



bc  
ba

Barnstable County  
Beekeepers Association



## buzzwords

<http://www.barnstablebeekeepers.org>

**December 2019**

### Upcoming Meetings

**7:30 pm at the West Barnstable Community Building on Route 149.**

**Refreshments are back!!!  
We'd love to have some holiday nibbles!! Bring goodies to share!**

New beekeepers and 2020 bee school attendees welcome to attend!!



### **December 10 Holiday Market**

The Can't-Miss event of the holiday season will soon be upon us. Circle December 10 at 7:30 PM on your calendar as that marks the annual BCBA Holiday Fair at our usual meeting spot at the Community Building in West Barnstable. Club members will be showcasing their locally sourced and hand-crafted wares which are ideal for holiday gifts. Expect to see honey, bees wax lotions, quilted and sewn items, greeting cards, tree seedlings and who knows what else. Plus, the evening will feature live holiday music for all to enjoy.

There is still space for additional vendors. The space is free but please bring your own display table. Vendors should plan to arrive at 7 to set up. If you would like to showcase your talents and maybe make a bit of holiday cash, please contact me at [john.a.a.beach@comcast.net](mailto:john.a.a.beach@comcast.net) to reserve your space. Look forward to seeing you there!

### From the Board

The temps are dropping and our girls are huddled up in the hive. It's the quiet time in the beekeeping calendar. So what's a beekeeper to do when there's nothing to do in the hive?

1. Catch up on your reading on bees. The Barnstable Library has a good collection of books and magazines on beekeeping.
2. Watch beekeeping videos on YouTube.
3. Take stock of your equipment. Built boxes and frames and organize your beekeeping supplies.
4. Check out Australia beekeeping Facebook sites - It's summer there!
5. Attend BCBA meetings. If possible, arrive early and help set up.
6. Watch the hives when temps get above 50 and hopefully catch some cleansing flights.
7. Render the wax you collected. Try your hand at candle making or beauty products.
8. Collect recipes using honey.
9. Submit articles and interesting information to the newsletter or [club Facebook group](#).
10. Miss our bees!

Maria & Todd Cashdollar

### Floral Items At Market!!

Looking for something for your pollinator garden?

Come to the december club event and pick up some free canna lillies.

Brian Malone



### Newsletter Submissions

Please send Buzzwords submissions to [David Whalley](mailto:david.a.whalley@gmail.com) david.a.whalley@gmail.com.

We are looking for good stories, photos, links, news about talks and presentations you've done or seen, book and movie reviews, and items for sale or free to good home! PDF, scanned document files, and hard copy submissions are not acceptable. You can create files in Word, Pages, Notepad, TextEdit, etc. for articles.

## DUES ARE DUE

The association's year ends at the year's end so come January 1st your 2020 membership dues are due.

Attached at the end of the newsletter is our NEW form. We wish all to print and include this with your \$20 fee as there is new information requested. We are contemplating a club directory and wish your approval for inclusion. And we are looking for unique help on some of our committees thus the new questions on the form. Please include this with your \$20 membership fee.

***Bee school folks – your dues are paid for 2020!!***

Claire Desilets

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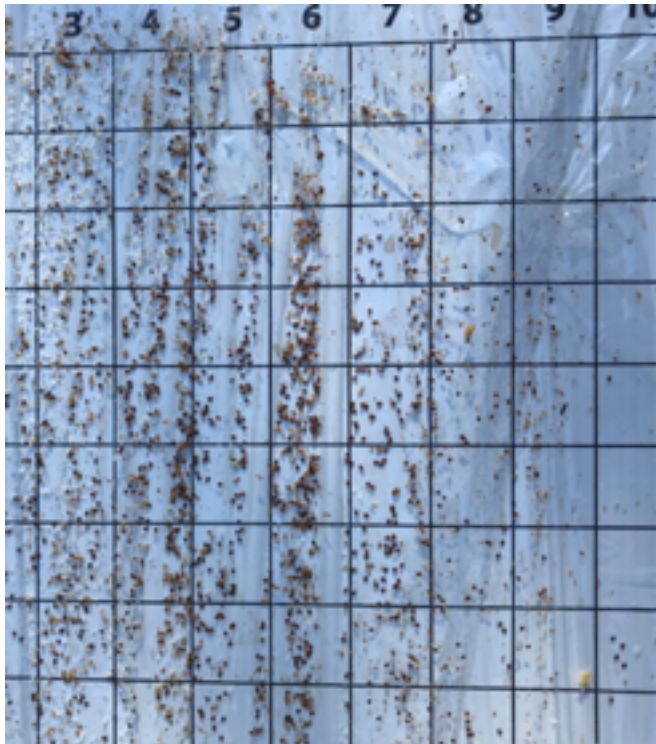
## HAVE YOU READ A GOOD BOOK LATELY?

