



[nnjbees.org](http://nnjbees.org)

# October 2017



## NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

President	<b>Frank Mortimer</b>	201-417-7309	3 <sup>rd</sup> V. Pres.	<b>John Matarese</b>	(201-481-5426)
V. President	<b>John Gaut</b> – Mentor Coordinator	201-961-2330	Secretary	<b>Karl Schoenknecht</b>	201-891-0947
2 <sup>nd</sup> V. Pres.	<b>Jaimie Winters</b>	551-486-7479	Treasurer	<b>Bob Jenkins</b>	201-218-6537

Meeting on: **Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM,**

Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**



*Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious Always Welcome!*



*Look for the Bee-tiful Yellow Signs*



Please join us on **Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>** when The Northeast NJ Beekeepers continues our Bee Talk Series where the focus is on you and your questions. This month's topic is **Preparing Your Hives for Winter**. Bring your questions and enthusiasm. See you there!



### **A BIG THANK YOU!**

This year's Honey Cup was a huge success with over 500 people in attendance and 31 honey submissions. The day would not have been possible if not for the volunteers who helped with preplanning, and the work that went into the entire day. The love that went into the baked good table was overwhelming. It was a huge success and a huge fundraiser for us. The education table with the extraction demo was a huge hit! The band **Fragile Pub Rabbits** who donated their time added to the festivities with groovy tunes. And the opportunity for our guests to purchase local honey went over big. We would like to thank all the members who supported the Northeast NJ beekeepers and the event by volunteering.





## Message from the President:

Hello Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

Welcome to October, the month when we'll hopefully soon be experiencing some fall weather. We only have a few more weeks to make sure our hives are heavy for winter, so please keep checking and feeding your hives. Remember, hives need 60-80 pounds of honey to make it through the winter!

Also, if you're using ApiVar, please make sure you know when to take it out. The MAXIMUM time you can keep it in your hives is 56 days. If you "forget" and leave the strips in all winter, you are potentially creating varroa that is resistant to ApiVar. Personally, I LOVE ApiVar, and I would be upset if it no longer works, as there really is no other treatment available that is as effective. So please always follow the directions for ApiVar and all your other bee medications.

Last month's Honey Cup was a HUGE success! It exceeded all expectations on being an excellent event! I would like to thank all the member volunteers! It was because of YOUR help why we had such a wonderful day! THANK YOU! For those who missed it, you missed a really good time. As a reminder, the Honey Cup is more than entering your honey, it's about beekeepers celebrating what we do, and getting to interact with the general public as they get to enjoy tasting our club's local honey. So next year, no matter if you have honey to enter or not, I would ask each of you to stop by the Honey Cup. I promise you will have a good time!

Regrettably, I must inform all of you that **Rich Schluger** has decided to step down as Vice President of our club. For those that may not know, Rich and I were elected as club officers together in 2011. At that time, our membership hovered in the thirties, and attendance at monthly meetings was a mere 9-12 people. If you enjoy our meeting space at Ramapo College, we have our current home thanks to Rich Schluger. If you have ever visited [www.NNJbees.org](http://www.NNJbees.org), our website is thanks to Rich Schluger. Rich was also instrumental in raising awareness of our club in the community, publishing our monthly

newsletter, sending out all club email blasts, and also doing a fantastic job month after month of co-presenting the monthly meetings. Behind the scenes, Rich was always there for me when I had a "crazy idea" for the club, and he helped me figure out what was needed to turn many ideas into a reality. The Northeast NJ Beekeepers is one of the best bee clubs in NJ, dare I say in the country, and it would not be what it is today if it weren't for Rich Schluger. We are all deeply indebted to him for all that he did. I personally will miss working alongside of him. Rich will still be attending our meetings, so next time you see him, please join me in thanking him for his service to the club, and for being such a great guy!

Effective immediately, your club officers are as follows:

President: Frank Mortimer  
1st Vice President: John Gaut  
2nd Vice President: Jaimie Winters  
3rd Vice President: John Matarese  
Treasurer: Bob Jenkins  
Secretary: Karl Schoenknecht

With this team, I am confident that the Northeast NJ Beekeepers will continue to be one of the best Bee clubs! All of your officers are dedicated to the club, and passionate enough to put in the time and effort needed for our club to be the best.

