Board Has Some Great Recipes To Help . . . .*

**A Honey of a Chili** (makes 8 servings)

### ***Ingredients:***

- 1 package (15 oz.) firm tofu
- 1 Tb vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Tb chili powder
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (15-1/2 oz.) red kidney beans undrained
- 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 Tb red wine vinegar



### ***Directions:***

Using a cheese grater, shred tofu and freeze in zippered bag or airtight container. Thaw tofu; place in a strainer and press out excess liquid. In large saucepan or dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat until hot; cook and stir onion, green pepper and garlic 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender and begin to brown. Stir in chili powder, cumin, salt, oregano and crushed red pepper. Stir in tofu: cook and stir 1 minute. Stir in diced tomatoes, kidney beans, tomato sauce, honey and vinegar. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.



## The National Honey Board's Featured Seasonal Recipe:

### Pumpkin Muffins with Cream Cheese Frosting

*Fall has some of the best flavors - apples, pears, cinnamon, and pumpkin - and honey pairs well with all of them! With the spice of cinnamon, crunch of walnuts and a touch of sweetness from honey, our Pumpkin Muffins with Cream Cheese Frosting are the tastiest way to transition into the fall season.*

#### **Ingredients (makes 12 muffins):**

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
1 cup solid-pack pumpkin  
1 cup honey  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
2 eggs at room temperature, slightly beaten  
1/4 cup low-fat buttermilk  
1 tsp. vanilla extract



#### **Directions:**

In a large bowl, stir together flour, cinnamon, baking soda and salt. Stir in walnuts.

In a separate bowl, blend pumpkin, honey, oil, eggs, buttermilk and vanilla until smooth. Pour pumpkin mixture over dry ingredients. Stir just until mixed.

Spoon batter into paper lined muffin cups, filling each to just below the rim. Bake at 350°F for about 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center of muffins comes out clean.

Let pan cool on rack for 5 minutes. Remove muffins from pan and let cool on rack completely.

**Cream Cheese Frosting:** In a small bowl, with electric mixer, beat 8 ounces cream cheese (softened to room temperature) with 1/3 cup honey, until fluffy.

## BEES IN THE NEWS

**"A Protein Produced By Honey Bees Could Inspire The First New Antibiotic In 30 Years": Bee Culture's "Catch the Buzz" for Sept 14 2017.** To read, visit:

[http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-protein-produced-honey-bees-inspire-first-new-antibiotic-30-years/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=38db28aa90-Catch\\_The\\_Buzz\\_4\\_29\\_2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-38db28aa90-256261065](http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-protein-produced-honey-bees-inspire-first-new-antibiotic-30-years/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=38db28aa90-Catch_The_Buzz_4_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-38db28aa90-256261065)



Preliminary observations appeared to indicate that honey bee activity slowed drastically during totality.  
Image Credit: Pete Martin / Clemson University

**Remember last summer's eclipse? Scientists are studying how bees respond: "Clemson, UNCG Researchers Test Honey Bee Response to Eclipse Totality,"** by T. DeLene Beeland [no pun intended, I'm sure] - American Bee Journal from 9/14/17. *To see a video of bees during the eclipse, visit:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsO0qTrqEOw&feature=youtu.be> . To read the article, visit: <http://mailchi.mp/americanbeejournal/september-14-2017-clemson-uncg-researchers-test-honey-bee-response-to-eclipse-totality?e=e9ff21e0bb>

**Got Beeswax? You can use it to de-ice your driveway, according to scientists from Drexel U, who are blending paraffin wax with concrete to make concrete melt snow by itself. Here's the story: "Scientists Just Developed Snow-Melting Concrete,"** by Trevor Nass for Forbes Magazine, 9/18/17. To read the article, visit: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/trevornace/2017/09/18/scientists-just-developed-snow-melting-concrete/#37fa71b5493f>

