

the Norfolk Bee

NOVEMBER 2022 • NORFOLKBEEES.ORG

NEXT CLUB MEETING

NOVEMBER 7, 2022

7:30 to 9:00 pm

**Hybrid
In-person
and on Zoom**

400 Main Street
Walpole, MA



Dear Fellowbeekeepers,

Is it fall yet? Doesn't really seem to be. The weather has been so wacky lately. The days are too warm and the nights are just getting cold. Make sure you have fed your bees and there is plenty of food. With this warm weather, they will eat up their supplies pretty quickly. Keep a close eye on them and add your fondant as you think it's ready.

We have a December Holiday Party with food, door prizes, honey tasting, inventions, and a game show. Stay tuned for all the details. This will be a potluck and a list will be going out for sign ups.

I look forward to seeing people at the November meeting. We had a small turnout for October and I hope that more of you will come in November. I will be there, along with others, to answer questions, talk and share stories before and after the meeting. This is a great time to go one-on-one with your favorite bee person, or to meet new beekeepers face-to-face.

See you all soon.

(The Bee Man)

Mass Bee Annual/Fall 2022 Meeting

Date and Time: Saturday, November 5, 2022. From 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

Where: Campus Center Bookstore, Middlesex Community College Bedford Campus, 591 Springs Road, Bedford, MA

EVENT DETAILS:

The Middlesex County Beekeepers Association is hosting the Mass Bee Annual/Fall Meeting on November 5th at the Campus Center Bookstore Building on the Bedford Campus of Middlesex Community College.

The meeting speakers will be giving presentations on honey, current honeybee research, and MDAR updates. There will be

a honey show, raffles, vendors and more.

The Honey Show and Cooking Competition Rules can be found at the Mass Bee website.

Pre-registration for the meeting is helpful, but if you're reading about this now, just bring your checkbook or cash.

There will be a limited number of box lunches available for purchase at the door for \$20.00.

Please note that if you plan to register/renew your Mass Bee membership and/or order lunch at the event, we currently cannot accept credit card payments; accepted payment methods include cash and personal check.

(Please turn to page 5)

**Yikes!
This meeting is tomorrow!**



News from the Landing Board

The November 7th Meeting Agenda

NCBA BOARD MEMBERS

2022-2024

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Tony Lulek

VICE PRESIDENT

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Stephen Green

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MEMBERS AT LARGE

Carin Cohen, Joel Richards,
and Jenna Tibbetts

NCBA BEE SCHOOLS:

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INTRODUCTORY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Dana Wilson

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

DIRECTOR

Ed Szymanski

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Marian Szymanski

NCBA TECH GURU

Greg Rushton

APPAREL

Marybeth Noonan and Maureen Harrington

DOOR PRIZE/RAFFLE

Kara Sullivan

HOSPITALITY

Rose Thornton and Carin Cohen

EXTRACTORS

Brianda Younie

MEMBERSHIP/FACEBOOK/GOOGLE

Rose Thornton

Deb Spielman

LIBRARIAN

Michael Simone

PROGRAMS

Ed and Marian Szymanski

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

Lara Davis



ReWilding: An Intro to Natives with Trevor Smith

Native plants and pollinators are all the buzz these days. What are natives? Why should we plant natives? How can we work them into our landscape and gardens? All this and more will be covered in this brief class providing you with all you will need to know to go make informed decisions for your landscape.

Trevor Smith is Weston Nurseries' Design and Education Manager. He is passionate about the natural world which inspires his commitment to ecological principles and practices and devoted to creating beautiful landscapes that reconnect with the natural world.

December: Holiday Party!

Plans are underway for the December meeting/Holiday Party to be held in the Aggie cafeteria. There will be vendors, food, games, honey tasting, homemade beekeeping inventions, recognition of long-time NCBA members, and door prizes. The meeting will be hybrid. For those on Zoom it will be great to see everyone, but admittedly, the honey tasting and potluck may be lacking.

It's time to renew your NCBA membership!

The best bargain around is the Norfolk County Beekeepers Association. Now is the time to renew your membership!

Your \$25.00 membership makes you eligible for 50% OFF a new queen, hundreds of dollars in door prizes, scholarships (Cornell Master Beekeeper certificate program and Rearing Queens classes), Facebook group, Google Group, and this amazing newsletter. Plus, we'll also help you learn and grow as a beekeeper, which is the best benefit of all. Renew now!

**RENEW
MEMBER-
SHIP**

NCBA apparel on sale online!