**John Matarese** has lots of ideas for new activities that the club can do, and he has already proven himself to be someone who gets things done. I am very happy he has stepped up to be our 3rd VP, and I'm confident that the club will benefit thanks to his involvement.

There is no way I could run this club without **John Gaut**. He has brought the science of beekeeping to our club and to all of our members. John spends a significant amount of time as our club's mentor director, writing monthly articles on what we should all be doing to ensure our hives are healthy, and being active in state and national bee organizations. Thanks to John, our club is based on facts, not opinions.

I am also pleased that **Jaimie Winters** is now our 2nd VP. Jaimie is an absolute workhorse. She does an excellent job working on all of our club's BIG events, such as the Honey Cup and Holiday Party. Jaimie also does a great job of getting more members involved and volunteering, which makes our club better for all of us. Jaimie also takes a "won't take no" approach at asking/ensuring that everyone donates to the club, especially when we have a guest speaker.

**Bob Jenkins** is the kindest person in beekeeping. Bob has done a marvelous job as club treasurer, and managing all our club's financial needs. Thanks to Bob, our nuc ordering process goes off without a hitch, as Bob devised a system to track everything. Bob's system is so good that Grant has encouraged other clubs to use Bob's system. Also, next time you buy something from the club, take a moment to realize what a chore it is to make sure your request is accurately handled and recorded, as are all the dozens of other requests from members who also want to buy something, pay their dues, or put a deposit on an item.

I like to think of **Karl Schoenknecht** as our club's historian. Karl has been a member of the Northeast NJ Beekeepers since the 1980s! For most of that time, Karl was the club treasurer, and he kept this club afloat thanks to his dedication. Karl is an excellent resource when it

comes to knowing what the club has tried to do in the past, what has worked, and what has not. Karl helps out behind the scenes and provides club advice for all the officers.

So, next time you see any of these officers, please take a moment to thank them for all that they do for the club. Last, I'd like to say that our club is an all-volunteer organization. Everyone who helps out does so because they want to give back to a club that has given them so much. A lot of work goes into everything the club does, from this newsletter that you are reading, to our monthly meetings, to the beekeeping supplies and nucs that are available from the club, to the Honey Cup, and our Holiday party. So, if you have personally benefited from being a member of the Northeast NJ Beekeepers, then I would ask you to think about how YOU can help out and give back to the club. Thanks to you, our club will continue to be the best!

See you all on Friday!

**Frank Mortimer**  
President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers



## Girls Learn Bee Power



A group of young ladies learned about bees and honey production on August 22<sup>nd</sup> at *Northern New Jersey Girl Scouts Jockey Hollow Camp*. Northeast NJ Beekeepers members John Gaut, Kelly Palazzi and Jaimie Winters spent the afternoon showing off their bees that came along for the ride and gave the girls a mini honey tasting as well.

## A Fond Farewell

About 10 years ago I joined a small club that met in the old Annex in Glen Rock. After it rained we'd have to mop the floors because the roof leaked, and if there was a guest speaker we ran out of chairs if more than 25 people showed up. That club was the Northeast New Jersey Beekeepers. Joining that club was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Fast-forward 10 years and so much has changed. We are a vibrant, growing, dynamic member oriented bee club. This branch has so much going for it that it is, clearly, the best branch in New Jersey, because it has something that no other branch has, and **that** is you. We meet in a great space, do great things, have great leadership but mostly it is the members who define its greatness. With the passage of time come changes. While I cannot imagine ever not being a beekeeper it is now time that I step down from my leadership position. I do this with gratitude and the solace that comes with knowing that this branch is in good hands with who will guide it forward. This does not mean that I will not be a member who comes to meetings, because I will. It only means that for you, the members that you have more and better things to look forward to. I thank each and every one of you for your trust, confidence and your participation. God bless.

-- Rich Schluger

## New Beginnings



Greetings NNJBEEKS!

I am John Matarese, the club's newly installed 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-president. I am excited and energized to be in a position to facilitate the furtherance of our pastime and passion, the Honeybee!