**"National Honey Board Partners with Project Apis m. to Invest \$10 Million to Aid Bee Health": Bee Culture's Catch the Buzz, 9/28/17.** To read, visit: [http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-national-honey-board-partners-project-apis-m-invest-10-million-aid-bee-health/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=326ad7e689-Catch\\_The\\_Buzz\\_4\\_29\\_2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-326ad7e689-256261065](http://www.beeeculture.com/catch-buzz-national-honey-board-partners-project-apis-m-invest-10-million-aid-bee-health/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=326ad7e689-Catch_The_Buzz_4_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-326ad7e689-256261065)



*Above left, hives stolen in New Zealand; right, "Samplings of worldwide honey collection"  
(Credit: Blaise Mulhauser, Botanical Garden, Neuchâtel, Switzerland)*

### ***Honey in the News!***

- **"Honey Samples Worldwide Test Positive for Neonicotinoids"**: American Bee Journal, Oct 5 2017: <http://mailchi.mp/americanbeejournal/october-5-2017-honey-samples-worldwide-test-positive-for-neonicotinoids?e=e9ff21e0bb>
- **"Honeygate: How Europe Is Being Flooded With Fake Honey"**: Catch the Buzz, Bee Culture, Sept 11 2017: [http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-honeygate-europe-flooded-fake-honey/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=ea80be0ae8-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-ea80be0ae8-256261065](http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-honeygate-europe-flooded-fake-honey/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=ea80be0ae8-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-ea80be0ae8-256261065)
- **"The Theft Of Beehives And Honey, Particularly Manuka Honey, Is A Growing Problem For Beekeepers In New Zealand"**: Bee Culture, Sept 8 2017: [http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-theft-beehives-honey-particularly-manuka-honey-growing-problem-beekeepers-new-zealand/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=9b26195a80-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-9b26195a80-256261065](http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-theft-beehives-honey-particularly-manuka-honey-growing-problem-beekeepers-new-zealand/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=9b26195a80-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-9b26195a80-256261065)
- **Good News in the New Zealand Bee Theft Story! "Police Have Arrested A Beekeeper In Relation To The Theft Of Nearly \$200,000 Worth Of Beehives In The Bay Of Plenty"**: Bee Culture's Catch the Buzz, 9/30/17. To read, visit: [http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-police-arrested-beekeeper-relation-theft-nearly-200000-worth-beehives-bay-plenty/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=9354b56865-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-9354b56865-256261065](http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-police-arrested-beekeeper-relation-theft-nearly-200000-worth-beehives-bay-plenty/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=9354b56865-Catch+The+Buzz+4+29+2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-9354b56865-256261065) For the original theft story, visit: <http://www.bee-culture.com/catch-buzz-industry-used-real-gentlemans-game-now->

[sudden-underground-element-crept-hugely-disappointing/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=442bab8f7e-Catch\\_The\\_Buzz\\_4\\_29\\_2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-442bab8f7e-256261065](http://www.beeculture.com/catch-buzz-owns-name-manuka-honey-new-zealand-australia-air-right-now/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=442bab8f7e-Catch_The_Buzz_4_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-442bab8f7e-256261065)

- **"Who Owns The Name Manuka Honey, New Zealand, Or Australia? It's Up In The Air Right Now"**: Bee Culture's Catch the Buzz for 9/29/17. To read, visit: [http://www.beeculture.com/catch-buzz-owns-name-manuka-honey-new-zealand-australia-air-right-now/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=7cfabd887c-Catch\\_The\\_Buzz\\_4\\_29\\_2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-7cfabd887c-256261065](http://www.beeculture.com/catch-buzz-owns-name-manuka-honey-new-zealand-australia-air-right-now/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=7cfabd887c-Catch_The_Buzz_4_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-7cfabd887c-256261065)

**"New insights into how plants link color & scent to lure in pollinators: "New Study Reveals Flower Color, Fragrance Coordination"** - Bee Culture's "Catch the Buzz" from Sept 15, 2017. To read, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/LewisCountyBeekeepers/posts/1431701380245965>



