



SWEET STUFF

NIBA NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Allen

Well here it is, November of 2022. This is my final president's message for the Sweet Stuff, something I couldn't even think about when I was first elected as the NIBA President in November of 2019. Looking back, there are many accomplishments that took place over the last three years, and I want to be clear that without the NIBA Board that was in place, those things would not have happened. We changed our meeting place to McHenry County College right away so we could accommodate more members. A couple of months later, Covid hit us and changed our lives forever. Our Board made the decision to continue meeting monthly via Zoom to keep us current. (I had never even heard of Zoom before this happened. That would have been an awesome stock purchase.) NIBA members were given the opportunity to see and learn from many amazing speakers. We also had the ability to combine with other clubs and the Garfield Park Conservatory for presentations given by speakers they had. We looked at the problem of not being able to meet and found a positive way to overcome the meeting restriction placed on us.

I'm humbled and appreciate the confidence NIBA members had in me and my leadership over the last three years. When I join an organization, I'm all in. I will do anything I'm asked for the benefit of the organization. As a firefighter you can't stop when things get hot or become difficult, and

I think that mindset serves me well. Constant change, new ideas, or tweaking old ideas to see if they'll work is what the NIBA Board does. Sometimes the best thing to do as the leader is to get out of the way so someone else's idea can move forward. Lead by example, don't expect anyone to do something you wouldn't do, and remember, no one is so big that the organization won't go on without them. These are things I really believe in.

Going forward, the next President and Board will make changes to move NIBA forward in their vision, which will be fun to be a part of. I hope we can get the mentor program moving up to the next level so our newbees can learn with a hands-on approach.

This entire Board contributed to the changes needed to continue moving forward. Thank you to John Leibinger, Ralph Brindise, Stephanie Slater, Marcin Matelski, Al Fullerton, David Murillo, and Cristy Binz for all of your hard work and support over the last three years. Last but not least, thank you to Terri Reeves for taking care of the website and Marianne Hill for editing and sending out the Sweet Stuff newsletter.

Thank You!

Tom

BEE CLASSES AT MCC REGISTRATION IS OPEN

McHenry County College has just begun taking enrollment for the upcoming beekeeping classes.

Beekeeping 101 – where it all starts – will be offered for four Wednesday evenings beginning on February 1.

In March there will be a class on honeybee queen rearing and one on producing comb honey.

In April there will be the hands-on beeyard class where colonies of bees will be installed with the class returning a week later to inspect the progress.

Classes will be hybrid with an in-person and a Zoom option. The in-person option will have a limited enrollment, so for those want that option, early registration is suggested.

Here is the course listing –

https://mchenry.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassListing.ClassListingDisplay&int_category_id=7&int_sub_category_id=38&int_catalog_id=3

Or call Dori Sullens at

(815) 455-8559

It will bee  season before you know it!

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/>



At Home Beekeeping Webinar
Distance Learning for Beekeepers

We're offering beekeepers the chance to attend virtual meetings from the comfort of one's own home using a computer or mobile device. Speakers include university researchers and extension specialists from across the SE US as well as USDA ARS researchers. Each event will bring participants up to date on timely beekeeping topics with time for Q & A included.

All are welcome!! Join us for this free event!!

• Oct. 25: Breeding and performance of bees with Varroa Sensitive Hygiene, with F. Rinkevich (USDA-ARS)	Last Tuesday of the month 6:30 – 7:30 pm Central Time
• Nov. 29: Liquid gold: A crash course on the types and properties of honey, with F. Lou (USDA-ARS)	
• Jan. 31: Seasonal efficacy of Varroa treatments, with C. Jack (URL)	

Watch via Zoom Webinar
<https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838>

or Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension/>

Questions? Email Allyson Shabel ams0137@aces.edu

Our institutions are equal opportunity educators and employees. Everyone is welcome! Please let us know if you have accessibility needs.

CHORES OF THE MONTH - NOVEMBER

John Leibinger

Like the bees we study, we accomplish more together.

What's happening in the hive?

Unless we get another warm spell, you are not likely to see much activity in your hive(s). Winter is just around the corner and the bees are settling in for the season. The nighttime temps will be running between the 20s to low 40s. Daytime temps may reach very low 50s occasionally. The bees are clustering to save some heat. They will be starting to consume their winter stores and will not be taking in sugar syrup at these temperatures.

For All Beekeepers, it is time to:

Finalize your colony activities for 2022:**

****Note:** These are much the same as October chores, with a few deletions. The deletions are primarily to avoid cracking open the hive bodies and breaking the propolis seals that the bees have created to reduce infiltration of the winter winds. I'll repeat for emphasis..... ***This is not the time to be breaking into the hive bodies and disrupting the seals or the winter cluster.*** (Exception: If you are wrapping your hives, the air infiltration by cracking the seals will be mitigated by the wraps.

Also, some of the notes below are specific to ventilation hives. See the October notes for condensing hives.

Consider an Oxalic Acid sublimation treatment 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 seals that were created to keep out the imminent winter winds.

Tilt hive forward a little bit to assist moisture drainage.

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

Add mouse guards. If you have Pygmy Shrews the openings will need to be reduced to about 5/16". 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 it 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 are given to 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. Make sure it is mouse/shrew proofed. Sometimes the lower entrances get plugged with ice or snow and even with dead bees.

Add an appropriate feeding shim and 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 (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 on the theory that there is a little solar heat gain on sunny winter days.

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.

If you have been a conscientious beekeeper throughout the 2022 season and have monitored and controlled varroa mites, left the bees with sufficient stores, ended the year with healthy bees and a young queen (less than a year old), you have provided your bees with the chance of thriving in Spring 2023. Still no guarantee, but you have tilted the odds in their favor.

