

# Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

The Newsletter of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association  
PO Box 31, Ashaway, RI 02804. <http://www.ribeekeeper.org>

## Message from the President

Here we are in January! At least that's when I am writing this. I've been keeping records on the weather for years and looked back to see if we have had this much snow in a while. We're just about double the accumulation of any of the past several years. It looks like this will be a good old fashioned New England Winter! Better still if all of this snow brings us a great honey flow!

How are your bees? At the January meeting everyone was concerned about the impact of the cold weather. Will this year's losses be more severe than previous years? Only time will tell, but you can do several things now to improve their chances. Make sure that entrances are free and clear of snow and ice. It may be hard to believe, but we always get a mid-Winter thaw for a couple of days and when it does warm up the bees will want to get out and spot the snow with yellow drops! You can also heft your hive to see if it is still heavy. If you think it is too light you can put a piece of newspaper on the frames and pour on some granulated sugar. Make sure the newspaper is a small enough footprint to allow the bees to get up onto it. Fondant, which is made with granulated sugar and corn syrup, can be shaved into slices and put right on the top bars above the cluster. Instead of making it, you can buy fondant from J.A.R. Bakers Supply in Lincoln. Can you open your hives in the winter? Sure! But don't take out any of the frames or disturb the cluster. Just lift the covers on a warm'ish day and take a peak.

On a brighter note, this is a great time to start planning your new honey season. I like to jot down a few goals. Maybe it's a new skill that I want to learn, or perhaps it's a colony expansion plan. I am always amazed at how many times I think I have plenty of time and before you know it spring is here and I don't have enough hive bodies made! I also want to encourage you to think about splitting your own hives this year instead of buying additional packages or nucs. Splits are easy and you can't beat the feelings of satisfaction you will get when

## January 2009 - In This Issue

The Presidents Report \* Next Meeting (back page) \* Meeting report \* Logos \* Northeaster Treatment Free Conference \* Newsletter contributions

you see your splits building up for the honey flows. And best of all is that you will save money! Send me an email or call me if you would like to have a meeting dedicated to "how to make splits."

See you at the February meeting!

## Meeting discussions

This months meeting was held at Rocky Hill Grange, January 11 2009. Attendance was in the thirties which was pretty good considering the foul weather. I myself did not make it, choosing not to challenge the ice rink outside my house. Thanks to Everett and Tony for taking notes.

Lots of folks are reporting dead bees already and the "How are your bees" discussions centered on emergency feeding of bees.

The meeting talked about making the Rocky Hill Grange our winter home. We would get a discount on the cost. One time use right now is \$125, though we established a fee of \$100 for this meeting. Cost could be reduced as low as \$75/winter or \$65/summer if we were a regular user. We would also get our own key to the building. This seemed to get a good reception although no vote was taken. Click here to add your opinion on whether it would be a good idea to use The Grange in winter.

## Plastic screen bottom board

Bernie brought in a plastic screened bottom board from Brushy Mountain and Better Bee. Seemed like a good piece of kit and received very positive feedback. Price \$14.00.

## Dues

Brought up for discussion about raising the yearly dues to \$15. It's proposed that this item is brought up to vote on at the April dinner so that we have a good representation of members.

## Logos

There was discussion about the possibility of a new logo. This subject came up last summer with no takers except for Katherine Malmborg, who has presented us with four designs. They are on the website in color and below in black and white.

Anyone with other ideas is welcome to bring it to next months meeting along with ideas for T-shirts or hats.

## Nominations committee

Members were asked to contact anyone on the board to nominate candidates for any of the board positions for the upcoming elections in April. Members were also asked for volunteers for

nominating committee itself. No takers at this meeting. Members should note that it's time to start submitting names if anyone wanted to run for office vote for new candidates. Everyone in office at this time intends to stay or run for their current positions.

## Local fairs

We will continue to be present at local fairs this year. Jeff McGuire mentioned that URI has an event in early May that would be good to attend. Betty might already sell there, but he thinks it may be good for an educational opportunity even if we don't sell. I will publish all local fairs on the website so don't be shy in sending me details.

