



# Buzz Words



[www.barnstablebeekeepers.org](http://www.barnstablebeekeepers.org)

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**Barnstable County Beekeepers Association**

**March 2016**

## ***MARCH MEETING***

The next meeting of the club is Tuesday, March 8th, at 7:30 p.m. at the West Barnstable Community Building, Route 149, West Barnstable. Our March meeting will feature Russell Norton, horticulturist of the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension. Russ will speak on pollinator plants and gardens and safe IPM. Refreshments will be served. Please feel free to bring a tasty treat along to share with your fellow beekeepers.

## ***ADDITIONAL BCBA MARCH MEETING***

Please reserve the evening of Tuesday, March 29th for an additional club meeting. Our Chief Apiary Inspector, Kim Skyrn and Taryn LaScola, Pesticide Program Coordinator/Chief Inspector will join us for a presentation and update on 1. Process of pesticide regulation and enforcement, 2. Ma bee kill program, 3. Oxalic Acid registration status 4. HopGuard II registration status and 5. Hive chemicals currently registered in Massachusetts. All these points are critical to the health of our honeybees here on Cape Cod.

## ***MASSACHUSETTS STATE BEE MEETING***

The state beekeeping association will hold their spring meeting on Saturday, March 12th, 2016 at the Topsfield Fairgrounds, Topsfield, Ma. Attached is the announcement and program of speakers.

## **FROM THE BOARD**

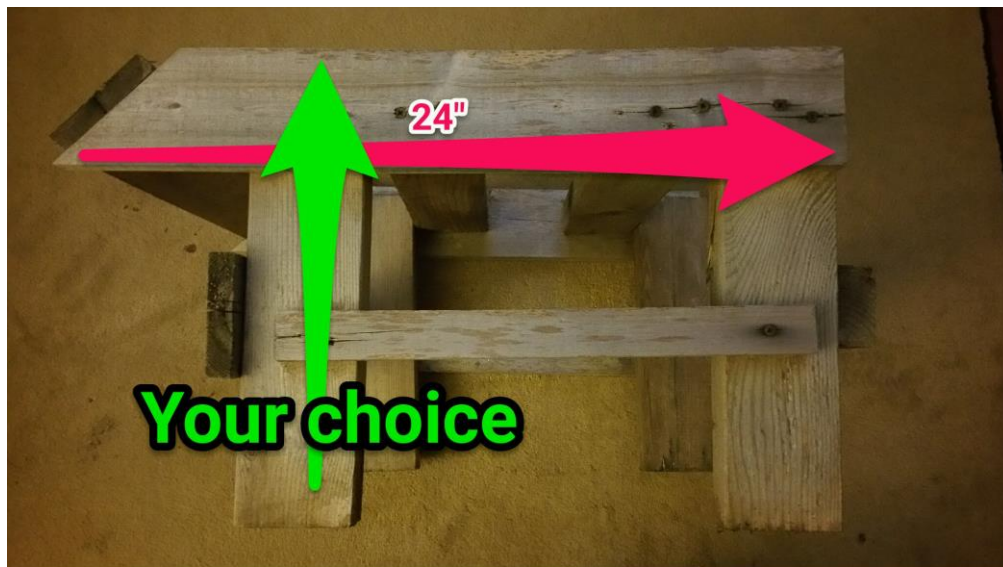
At the spring prep class, I'd mentioned about using discarded wood for hive stands.

There are abandoned pallets laying outside many businesses waiting for people to come take them home and give them a purpose. If you're going to put your hive in a field with high grass, you might use a homeless pallet as a heavy duty beach blanket to set your cinder blocks on and set your hive on them. This keeps the grass from growing and interfering with the flight path of your bees, and you won't have to use that loud lawn mower or weed whacker.

If you have access to some power tools and a pry bar, you can disassemble the pallet into three four foot 2 x 4s and ten or twelve four foot slats. That gives you the raw materials to open a world of possibilities. Grab more than one and you can use part of a slat to connect two 2 x 4s into an 8' length, and voila! You can cut some legs and another slat as a cross bar for stability.



Maybe you don't need a whole bench. Pull out that old circular saw with the shiny new blade and cut yourself a couple shorter pieces. Then you can use the 2 x 4s to make some legs and the slats to hold them together. On this stand, the overall length is 24". The cross bars on the inside are 16 1/4". The legs are 23.5", and they are 1/2" below the side slats that make a rim for you to set your bottom board inside.





