



the BEELINE

LONG ISLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB, INC.

Keeping Bees on Long Island Since 1949

FEBRUARY-
MARCH
2024

Volume 33
Edition 2

What do bees (and the beekeeper) do in the winter? by Deborah Klughers



I'm often asked what bees, and beekeepers do in the winter. Most people think that honey bees hibernate in the winter. They do not! When the temperature drops to about 57°, honey bees start to form a winter cluster. Special heater bees warm the cluster by detaching their wings and vibrating their wing muscles, which gives off heat. They don't heat the hive, just the cluster. The heater bees keep the cluster around 85° when no brood (unborn bees) is present. The Queen stops

Visit the club web site at
WWW.LONGISLANDBEEKEEPERS.ORG

Check your account on the website every month to access this newsletter!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

the next meeting

Sunday, March 24th,
1 - 3pm
@ Sisters of St. Joseph
Brentwood

There will be Bee Swap at this meeting! 📺

SPEAKERS:

Bill Hesbach,
EAS Master beekeeper who will be speaking on Pollen

Grace Mehl
"What's Happening in the Hive?"

upcoming events

The Southern Adirondack Beekeepers Association Spring Seminar Mar 23
This is a worthwhile one day bee conference and you can find details on their website.

Teaching Apiary w/ Grace & Moira Apr 6
@ Sisters of St. Joseph

Teaching Apiary w/ Kathy Luberto Apr 20
@ Sisters of St. Joseph

laying eggs in the late fall, but resumes around the winter solstice. When brood is present, the cluster must be maintained at about 93°.

It takes fuel to heat the cluster, so the bees (especially the heater bees) must have access to plenty of honey or winter feed in order to keep the colony warm and fed. And guess what happens when you eat? You have to poop. Bees do not defecate within their hive unless they are sick: they have the most sanitary home in the entire animal kingdom.

Honey bees have an expandable gut, so they can hold their poop in for months. When daytime temperatures are around 45 degrees, more or less, the bees fly outside and take cleansing flights. Small yellow plops of bee poop in the snow, or on cars, or anywhere really, is a welcomed sight by beekeepers. We know our bees are alive, flying, and are able to relieve themselves.

That's a glimpse into what bees do in the winter. Beekeepers, on the other hand, are typically pretty busy at this time of year. We treat our bees for Varroa mites, check food reserves and apply emergency feedings, prepare equipment for the upcoming season, make hive products, sell honey and hive products, and attend conferences and trade shows, amongst other tasks.

In January I did all of the above!! I attended the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) Conference and Trade Show in New Orleans where I gave two talks, and entered one candle into their honey show. I won a blue ribbon, plaque, and crystal bowl for my entry!

I also attended the inaugural North American Honey Bee Expo in Louisville, Kentucky, and entered numerous items into their honey show.



Over 3,281 people attended the Bee Expo, including beekeepers, researchers, students, beekeeping equipment and services vendors, and the American Honey Show Training Council team. The honey show drew 339 exhibitors who submitted a total of 1,161 exhibits into 72 different classes. None of the judges in their 20+ years of experience had seen, nor judged a show this large in North America!

The first through sixth place winners in each class were awarded ribbons (1st-3rd only) and points: First place earns 6 points, second gets 5, down to sixth place, which gets 1 point. Each entrants' points are added up and the person with the most points wins the Grand Champion Award, while the person with the second most points wins the Grand Champion Reserve Award. I'm proud to announce that I won the Grand Champion Reserve Award! It was a LOT of work, but well worth it!

A good showing

When you enter honey shows, whether you win or lose, you get written constructive critique on

your entries. You can then use that information to “up-your-game” and provide consumers with the highest quality honey and hive products! My dark honey took 6th place, and my natural set took 4th. My ginger-lemon mead was awarded second, and I had a number of candles, confections, food items, lotions, household cleaners, photographs, and even my poetry were awarded ribbons for 1st and 3rd place. So, if you would like high-quality award-winning honey and hive products from a real local beekeeper, you know who to go to!

Speaking of real beekeepers, the ABF is working hard to help combat honey fraud on a national level through recent legislation introduced by Congressman Kelly Armstrong. H.R. 4764, the Honey Identification Verification and Enforcement (HIVE) Act, would require the Food and Drug Administration to finally establish a standard of identity for honey and subsequently report to Congress on enforcement actions taken with respect to adulterated or misbranded honey. It would also reorganize the existing US Department of Agriculture country of origin labeling requirements by utilizing the consumer-familiar ingredient labeling criteria.

Countries of origin would be listed in order of predominance, allowing the consumer to discern the origin of blended honey. This may help US beekeepers combat the influx of diluted, adulterated, and misbranded honey imports as well as level the playing field for the domestic beekeeping industry with overseas companies.