I am hoping to bring new ideas and information that can be of use to everyone in the club and to help publicize and accentuate the positive role that Beekeeping fulfills not just for the Beekeeper providing hive products such as Local Honey to our communities, but also the vital part this dynamo insect plays in pollinating our ecosystem helping our food crops to flourish.

Some of you may already know me as the guy that provided the opportunity for club members to sign up for and purchase Mann Lake Pro Sweet in bulk recently. Others may know me as the operator of Campgaw Bees, producer of hive products and professional bee removal service.

I have been a lifelong resident of Bergen County and have been active in beekeeping now for approximately 6 years. I look forward to working with the membership and officers in developing new programs, activities and lecture topics to keep us all on the cutting edge of the latest information and procedures to help us all continue to be the best beekeepers we can be.

Lastly, I would like to express my appreciation to the officers and the membership for their confidence in me in fulfilling this role for the club!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or bee concerns.

-- John Matarese

## Mite Checks in Rutherford



John Gaut headed to Rutherford on September 4<sup>th</sup> to help Rutherford beekeepers conduct mite checks using the alcohol wash method. The results were then sent the state. Katie Driscoll, Bobby Vitali, Billy Neumann and Jaimie Winters participated in the testing and learned a lot about their mite counts before applying their fall treatments of Apivar.

## 2017 Honey Cup



Our annual Honey Tasting Competition (Honey Cup) was held on Saturday Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> at Ramapo College in Mahwah, NJ. Over 500 honey-loving attendees showed up to taste all the entries and cast their vote for the best tasting honey. This year, for the first time, there were two categories, Light

Honey and Dark Honey. There were 14 entries for the dark honey, and 17 for the light honey. Additionally, there was a Best Label competition.

The goal of the Honey Cup is for the general public to develop a deeper appreciation for local honey, and thereby appreciate having local beekeepers. Everyone who attends gets to cast a vote, so all the winners are based on public opinion, or in this case, the public's taste buds. All the entries are poured into the same type of bottle, and each one is assigned a number. This way, it's all about taste, not about whose honey it happens to be.

This year, we had a band, a face painter, and invited vendors to sell honey-related products. It created an entertaining fair-like setting that was enjoyed by all who attended. It was also a celebration for the Northeast members, as they got to see hundreds of people taste their club's honeys, talk about beekeeping to all the curious guests, and educate them on the many interesting facts of Apis Mellifera and honey. The club also had an education table that was complete with teaching hives, an observation hive, and a live demonstration on how to extract honey from frame to jar.

Overall it was a huge success, and helped spread goodwill about local beekeeping to all who attended. The 2017 Champion were:

### Light Honey

<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Place</u>
13	Will Stonebrink	1 <sup>st</sup>
4	Nick Griepenburg	2 <sup>nd</sup>
1	Srini Abbaraiu	3 <sup>rd</sup>

### Dark Honey

<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Place</u>
88	Jaimie Winters	1 <sup>st</sup>
82	Nancy Doyle	2 <sup>nd</sup>
79	Kelly Palazzi	3 <sup>rd</sup>

## Best Label

<u>Label Letter</u>	<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Place</u>
E	Heather Mika	1 <sup>st</sup>
F	Andy Kohler	2 <sup>nd</sup>
L	Billy Neumann	3 <sup>rd</sup>





# Beekeeping in October

By John A. Gaut

The bees are still bringing in pollen and some nectar to build their stores for the winter. Last year I was feeding the colonies continuously. This year they were able to find plenty of nectar from the golden rod and aster and I have only had to feed the nucs occasionally. I will be checking the colonies again this week and feeding as needed to insure there is enough winter stores. In my past inspections, I can observe how the colonies are organizing the hive for the winter. I continue to be amazed how consistently a colony arranges the honey to the top and outside of the hive, pollen in the bottom near the center and a brood nest in the center bottom part of the hive.

Below are a few pictures of what my bees are doing now. The first is a picture of a nice frame of capped brood. There will be less and less brood as we get close to Halloween.



The next looks like a spotty brood pattern. It is not. The bees are backfilling the cells as the bees emerge. If you look closely, you may be able to see the shiny nectar in the cells and a few newly emerged bees!