The important thing when you use a thinner brace as in the photo is to screw it in at an angle as in the photo below. This will improve the stability in the wind. If you use a 1 x 4, you can use pairs of screws to supply that cross-wise stability. This is how the cross bar is attached to the front. The best thing about making your own stand is that you can design it to a height that works for you. Feel free to make the legs 6" longer or shorter depending on your height. If you make a bench, you can make it wide enough so it provides space for you to put down any boxes you remove.



-----*Joe McClure*

## ***BEE SCHOOL SCHEDULE***

Thursday, March 3rd – Pests and Diseases

Thursday, March 17th – Swarming and Prevention

## ***NEW SERVICE AND AVAILABILITY OF SPRING BEES***

We have a new service for identifying exactly which families of plants contributed to a honey sample. We are calling this HoneyDNA. Details are in our newly launched online shop:

[www.bestbees.com/shop](http://www.bestbees.com/shop)

Also, for any club members who still need bee packages, these are now available for purchase in the online shop. Prices are higher than all other package providers because we are raising funding for our research to improve bee health (with two research apiaries on Cape!). Can we let fellow club members know? Thank you.

Best regards,

Noah Wilson-Rich, Ph.D., Founder & Chief Scientific Officer

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## ***BEE INSPECTOR POSITION POSTED***

I wanted to share this job posting as it became online today! Please distribute widely to your members and others who may be interested for Eastern Mass work. They will need to apply online by visiting the link below:

<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=1600010K>

Thanks so much for your help in spreading this information,

-Kim Skyrn, PhD, Chief Apiary inspector

## ***SPRING CHORES IN THE BEE YARD***

March has to be the most challenging month in the bee year. One has done a great job of overwintering the colony, still plenty of stores with multiple cleansing flights throughout the winter and then come mid-March, the cluster is tight and dead. Very sad, very disturbing and very late to order bees. What went wrong so late? There are many possibilities. The cluster might have gotten too small to maintain a warm environment or a quick temperature plunge could have caught the hive off guard and they had no time to re-cluster. An extended cold spell could fine the cluster without food and starvation ensued. And keep in mind, the varroa mite does survive the winter and can live for 5 to 8 months from fall and into the winter thus feeding off the bees.

A dead out should be thoroughly cleaned, scraping the bottom board and leaving it in the sun to dry. Brood frames should be checked for damage and replaced especially if they are over 4 years old or heavily laden with drone comb/cells. If there are frames with honey left, they can remain in the hive, but the hive should be completely closed to prevent robbing or mouse damage. When preparing for a new package or nuc, only use one deep to start the new hive and certainly give them a few frames of honey on the outside walls leaving plenty of open space for the new queen to start laying when released. It is ok to leave a few dead bees if stuck in the cells as the new girls will clean out the debris and any mold. That might entice them to be more hygienic.

If you have successfully overwintered your hive, congratulations! The prevention of starvation this month should be a priority. Continue with dry sugar or fondant until the weather is suitable for daily flights. Once good weather is here, you may start feeding sugar syrup. Using 2:1 to start is helpful for the bees in the event of cold weather. There will be less liquid for them to expel. Switching to 1:1 syrup thereafter is fine. But if it is a strong hive and there is plenty of honey still stored, let them use the honey for more room or you will be creating a swarming situation.

Oh, and check your feeding pail to make sure the screen is not sealed with propolis or crystallized sugar. The club has both brood foundation and new feeding pails in stock if needed.  
CCD

-----Claire Desilets

***OH, NO!! NOT ANOTHER WORRY***

<https://www.zombeewatch.org/>

Thanks Susan Houghton

## ***TRIVIA***

It takes approximately 2,785 nurse bees to rear one larva from the time the egg is laid to capping the cell and they spend 10 hours, 16 minutes and 8 seconds to complete this feeding task. (Bee Culture Feb '16, Lindauer, 1953)

Do you know how honey bees tell the temperature in the hive? Well, they have temperature receptors on the 5 distal (end) segments of their antennae. It is so fine-tuned that the bees can detect a temperature difference of 0.45 degrees F and will “fly” into action. ( Jamie Ellis, ABJ, Feb '16)

## ***HELP STILL WANTED***

Looking for a few individuals to serve on board of Barnstable County Beekeepers Association. Help guide the growth of this soon-to-be non-profit as it serves local beekeepers. Duties include attendance at 3 board meetings yearly and assumption of other tasks as your time and skills permit. Opportunity for advancement to officer positions! No experience necessary but energy, humor and interest in working with a great group of people are definite plusses. Please contact John Beach at [john.a.beach@comcast.net](mailto:john.a.beach@comcast.net) . Deadline March 31.