In the end, the public wins, because they would get what the label states they are getting. Which brings me back to local honey fraud. The HIVE Act does little to combat this plague upon real beekeepers. Interestingly enough, Resilient

Long Island is hosting a symposium at Hofstra University about native plants, invasive species management strategies, restoration practices, and more. They also have a poster session that I submitted my research abstract to for consideration. Guess what? They accepted it!

My research involved sending dozens of honey samples from colonies located on the east end of Long Island to the Palynology Research Laboratory at Texas A&M University to analyze the pollen content of the honey. The results of the study helped to determine what the foraging preferences of honey bees are right here on eastern Long Island. It also offers insight into actions we can all take to help feed honeybees and other pollinators.

And guess what else the results can tell us? They can provide a baseline to show what types of pollen is typically contained in honey that actually comes from the east end of Long Island. These results can be used to compare with “local” fraudulent honey. You know, the honey that beekeeping companies buy from elsewhere and say that it’s from their bees here on Long Island, but really isn’t? I’ll be continuing the study and plan to send additional samples for DNA analysis this season, so stay tuned! If you are or know a beekeeper who would like to be a part of this project, please reach out!

The symposium is open to the public and professionals, the latter can earn CEU credits (ISA, CNLP, SAF, LACES, NYSDEC Pesticide). Register via this link. <https://liisma.org/resilientli-2024/> or search for them online. The poster session will be held on March 7th from 5:30 – 8 pm at the Seatuck Environmental Association in Islip, while the conference will be held the following day at Hofstra University in Hempstead.

Honey with tea

In February, I'll be a vendor at Tea Talk, a new series of events sponsored by the Food Lab at Stony Brook Southampton. You will have an informative and fun time learning about food systems and so much more. The fabulous Judiann Carmack is leading the charge, so you know you cannot go wrong with her leadership and amazingly green thumbs! To sweeten things up, I'll be offering my award-winning honey and hive products during the first Tea Talk on February 6th. There's (almost) nothing better than honey in tea, and without bees, food would be very boring and way more expensive than it is already.

Tea Talk will occur the first Tuesday of each month, and it's free, so mark your calendars and sign up! There's going to be some very exciting events and learning opportunities coming from the Food Lab in the near future, so stay tuned! Remember, you are what you eat from your head down to your feet, and as for bees, they are important only if you eat food or know someone who does.

I'll also be offering a FREE Introduction to Beekeeping Class at the Rogers Memorial Library in Southampton on Wednesday the 7th from 6 – to 7:30 pm. It will be chock full of useful information for beekeepers and non-beekeepers alike. There will be door prizes and lots of fun, so buzz on by. Adults only, please register on their website.

For everyone ages 2 and up, I'll be offering my Honey Bees and Honey talk at The South Fork Natural History Museum and Nature Center in Bridgehampton, on Saturday March 30th at 10:30 am. Attendees will learn about honey bees and honey, including the differences between honey bees and other insects, how honey is

made, and why honey bees and other pollinators are important. We will explore the simple biology of honey bees and more! For non-members, there is a \$15 fee for adults and a \$10 fee for children for this program. This fee will also provide non-members with free admission to the museum on a day of their choice. Members can attend for free. Advanced reservations are required please! Check their website to register.

Phew. I'm tired just thinking about all this. But wait there's more! I was able to check about 80 of my colony's food reserves last week when the weather was in the mid-40s. I'm planning to check the rest of them by the end of this week, since temperatures will be in the upper 40s again. If you are a beekeeper, I highly suggest you do the same. If your bees have made it thus far, don't think you are out of the woods just yet.

The cruelest month for bees

About half of American honey bees die each year, with March being deemed the cruelest month. Why? The colony makes it through February, and the beekeeper fails to understand that the colony started to expand in late December. There are now more mouths to feed, and they also need to consume more food to not only keep the adults warm, but to keep the brood nest at the proper brood rearing temperature. Avoiding starvation is one aspect of beekeeping that we beekeepers have some control over. My advice to beeks: Check your bees and feed them if they don't have at least 15 pounds of food. Simple. Don't let them starve!



Published in the February 2024 issue of Amagansett Star-Review. Written by Deborah Klughers.

• **the next meeting** •

Sunday, March 24th

Location: Sisters of St Joseph,
1725 Brentwood Road, Brentwood, NY 11717

Time: 1 - 3pm (Doors open at 12:30pm)

The meeting will take place in Building #2, which is the building with the green dome on the roof. Follow the yellow BEE MEETING signs.