The frame in the next picture was a nice frame of brood in the top deep. Now there is only a small amount of brood toward the outside. The center has been all filled with nectar. In the Spring, this could trigger swarming; in the Fall the bees fill some of the brood area (top outer frames) with nectar. However, this colony still needs some brood nest space and open comb.



Finally, a frame that was brood and is now being filled with pollen (and a little honey on the edges).



The queen will continue laying in the remaining open comb typically in the bottom of the hive. The colony has pushed her down by filling the comb in the top with honey and pollen. The outside frames in the bottom will have honey and pollen too. Just the inside frames will be open for brood rearing and clustering once the weather gets colder.

The field force will continue to bring in pollen and any nectar they can find this month. The colonies will reduce brood rearing as the days get shorter and cooler. The “winter bees” are emerging; winter survival will depend on their health and numbers. I am currently treating with ApiVar. The phoretic mite population increases in the fall due to less brood and also mites coming into the colony from other colonies; either via robbing or drifting. ApiVar is an 8-week treatment that will continuously kill the mites during the fall. I leave ApiVar in for the full 8 weeks; it is fully effective even after being in the hive for the maximum time.

To survive the winter, **the colonies should be strong and have a vigorous queen**. Three other important requirements are:

1. **Adequate food reserves, both honey and pollen.** The hive should have 60 pounds of honey and about 4 frames of pollen (bee bread). The colony will consume the honey to maintain a cluster temperature and also need the protein from the pollen to stay well nourished. In the middle of winter, the colony will start consuming both honey and pollen when they start brood rearing.
2. **Low mite parasitism;** less than 1% is ideal. Mites suck the bee's hemolymph (blood) and transmit viruses causing the colony to suffer a virus epidemic in the middle of winter. A mite count now will let you know if your mite treatment program was successful. Treatments vary in effectiveness. You can NOT assume that your colonies are OK since you treated; you need to test and verify the treatment was successful!
3. **A dry and wind protected hive.** A small top entrance helps to ventilate moisture from the hive and provides an alternate entrance if the bottom entrance is covered in snow. A piece of insulation between the inner cover and outer cover can prevent condensation on the underside of the inner cover (condensation raining on the cluster can kill the colony). If a screened bottom board is used, the IPM board should be in place. Too much air moving through the hive will cause the colony to consume more honey to maintain the cluster temperature. Insulating the sides of the hive also helps reduce air infiltration and can reduce heat loss, especially on those windy, sub-freezing February nights.

Most of the colonies I have inspected during September and early October are doing well. There are many variables; the most important is **mite counts**. If the mite counts are low, the colonies are able to adjust to most of the other variables and pressures.

I weigh my hives so I know if the colony has enough winter reserves or not. (I use a \$5 luggage scale.) A completely empty hive with 2 deeps of comb weighs about 50 pounds. There should be about 10 pounds of bees (and brood) in the hive. There also should be about 4 or more frames of pollen that will be about 30 pounds. Another 60 pounds of honey adds up to over 150 pounds for a 2 deep hive. If there are 3 deeps or there are supers, the hive should approach 200 pounds. You need to inspect each colony to verify there is the equivalent of 60 pounds of honey (10 deep frames or 15 mediums), 4 or more frames of pollen and some open comb or brood area (5 or more frames) for the colony to cluster and raise brood.

**Inspect your colonies to be sure they are not being overfed.** The hive should have some open comb in the bottom deep and the brood nest area should not have nectar or syrup in all of the brood cells. The queen needs some space to lay eggs and the bees will need some open comb to cluster on (and in). The bees can arrange their nest for the winter. The beekeeper just needs to verify they are getting enough resources. The colonies should have enough honey so emergency feeding (candy boards and fondant) is not necessary in the winter.



# Ridgewood is New Jersey's First Bee City USA

The Ridgewood Village Council unanimously voted to approve a resolution for Ridgewood to be designated New Jersey's first Bee City USA. Bee City USA is a relatively new organization that is similar to the "Tree City" program; only it focuses on bees instead of trees.