## ***EQUIPMENT FOR SALE***

If anyone is looking for additional frames with new foundation and ready for your hive, please contact Louise Miller in Falmouth at 508-457-6689.

## ***SAVE THE DATE! BEEKEEPERS BALL 2016***



## ***IN THE NEWS***

An **important read** for MA beekeepers. This will affect all beekeepers in MA.  
<http://hillcountryobserver.com/2015news/dec2015bees.htm>

Check this out: We understand it received funding from Shark Tank!  
<http://www.beefreehoney.com/pages/saving-the-bees>

## ***RECIPE OF THE MONTH***

### ***ORANGE JUICE MASK***

Oranges soothe the skin and are believed to retard wrinkles. They are a wonderful tonic for dry to normal skin. For a skin cleanser, peel an orange, throw it in the blender and then mix the puree pulp with oatmeal. Massage onto pre-dampened skin, concentrating on oily, scaly areas. Rinse with lukewarm water.

Another mask:

The secret of this mask is in the tapioca that turns it into a gel. Either tapioca or plain gelatine dissolved in a bit of warm water may be mixed with fruit or vegetable purees for added toning. Maybe you can use some of the left over smoothies!!!!

In a small saucepan over low heat, mix 1 tablespoon tapioca and ½ cup of fresh orange juice. Stir in 2 tablespoons of honey and let the pudding simmer until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cool. Spread the mixture over the face and neck and let dry for 20 minutes. Rinse.

P.S.= You can eat the remainder or refrigerate for another day!!! -----Marte Ayers

## **TICK TESTING.....**

Cape Cod Cooperative Extension recently received funding from Cape Cod Healthcare as part of their Community Benefits Grant program. These funds will support a subsidized tick testing program for Cape Cod residents in 2016. Under this program, folks would pay \$15/test which normally runs \$50. The results provide valuable data for folks to share with their health care provider to help arrive at a correct diagnosis for tick-borne diseases. We beekeepers are certainly at risk.

It is a very easy process to submit a tick for testing: place tick in a sealable plastic bag, complete the online submission form at [www.TickReport.com](http://www.TickReport.com). Pay the \$15 fee on line with a credit card or mail a check, label the bag with the order number assigned by TickReport: send the labeled tick in an envelope to: Laboratory of Medical Zoology, Fernald Hall, Univ of Mass, 270 Stockbridge Road, Amherst, Ma 01003. Your results will follow in 5 business days or less.

## ***SOMETHING FUN***

A couple of goats were loose and grazing around the back lots of the Universal Movie Studios. As we know goats have a reputation of munching on most everything. Well somehow they got into some tins of old movie film loose on the reels. So after munching for a while, one goat

asked the other, how did you like *Gone With The Wind*? The other goat thought for a minute and then replied, I liked the book better!

-----Pete Cooper

### ***Learn More: Slovenian AZ Hive and BCBA***

By Mark Simonitsch email: fishweirs@capecod.net



**Background:** My heritage is Slovenian (formerly the Austrian state of Carniola). Slovenia is considered to be the “Beekeeper of Europe.” The Carniolan bee (*Apis mellifera carnica*) has been indigenous to this Alpine territory since the last Ice Age. Following many visits with Slovenian relatives I became convinced that the Slovenian AZ hive would allow me and other older beekeepers to continue keeping bees until we “drop.” No lifting more than one full frame of honey is the big attraction of using the Slovenian hive.

**BCBA** About four years ago a BCBA committee was formed to attempt to improve the Langstroth beehive. The committee met for about 12 months. The committee was formed coincidentally to BCBA member Mike Doyle ordering a Slovenian Hive in 2012. Earlier I had provided Mike with a drawing of the Slovenian AZ hive for building. After a review Mike knew he could build the cabinet quality hive with many internal considerations for the “bee space rule,” but why bother for only one hive. Three months later Mike asked me to stop by his shop. Surprise – he purchased a Slovenian AŽ beehive from Slovenia.

