

SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Allen

Happy August! I hope each and every one of you has been able to enjoy some summertime activities! We had the picnic in July and had some fun and learned about NIBA's new 9-frame electric extractor. The smoker contest was judged by Larry Krengel. Participants were Ron Willer, Stephanie Slater, Ralph Brindise, and John Leibinger. The winner was Stephanie Slater! The honey dessert contest had some amazing dishes submitted by Ralph Brindise, Chad Lacek, and Lindy Salvi. Ralph Brindise was the winner with his honey pecan cheesecake.

The new extractor will be available for rent soon, but you must take a class on how it operates before you can use it. The terms of its use: The rental fee is \$25 for two days. Security deposit is \$50. There is a \$25 cleaning charge if it doesn't get returned clean, which will come out of the security deposit. Some equipment is included for your use, which will be detailed soon. We're planning our September meeting to include the extractor training. More details will be announced soon.

Honey harvesting is in full swing. Talking with many NIBA members, once again results are all over the place. Some people are seeing harvest amounts not seen in recent years, others are not seeing much honey being brought in, and lots of people in-between. Once again you have to really appreciate the years you get a good harvest. I was

talkina with some kids at the fair booth today, and they asked me if it was easy to raise bees. I told them it was kind of like herding cats-thev're

MEETING AGENDA

630 PM newbees Q&A

700 PM Pledge of Allegiance - Tom

702 PM Old Business – Tom The fair

705 PM New Business

Election committee – Tom

New extractor – Al

715 PM Panel discussion

830 PM Raffle

845 PM meeting adjourned

going to do what they want to do. We can only hope to respond to what we see them doing to make our relationship work.

We're in McHenry County Fair week--yay! Many of us are volunteering to work the booth. Quite a few entered the honey show; our own Christy Binz was the Superintendent! The results are elsewhere in this newsletter. Stephanie Slater passed on an idea I thought was pretty smart. If you think you might want to show honey or wax in the future, go watch honey shows! The judge (in this case, Ron Fisher) typically chats and offers tips as he judges. Every bit of information can help you compete in the future. Thank you to all of those that volunteered to work the booth, some more than once. I really appreciate your help!

We begin our monthly meetings again in August, but remember, we move to the 2nd THURSDAY of the month, newbees or anyone at 6:30pm and the regular meeting at 7pm. This meeting will have a panel discussion with several of our members that will answer your questions from their perspective.

We need an election search committee, so I'll be reaching out to several members to see if they're interested. They will be tasked with reaching out to members to

see if they'd be interested in being Vice President or President. Per our bylaws, the President is limited to a 3-year term, though you don't have to do 3. We'll announce the members of the committee once it's formed, so those interested in either position can reach out to one of them.

Happy honey harvest!

Tom



MCHENRY COUNTY FAIR HONEY SHOW RESULTS

Honey Judge Ron Fisher commended "us" on the quantity and quality of entries. He said keep up the good work. Thank you to Cristy Weiner-Binz for doing a spectacular job as Superintendant. It not easy and takes a great deal of organization. She did it all perfectly and with grace.

Here are the results:

Class 1-Light Extracted Honey:	Class 9-Frame of Honey for Extracting
1st Place - Christina Murillo	1st Place - Cristy Binz
2nd Place - Stephanie Slater	2nd Place - Ron Zimmerman
3rd Place - Ralph Brindise	3rd Place - Ralph Brindise
4th Place - Sue Klepitsch Pinkawa	4th Place - Stephanie Slater
5th Place - David Dietz	Class 10-Ross Rounds
Class 2-Amber Extracted Honey	1st Place - Christina Murillo
1st Place - Ralph Brindise	Class 12-3 Pound Block
2nd Place - Cristy Binz	1st Place - Ralph Brindise
3rd Place - Sue Pinkawa	2nd Place - Stephanie Slater
4th Place - Susan Creath	Class 14- Dipped Candles
Class 3-Dark Extracted Honey	1st Place - Susan Creath
1st Place - Ron Zimmerman	2nd Place - Ron Zimmerman
Class 4-Cut Comb Honey	Class 15-Molded Candles
1st Place - Ron Zimmerman	1st Place - Cristy Binz
Class 5-Chunk Honey	2nd Place - Susan Creath
1st Place - Ron Zimmerman	3rd Place - Ralph Brindise
Class 8-Creamed Honey	4th Place - Ron Zimmerman
1st Place - Ron Zimmerman	5th Place - Stephanie Slater