NCBA's *new* apparel line is now on sale! Holiday shoppers must order by November 8th at midnight to allow TJ Miller, Inc. time to have orders ready for the holidays. Shoppers can either choose direct shipping (for an additional cost) or to have them available for pick up at the December meeting (hopefully). All orders are done on TJ Miller's website, all with secure credit card transactions. Questions? Reach out to Gina at TJ Miller, our contact person. Use this link to start your order:

BIG thank you to MaryBeth Noonan, Maureen Harrington, and Kara Sullivan for getting this set up and done in a short period of time.



November in the Apiary – what’s left to do?

by Ed Szymanski

Here we are in November, another year of beekeeping coming to a close. It was a tough year with the drought, but the spring honey production was great, and we got a fall flow rebound after all of the rain. Hopefully, you’ve been monitoring and treating for Varroa mites, and your colonies are queenright and healthy.

What’s left to do?

Make sure mouse guards are in place, they should be already. If you’re just getting around to it now, make sure you’re not trapping a mouse inside before you put it on.

You can still feed if your hives aren’t at their target weight. We always looked for 100 lbs or so with double deep hives, and now with the singles, we shoot for 75-80 lb. We overwintered 13 single-deep colonies last year at 75-80 lb. Feed 2:1 syrup only at this point, and as much of it as you get on there at once to force them to store it away. This coming weekend will be warm so it’s a good time.

Mid-November is a good time for a touch-up mite treatment to knock down the overwintering phoretic

mite population. Oxalic Acid is the preferred treatment at this time, either vaporized or dribble as you prefer. This will greatly reduce the number of mites looking to start breeding when brood rearing begins in late winter/early spring and gives you a head start on mite control for next year.

Add a piece of insulation on the inside of your outer cover to prevent moisture from condensing on that surface and dripping down onto the cluster.

Add a shim between your inverted inner cover and the top brood box to allow for the addition of sugar patties in late winter. It’s better to add the shim now when it’s warmer, then you only have to open slightly to add the sugar patties. Don’t worry about the bee space violation – they won’t build comb now. Remember to remove it in the early spring when you start liquid feeding.

Read books and magazines, clean equipment, repair equipment, wash your bee suit, attend conferences and meetings.

Happy Wintering!

Thank you 5, 10, 15, 20+ Year Members

The NCBA board is happy to announce they will be recognizing those NCBA members who had their 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th+ membership anniversary in 2022.

This recognition will occur at the December 7th club holiday party. It is because of members like you that make the club strong, bringing a wealth of information and expertise to the club and its members.

**WHAT WOULD BEARS
BE WITHOUT BEES?**



JUST EARS.



Best Queen-o-Lantern of Halloween. Thanks to the creative genius of NCBA member, Adam Strauss, terrified trick-or-treaters could be heard screaming. “Argh, Apis mellifera! Apis mellifera!” as they ran away.

Bemused

by Susan Golswitz

Virgil's Bees

Bless air's gift of sweetness, honey
from the bees, inspired by clover,
marigold, eucalyptus, thyme,
the hundred perfumes of the wind.

Bless the beekeeper
who chooses for her hives
a site near water, violet beds, no yew,
no echo. Let the light lilt, leak, green
or gold, pigment for queens,
and joy be inexplicable but there
in harmony of willowherb and stream,
of summer heat and breeze, each bee's body
at its brilliant flower, lover-stunned,
strumming on fragrance, smitten.

For this, let gardens grow, where beelines end,
sighing in roses, saffron blooms, buddleia;
where bees pray on their knees, sing, praise
in pear trees, plum trees; bees
are the batteries of orchards, gardens,
guard them.

Carol Ann Duffy

Now that the bees (and we) are settling down after the drought, the flow and the harvest, having evicted the drones and preparing for the winter ahead, it's an appropriate time to take stock, breathe deep, and give thanks with a small prayer from Carol Ann Duffy, a Scottish poet who served as poet laureate of Great Britain.

Duffy has said, "Poetry, after all, is the honey of language." Her work commands attention to sound as well as sense. She's a sister of sorts of John Keats, the romantic vowel and sensuous word master. The sounds and music created by both are equally as luscious as their meanings. If unused to such music, one exercise that may help to wander in this realm is to read the poem aloud to yourself – close the door so no one is listening – and pretend you don't speak or understand English. Just listen to the sounds and rhythms as they occur without making "sense" as you go. You may have to do it twice or more to relieve yourself of unfamiliarity and self

consciousness, but Duffy and the bees won't mind, and the rewards are plentiful.