## Flower show

The meeting talked about the Spring Flower show. We aren't attending this year, due to price, State economy and how we thought attendance would be way down, not having the return on cost with these conditions. Discussions about this have taken place via various emails over the last few weeks. Roger talked about trying to piggyback off of somebody else's booth, i.e.. A landscaper's booth, but he didn't know what the rules were governing that. I believe he said he was going to talk to someone he knew that sets up there.

## Votes

What you voted on

### Beelearn

There was a motion by Roger to dissolve BeeLearn, seconded by Bernie. Motion passed. Discussion included lack of application for scholarship last year and no donations coming from any sources.

### Treasurers report

Motion to accept the treasurer's report passed.

What was carried forward to another meeting

\* Rocky Hill Grange as a regular winter meeting place. You can add your opinion on the website.

\* Logos - see elsewhere in this letter

## Packages and Nucs

Members were encouraged to get their live bee orders in ASAP. As usual, nucs and packages will also be available from several sources in the area. As I receive details I'll post them on the website or email them out.

## Beeschool

Arrangements for URI and Davies are under way and registrations are being taken - 14 so far. Full



details are on the website and publicity announcements will be sent to the local press.

## **Books and Library**

Celeste made a pitch for donations for the library and also raffle donations for the April Dinner.

Mark & Roger introduced two books for members to read: "Fruitless Fall" by Rowan Jacobsen and "Sweetness & Light" by Patty Ellis

## **Northeast Treatment Free Beekeeping Conference**

<http://BeeUntoOthers.com/Conference.html>

Golden Rule Honey, LLC Presents: Northeast Treatment Free Beekeeping Conference. Friday, July 31 through Sunday, August 2, 2009 at Doyle Conservation Center, Leominster, Massachusetts

**Confirmed Speaker:** Dee Lusby, Arizona, Erik Osterland, Sweden, Michael Bush, Nebraska, Michael Palmer, Vermont, Sam Comfort, New York/Florida, Dean "deknow" Stiglitz, Massachusetts, Laurie Ramona Herboldsheimer, MA and more TBA.

Topics include all aspects of managing bees without the use of any treatments (synthetic, "natural", or "organic"). There will be programs for both beginning beekeepers (including those that have never been around bees before) and for those with more experience:

Small Cell Beekeeping, Foundationless Frames, Overwintering Nucs, Queen Rearing, Commercial Beekeeping, Top Bar Hives, Marketing, Microbial Environment in the Hive, Beginning Beekeeping, Working with Landowners, Beekeeping on a shoestring, Cutouts, History of Foundation and Cell Size, Economics of Migratory Beekeeping, Bee Photography, Panel Discussions

Healthy, tasty meals will be provided on site as part of the conference cost (no HFCS!).

Treatment free hives will be onsite for hands on fieldwork with our speakers! Plenty of opportunity for spontaneous interactions with speakers and attendees.

The venue, Doyle Conservation Center, is an ideal location for our conference. State of the art audio and video facilities combined with solar power, composting toilets, geothermal heat/cooling pumps, sustainable and recycled building materials "Gold

Certification" from the U.S. Green Building Council. All of this on 50 acres of conservation land!

Cost for the conference is : \$150 Paypal information at: <http://BeeUntoOthers.com> Or, send a check to: Golden Rule Honey, LLC, 168 Fourth Street, Leominster, MA 01453. We have a lot of interest both locally and from as far away as Maryland..so register early to ensure there is space for you!

Conference will begin with lunch on Friday and end around 1 pm on Sunday. Registration includes 6 meals. As we are arranging and preparing the food ourselves, these will be high quality meals.

There are hotel options, some nearby campgrounds, etc...will update the website as we know more. Leominster is on the Fitchburg commuter train line, and can be reached from Boston or Cambridge without a car.

Please email us if you have any questions. The website will be updated as we go along.