Ron said he did something unusual and for the first time. Best of Show was awarded to Cristy Binz for the frame of wax. He recognized both the bees and the beekeeper.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) – On-demand beekeeping classes https://www.abfnet.org/page/education

Michigan State University Webinars

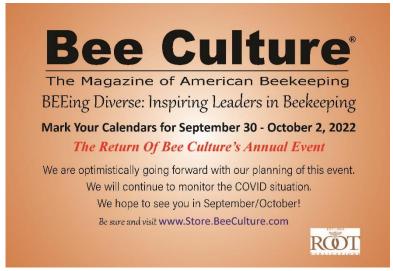
https://pollinators.msu.edu/resources/beekeepers/webinars/past-webinars/

University of Minnesota Bee Lab Classes and Mentoring Apiary https://beelab.umn.edu/beekeeping-classes

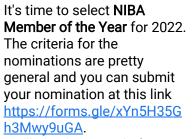
Western Apicultural Society (WAS) – Monthly mini conference recordings https://www.westernapiculturalsociety.org/events-1

Kansas Honey Producers Association – Extracting More \$\$\$ From Your Hives speaker series recordings http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org/archives.html

University of Guelph Honey Bee Research Centre - https://honeybee.uoguelph.ca/videos/video-list/



https://www.beeculture.com/beeing-diverse-inspiring-leaders-in-beekeeping/



We'll also have cards for you to fill out at the September meeting. The deadline is September 30th.

We'll announce the winner at the October meeting.



Central Dupage Beekeepers Assn is inviting NIBA members to a presentation by **Dr. Tammy Horn Potter** on **Saturday August 20 at 6:30pm**. Tammy is the state apiary inspector for Kentucky, works with Project Apis, and has written a few beekeeping books. You can read more about Tammy here.

Her presentation is titled *Bees in America: How the Honey Bee Shaped a Nation.* Zoom log in info is below

CDBA Meetings is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: August 20 2022 Meeting

Time: Aug 20, 2022 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85299536331?pwd=cWIPbkZSZEROejdlZkImSGE5c091Zz09

Meeting ID: 852 9953 6331

Passcode: 880434

SHE HAS A WHITE MARK

Larry Krengel

I have an itchy knuckle. Yup, it got a sting, just a light sting. The bee might have gone back to work after brushing her stinger on my finger.

It is 8:00 in the evening. I was moving a colony to a bigger box but in the same position. I waited until most of the foragers would be home before I started my work thinking it would make the new accommodations easier for the foragers to find tomorrow. Is that true? Well, it seems intuitively likely. A lot of our beekeeping comes from intuition based on reasonably good facts and past experience. Time will tell.

Last spring, I removed one of my overwintered queens from her colony and gave her a few bees, a frame of brood, and a nuc box. She did a good job last year, survived the winter, and I wanted the overwintered colony to raise a new queen from her good genetics. They did indeed raise a queen who did well this year.

The old queen set up house in the four-frame nuc box. I was holding her in reserve just in case the new replacement queen did not meet expectations. Because the new queen did well, I was left with a spare year-old queen – a white mark. She continued to lay a beautiful brood pattern, and the population filled the nuc box. I borrowed frames of capped brood from her box and used them to enhance other colonies... a number of times.



As the season progressed and supers were added throughout the apiary, I ran out of places to receive her surplus brood. I moved her to a five-frame nuc. She filled that. If she is going to make the coming winter, she will need to move into a bigger box. That was tonight's task.