Virgil's Bees

This poem expresses gratitude and a request for blessing or consecration. It details the focus, vigilance and preparation required of the beekeeper, as well as the job of the bee, showing the shepherding as inextricably united; it's a poem celebrating and honoring the shared goal of bee and keeper and their (our) mutual, almost symbiotic relationship with precision and grace in language, as well as gratefulness (great fullness), praise and plea. By extension, it celebrates and offers gratitude to the complete process of nature's bounty.

What a sentence – alliterations on parade: "Let the light lilt, leak, green/or gold, pigment for queens, and joy be inexplicable but there/in harmony of willowherb and stream, /of summer heat and breeze, /each bee's body at its brilliant flower, lover-stunned, /strumming on fragrance, smitten." Try this one aloud.

The inference is that as the bees are passionately "smitten" by their work, and so is the beekeeper, evidenced by the attention in which the hives are considerately placed encouraging the "harmony" within which the bees can pursue their efforts and prosper.

The last stanza takes us back to Virgil and pulls the poem together. In the phrase "bees/are the batteries of orchards," what is the meaning of "batteries"? Surely it doesn't mean our sometimes unreliable phone energy unit or other device power sources or, alternately, an offensive criminal attack, or does it? One definition is, "a fortified emplacement for heavy guns" which supports the violent implication. We're back to the Aeneid and its placement of bees in terms of warring armies. I found another definition: "an impressive or imposing group." Of course, bees can be all of these, warring, energy creating and storing, and even aggressively pounding, but I prefer another in this context: a "unified, powerful group, working together for a single, communal purpose." Since "guard them" comes directly after, I'm swayed to believe the definition isn't negative; instead, it's the culmination of the purpose and work bees do which is worth blessing and protecting and preparing for with humility, earnestness, tenderness and awareness.

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Virgil

Why “Virgil’s bees”? I admit I had to go back and do some research. I’d read the Aeneid in college, but didn’t remember the persistent connection between bees and the struggles of war, and I never read the Georgics, so I hadn’t been acquainted with his lessons in beekeeping which are amazingly contemporary, full of even scientifically accurate observations.

From the Georgics, Book IV – Bee-keeping – Translator A. S. Kline: “...with a delightful sweetness, they cherish their hive/and young; with it, with art, they form/fresh wax and produce their sticky honey.” Or, “if we may compare small things with great, an innate love of creation spurs the Attic (citizen of Attica/Athens, speaking the literary language of ancient Greece) bees on, each in its own way. The older ones take care of the hive, and building the comb, and the cleverly fashioned cells. But at night the weary carry back sacs filled with thyme – (another translator, H.R. Fairclough reads this phrase as, “thighs freighted with thyme” – what a gorgeous description of pollen pockets!) They graze far and wide on the blossoms of strawberry-trees and pale grey willows, and rosemary and bright saffron, on rich lime-trees and on purple hyacinths.”

In conclusion, Duffy has invited us to explore what the best works of art can offer: not only has she given us a beautiful, brilliantly crafted work of poetry for us to enjoy, ponder, and absorb, but has, through her appreciation and reverence for another poet, led us toward deeper investigations and further aesthetic experiences, even far back to ancient times. As ever, our bees provide both inspiration and catalyst for both artists and keepers.

Susan Goldwitz is a NCBA member and prizewinning poet who has taught literature and writing courses on disparate levels from men’s and women’s prisons to undergraduate and graduate programs.

She has been keeping bees for about ten years.



Florida donation

The NCBA made a \$500 donation to the Florida Beekeepers’ Association, a registered nonprofit association. The donation will help Florida beekeepers rebuild after losing thousands of hives to Hurricane Ian.



(Continued from page 1)

MassBee Meeting Presenters



C. Marina Marchese from American Honey Tasting Society will be giving presentations on *Review of Honey Defects and Crystallization and their Causes* and *Sensory Analysis: The Missing Link to Evaluating Honey*.



Phoebe Snyder from UNC Greensboro will be giving presentations on *Chemical Communication in the Hive* and *Hygienic Behavior with a focus on the UBO Assay*



Dr. Kim Skyrn our Chief Apiary Inspector from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Apiary Program will be giving us an update on the Apiary Program’s plans and events for 2023.

Join the MassBee Board

The Massachusetts Beekeepers Association (MassBee) is looking for board member volunteers! MassBee is actively looking to fill the roles for a Recording Secretary and a Corresponding Secretary. Members of the NCBA Board are eligible to be on the MassBee Board as well.

The 2023 EAS Conference will be held in the Bay State and MassBee is working hard to make sure it will be the best and most memorable EAS Conference! If you’re interested in volunteering, please reach out to the current president, Mary Duane, via president@massbee.org.



Board Meeting Minutes 10/17/22

The Board of Directors Meeting is the third Monday of each month.

