



**Barnstable County  
Beekeepers Association**

# **buzzwords**

<http://www.barnstablebeekeepers.org>

**January 2016**

## **January Meeting**

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, January 10th, 7:30 pm at the West Barnstable Community Building on Route 149.

**SPEAKER:** Noah Wilson-Rich, Ph.D. will provide us with what is in store with beekeeping in the next 10 years. Noah is founder of The Best Bees Company of Boston in 2010 which provides full service beekeeping for residential folks and businesses across the country. His research includes apitherapy, propolis, urban ecology and a number of other papers contributing to the health of the honey bee.

Check out his website at [bestbees.com](http://bestbees.com).



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## **Bee School**

**Classes begin Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm at the West Barnstable Community building.**

**FIRST CLASS** – Introduction to beekeeping and a peek at the equipment needed to get started will be covered.

**SECOND CLASS** – Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, same time, same place

Equipment presentation continued followed by frame building workshop and a raffle.

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## From the Board

### *Beekeeping, A Hobby for All Ages*

After more than a decade of visiting the Bee Hut at the Barnstable County Fair, my husband and I finally decided to become beekeepers. We had talked about it for years, but never seemed to take the plunge. Then, in summer 2014, while once again visiting the Bee Hut, the timing just seemed right. Two years before, my mom had moved in with us following a stroke and Todd and I became her caretakers. She very much enjoyed the fair, and shared our fondness for the Bee Hut, having visited it with us several times. We were in search of ways to make sure our world didn't get too small, and so, in winter 2014, Todd took the beekeeping class, and I studied the materials at home. Mom loved hearing us exchange information and once Bee School was over, the three of us attended several BCBA meetings together. She took great pride in helping us as we assembled our first hive and frames. She asked questions, and despite her increasing dementia, never tired of learning about our new hobby. Mom had always been a nature lover, and could occupy herself for hours in our backyard, watching the birds and wildlife. The bees were a logical extension of this passion.



In April 2015, mom proudly accompanied us as we picked up our first package of bees. She sat on the deck watching intently as our mentor helped us install them, and again flooded us with questions and encouragement. In the weeks that followed, she reveled at our updates and celebrated with us as they flourished. Shortly thereafter, mom's

health and mental status began to decline further, and we were no longer able to care for her safely at home, as we faced the difficult decision of transitioning her to a nursing home. We visited her frequently and brought her videos of our inspections. She couldn't have been more fascinated.

As mom's language decreased, she could no longer recall the word "bees," but still asked about them, referring to them now as "our honeys." We loved her substitutions, and this became one of our favorites. Fortunately, the year was a very successful one, and she was able to taste the fruits of our labor of love, and absolutely loved the flowery goodness of fresh honey.

Our bees made it through their first winter, and in the spring, we found ourselves needing



to split the hive when we discovered several swarm cells. Again, we visited mom, showing her photos and explaining the process we had to complete and that we now had two hives. Imagine our surprise when she said, "So that means that you will have two queens." This obviously was not a long term memory, as she knew little about bees prior to our undertaking, and we were particularly pleased as she demonstrated the recall of this newer knowledge.

Mom turned 91 in November. On the shelf in her room sits a jar of our honey. Now and then, she enjoys it in a cup of tea. Mostly though, she just likes to know it's there. Though her memory continues to fade and her language is becoming more and more impaired, she consistently asks about our bees. There are countless things that I love about beekeeping, but there is truly nothing that I love more than that mom is a part of it.

### *Maria Cashdollar*

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Did you go to the BCBA's annual holiday festival on December 13? If not, here is what you missed but, first, many thanks to the numerous vendors and patrons who made it a festive and fun event. It is always amazing to me (although I suppose it shouldn't be) how creative and skillful our member/vendors are. From knitting to bees wax candles to lotions to local honey to club calendars, t shirts and sun catchers to Slovenian bee hives to imported baskets from Madagascar and much more, there was something for everyone. Not surprising, the solid patronage of our members spoke to the quality of the offerings. And where else could you be talking about formic acid while simultaneously testing a soothing hand cream or appreciating the color of a local honey?

There is something to be said for "shopping local." Our holiday festival certainly showcased what is best about this. Where else are vendors afforded a no-cost table to showcase their goods and where else can buyers purchase quality "stuff" from our neighbors and fellow beekeepers? Vendors and patrons, mark you calendar for 12/12/17, when we'll be doing it all again!