Bee City USA is a nonprofit national organization that galvanizes communities to sustain pollinators--responsible for 1 in 3 bites we eat and the reproduction of 90% of the world's wild plant species--by providing pollinators with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides.

Bee City USA fosters ongoing dialogue in urban and suburban areas to raise awareness of the role pollinators play in our communities and what each of us can do to provide them with healthy habitat.

Bee City USA aims to protect pollinators by:

- Raise awareness
- Enhance habitats
- Celebrate achievements
- Institutionalize a community's commitment to establishing and maintaining healthy pollinator habitat within its boundaries

The Bee City USA designation means Ridgewood will work to educate the community on the importance of pollination-friendly environments, install a Bee City USA street sign, celebrate National Pollination Week, and apply annually to renew the designation.

There are currently 59 Bee Cities across the U.S., and in addition to being the first in New Jersey, Ridgewood will also be the first Bee City in the Northeast. By becoming a Bee City USA, Ridgewood is setting the example of what other towns should be doing. It is a great way to educate the public on the importance of pollinators and what can be done to help them.

Bee City USA founder and director, Phyllis Stiles, said, "The program aspires to make people more PC ("pollinator conscious," that is). If lots of individuals and communities begin planting native, pesticide-free flowering trees, shrubs and perennials, it will create large-scale change for thousands of species of pollinators at risk. How each city or county celebrates pollinators is up to them, but we especially encourage educational programs for children, like school gardens. When a child falls in love with pollinators, they are friends for life."

**Bee City USA®** is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Bee City USA urges municipalities, individuals, organizations, corporations, and communities to promote and establish pollinator-friendly landscapes that are free of pesticides. For more information about the application process for becoming a Bee City USA community, please visit [www.beecityusa.org](http://www.beecityusa.org).

If you would like more information on what it takes to get your town designated a Bee City USA, please contact Frank Mortimer, at [frankmort@gmail.com](mailto:frankmort@gmail.com)

# Winterization Checklist

By John A. Gaut

I find that checklists are very useful for many tasks and operations. I have developed my own winterization checklist for beekeeping.

- Adequate Honey Stores, 60 pounds or more
- Good pollen reserves, 4 + frames of mostly pollen
- Large population of young healthy bees
- Low Mite levels
- Upper entrance
- Reduced and mouse guarded bottom entrance
- Minimize Air Infiltration
  - Close Bottom Board on Screened Bottoms
  - Tape any gaps in boxes
- Insulate the top of the hive between the inner cover and the outer cover
- Insulate the hive sides

## Northeast NJ Beekeepers Fieldtrip!

The Northeast NJ Beekeepers will make a beeline to the **Melovino Meadery** for a private tour and tasting at this special Meadery the day after our monthly meeting, **Saturday October 21st**. Our own mead expert, Bob Slanzi, will lead the tour and walk us through the mead tastings. **The private tour starts at 1 pm.**

Bring spouses, friends and family wanting to learn about this Viking tradition. The cost for the day is \$10 per person, payable to Melovino Meadery.

Members will be providing their own transportation, and we should plan on meeting there at 12:46 pm.

The Meadery is located just down the Parkway, outside of Maplewood, about 46 minutes away from Ramapo College.



### Melovino Meadery

2933 Vauxhall Road

Vauxhall, NJ 07088

<http://www.melovino.com>



# Beekeeping Memories

by Karl Schoenknecht

I found an old book called the *World of Bees* by Murray Hoyt first printed in Great Britain in 1965. A photo in the book reminded me of my early experience with honeybees. A girl in my 5th grade class told our teacher that her father was a beekeeper, so the teacher arranged to take the class on a field trip which was a half mile walk from the school.