## **Out there on the web**

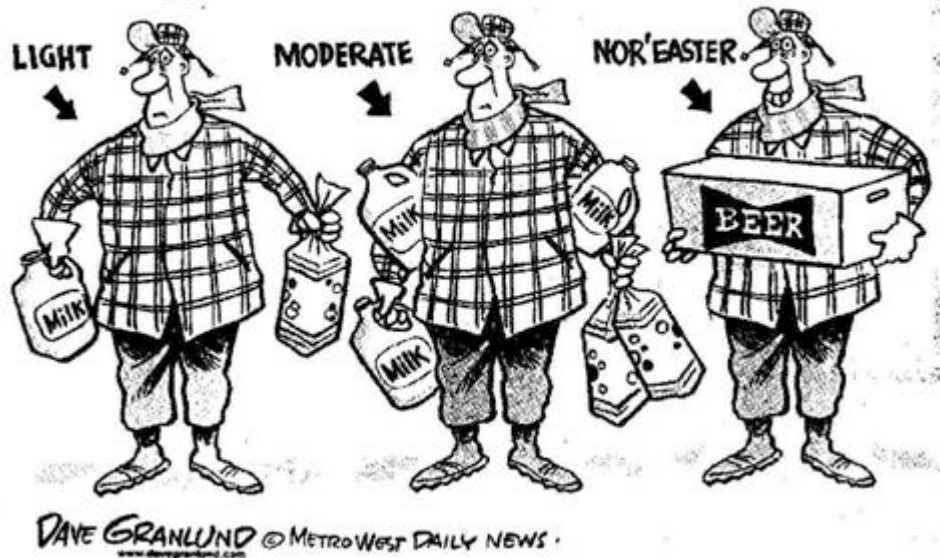
For those who already use the LinkedIn networking site, we have a group set up there. And just for fun we also have a Facebook Group

## **A different kind of beekeeping**

Members Sara and Derek Bradford wrote about part of their trip to Nigeria. The online article has a couple of photos.

"It's dry season in the open savanna landscape of north central part of Nigeria. On our recent travels along the main Kaduna to Abuja road we were on the look out for bee keepers and in a few of the scattered large deciduous trees alongside the road we could see what looked like a barrel 30 ft up in a crotch in the branches. When we pulled over to look more carefully we could see each was a cylindrical straw hive about 18" diameter and 3-4 feet long. One end was blocked out solid with woven mat and mud, the other a round panel with hole in the middle. There was little or no bee activity apparent now but brisk honey sales along the roadside were advertised with recycled bottles (like wine bottles) set out at 100' spacing on the highway's median Jersey barrier. The asking price for a liter of honey was the equivalent of about \$5.00."

## New England snowstorm indicators...



## Next Meeting

Sunday, February 8 at 2 pm

The next RIBA Members Meeting will again be held at East Greenwich Grange on February 8th; 2pm. The address is 1340 S County Trail, East Greenwich, RI Phone: 401-884-4218. Mark your diaries! It's on Rte 2, off I-95 exit 8.

## RI Beekeepers Association

### OFFICERS

#### President

Everett Zurlinden, E. Greenwich, RI  
(401) 374-4730  
everett@beehavin.com

#### Bee School Director

Betty Mencucci, Glendale, RI  
(401) 568-8449  
bmencucci@cox.net

#### Farm Bureau Representative

Mark Robar  
(401) 539-0434  
www.tefarm.com

#### Exec. Vice President

Louis J. Chasse II, Saunderstown, RI  
(401) 295-0888

#### E.A.S. Rep. Board of Dir.

Ed Lafferty, North Providence, RI  
(401) 353-6644  
fruithillapiaries@verizon.net

#### Apiary Inspector

Jim Lawson, Providence, RI  
(401) 222-2781 x4519  
james.lawson@dem.ri.gov

#### Secretary

Mike Southern, Ashaway, RI  
(401) 348-9523  
Mike.Southern@Cox.net

#### Librarian

Celeste Lafferty, N. Providence, RI  
(401) 353-6644  
fruithillapiaries@verizon.net

#### Treasurer

Anthony DiGiulio, N Providence, RI  
(401) 282-9443  
ajd799@cox.net

#### Newsletter Editor

Mike Southern, Ashaway, RI  
(401) 348-9523  
Mike.Southern@Cox.net

RIBA WebSite [www.ribeekeeper.org](http://www.ribeekeeper.org)

For the online list of officers go to: <http://www.ribeekeeper.org/officers.php>