Now that our bees are tucked in for the winter, we can relax a bit, cross our fingers, repair and make new equipment and read a few books. We would love to have you share a paragraph or two with us. Whether it be fiction, non-fiction or a bee text, could you send a snippet to [david.a.whalley@gmail.com](mailto:david.a.whalley@gmail.com), our newsletter lead person?

David Whalley

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## VARROA, VARROA, VARROA!!!



Most of you can recognize those little dots on the bottom board to the left. This was a varroa drop noted a few days after an Oxalic Acid dribble. Can you imagine if your bees had to go through the winter with all those critters tucked under their under side?

We still have lots to learn and when best to treat and what best to treat with. Keep reading this winter and certainly check out [www.scientificbeekeeping.com](http://www.scientificbeekeeping.com) as Randy Oliver continues to delve into the life of this pest.

Also, check out [www.beecombplex.com](http://www.beecombplex.com) for a new idea that sounds very exciting to zap the varroa mites. A couple of Cornell PhD students are working on this little optical chip that will sit in a frame. A laser powered by a cartridge is said to zap the mite when it comes in contact with the laser. And it is harmless to our bees. Perhaps another tool in the tool box and not a miticide that is showing some promise.

Stay tuned!!

Claire

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## We Are Thankful .....

Back in July of 2018, we lost a long time member. David Graham of Woods Hole enjoyed everything out of doors. Early on, as a sailor, he raced Cape Cod Knockabouts and worked up to captain of the 40 foot research vessel "Ciona" out of Woods Hole. When not on the ocean, Dave could be found collecting marine specimens for the Marine Biological Laboratory, planting cranberry vines, working in marine construction or landscaping. Dave was said to be an avid ecologist and generously shared his knowledge. He mentored

Check out the BCBA Facebook page for shared links, photos, and questions/answers! Join the conversation!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BarnstableCountyBeeA/>

## Forage

[Why Did My Bees Die?????](#)

[Give Bees A Chance - Fungi Perfect!!](#)

many beekeepers over the years and some of us were fortunate to receive a newspaper clipping with a note sharing his enthusiasm of honey bees. His father, Herbert W. Graham, Ph.D. was one of the folks to start the Barnstable County Beekeepers Association in 1973.

We are acknowledging his life and contributions at this time because BCBA has been the recipient of a very generous donation from David's trust. Our board of directors are now in discussion as to how best to use these funds.

Claire

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## Things That Work for Me

I'd be one of the last to tell other beekeepers explicitly what to do but, having been able to sustain an apiary on the outer Cape for quite a few years without buying bees, I want to share what seems to be essential for me. To keep it simple and minimize the verbiage, I list only what I consider critical management by month in bullet form. This is a work in progress submitted to invite comments and hopefully work towards a management protocol that maximizes colony survival and productivity on the Cape through the years. [I've left out all my queen-rearing activities to keep it simple for those without the time for that seasonally intensive, but highly rewarding, work.

### March

- Make sure there's honey or dry sugar in intimate contact with winter clusters.
- Don't feed pollen or pollen substitute in spring to avoid Nosema if (when!) spring weather turns wet and cold. The Cape has excellent natural maple and willow pollen sources.

### April (and May)

- Feed syrup to light colonies during bad spring weather to avoid starvation.
- Add box of drawn comb over strongest colonies (8-10 seams of bees) but keep weak colonies tight to keep brood nest warm.

### May (and June)

- Check strong colonies at least every nine days for swarm cells to avert swarming.

### June

- Split up weaker colonies to make nucs and add queen cells from locally adapted stock. (This is the best use of weak colonies now because they will not make a honey crop.)
- Super up strong colonies for locust nectar flow.

### July

- Begin monitoring for Varroa and treat colonies over 2-percent infested with formic acid.
- Cage queens for three weeks during July dearth. Then treat colonies with oxalic acid to kill most (phoretic) mites. (Planned for this year.)