It's held at 7:00pm via a Zoom Video Meeting.

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

NCBA BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 17, 2022

7:05 to 8:30 pm

Attending:

Tony Lulek
Mohamad Khalil
Dana Wilson
Ed Rock
Kara Sullivan
Jennifer Jett
Lara Davis
Michael Simone
Ed Szymanski
Kevin Keane
Mary Beth Noonan
Roger Q. Hill
Maureen Harrington
Greg Rushton
Kara F Sullivan
Joel Richards

President's Update – Tony L

- Old & New Business
 - o EAS update – Mo and Jennifer
 - o They are finalizing all the program details
 - o Club Members need to become EAS members if they'd like to volunteer and receive benefits for volunteering
 - o NCBA may want to have a booth / table /Banner representing the club to promote NCBA to east coast beekeepers.
 - o Place note on EAS in the Newsletter to make sure our NCBA members are aware of EAS
- MASS Bee is in need of board member volunteers (Mo will write something up for the newsletter)
- o Tony mentioned two things
- Share a note to NCBA members about the Florida Beekeepers and their loss from Hurricane
- Moved and approved to donate \$500 from NCBA club funds to the Florida Beekeepers Association (registered nonprofit association)
- Need to organize the holiday party activities (Tony drafting something for the newsletter)
- Ed S will coordinate vendors
- Need to coordinate potluck for members
- Organize Games
- Honey Tastings
- Hive Equipment Inventions Table (if you've invented a handy tool)
- Membership Certificates for longevity (gift certificates for LONG term members) Dana coordinating

- Need some “remote” door prizes for zoom-ers (\$600 for door prizes for the holiday party)

Vice President's Update – Mo K

- Nothing new...see new business / EAS

Treasurer Update – Stephen

- Bank balance \$42,210.70 as of 9/19/2022
- Financials delayed until (Stephen out with COVID).

Recording Secretary: Minutes – Ed R

- Meeting notes accepted

Corresponding Secretary – Kevin Keane

- Nothing new –
- Deadline for Newsletter materials to Kevin – 10/28/22

Committees:

- Programs – Ed S and Marion
 - November – Trever Smith – Weston Nursery – Pollinator Planting
 - November program - Options for continuing bee education - Master Beekeeper Programs and other Educational Programs – by Ed S.
 - Possibly showing a video of Ed S. doing a hive inspection (for Master Beekeeper program)
 - Tony – perhaps an idea for programming would be “how to set up a

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Interview with a Beekeeper

by Brian Hart

I've been interested in what got beekeepers started on their journey in beekeeping. So I interviewed two beekeepers and asked several questions on what got them started in beekeeping.

First beekeeper: **Todd Barker**

Q: How long have you been bee keeping?

A: 16 years

Q: What made you begin your journey in bee keeping?

A: I was introduced to it by my other half, and at first I wasn't interested, but grabbed on to it when I went to my first bee meeting.

Q: How many hives did you start with, and how many do you have now?

A: First I started with 2 - Now over 50

Q: Has beekeeping been what you thought it was going to be?

A: In the very beginning no, it was just a hobby. Now I love it; it's all I do mostly.

Q: What do you find the most interesting about bee keeping?

A: As a beekeeper the ever evolving learning curve. After 16 years, I'm still learning. Plus, my bees keep me relaxed and focused! A real de-stresser...I could watch them all day.

Q: How has beekeeping changed your life (could be something small or something big)?

A: Well for me, I've met so many great people, like yourself, and mentored so many! The act of providing bees so as to enhance the agricultural environment is big. Also, I've made beekeeping a passionate business. I love what I do and love passing on that passion to others! It has been life changing, but not just for me but for the many people/beekeepers I've heard from that it gives them peace, purpose and for some... prosperity.

The second beekeeper: **Brian McCafferty**

Q: How long have you been beekeeping?

A: This is our fourth year.

Q: What made you begin your journey in bee keeping?

A: We are avid gardeners and had planted for pollinators and to attract birds. Beekeeping was the next logical step.

Q: How many hives did you start with and how many do you have now?

A: We started with two and now have four. Four is a lot for our small garden but a good number to go into winter with. We are struggling with the decision to downsize or place some hives elsewhere.

Q: Has beekeeping been what you thought it was going to be?

A: It is a bit more work than we expected. We have very robust populations in our hives and they produce a lot of honey. Even the state inspectors comments that we must be located in a sweet spot. We spent a lot more money getting setup that we expected and we now have to figure out how and where to sell the huge amount of honey we have. Finding our queens is a challenge with huge colony populations. Even the state inspector struggles to pick a hive to test.