### *John Beach*

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#### **WANT TO BRUSH UP ON NOSEMA?**

These sites were provided by Kim Skyrn our Chief Apiary inspector after a report of a high spore count.

<http://www.beeccdcap.uga.edu/documents/CAPArticle6.html>

<http://entomology.ucdavis.edu/files/147621.pdf>

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## TRICK THEM MICE!!

Driving through the bogs the other day, I noticed debris behind the mouse guard on a dead out hive. Huh? The mouse guard waste left in for good ventilation to prevent a wax moth infestation and mold late fall. Well, upon investigation by pulling the two deeps apart, FIVE, that is 5 mice jumped out? Yuck! And EEK! No damage done yet, but quite a collection of debris for their new nest was removed. Such creative little critters but not this time on my dime! They were able to squeeze in one end of the mouse guard (1/2" hardware cloth) which was about 3/4" too short. Ok, these are nice frames for a new package to get started with so a new approach was needed. Got it! Storing my queen excluders in all hives, it was moved down BELOW the bottom deep box resting directly on the bottom board. The inner cover was flipped to the summer side (flat side down) and the ventilation stick was placed against the opening to block. The challenge is on! But why did it take me so long to figure this out?

*Claire Desliets*

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## Pay It Forward

Do you recall how excited and nervous you were when you first started beekeeping? Me too! It wasn't so long ago that we were anxiously awaiting the email to tell us that our bees had arrived. During that time, it was so helpful to have our mentor to email questions to or



give a quick call for advice. We were so grateful to have him show us how to install our bees, despite the countless You-tube videos we had watched on the process! In the months that followed, he was always willing to provide guidance and suggestions, and responded quickly to any concerns we had. Thanks Stan!

If you are one of those people who benefited from the help of a mentor, why not consider being one? It's a great opportunity to help encourage and support new beekeepers and gives you a chance to connect with new people in the club. If you are worried that you may not know enough, don't be. There are other people available to weigh in and provide input if a situation you encounter with your newbie is outside of the realm of your experience. There isn't a large time commitment involved, and often questions can be answered via email, text, or a quick phone call. You aren't expected to handhold through the whole process; rather, you will served as a resource and someone to connect with as the newbees make their way through this endeavor!

Won't you join us in paying it forward?

*Maria Cashdollar*

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## CAPE BEE

Bit of history – It seems fitting as we close one year and welcome a new one to look back at our successes and failures.

Back in 2009 there was an interest among a few BCBA members to consider a queen-rearing project. Prompting the interest was the availability of a Specialty Crop Funding through the USDA and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. The three year grant was written and received and thus begun Cape Bee in 2010.

Over the next few years, several directions were taken learning from our failures. Initially, the approach was to find a simple method to teach members to raise their own queens through the Miller method, a fun but not practical approach. The next step was for a few members to graft larva, develop queens through the mating process and sell the queens as mated, laying queens. Again, not a practical approach for BCBA members, as too many bees and brood were needed to realize the final product. It should be noted each season we either started with packages, nucleus colonies or purchased Russian, Carniolan or costly breeder queens. None proved to be exceptional but those of us accepting these various bees into our apiaries did benefit due the genetic diversity.

Four years ago, the club was invited to move the various club hives to the county property, site of the former county farm and a portion currently farmed by Tim Friary of the Cape Cod Organic Farm in Barnstable. This was a perfect move and from here our goals changed. There remained interest and a need for locally raised queens but more hands-on education was needed to instruct members on how to make splits and create nucleus colonies. The first winter we lost all the hives but with income left from the grant, we purchased 12 nucleus colonies and 12 packages. This was found to be an overwhelming number to manage by a few volunteers, but we forged on. Queen rearing continued with a few members grafting and the decision was made to sell queen cells about to emerge to members, re-queen hives in our apiary and add a few cells to 5 frame splits for sale to members. The draw back here was the fact that the cells were very fragile and time was critical for making nucleus colonies before the virgin queens emerged. Transporting the cells also was a challenge.