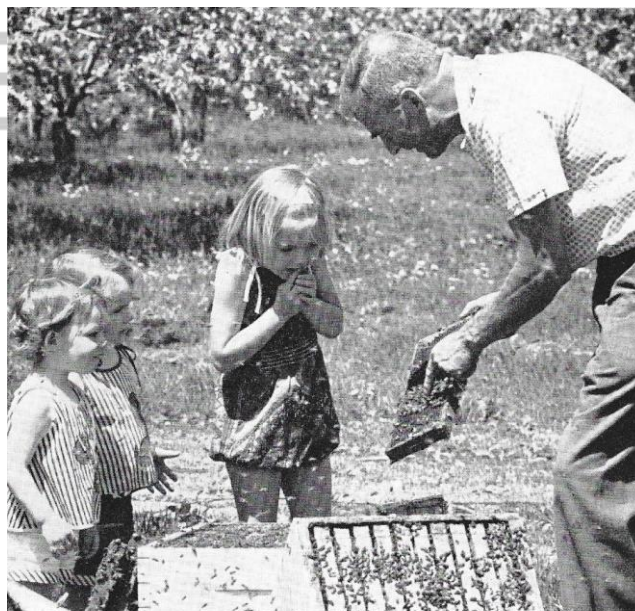
Our class of about 20 students walked to a small 1/4 acre home site surrounded by similar yards all with beautiful wild flowers and fruit trees in blossom. My classmate's father greeted us and showed us a large table piled with blocks of bee's wax that he said came from his more than 50 beehives. He said he made candles from the wax for his church and told us to smell the wax. I remember the golden color and the delicious smell that I will never forget. We were then asked to follow him into the bee yard.

Our teacher asked if the bees would sting us? Most of us were frightened but the beekeeper told us that the bees won't harm us if we don't harm them and their main interest was to gather nectar to make honey so they would have food for the winter.

He told us to avoid blocking the front entrance as they might fly into us and get injured. He told us to move slowly, not to run around or swat at the bees as this might scare or injure them and make them defensive.

The beekeeper then opened a small hive and let some bees walk onto his hands. He then asked his daughter to hold out her arm and transferred some bees to her. She said they tickle and soon many of us were letting bees walk on our hands and arms. The beekeeper gently removed some frames and showed us that some frames were for storing honey and others for brood where the queen could lay eggs and start baby bees. He then found the queen and showed us that she was much bigger because she was full of honeybee eggs.

Before the beekeeper closed up the hive he got some plastic spoons and scooped off some honeycomb for those that wanted a taste. He said we could eat the wax too. I remember the sweet taste and I ate the wax even though it stuck to my teeth. No one got stung and I will never forget that wonderful experience.



The daughters of Charles Mraz seem thrilled as he points out the queen to them, and completely unafraid.



**Join Us Next Month for:**

**The Mystery of the Hive:  
Whispers in the Dark**

**Presented by**

**Peter Loring Borst**

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**Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 PM**

**Ramapo College, Mahwah, NJ**

**H-Wing Auditorium**

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**The Northeast NJ Beekeepers** and the **Ramapo College Beekeeping Club** are pleased to invite all New Jersey Beekeepers to this special presentation.

**Peter L Borst** has worked in the beekeeping industry since his first job working as a beekeeper's helper in Wolcott NY, in 1974. Previously, Peter was the Senior Apiarist at Cornell's Dyce Lab for Honey Bee Research for seven years, and he was an apiary inspector for New York State from 2006 to 2008. He is currently employed at Cornell doing biomedical research, and he is President of the Finger Lakes Bee Club.

Peter is a regular contributor to the American Bee Journal, writing on topics as diverse as beekeeping techniques, the composition and value of pollen for bees, and the history of bee breeding.





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Association.**

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\*Cannot be combined with any other offers\*

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[www.metropolitanfarm.com](http://www.metropolitanfarm.com)



Northeast New Jersey Beekeeper...

Public Group

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...



Our Facebook Group has **over 1740 fans** from all over the world! It's a great place to connect to other beekeepers, so bee sure check out all the great bee pics, bee stories, and bee info.

**Remember:** <http://www.nnjbees.org> **is your website!**

**Check that site for everything Northeast New Jersey Beekeeping!**

❖ Volunteers ❖	
Celia Miller	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc.
Jennifer Phillips	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies and other treats
Billy Neumann	Club photographer
Hugh Knowlton	Workshop/Event coordinator and presenter
Mike Miller	Club apparel
Bob Slanzi	Meadmaster

### **Next Month**

The Mystery of the Hive: Whispers in the Dark

Presented by

Peter Loring Borst



*The First Rule of Bee Club: Tell Everyone about Bee Club!*