Soon the committee was examining “our” Slovenian hive. The hive was shipped to a Michigan business to have the hive duplicated. That effort failed. We agreed to dissolve the committee. Our decision was based on the belief that the Slovenian hive existed and “might” appeal to a few of those who wanted an improved “Lang”.



Meanwhile Mike and I were demonstrating the Slovenian AŽ hive and Slovenian beekeeping to bee clubs in southern New England. Next: I developed a tour of Slovenian Beekeeping for American beekeepers. I imported an ocean container of Slovenian hives to sell. Janko Božič, an American PhD Slovenian bee professor, agreed to write an English beekeeper's manual for the AŽ hive. Available: [www.slovenianbeekeeping.com](http://www.slovenianbeekeeping.com)

In April of 2015 BCBA member Stephen Daniel and I received our nine AŽ hives from Slovenia, placed them in a partially completed bee house and installed nine packages of Carniolan bees. In Fall 2015, I disposed of the tours and hive business to Suzanne Brouillette of Harrisville, NH. She is a very energetic beekeeper. She lived in Italy and had a tour business. Suzanne is doing a marvelous job with the business, much better than I could ever do. She has a retail shop filled with Slovenian bee equipment in her NH barn.

Our Buzzword's Editor has asked me to share Stephen's and my experiences of the first year of using the AŽ hive in this and future Buzz notes. The introduction will allow everyone to understand this Buzz note. Disclosure: I no longer have any financial interest in "Slovenian Beekeeping Company."

**Langstroth and Slovenian Beehives:** The first step is to collapse any idea of competition between the two hive designs. There are advantages to each hive style. Removing the top of the Lang to access frames is quite a different experience from opening and working at the rear door of a Slovenian hive.

My belief: Any hive that is affordable, accepted by the bees and meets a beekeeper's preferences can be good. We know honeybees can choose tree trunks, house walls, garages and you name it for a bee "house" for their hive. It is difficult to quantify the suitability of a swarm's choice of a place to live despite Tom Seally's terrifically researched and readable book. "

For most beekeepers any style hive with a removable frame is here to stay. Like pre-sliced bread – removable frames are not going away anytime soon. Removing the top of the Lang to access its removable frames is quite a different experience from opening and removing frames at the rear door of a Slovenian hive.

To maximize the benefits of a Slovenian hive requires a roof over the hive(s). The hive performs most effectively in some kind of a roofed shed or cupboard arrangement with sides and a back door. The possibilities of simple house designs for AŽ hives are limited only by the imagination. Adapting one wall of an old shed works very well.

**Bee House:** At a minimum the top of the AZ hive must be protected from sun and rain. Normally the front is painted and the sides are untreated if located in a shed. Not painting the sides and top allows the wood to breathe to keep the internal humidity of the hive as low as possible. Low humidity in the hive provides the lowest percentages of water content in the honey. Water content of 14-15% is possible using Slovenian honey under the very best conditions.

Our Harwich bee house faces southeast. Sunshine arrives early on the hive fronts and remains late in the summer afternoon. The special overhang of the roof provides shade on all hive fronts

by eleven AM in the summer. Bee house windows keep the inside temperature cooler in the hottest months. Each hive has a rear door with two ventilator panels.

The house avoids placing hives directly in the sun and provides excellent winter protection for the hives with subsequent conservation of bee energy – thus lowering winter honey consumption by the bees and keeps the temperature of the hives up. In winter 2015-16 the inside temperature of our bee house is often 10 degrees F warmer than the ambient temperature.

A house for bee hives? The honeybee is a forest animal. It has evolved over millions of years while living in shaded and hollow tree trunks near the edge of the forest. A hive with a metal top and receiving sunlight can overheat in the summer. The warmer the internal temperature of the hive the more water must be carried by the bees to evaporate to maintain proper temperatures. Which would you rather have your bees do in the summer? Make trips carrying water or foraging for nectar?