There were lots of bees. Burr comb was abundant. The bees cooperated nicely. With the frames moved to the new box with the attached bees, I checked the bees remaining in the bottom of the nuc box. I had not seen the queen on the frames I moved. Sure enough, there she was among her subjects marching across the bottom of the old box. Nicely her year-old mark still showed well.

I used a queen clip to collect her from among the mass of bees remaining in the bottom of the nuc. She seemed right at home when I released her on top of the frames in the new box.

They are now in a ten-wide deep. Because they are going to be a single deep this winter, I plan to place them on top of a strong colony above a double screen to help keep them warm. Can her majesty make a third season??

The bees and I did well this evening.

My itchy knuckle is settling down. The bees are gathering on their new box. All is well.

SNELGROVE VERTICAL SWARM - PART 2

David Murillo

If you recall from the last article, the vertical split had been performed, and the first set of door manipulations had been made; the top back door was closed, and the bottom back door open, while the right side top entrance was open. Both left doors were closed, and right bottom door closed.

On July 1, opened the right bottom door, and closed the right top door, while opening the left top door and closing the back bottom door. At this point, it is day 14. The gueen cells I suspect continue to be capped, and I decided to let them be. All I did was manipulate the doors on the board to syphon off more worker bees into the bottom hive. So, when I say the right, or left doors on the board, my meaning is as if you are looking at the back of the hive. So the right doors are to your right, the left doors are to your left, and the back of the hive is at your back, as you logically would not approach the hive from the front since the front hive still has the "main entrance". That is left as is. The Snelarove board I am using is a modified Snelgrove board on one of my thermal hives on one of my back yard hives. Although I am running both of my backyard hives and one of my offsite hives with Snelgrove boards. So other than visiting the hives to open/close the doors, I left them alone on this visit.

July 6th, I opened the hive and inspected frames. Nice sunny day. Noting a destroyed queen cell. Today is day 19 from the day I made the split. I was hoping the queen was back and have eggs in frames, but nothing yet. I continued to examine the hive, specifically the 2 medium honey supers below and a box of ross rounds. I pulled the ross rounds, and 3 frames of honey fully capped. I replaced the ross rounds with another medium super to make it 3. It was not until I left I realized

there would be no way the queen would be back laying eggs as the average number of days a new queen would lay eggs is about 29.

July 8, day 21, similar to my previous visit, I now opened the bottom left door, and closed the left top door, while also opening the right top door and closing the right bottom door. I think you're starting to understand what is going on here on a weekly basis and how important it is to stay on top of it if you want it to work as planned. Also, inspecting the bottom hive is also very involved at this point. Up to this point the bottom hive had not been inspected. I know the bottom gueen has laying space, all the frames provided, whether dirty, moldy, or containing dead brood/bees /honey from prior year has been removed from the hive, or moved to the supers. I know the vast majority of the nurse bees and drones got moved to the top hive, and the flying bees will not swarm without a good ratio of drones and nurse At this point, as I type this I understand how ignorant that sounds. As these are all assumptions, but I trust my calculations are correct.

July 15, I visited the hives and opened the right bottom door, and closed the right top door. I also opened the back top door, and closed the left bottom door. Again, I did not inspect the hive. Today is day 28, at this point I should see a queen, and maybe eggs. The process to inspecting these hives is really labor intensive. To quickly walk you through, the top hive is too high (on a 1 foot stand) and too heavy to lift with all the frames. Therefore, I inspect 5 frames, put them in an old nuc box, and then finish inspecting the remaining 5. Then, and only then, can I remove the top hive, set it aside next to the covered nuc box, and remove the snelgrove board. At this point both sides of the board have plenty of bees on them. So as soon as you remove them you have bees coming at you from all directions. Next you have 3 supers to go through. At this point only a small quantity of honey frames are capped on both sides. I will spare you the details of breaking down the entire hive for every one of my visits, but imagine doing this on 3 Snelgrove hives. Even if the hives were not on a stand, would the plan be to pick up a full box of bees off the top of the tower with 10 frames, by yourself, with a Snelgrove board that might stick on the bottom hive (due to propolis), or worse yet, as you pull off the top hive, the board sort of sticks, and then the board falls off the hive from the pull of gravity, with bees on both sides, or worse yet, your new mated queen, with bees from the top hive, bees on the board (remember bees on both sides) and bees from the honey supers angry at you? Not even smoke has a lot of effect at that point. I'll stick to my slow, and tried method.