The basic goals outlined in the fall of 2014 were to 1) develop a more locally adapted honeybee for our rigorous Cape environment, 2) promote both backyard queen rearing and the use of nucleus colonies among the BCBA membership and 3) reduce the damage of over-wintered colony loss by breeding better bees and over-wintering strong nucleus colonies. Because of the specialized equipment needed for queen rearing and number of hives needed, promoting queen rearing among members is not feasible. However, spreading the local genetics lives on with but a few folks queen rearing.

From 2014 to the present, the club maintains the apiary in Barnstable appreciative of the use of the acreage and the use of the farm's vacant building. Maintaining the property, thanks to two dedicated members, keeps it as a show place and convenient workshop location. Over the



last few years, a swarm of members have met on a weekly schedule to manage the hives. Monthly hive openings have occurred to help educate new and veteran beekeepers on the various management techniques and will continue May through November. Our goal is to maintain a minimum number of hives in order to properly manage but a sufficient number to make splits/nucs selling a few while working to find a good overwintering technique with these small clusters. As of this writing, Cape Bee has 16 standard hives and four 5 frame nucleus colonies going into winter with minimal treatment.

Queen rearing will continue by few using larva from healthy over wintered hives around the Cape. What is most exciting is to be selling newly hatched virgin queens. It is such a thrill to follow a grafted larva to a formed capped queen cell and finally see her emerge from the cell right in the cage. Again, these virgins are fragile and protocol must be followed exactly upon purchase! New equipment will be used come May of 2017 in hopes to improve our queen rearing and overwintering of the nucleus colonies. Good reports have been received from those members purchasing our nucleus colonies and queens so stay tuned as we educate and slowly spread some healthy, locally adapted queens around the Cape.

*Claire Desilets*

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## 2nd Annual BEE BALL: 9/30/17

If you're interested in helping organize the 2017 Beekeepers' Ball, please contact Kim Concra [klconcra@msn.com](mailto:klconcra@msn.com) or phone: [508-237-6616](tel:508-237-6616) for more info and directions. Our first committee meeting will be January 11th in Yarmouth.



*Kim Concra*

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## Domestically produced wax foundation available for Slovenian Beehives (AŽ)

Foundation for Slovenian Hives is now being manufactured in America with domestic wax. Wax foundation from Europe has been prohibited to be imported to the USA. Beginning immediately, foundation for the Slovenian AŽ frames can be obtained by calling Suzanne Brouillette, owner of Slovenian Beekeeping, Chesham, NH at 603 499 3730.

In addition to wax foundation Suzanne carries a complete line of all beekeeping equipment useful for Slovenian Hives. Near the shop in her "Red Barn" Suzanne has a medium sized Slovenian bee house in which she entertains tours and Q & A. Slovenian Beekeeping is located in Harrisville, NH (ten miles from Keene).

Harrisville is the best preserved small mill town in all of New England. The white trim red brick buildings alongside the mill pond and dam in the center of town creates one of the most beautiful landscapes and town settings imaginable. The General Store on Main Street provides coffee and sandwiches for winter day-trippers.

*Mark Simonitsch*

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## Mother Nature Killed my Hives

As beekeepers, we do our best to ensure that our bees survive the winter and make it to spring. As the snowflakes drift to the ground, we dream (or at least I do), of splitting the overwintered hives. But did you know that despite your best efforts sometimes the bees perish no matter what? Sadly it's true. As beekeepers we do our best to prevent winter demise by following helpful checklists created over the years by our members-

Winter Checklist:

- Varroa treatment prior to winter?
- Winter feeding of bees and checking on stores monthly? Replenish as needed.
- Protect the hives from drafts and strong winds?
- Clear the snow from the entrances when covered?
- Wrap the hives in black roofing paper to help stabilize temperatures within them?
- Make a quilting box or ventilate the hive to help with moisture?

Despite these measures, some of you will have hives that die. Why you ask? This is because of two reasons that you have relatively no control over as beekeepers. They are both caused by Mother Nature. Sometimes, when we have huge temperature swings in a matter of hours on the same day, the bees are caught off guard. When the temperatures fluctuate and dip rapidly, the bees are unable to re-cluster quickly enough. This happened last year. We had one day, when we experienced temperatures above sixty, then later that evening dropped into the low teens for the next few days. There was nothing that I could do. I discovered they died a few days later. They were not out on cleansing flights as expected. When this happens, you may see evidence. Bees are scattered throughout the hive, with plenty of food stores and no other signs of issues.

