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# January 2018

**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
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2 <sup>nd</sup> V. Pres.	<b>Jaimie Winters</b>	551-486-7479	Treasurer	<b>Bob Jenkins</b>	201-218-6537

Meeting on: **Friday, January 19<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-u-tiful Yellow Signs*

## NUCS 4 SALE

The Club will once again be ordering nucs. Starting this Friday, you can **reserve your nuc with a \$50 deposit.**

Nucs are \$170, and we expect delivery late April.

**Order today, as supplies are limited!**



**Road Closure Notice:** Rt. 202 from Oakland will be closed for construction. **YOU MUST APPROACH RAMAPO COLLEGE FROM RT. 17.** For more information and detour map/details, please visit: <https://www.ramapo.edu/publicsafety/road-closure-route-202-culvert-replacement-project/>





## Message from the President:

Happy New Year Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season. If you're like me, you're already counting down the days until spring. The extreme cold temperatures we have been experiencing will certainly be testing the mettle of our colonies. I do think that colonies that were not too strong, or were too few in numbers will succumb to this sustained arctic blast. If you haven't done so already, as soon as the weather warms up a bit, pop open the cover of your hives and see if you see bees. If your bees are at the top of your hives, then you must feed them solid sugar, (never syrup). There are several forms you can use, everything from granulated sugar atop a sheet of newspaper, to bee candy, (recipe on NNJbees), to fondant. Whatever you choose, if your hives have clustered at the top of the frames, they are out of food and you must feed them.

Now, if any of your hives do not survive, then it's best to do what Ross Conrad always recommends: use the dead hive as a learning experience so that you can become a better beekeeper. Do what he calls an autopsy on the hive, and go frame by frame and determine what you think happened. (You can also take photos and ask one of the club officers what we think happened.) I also think it's very important NOT to blame it colony collapse disorder. Especially since VanEngelsdorp's lab in Maryland is saying they have not seen any cases of CCD in the past 4-5 years. In the winter, hives die for several reasons: 1) Mites, 2) No Food, 3) Too small of cluster.

Now, for the many hives that will make it through this extreme cold spell; remember that most hives die between now and April. Make sure you feed them if they need it. Further, you should only open then outer and inner covers. Never do a frame by frame inspection at this time of year. You want to peek inside, see if your bees are alive and then close it up. The faster the better.

I also like to remind you that it's never too early to start thinking about mite treatments. I've been having great success starting ApiVar treatments in early February, so I can get a full mite treatment in my hives before the nectar flows begins in April. Planning your year now will pay you back with a huge honey crop this season, so if you want to treat before the nectar flow, map out your mite treatment calendar now.

Speaking of Calendars, the 2018 NJ Beekeepers is here! This is a great resource that tells you exactly what you should be seeing and doing every month, and it is specific to New Jersey. They are only \$10, and I recommend that everyone pick one up at our next meeting. Additionally, the club has restocked our bookshelves, so there will be plenty of books available for purchase at our meetings.

This Friday, Grant Stiles will be speaking on winter management, and he will be answering any and all questions beekeepers may have. Grant always puts on a great show, and every time you hear him speak, you're guaranteed to learn something new!

Additionally, Cynthia Werts will open our meeting to talk about the state's honey show! This year is more important than ever that New Jersey Beekeepers enter their honey in the show. Our goal is to fill the cabinets that sit in Trenton for all our legislators to see and admire. The more honey in the show, the greater the impact it will have on the legislators. So, please plan on submitting your honey in the competition. Cynthia will be sharing her tips for how to win! Let's make this year's winner from the Northeast!

I look forward to seeing everyone on Friday!

Bee well,

Frank  
President  
Northeast NJ Beekeepers

BEEKEEPERS



## Update on NJ Dept. of Ag's proposed regulations

The deadline for public comments is Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. It is important that every beekeeper in New Jersey send in something. You still have time, so please make sure to email your comments to: [proposedrulesPlantIndustry@ag.state.nj.us](mailto:proposedrulesPlantIndustry@ag.state.nj.us)

Once the public comment period closes, the Dept. of Ag has three options:

- 1) Pull the regulations and start over. (What we're hoping for.)
- 2) Addressing the public comments and "fix" the regulations.
- 3) Ignore the comments and move forward with the regulations.