### August (after Clethra harvest mid-month)

- Leave one medium super, at least, full of honey for winter feed. At least here, colonies never gain weight after Clethra bloom.
- Feed pollen substitute (e.g. UltraBee), at least 4 lbs per colony squashed between brood chambers, i.e. close to brood, to nurture fat "winter bees".
- Monitor Varroa again; treat infestations over 2 percent with formic acid to reduce mite infestation and virus infection in the brood that will become winter bees.

### September

- Top off light colonies with 2:1 syrup. Single-deep (or double medium) should weigh 70-80 lbs gross hive weight. Double deep (or triple medium) colonies should weigh at least 120 lbs gross hive weight by end of month.

### October

- Monitor for Varroa again and tag colonies: 1) with low counts for source of queen grafts next spring; and 2) with high counts for oxalic acid treatment next month.

### November

- Treat with oxalic acid dribble or sublimation.
- Add overhead insulation (I use 1-inch-thick polystyrene). I also still wrap hives with tar paper or black filter fabric, but wonder if the bees need it.

## December- February

- Add dry sugar to top bars of light colonies: <100 lbs for 3-mediums, <70 lbs for 2-medium hives gross weight.

One final note, a pretty good estimate of gross hive weight can be obtained by hooking a spring scale (or, easier to read, a digital luggage scale) to a lag screw or hook fastened to the rear of the bottom board and lifting the back of the hive just slightly (< 2 degrees or about 0.5") off the hive stand. Double the recorded value to get a rough idea of total hive weight. I checked this method with two hives on platform scales, which accurately measure total hive weight, and it worked fairly well.

John Portnoy

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## RESOURCES

The following officers and directors are a great resource to answer questions and requests for assistance.

<b>Officers</b>		
<b>President</b>	Michael D. Smith	<a href="mailto:michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com">michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Maria Cashdollar	<a href="mailto:winter64@aol.com">winter64@aol.com</a>
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	Claire Desilets	<a href="mailto:beekeeper@gmail.com">beekeeper@gmail.com</a>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Deborah Carmel	<a href="mailto:deborahcarmel429@gmail.com">deborahcarmel429@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Lynn Heslinga	<a href="mailto:lynneslinga@gmail.com">lynneslinga@gmail.com</a>

## Directors

Marthe	Ayers	<a href="mailto:mfoura32@aol.com">mfoura32@aol.com</a>		Louise	Hopper	<a href="mailto:lvh2925@comcast.net">lvh2925@comcast.net</a>
Phyllis	Bayer	<a href="mailto:pbayer@IFAW.org">pbayer@IFAW.org</a>		Mary Anne	Mann	<a href="mailto:hummann@outlook.com">hummann@outlook.com</a>
John	Beach	<a href="mailto:john.a.beach@comcast.net">john.a.beach@comcast.net</a>		Andy	Morris	<a href="mailto:andymorris02553@gmail.com">andymorris02553@gmail.com</a>
Todd	Cashdollar	<a href="mailto:thruheavenseyez@aol.com">thruheavenseyez@aol.com</a>		Brian	O'Donnell	<a href="mailto:bjmdod98@gmail.com">bjmdod98@gmail.com</a>
Jennifer	Cattin	<a href="mailto:jencattin@gmail.com">jencattin@gmail.com</a>		Lisa	Sheehy	<a href="mailto:lisasheehy@msn.com">lisasheehy@msn.com</a>
Melissa	Caughey	<a href="mailto:pcmc2000@msn.com">pcmc2000@msn.com</a>		Donna	Tompkins	<a href="mailto:donnatomp@comcast.net">donnatomp@comcast.net</a>
Peter B	Cooper	<a href="mailto:brpbcl@gmail.com">brpbcl@gmail.com</a>		Dave	Whalley	<a href="mailto:David.a.whalley@gmail.com">David.a.whalley@gmail.com</a>
Olga	DiSavino	<a href="mailto:ack_olenka@yahoo.com">ack_olenka@yahoo.com</a>		Miguel	Zamora	<a href="mailto:zamorasmiguel@gmail.com">zamorasmiguel@gmail.com</a>
Edward	Hegner	<a href="mailto:edward.hegner@gmail.com">edward.hegner@gmail.com</a>				