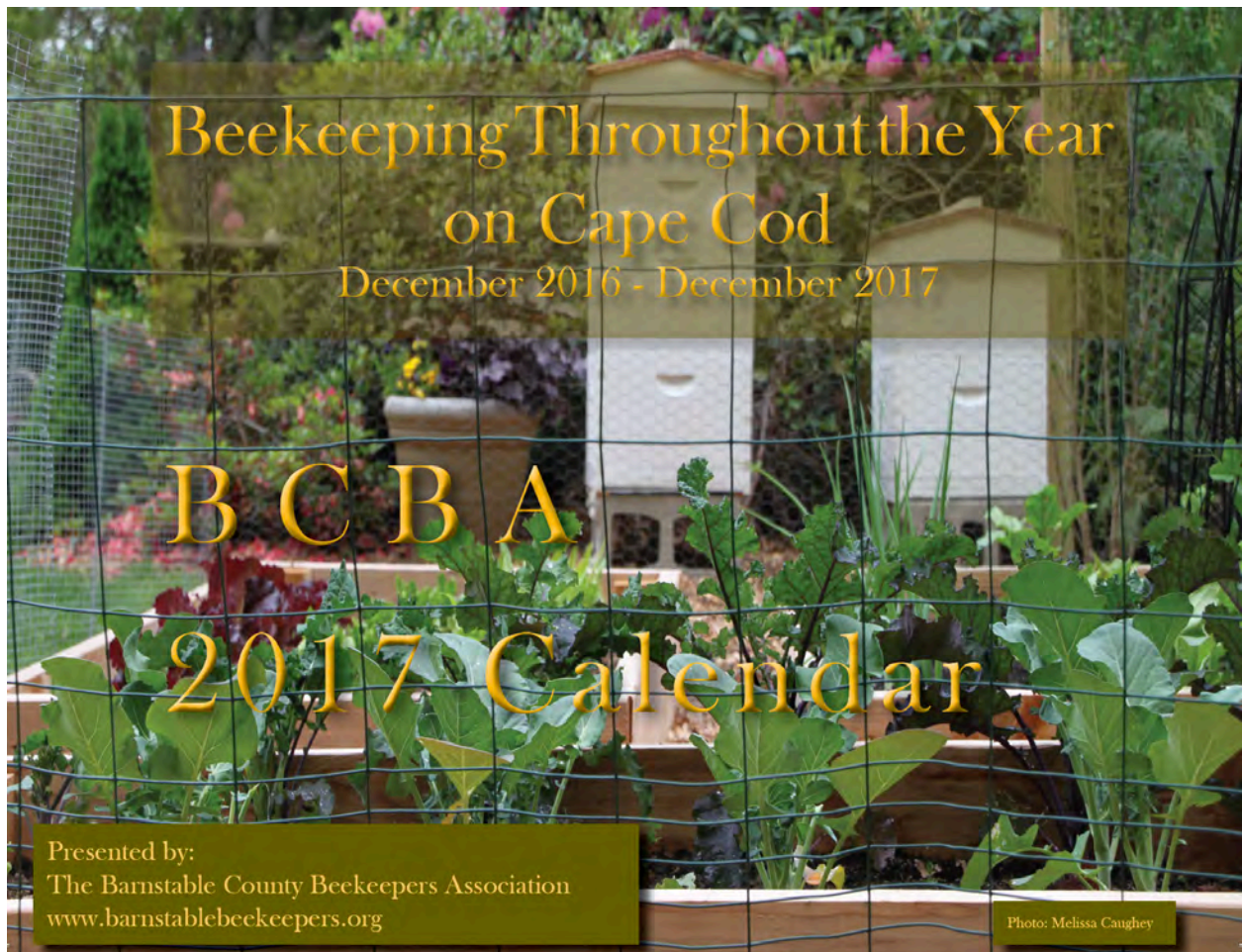
Bees can also perish if they are unable to break the cluster that they keep for warmth. Bees need warmer days in the upper 30s to be able to move closer to stored food sources within the hive. Bees will not break the clusters on strings of cold days even if they are starving and food is within mere inches of their wings. When you do a post-mortem check, you will discover the bees still in their "ball" compact. Some bees will even be found inside the cells, in an effort to keep warm. Food supplies are not an issue. Sadly, bees can freeze to death.