While we wait to see how the Dept. of Ag reacts to the comments, we must keep the public pressure on the Dept. of Ag, and let them know the proposed regulations are unacceptable! It is essential that our voices are heard, and that the Dept. of Ag understands the citizens of the Garden State will continue to stand up for our state insect!

We have had tremendous success getting our towns to formally oppose the regulations. As of this writing, we know of 14 towns that have already passed resolutions opposing the regulations. These towns include:

**Ridgewood**

**Hopewell**

**Rutherford**

**Egg Harbor**

**Bergenfield**

**Lebanon Township**

**Dumont**

**Clifton**

**Harrington Park**

**Waldwick**

**Ringwood**

**East Amwell**

**Readington**

**South Hackensack**

Additionally, there are another dozen or so towns that are in the process of passing resolutions to oppose the regulations.

**Please speak to your town's council about these regulations.** Use the script that was provided to you via email. This is working, and the more towns that oppose the regulations, the better.

And, a big, **BIG, THANK YOU** to ALL the members who have gone before their town councils to get these resolutions passed! You are helping the bees in your town, and across the entire state! One person can make a difference, and **YOU** made that difference! **THANK YOU!**



# The “Bee Tree”

by

**John Matarese**



Last week, we were contacted by a resident of the Village of Ridgewood in reference to what he thought were Honeybees on his property. He explained that recently he had several large trees cut down from his property. One of the trees had a section that was hollow in the center and when it was cut open, it revealed a bee hive. I spoke to the homeowner over the phone and he explained that he had seen the bees out flying around the log several minutes before our conversation and the tree was cut down several days earlier.

I drove over and met with the homeowner who showed me the log. It was a very large section from a Red Oak tree. (Approximately 3-3 ½' in diameter) As I looked inside the cross section that had been cut I was pleased to find in fact, a live colony of honeybees clustered together on their comb.

The colony had made their home inside the tree via an open knothole in the side of the tree (approximately 2" in diameter) and appeared to be in good health inside.

The homeowner was obviously concerned about the future of the colony and Honeybees overall, and that was the reason he reached out for assistance. I explained that if the colony were left “as is” with their hive partially exposed, or if they were disturbed in an attempt to relocate them during this time of year, they would almost certainly perish. The homeowner agreed to leave the section of the tree that contained the colony (approximately 7-8’ long) on his property until the spring when I explained that I could relocate them.

I took action to seal the cut end of the log that had exposed the colony by first, lightly packing the opening with fiberglass insulation, then using a piece of 2” thick foam board insulation and securing it to the end of the log, covering the hole tightly.

The homeowner had the logger move the tree section with a machine to a more convenient location on the property. I am optimistic that we gave the colony every opportunity to survive the rest of the cold months. When we get another warmer day, I will open the insulated end of the log and add some bee candy to ensure they have enough food and also to administer some Apivar, as I am certain that there is a mite count that will need to be dealt with since it is a feral colony and it must be assumed they have significant mite load.



In the end, it just demonstrates that even though we live in the most densely populated County of the most densely populated state in the union, Honeybees can adapt to one degree or another under varying conditions. In addition, even though there’s no way of knowing the age of this particular colony or how long its bee inhabiting this particular tree, it is encouraging to find a feral colony surviving on its own in spite of mites and other maladies. Perhaps one day scientists will discover that Honeybees have been able to adapt, overcome and prevail over the scourge of the Varroa Mite Destructor.



BEEKEEPERS



# American Beekeeping Federation Conference

by John A. Gaut

I was fortunate to be able to attend the American Beekeeping Conference in Reno, Nevada earlier in January. Stan Wasitowski (S & F Honey Farm) and I were the New Jersey State Delegates. I was embarrassed to tell other beekeepers I was from New Jersey though. Many folks were aware the Garden State with the Honey Bee as the State insect was trying to severely restrict beekeeping. There were a lot of questions about the proposed beekeeping regulations. The overall concern was that these irrational regulations could spread to other states.