In the Slovenian hive the bees are oriented to come and go using the two entrances at the front. Smoking the hive at the rear door entrance requires no more smoke than from a lit cigarette. The tiny smoke device is placed at the rear door - smoke collects and remains in the hive box – the bees avoid the smoke and use the front entrances while the beekeeper works at the back door. The big news to share about the hive is that working at the rear door of a hive, inside a bee house, without wind and without direct sun light, produces an environment for the bees that causes them to be undistracted and gentle. No propolis accumulates on the frames – a great feature of the AZ hive. The frames can be quietly and smoothly extracted without disturbing the bees. Beekeeping is a delight in the interior of the house. In the summer I work in shorts and without a veil, or, with nothing more than veil..... inside the house where it is shady.

## ***The Continuing Beekeeping Adventures of Paul 'n Patty***

By Andy Morris

Paul 'n Patty were concerned about the planet. They subscribed to the philosophy of the “Four R’s”; Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. They had jobs near enough to so they could use just one car, and that was a hybrid, utilizing both gasoline and electricity. They had a worm farm in their cellar to dispose of their vegetable table scraps, and free-range chickens in their back yard for all the rest. Instead of fertilizer, they composted their yard and garden waste and surplus. None of this seemed as important to them as what they learned from one fateful newscast on the television: that the honeybees were in crisis, that something called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) was affecting them, and if something wasn’t done, and soon, the entire planet was in jeopardy.

Sleep didn’t come easy for Patty that night. She kept having visions of what the world might be like if this CCD weren’t dealt with. Her dreams were straight out of an early Mel Gibson movie, post-apocalyptic and violent.

Breakfast wasn’t much fun the following morning. Patty had her bad night but Paul had slept like a bear in January. Paul was all smiles and feeling frisky and she was grumpy and quite depressed.

Now Paul could sense something was amiss and asked, "Honey, what's the matter. You don't look like you slept too well last night."

"Well, I didn't," she said. "And you shouldn't have either!"

Realizing he had already lost whatever battle she was about to wage, Paul offered, "You're right, Honey, but I couldn't help myself. I was tired, the lights were out and I was in bed. Tell me what was bothering you so much that you couldn't sleep."

"It was the news last night, before we went to bed," She said. "That story about the bees being lost and the possible impact on the world...it kept me up most of the night."

Cautiously, Paul eased in that he thought it might be many years before the loss of the bees became a real problem and the impact wouldn't and therefore shouldn't bother them. That's when he got "The Look", and he knew he had made a very serious tactical error.

With her clenched fists on her hips and her head tilted to the left (never a good sign), Patty squinted her eyes and said, "Who are you? I don't even know you anymore!"

"Whose idea was it for us to recycle? Yours."

"Whose idea was it to drive the hybrid? Yours."

"And now you have the nerve to say that this is not our problem? I don't think so!"

Paul had retreated to the kitchen sink and was holding up a dishtowel in defense. He could not remember a time when he had seen Patty this angry. He wasn't sure if she was angry with him so he tried to sooth things out. "Honey, you're right. But what can we do?"

"I'm glad you asked," said Patty, "because while I couldn't sleep last night, I did some research. I called the fire department and asked..."

"You WHAT?" Paul exclaimed. "You called the fire department? But this wasn't an emergency. There are laws against doing that!"

"...Them what they knew about honeybees. I knew they would be awake, so that wouldn't be a problem. They told me about a local bee club. Can you believe it? There is actually a club, here in town, just for beekeepers. Today I'm going to call them and see what we can do to help out."

Paul swiped his sleeve across his brow and let out whoosh of air as he sat down at the center island of the kitchen. He knew anything could happen when Patty was in one of these moods, and he tried to brace himself. He cradled his chin in the palm of his hand and wondered to himself, 'What's next?'

**To be continued....**

Editor's Note: Last month's poem, *Wintering*, was by Sylvia Plath

### ***CLUB RESOURCES*** **(accurate as of 3/16)**

The following officers and directors are a great resource to answer questions and requests for assistance. (All area codes 508 unless another one is indicated.)

President	John Beach	362-2054	<a href="mailto:john.a.beach@comcast.net">john.a.beach@comcast.net</a>
Vice President	Kalliope Egloff	617-962-3315	<a href="mailto:kalliopeegloff@yahoo.com">kalliopeegloff@yahoo.com</a>
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