Today is July 23, day 36; I opened the back bottom door, and closed the back top door, and I also closed the right bottom door, and opened the left top door. Today I am planning to inspect the supers and determine if I can extract any honey. Unfortunately, yesterday, Friday, completely overcast all day, and today, it was supposed to be partly sunny, but it was completely overcast again at the time I decided to inspect the hives, around 11 am. The bees were not happy. Again, if you recall, in order to get to the honey supers, I need to remove the top hive, and this means remove 5 frames so it's light enough for me to control the Snelgrove board, and control the top hive removal without any incidents. While inspecting the top hive, I found the queen, and noted she was laying eggs. But the bees were not happy. So much so, that I quickly continued to move to the supers. I inspected supers, and removed 10 frames in total from the 3 supers. This hive is now down to 2 supers, and probably reaching a point where they need to be removed and replaced soon and the hive treated.

Today is July 30 I opened the left bottom door, and closed left top door, and opened the right top door. And closed the back bottom door. Additionally, today, I took 1 super off this hive while leaving 1. and actually adding wet super I took off on the 23rd for the bees to clean up. The bees were calm, it was a beautiful hot summer day, and there were a lot of bees. was loaded with The hive Unfortunately, so loaded, that I heard the dreaded crunch more than once as I performed my tasks and I am not sure how I could have prevented it. The bees ended up bearding on the bottom hive all the way up the first hive. They were not happy once they figured out what I was doing, but by then I was gathering my tools and finishing up. This will be my extracting weekend, so my inspection was brief as my main objective was to check all my hives for honey extractability. Let's see what happens next month, will my time and labor pay off? Will I have a great harvest? Have I thwarted and tricked mother nature by keeping the bees working the hive and prevent them from swarming? Stay tuned and find out for part 3. I will also share what I would have done differently and I hope you learn from my Snelgrove Board rookie mistakes.

FUN AT THE FAIR





The "Queens" found the queen! Hello, your majesty!

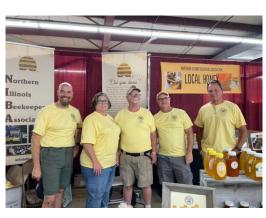








The NIBA booth looked fabulous, as always! Thanks for the help, Jen Allen!





Thank you to all the volunteers. Without you, this connection with the public would not be possible!



CHORES OF THE MONTH – AUGUST THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

John Leibinger

Like the bees we study, we accomplish more together.

What's happening in the hive?

The colony population will have reached its peak and will likely start to decline slightly later in the month. Nonetheless, you should be observing lots of bees and still see brood at all stages being raised to replace the older bees in the colony. The rate of laying of the queen will be tapering off significantly from the rate that has been experienced in the spring and early summer. The rate of change is typically a factor of the race of bees that you have. It is typically a function of declining resources for bees as plant growth tapers off in the heat of summer. This is all part of the annual cycle and is an element of 'normal'.

You will likely see a lot of 'bearding' occurring on hot August evenings. I am sure most of you saw some of this in the last half of July during our heat wave. If you are a new beekeeper, don't panic, this is all part of the bees thermoregulation process and is another element of 'normal'.

You may start to find your bees have developed some 'attitude' as we get into the month. Reduced resources often lead to robbing behaviors and if your colonies are on the wrong side of the thief-victim equation, they can start to be a bit defensive. The same behavior can be true when **you** are the 'thief' during harvesting.

Temperatures are heating up so ventilation and available water sources are 'must haves' for your bees.