Beekeeping is an art. It is not a perfect science. We continually learn. Sometimes things are our own faults and other times, we have no control. After years of beekeeping on Cape Cod, I have learned that the winter weather is unpredictable. I always take time to reserve a new beehive or two now from a local apiary. It's not a bad idea, and I think you will find that most club members will happily pay you back for the bees you bought if you don't need them. I like to think of it as a bit of insurance. If there even is such a thing in beekeeping.

*Melissa Caughey*

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## 2017 Barnstable County Beekeepers Calendar



I hope everyone has been keeping track of their bees' health. What better way to track the activity of your hive than with photographs? It's also good to document the winter work you're



doing as well! If you're building frames or organizing your woodenware, send us some pics! Maybe you're making lip balm or soap, melting down wax for candles or you've made some, send us some pics!

Non-photographic contributions are also good. Do you have a saying or catch phrase related to bees, beekeeping, honey, wax, etc? I'm not looking for poetry, but the practical. My go to phrase came to me from Bobby Waldron, "bees don't read the same books we do."

Whichever you can supply, please email <mailto:michaedgetsmail@gmail.com>!

*Joe McClure*

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### **Argentinian Winter Colony Loss Prevention through Queen Replacement**

Even considering that winter colony losses can be explained by a complex interaction of factors, requeening appears as one of the most important management practices to reduce colony loss phenomenon in Argentina. The link below explains a recent study to determine if the practice by some Argentinian beekeepers of replacing queens in the fall could be statistically identified as beneficial to reducing over wintering colony losses. Taken into consideration in the discussion presented is an acknowledgement of other factors common to winter losses such as poor management of the apiary by the beekeeper. Argentina bee colonies experience significant varroa infestation.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00218839.2016.1238595?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

*Mark Simonitsch*

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### **The Continuing Beekeeping Adventures of Paul 'n Patty (part 9)**

"I bought you a gift," said Patty. "I've already worked on mine. See." She handed Paul a small loose-leaf notebook.

"What's this for?" he inquired.

Patty squinted her eyes at Paul. "Don't you remember from bee school? It was suggested several times, and it was even mentioned at the session when we learned how to introduce the package of bees into the new hive. We should keep detailed records of our hives."

Paul put their first copy of Bee Culture down on the mahogany lamp table next to the antique wingback chair. He had been reading an article about queen bee rearing in which they had strongly stressed the need for keeping records of the process. It seemed that timing was of the utmost importance when rearing queens. Wait too long at any step and things could get messy.

Although he remembered the times the instructors at bee school mentioned the need for keeping a journal about one's hive, he decided to tease Patty and pretend to not understand.

"Do you really think I can't remember what I did when I went into the hive last time?"

"OK," said Patty. "How many gallons of syrup did we make up to feed the bees?"

"Four."

"My bees have already taken about one and a half gallons from my feeder. How many have you taken?" asked Patty.

Paul smiled because he remembered the afternoon of the Syrup-filled Shoe Incident and responded with, "One. Do you really think that stuff is important to keep track of?"

Patty just shook her head in mild disappointment and said, "Here's your notebook. The first page is a calendar, so at a glance you can see the last time you visited your hive. If you use different colored markers, you can schedule different reasons for going to your hive.

"I've laid the rest of the journal out so it is a checklist. I tried to think of as many things as I could, remembering the information we got from bee school, but I'm sure we'll have to revise the format as we mature as beekeepers."

"Do you mean," asked Paul, as he invitingly patted his lap, "that I'll have to carry this thing to the hive each time I visit? Can't I just wait to write the stuff in it when I get cone and back to the house?"

Patty accepted his invitation and sat down on his lap. "Paul, we are, as the more experienced members of the bee club, call us, 'Newbees'. If we start this experience with good habits, they will become old good habits. The answer to your question is: Yes, we'll have to bring our journals to the hive each and every time we visit the hives, and make noted on the spot."

Paul wrapped his arms around Patty and said, "I love it when you are forceful. What do you say we practice some other old good habits right now?"

*by Andy Morris*

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## Can smaller sized cells reduce varroa?