**"Fewer Wildflower Choices Thwart Bees' Natural Inclination To Choose A Balanced Diet And They Suffer Cognitively From Lack Of Omega-3 Acids"**: Bee Culture's "Catch the Buzz" for 9/21/17. "If you give a "menu" to a bee, it will instinctively choose dishes that provide the right balance of nutrients: sugary nectar plus pollen full of protein, fatty acids and micronutrients." But unfortunately, bees can't always find those dishes. To read the article, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/LewisCountyBeekeepers/posts/1430198760396227>

**"Bees Will Be The Saviors Of Coffee Drinkers With Areas In Latin America Suitable For Growing Coffee Facing Predicted Declines"**: Bee Culture's "Catch the Buzz" for 9/22/17. To read, visit: [http://www.beeculture.com/catch-buzz-bees-will-saviors-coffee-drinkers-areas-latin-america-suitable-growing-coffee-facing-predicted-declines/?utm\\_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm\\_campaign=ccb595e575-Catch\\_The\\_Buzz\\_4\\_29\\_2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0272f190ab-ccb595e575-256261065](http://www.beeculture.com/catch-buzz-bees-will-saviors-coffee-drinkers-areas-latin-america-suitable-growing-coffee-facing-predicted-declines/?utm_source=Catch+The+Buzz&utm_campaign=ccb595e575-Catch_The_Buzz_4_29_2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0272f190ab-ccb595e575-256261065)

**"Maryland: First State to Ban Bee-Killing Pesticide"** (RealFarmacy.com): to read the full story, visit: <http://realfarmacy.com/maryland-bees/>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*From Harold Weaver at Beeline Apiaries: "Good day to all beekeepers, I hope you have had a good summer with the bees. There was a good honey flow; even hives started from packages have some honey that can be pulled off! Now is the time to think of treating for mites. We have the Mite-Away Quick Strips, Apiguard and Hopguard in stock. Another thing to be checking – their food supply. It may be good to give some more sugar syrup so they don't eat too much of their honey stores! We have syrup in stock here; so bring your pails to fill up! We also were able to get some sugar. We offer 6 lb. bags for \$2; 25 lb. for \$8; 40 lb. for \$12. Bring your own pails to put it in or buy a bucket from us! We have a limited supply so come get it before it is gone! If we don't have something in stock that you need, we can get it for you!"*

*Thank you for doing business with us! We look forward to your continued support!*

*Harold Beeline of WA 360-280-5274*

*Never-Used VARROX Vaporizer with 2 lbs oxalic acid for sale - \$155 total. LCBA member Courtney Miller can deliver the vaporizer to Chehalis/Centralia most any day or someone can pick up from her in Salkum. Her phone is 360 623-9532 and her email is [camseven.miller@gmail.com](mailto:camseven.miller@gmail.com).*

*September 5 - 8: Western Apicultural Society of North America 2017 - 40th Anniversary Conference, UC-Davis, California; for info, visit: <http://www.westernapiculturalsociety.org>*

*Experience honey's journey from hive to table with the National Honey Board's new virtual reality (VR)! You'll explore fields of wildflowers, dive into the busy hive, watch harvesting and bottling, and learn fun bee facts along the way, all from a honey bee's point-of-view. To view, visit: <https://honey.com/newsroom/campaign/be-the-bee-a-hive-to-table-experience>.*

**Do You Sell Wax?** If you are an LCBA member and would like to be listed on LCBA's Buy Local Honey page, please email [secretary@lcba.community](mailto:secretary@lcba.community) with your contact information, prices, and a photo if possible.

**Western Apicultural Society Newsletters:** [http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS/WAS\\_Journal](http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS/WAS_Journal). Click on the line in the paragraph on the right as directed. If you're still getting the old issue, click on "empty cache" in your browser or "refresh" or "reload" under VIEW in your menu bar.

**WASBA Newsletter:** Pick up your copy of this bimonthly online at [www.wasba.org](http://www.wasba.org): click on "Newsletters." The July Newsletter's cover story is LCBA's Youth Scholarship Program!

*That's all for now ~ take care, & bee happy!*

~~ Susanne Weil, LCBA Secretary ([Secretary@lcba.community](mailto:Secretary@lcba.community); 360 880 8130)