The bee population is no longer expanding, but the Varroa mite ratio to bee population likely is. You must monitor their growth by doing regular mite checks (monthly sugar roll or alcohol wash, see below in General Info).

For All Beekeepers, it is time to:

<u>Maintain the space around your hive(s)</u>. Your bees work hard at thermoregulation of the hive. Help them out. Trim weeds and grass to allow maximum air flow as the temperatures rise. Maintaining a clear flight path to the hive also helps with their foraging efficiency.

<u>Provide additional ventilation</u> to assist the bees in maintaining proper hive temperatures. This can be in the form of ventilated inner covers or as simple as propping the outer cover to allow more air circulation. The additional ventilation is also helpful in the conversion of nectar to honey. Better ventilation eases the job of moisture removal from the stored nectar.

<u>Make sure the bees have a water source</u> as we move started using into the heat of summer. Bees collect water to help cool the hive as part of their thermoregulation efforts. There are numerous ways to provide water. A quick internet search will provide some alternatives. I have been using Boardman feeders for providing water and I am amazed at how much water they utilize. (I am using the feeders in an attempt to mitigate the bees encroaching on neighbors and it seems to be working).

<u>Monitor for Varroa Mites monthly and take action if needed</u> (See General Info section below for references to mite checking procedures).

It is very important to get the mite loads under control now. The brood that will be raised as winter bees will be coming just around the corner. To maximize the strength of these winter bees, you need great nurse bees to raise them. These are the bees we are trying to protect now. Protect the bees that raise the winter bees. Come out of winter with healthy hives raring to go for 2023. This is a great step towards sustainable beekeeping.

Know what you have and keep records. Keep mite growth in check by utilizing a miticide, organic acids, drone comb culling, a combination of IPM methods, or a brood break. Pay attention to labeling instructions when using treatments and be mindful that you cannot leave honey supers on for all methods of treatments. The only treatments currently approved for use while honey supers are on are Hopguard 3, Mite Away Quick Strips (MAQS), and Formic Pro. Read the label for instructions on their use. See the July 'Chores' for a brief explaination of why Oxalic acid is not currently approved. Specifically be aware of temperature ranges for use. If you have already harvested your honey for the year, there are several other alternatives that have wider temperature ranges for use. Your specific approach will be influenced by your personal goals and philosophy, but, if you have a mite problem, doing nothing is not an acceptable answer if you want your colony to thrive and survive the winter.

Harvest honey appropriately. Don't overharvest, there are some lean weeks ahead for your bees. Be wary that the bees might be getting a bit defensive so dress accordingly. Do not be careless in your harvesting habits. Don't be sloppy with burr comb that you scrape from the frames. Pick up those wax scraps which are often laden with honey. In lean times the bees, being the opportunists that they are, will jump at the chance to start robbing unprotected honey and sweet scrapes laying around. You do not want to incite a robbing frenzy. Do not leave frames of honey open in the bee yard or wherever you store them while awaiting extraction (extraction should occur as soon as you can arrange the time after removal from the hive). I have seen beekeepers lose many, many pounds (potentially all) of their honey by storing it in a garage that they thought was 'bee tight'. It happens remarkable fast. Prepare ahead.

Return freshly extracted frames or supers late in the day to reduce stimulating the robbing urge among your colonies. If you are not returning them to the hive for refilling, but rather storing for the winter, you should consider putting the super of wet frames back on the hive above the inner cover (regular inner cover, not a ventilated inner cover) and below the outer cover (some beekeepers add an empty super box (no frames) between the inner cover and the wet super). The benefit will be twofold. First, the bees will come up and remove all the remaining honey and store it in frames below the inner cover. Second, the bees will 'refurbish' the comb and leave it dry for storage. When you do go to store them, some sort of action to prevent wax moth infiltration may be appropriate. Though I have not experienced much of an issue with wax moth in supers that have never had brood in them, the general recommendations are that you store frames with paradichlorobenzine (PDB) crystals (**Do Not Use Moth Balls or Moth Crystals Containing Napthalene**), spray them with a product called Certan, or freeze the frames to kill any moth eggs/larva and secure in an airtight (moth tight)container. There has been some research to indicate that PDB may get absorbed a bit by the wax, so do your homework and decide on your path. Before reusing these supers next year, you will need to air them out for several days to a week to dissipate the PDB odor.