**The New Jersey contingent: John Gaut, Meghan McConnell, Fran Wasitowski, and Stan Wasitowski. Loretta and Bill Cheswick also attended from New Jersey.**

The conference started on Wednesday and concluded on Saturday evening with a banquet. The banquet included the presentation of many awards and the announcement of the new Honey Bee Queen and Princess, Miss Pennsylvania and Miss Wisconsin respectfully. The American Bee Research Conference was ongoing at the same time, so I got to dive into some of the latest research. Following is a few highlights of both conferences.

The four P's of Pollinator Health continue to be a problem to varying degrees in different locations.

- Parasites (Varroa)
- Pesticides
- Pathogens (Bacterial, Fungal and Viral infections)
- Poor Nutrition

Some also added the Internet. One comment was **“Don't let the internet kill your bees.”**

Randy Oliver presented his latest findings using an Oxalic Acid and Glycerin solution in a cellulose medium (towels or card board strips). While initial results were promising, he has more work to determine the dosage, duration of treatment, how the OA is distributed and the optimum formula. Oxalic Acid with Glycerin is still in the experimental phase and not ready for general use!

There were several presentations related to Nosema Ceranae. Some commercial beekeepers commented that they do not worry about Nosema since they see no impact on colony health; and there is no treatment. Research is showing that infected bees have higher respiration rates, lower lipids and higher (earlier) mortality. The overall impact on the colony may be subtle, but there is an impact. The best option for controlling Nosema may be genetics, selecting queens from colonies that have low nosema levels.

Presentations related to Queen Rearing were very interesting, at least for me 😊. Selection for desirable heritable traits in local stock was the underlying theme of many presentations. Continuous selection is needed, otherwise the trait is diluted after a few generations. I picked up a few improvements I can make in my selection and mating processes. The Black Queen Cell Virus is now common throughout the country. Monitoring all virus levels in the queen rearing apiary is recommended. Hygienic testing is also recommended. Breeders continue to develop mite resistance lines including the mite biters and now the “Pol-line.” Breeders are also selecting queens that show resistance to viruses.

A presentation about Gamma Irradiation shared the following results:

- Irradiation had strong effects against chalkbrood, Deformed Wing Virus and Nosema
- Irradiation did not work completely against Black Queen Cell Virus and had little to no effect on Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus.
- Irradiation does improve colony health, but is only a “first step.”

Dr. Geraldine Wright once again presented solid scientific information related to honey bee nutrition, especially pollen and protein substitutes. She and her team have analyzed many types of pollen for nutrient content. There is a wide variation! Protein content varies widely. Some Essential Amino Acids are missing from many pollens. Other pollens have the missing amino acids but are still have an incomplete amino acids profile. Some pollens are low in fatty acids/sterols. (Royal Jelly is 13% fat. And a deficiency in Omega3, Linolenic Acid impairs honey bee learning.) Therefore, diversity of pollen sources is important. Protein subs usually have all the required amino acids and other nutrients but still do not perform as well as natural pollen. Some protein subs are close though; others are miles away. If there is limited pollen, feeding a protein sub is much better than letting the bees starve. (Her blood pressure went up when there was one vendor presenting the latest “magic supplement” without any data to back up the claims. I had to compliment her after she challenged the speaker.)

The Bee Informed Partnership presented data related to colony losses and also some good management techniques. Annual Colony losses have remained constant in recent years totaling over 30%. The mite count in September is a good predictor of colony losses in the winter; if the mite count is high in September there will be more colony losses. Beekeepers that effectively controlled mites in September and October had very low losses. Re-infestation is a problem

in many locations. Mites from collapsing colonies immigrate into health colonies (via robbing or drifting). Beekeepers that monitor for mites 6 times a year (using an alcohol wash) were highly successful.

Indoor wintering of hives was a featured panel presentation and discussion. As an Engineer, I was very interested in the building and air handling design parameters. Colony health and build-up was much better when compared to outdoor wintering in California.

Dr. Jamie Ellis of the University of Florida was a very dynamic and interesting speaker. He talked about the challenges of Honey Bee research and some of the findings at Florida. Dr. Ellis will be speaking at our October meeting!