Start preparing for the 2023 season:

Renew your annual Apiary Registration with Illinois Department of Agriculture.

Clean up any dead outs that you have experienced this season.

Continue to increase your knowledge of bees and beekeeping:

- Read and study about bees and beekeeping

- Attend beekeeping meetings
- Increase your knowledge of local plants and trees.
- Form a small group of beekeepers to meet for lunch and talk bees.

Inventory your equipment, tools, and supplies.

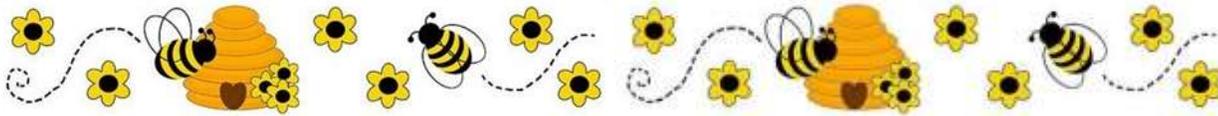
Review your 2022 season (and your notes) for successes and opportunities.

Set new goals for 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)



BEE TIME

Larry Kregel

With autumn, the demands of the beeyard ease. Time now for the keeper's mind to wander....

What do you think? Do your bees know you? I will take the position that they do indeed know their keeper. We have evidence that bees can recognize human faces. It even seems that bees can recognize the vehicle you drive to the beeyard. These bee talents could complicate a beekeeper's time in the yard. Recently researchers have found that bees can count and are able to differentiate between odd and even numbers. An amazing finding, but I am not sure how knowing odds and evens affects my time with the bees. Yet recognizing human faces... that can put a different spin on my bee time.

The tales of honeybee colonies lying in waiting to attack the approaching beekeeper are often shared on internet sites. Are they responding to an intruder or to a specific approaching face? Although all beekeepers have encountered such situations, that situation is more likely the case among keepers new to the endeavor. I would suggest that

response might develop from the nubee's lack of finesse – being more abrupt, more likely to injure bees, less skilled in applying smoke – and the bees anticipating that beekeeper... that face... even enclosed in a veil.

On the other side of the coin, some beekeepers find their time with the bees to be more peaceful with few threatening bees. I would suggest that these tend to be the more experienced beekeepers who are less likely to commit faux pas that the bees sense as threatening. Perhaps it comes from a lower anxiety level when around the colonies. Possibly, developing finesse in the beeyard develops a friendlier response to their beekeepers, new and old. The bees associate that face with a gentle touch.

If my thinking is correct, it would be wrong to label a colony as mean, but rather as having learned to be defensive. We interpret highly defensive colonies as being mean.

For those who find their bees to be “mean” there are two pieces of advice. First, gain experience in the hives. It is best to find a mentor who does not find bees to be mean. Watch carefully – and mimic - how hives are opened, when smoke is used, how frames are examined, and how the hive is closed.

Second, spend some quality time with the bees. Not every visit requires deep penetration. Talk the situation over with the bees and enlist their cooperation. Give the bees the opportunity to learn the sight, sound, and smell of a friendly beekeeper. I keep bee watching benches by all my hives where I can spend quality time with my colonies.

Does that mean that an individual bee can recognize its beekeeper or does the colony own that recognition? Most beekeepers have experienced a peaceful colony with a single bee seemingly taking exception to their keeper and banging on the veil. That bee may even follow as the keeper leaves. However, with individual bees being rather short-lived, it would seem that the memory must be somehow lodged in the mind of the superorganism, the colony. Perhaps it could be an overlapping memory trace, meaning that after one life cycle (perhaps six weeks), the memory would be lost if it were not reinforced. An interesting possibility. We might be able to retrain a colony. Develop an apicurical “Positive Mental Attitude”. Perhaps we need a bee psychotherapist.

That is a lot of perhapsing. Indeed, one's mind may wander.

Many NIBAers receive the Beeline, a sometimes email I sent out through Google Groups. Anyone interested is welcome to join in. Find me by going to [The Beeline - Google Groups](#).

LK



NORTHERN ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

2023 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Affiliated with the Illinois State Beekeepers Association (ISBA)

****PLEASE NOTE CHANGES BELOW****

Check one: Renewal Individual Membership - \$20 Renewal Family Membership - \$30

Check one: NEW Individual Membership - \$25 NEW Family Membership - \$35

(Includes Single Membership in the Illinois State Beekeepers Association, additional ISBA memberships, \$10 each)

If applying after February 28, 2023 and you are a renewing member, please add \$5.00.



Name(s):		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		
Email address (if family membership, include all emails. Newsletter will be sent to all emails):		



Yes, I would like to order a NIBA name tag(s), add \$10 per name tag.

Name tag(s) should read (please print):

Please tell us more about yourself:

I have been a NIBA Member since _____ (year) I plan to have _____ colonies/hives this season

I have been a beekeeper for about _____ years I am a Master Gardener/Beekeeper _____

Check all that applies:

I sell honey ___ willing to Coach/Mentor ___ Swarm Catcher ___ willing to remove Bees from buildings ___

Personal skills I would be willing to donate to NIBA (i.e. Beekeeping experience, accounting, webmaster, event planning, community education, carpentry, legal, business management, retail knowledge, other)

Complete this form and mail with **check payable to: NORTHERN ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION (NIBA)**
 TO: NIBA Membership, c/o Ralph Brindise, 517 Northlake Road, Lakemoor, IL 60051

2022 NIBA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Webmaster – Terri Reeves
Newsletter Editor – Marianne Hill
Club Extractor Coordinator – Randy Mead
Club Raffle Coordinator – John Leibinger
Snack Coordinators – Cristy & Dave Binz

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.**