Q: What do you find the most interesting about beekeeping?

A: The bees always know better than you do. No matter what you read or hear, your bees will show you their way. If you ask 5 beekeepers for advice your will get 10 opinions, but the bees always have the last laugh. Beekeeping is an artform that we are trying to turn into a science.

Q: How has beekeeping changed your life (could be something small or something large)?

A: Because we have such a small space, and the bees live in our garden, a queen-less hive can present some real challenges as they tend to get very aggressive. Also, the best producing hives also tend to be the most aggressive at times, so requeening is usually a tough call. The bees can dictate our lives from time to time. I have been stung more in the past 4 years than in the previous 60 years.

What's blooming

In November the only plants blooming are those who somehow avoided the deathly touch of Jack Frost, potted Hardy Mums, or Witch Hazel.

Calling all bee vendors for Holiday Party!

The NCBA holiday vendors are back!

At the December meeting (in-person at Norfolk Aggie), we will once again feature NCBA members selling bee-themed gift items for friends and family. Anyone wanting to participate as a vendor, please contact Ed Szymanski at lunariafarm@outlook.com.

Let me know what products you will be selling.



Get involved with the NCBA

The NCBA runs on the interest and enthusiasm of its members. We encourage everyone to get involved with the club. Come to a board meeting.

Meetings run every month from late August-June.

The meetings last about an hour and we plan for the upcoming club meetings as well as for special events and the seasonal demands of the beekeepers' year.

Meetings are on Zoom. Plus, we are very nice people.

If you're interested, email Tony Lulek and he will send you a link to the meeting.

(Board meeting minutes, continued from page 6)

table for a Farmer's Market"

- Blue Stem Natives (Jennifer Jett suggested them for pollinator presenter)

NCBA Intro to Bee School – Tony and Dana

- 44 enrollees now
- 6 in person and 4 zoom meetings...yet all hybrid
- Reviewing curriculum and editing for currency and accuracy

• Intermediate Bee School – Ed & Marion

- Done for this year – registration starts up in January 2023

• Extractors – Brianda

- \$600-700 approved to purchase a new extractor to add to our "fleet"

• Library – Michael Simone

- Look at December meeting as a standard "book sale" activity

• Door Prizes – Kara

- Nothing new to report
- Discussed door prizes and processes

• Website – Greg

- Everything is OK
- Do we want to consider adding a donation page to the website
- We do need to check with a lawyer to see how we set it up appropriately.
- We'll set it up and give it a trial run

• Membership – Facebook – Google Groups - Rose & Deb

- 170 members (members and bee school folks) renewed
- Dues \$25/year for membership
- Google and Facebook groups have been updated and going OK

• Bee Apparel – MaryBeth and Maureen Harrington

- Mary Beth and Kara (worked with TR Miller Walpole) shared a simple array of materials (some caps, hoodies, jackets and tee shirts) that will be made available for NCBA members to purchase
- Purchasers will have an option to purchase items and have them shipped directly to their home or pick up at the club meeting and save shipping.
- Pricing needs to be reviewed with the vendor and apparel team.
- Board made motion and approved this apparel plan and the minimal (\$200) set up fees for logo and embroidery charge

• Calendar Committee – Jenna Tibbetts

- Will update calendar for November

• Nominating Committee

• Scholarships and Grants - Lara Davis

- Not a lot of updates
- Updated website and applications will go live by end of the week

• *Meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM*

You know that
good friend
or relative
who's
intrigued
about bees?

Tell them about the NCBA Bee School 2023

Bee School fills up quick and it is the perfect opportunity to dip one's toe into the world of beekeeping.

Registration is now open. Best of all they can sign-up online!

[Sign-up online.](#)



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Built as one piece instead of two separate pieces for stability. They are made with galvanized 1/8" screen and white plastic slide-in tray to count mites. Glued and screwed together for long lasting durability.

Slatted Racks Completely assembled, glued and nailed. This gives the bees more room in the hive on rainy days and when they are all in for the night making them less likely to think about swarming due to crowding.

Supers Made out of pine; with pre-drilled finger joints, and handles cut into boards, comes unassembled. Deep, Medium and Shallow available.

Inner Cover Ventilated, wooden inner cover.

Outer Cover covered with Tin Made from 3/4" exterior plywood, completely assembled, glued and screwed. Cover comes with tin cover to protect from outdoor elements.

Complete Hive Setup Includes screened bottom board, two deep supers, 20 frames with wax foundation, inner cover and outer cover.

Hive Frames—Deep, Medium, and Shallow Wooden frame, made out of pine, held together with 10 nails. (Does not include wire or foundation).