Be very aware of robbing. It happens quickly and can be devastating. Reduce entrance openings to the smallest size on your entrance reducers, or alternately, install robbing screens. If you do not use screened bottom boards, it may be advantageous to use the robbing screens instead of the significant reduction in reducer opening during the extreme heat so that you can maintain maximum ventilation. There are many types of robbing screens, some very simple and some a bit more 'inventive'. Check the internet for robbing screens and you will get an abundance of ideas. You will have to use your judgement on the direction you take.

Make sure that you keep records. This is a very important element of the learning process...whether you are a first year beekeeper or a forty year beekeeper....you should always be learning something. Record inspection dates, time and temp and weather conditions, quantity of bees, bee behaviors, signs indicating the presence of the queen (eggs, young larvae, actual sighting), number of frames of brood and stores, brood pattern and frame/comb condition, available laying space, observations of signs of swarm preparation, pollen coming in (color, type if possible), drone production, Varroa Mite count, presence of Small Hive Beetle or other pests, and a number of other issues. Record anything else that is outside of 'normal' once you learn what 'normal' is. Take notes in the bee yard. You will be surprised at how easy it is to get confused over what was observed and which hive it was observed in if you wait to record info after the fact.

Monitor the hives for queen signs. Stuff happens....the queen may be failing and the bees need to replace her. She may have died for some reason. Don't allow your hive to remain queen-less. Doing so will likely lead to a 'laying worker' condition. This is a problem that is not easily resolved and oftentimes results in the death of the colony. You need to know that they have the resources to make a new queen or you will have to provide those resources from another colony. Alternately, you can buy and install a queen though as you get late in the season, queen availability may be reduced.. Going into fall/winter with a healthy hive and a young queen are key elements to successful overwintering and sustainable beekeeping. Stay ahead of problems and take action when needed.

Return extracted frames to the hives for them to continue to make more honey if you want. There is still a potential fall flow from goldenrod, asters, and other late blooming plants. If you are not interested in harvesting the fall flow, consider starting your winter feeding now (once you have removed your honey crop from spring/summer). Feed 2:1 sugar to water. This has the benefit of allowing additional time for winter stores buildup.

<u>Consider making splits or nucs</u> to raise additional bees for next year if this is part of your goal plan. Regardless of your goal plan, this is a great step towards sustainable beekeeping. There are different thoughts on the timing of this, but in any case do not delay or you can pass for 2022 and plan better in 2023.

General Info

Download the forms to register your bees with the Illinois Department of Agriculture. https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Insects/Bees/Documents/beekeep.pdf (Ctrl+Click link)

Sugar Roll Method: varroa mite monitoring - The Sand Hill (Ctrl+Click link)

Alcohol Wash Method: Alcohol Wash for Mite Control - YouTube (Ctrl+Click link)







Extreme Robbing

Simple Robbing Screen

Another Robbing Screen

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Website and Newsletter **Submissions**

www.nibainfo.org – The Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association website. A wealth of information is available. Contact board members via email, download the membership form, access copies of the newsletter. Terri is asking for your pictures, stories, etc. to have them highlighted on the web page! reevestherese@att.net

This is YOUR newsletter. Please feel free to contribute. Or let us know if you have any topics you'd like to see covered. newsletter@nibainfo.org

Membership Has Its Benefits!

- By Randy Mead

Did you know that your membership in NIBA includes the opportunity to rent a club 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.

Are you on Facebook? So are we!

Search for Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association. It's a closed group, so you need to request to join—but we're happy to approve your request.

We're an active and knowledgeable group. Lots of questions and answers about the Fall season and preparing for winter, robbing, etc. And LOTS of pictures!

Join the fun today!

The queen marking color for 2022 is YELLOW.