**Dr. Jaimie Ellis**

I found the conference to be very worthwhile. Especially interesting was the latest research and management techniques. It is also great to see other beekeepers I rarely see and meet new beekeepers. The attendees were a mix of small beekeepers with only a few hives, many sideline beekeepers with 50 to 300 hives and large commercial beekeepers. Some of the commercial guys and gals had closer to 10,000 hives! Everyone loves the honey bee!!

Next year's conference is in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. It's on my calendar!

# Rutherford loves its beekeepers!

by Jaimie Winters

The Northeast New Jersey Beekeepers is prominently represented in the Coccia Realty window on Rutherford's Park Avenue this month. The real estate company invites organizations to highlight their initiatives in their large office window on a rotating basis and for the last two years the beekeepers have taken up the spot for the month of January. The window features a beekeeper in full gear working her hive, examples of an array of honey from Rutherford's seven beekeepers, an observation hive, frames depicting bee activity and various educational posters. Robert Vitali helped set up this year's display that has shoppers stopping to learn about our bees.

Rutherford beekeepers and their bees are the highlight of events throughout the year including the First Presbyterian Church's Bee Blessing and Honey Harvest, the Tree Festival, Lady Bug Festival, Multicultural Festival and Labor Day Street Fair. The beekeepers are also featured speakers at Scouting and Gardening meetings. Rutherford loves its beekeepers and was one of the first towns to pass a resolution opposing the beekeeping proposals which would zone out beekeeping in Rutherford. Coccia Realty is located at 11 Park Ave., Rutherford, near the train station.



# Beekeeping Memories

## Refreshments and the “Dessert Queens”

by

Karl Schoenknecht

Some of our beekeepers make mead, purchase baked goods, or bring something their spouses made, but few, if any, ever make desserts. One exception is Tom Fuscaldo, who long ago shared with us some of his homemade honey ice cream, but I must write about the members who have provided food at our meetings for decades. Many of our “dessert queens” of the past have dedicated themselves to providing our members with a variety of homemade food and assorted desserts.

Of all the members I remember, I must mention Marion Scherer. For years, long before I became a beekeeper in 1982, at the old kitchen of the Glenrock Annex she prepared the coffee, put out paper plates and what was necessary for the food that was brought for our meetings. When the meetings were over she washed the coffee pot and removed the trash. She was thankful when someone helped her, but she never complained and she was so reliable that members just took it for granted that she would always be a part of our meetings. Marion was soft spoken and content to remain behind the scenes.

One night we hooked up a microphone for Tom Fuscaldo, who brought in a VCR and an older style TV monitor to show educational films on beekeeping. There was only one electrical outlet nearby in that old building but someone found an 18 gauge extension cord with three sockets and things worked well until Marion plugged in the coffee pot. We were watching the film when suddenly the extension cord burst into flames. Fortunately, our recording secretary and volunteer fireman, Rich Maynard jumped up, grabbed something to protect his hand and quickly pulled the extension cord out of the wall socket. The burning cord was quickly extinguished, but poor Marion blamed herself and memories of the event upset and embarrassed her. Marion began missing meetings, telling friends that she had a cold, or wasn't feeling up to it. But to this day, I still wonder if that event caused her to stop coming to meetings.

I also remember Marie Springer and her young daughter Mary. Marie made salads and desserts of many kinds. On meeting days, Marie would cook and bake regularly and try something new at each meeting. Later Marie moved to Sussex County and had trouble with the long trip to Glen Rock. In 2009 she said she was moving to Washington D.C. to make our Government better.

Several other members have baked for our meetings but Celia Miller, our current dessert extraordinaire, is the best the club has ever had! Everything she makes is delicious and better tasting than any of the bakeries in our area.

Celia, I and the rest of the Northeast Beekeepers, truly appreciate your efforts and yummy treats! Thanks also to Tom, your husband, for being your assistant and helping cart all those different goodies from your home to our meetings. Thank you for all that you do!



Northeast New Jersey Beekeeper...

Public Group

Joined ▾

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Notifications

...



Our Facebook Group has **over 1750 fans** from all over the world! It's a great place to connect to other beekeepers, so be 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
Mike Miller	Club apparel
Bob Slanzi	Meadmaster

**Next Month**

**Spring Management: How to have a strong start to the season**



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