[https://resistantbees.com/index\\_e.html](https://resistantbees.com/index_e.html)

This blog has an energetic discussion about reducing varroa by manipulating cell size. Can this be correct? Some European beekeepers believe cell size is a contributor to the proliferation of the varroa mite. Without proof the scientific community is resistant to such ideas - but read for yourself in this blog.

Slovenian Professor Janko Božič is skeptical. One of his students chose to do a research project to measure cell sizes by free building bees - (without foundation). The student found that bees will naturally build a cell that can vary from 4.7 to 5.8 mm. Read the PDF below for further information - perhaps you will decide otherwise :)

*Mark Simonitsch*

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## Honey-Roasted Carrots

Substitute apple juice for bourbon, if you prefer. Look for bunches of carrots that are all about the same size so they'll cook evenly. If some are too big--or if you can't find real (sometimes labeled French) baby carrots--just peel the bigger ones and halve them lengthwise before roasting.

**Yield:** Makes 4 to 6 servings

### Ingredients

- 2 pounds baby carrots with tops
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons bourbon
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon chicken broth or water
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

### Preparation

1. Place a small roasting pan in oven. Preheat oven and pan to 500°.
2. Cut tops from carrots, leaving 1 inch of greenery on each carrot.
3. Stir together olive oil and 1 Tbsp. butter in preheated pan. Add carrots, salt, and pepper; toss to coat. Bake 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, melt remaining 2 Tbsp. butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallot; sauté 1 minute. Remove from heat, and stir in bourbon and next 2 ingredients. Return to heat, and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium, and cook 5 minutes or until mixture is syrupy.

5. Drizzle syrup over carrots; toss to coat. Bake 5 to 7 more minutes or until carrots are crisp-tender. Transfer to a serving dish, and sprinkle with thyme.

<http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/honey-roasted-carrots>

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### Check out our club's Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BarnstableCountyBeeA/>

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### DID YOU KNOW?

A hive of honey bees will fly 90,000 miles, the equivalent of three orbits around earth, to collect 2.2 pounds of nectar to produce honey.

[https://www.buzzfeed.com/jimbeam/things-you-should-know-about-honey-bees-right-now?utm\\_term=.wb7RGn8ZM#.tk8B3jG5d](https://www.buzzfeed.com/jimbeam/things-you-should-know-about-honey-bees-right-now?utm_term=.wb7RGn8ZM#.tk8B3jG5d)

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### CONSIDER JOINING THE MASSACHUSETTS BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION

For more information on the event and other state-wide happenings, you can download the Massachusetts Beekeepers Association brochure [here](#).

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### RESOURCES (accurate as of 1/17)

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

<b>Officers</b>		
President	Kalliope Egloff	<a href="mailto:kalliopeegloff@yahoo.com">kalliopeegloff@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Michael D. Smith	<a href="mailto:michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com">michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Claire Desilets	<a href="mailto:beekeepr@gmail.com">beekeepr@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Lynn Heslinga	<a href="mailto:lynneheslinga@gmail.com">lynneheslinga@gmail.com</a>



## Directors

Marthe	Ayers	mfoura32@aol.com		Mary Anne	Mann	hummann@outlook.com
John	Beach	john.a.beach@comcast.net		Rebecca	Matarazzi	Rebecca.matarazzi@raveis.com
Maria	Cashdollar	winter64@aol.com		Joseph	McClure	joegetsmail@gmail.com
Melissa	Caughey	pcmc2000@msn.com		Andy	Morris	andymorris02553@gmail.com
Kimberly	Concra	klconcra@msn.com		Brian	O'Donnell	bjmdod98@gmail.com
Peter B	Cooper	brpbc1@gmail.com		Melissa	Sanderson	melissa.a.sanderson@gmail.com
Claire	Desilets	beekeepr@gmail.com		Lisa	Sheehy	lissasheehy@msn.com
Kalliope	Egloff	kalliopeegloff@yahoo.com		Mark	Simonitsch	fishweirs@capecod.net
Lynn	Heslinga	lynneheslinga@gmail.com		Michael	Smith	michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com
Paul	Lefebvre	lefivr@gmail.com		Miguel	Zamora	zamorasmiguel@gmail.com
Julie	Lipkin	julie.lipkin45@gmail.com				