SPEAKERS: **Bill Hesbach** “Pollen”; **Grace Mehl:** “What’s Happening in the Hive”.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

- Kathy and Toni can always use help **setting up the hospitality table**, and of course, **donations** of cake or cookies and the like are always welcome!
- **We also welcome donations for our door prizes.** A little something that you have hanging around that you are willing to share with other club members to brighten their day!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **If you haven’t received emails** or newsletter you probably haven’t paid your \$40 dues for 2024 due (Jan 1, 2024 to Dec 31, 2024). Paying via PayPal is the quickest way to get a paid response.
- **Classified ads** must be updated by members who have paid their dues and updated by the next meeting or the ad will be removed!
- **The Library will be open for lending and returning books.** Our policy is, if you may borrow books and return them the next month. If you fail to return the books after 2

months, then the name of the borrower will be list in the “Delinquent Borrower” section of the Newsletter.

- **Club T-shirts and sweat shirts** will be available to purchase.
- **Formic Pro will be available** in small numbers at the March meeting. We just made a small order for those that need to treat right away. Please do sample your bees in April to determine if this is needed. Price will be \$7 per treatment. Bring check or cash.
- **Bee Swap is this month** at the March meeting. It is an opportunity to clean out your bee shed and get a little cash to buy something new! Please do not bring anything that is broken or obsolete! Put your name and price on your items. This is a cash and carry event. Do not expect sellers to be able to take electronic payments. Again, bring cash or check.



Since there weren’t any names submitted for nominations for the open Board positions, a motion was made to cast one vote to elect the members of the Board for their open positions.

The Board voted unanimously for these positions.:

(Pursuant to Article VII, Section 10 and Article IV, Section 4 of the Club Bylaws, the Nominating Committee hereby presenting to the Board following candidates, and their respective offices, for the 2024-2026 term for consideration.)

- President: John Most
- Treasurer: Suzanne Cahill
- Membership Secretary: Conni Still
- Outreach Director: Rick Cannone
- Information Technology Director: Nick Hoefly

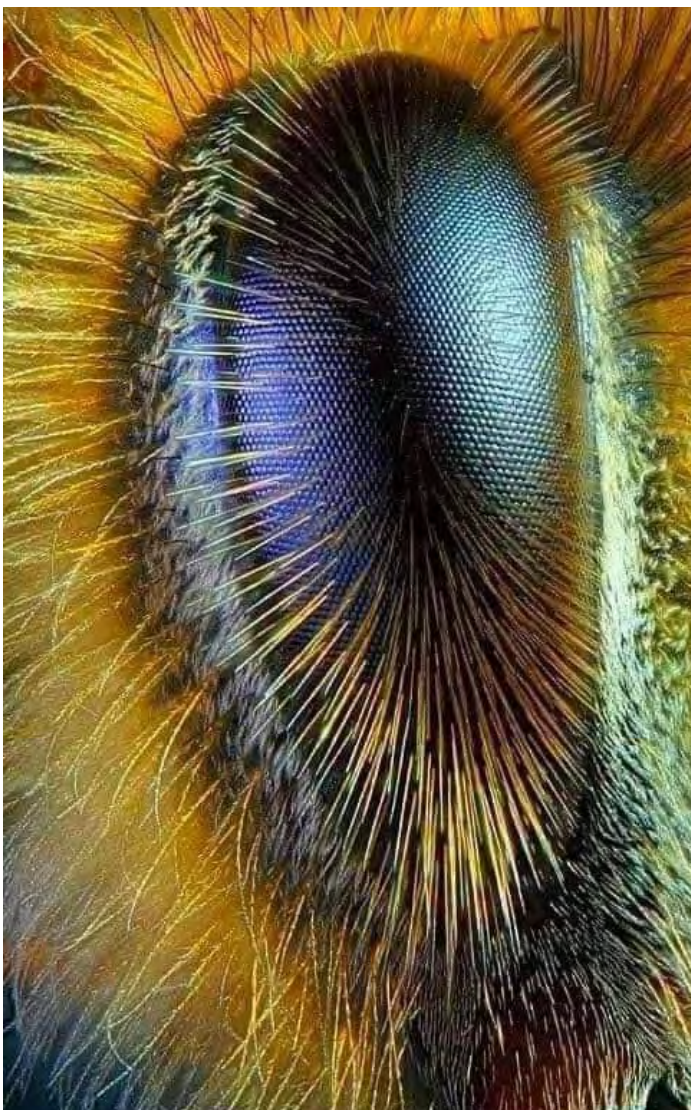


We are sad to tell you our long time member **Irene Reidener** has died. Her husband Max died a few years ago and was a Master Beekeeper and one of our founding members.

He was a past president of the club and did many educational talks. Irene remained a paid member of the club to support our work after Max died, enjoying reading the newsletter and seeing what everyone was doing!

“THE BEEHOLDER’S EYE”

Post from [David Attenborough Fans on Facebook](#) · Feb 22, 2024



The Beeholder’s Eye -The bee’s eye is a marvel of biology. It is covered with hairs that act as a shield against pollen and consists of thousands of small lenses called ommatidia. These lenses allow the bee to see a range of colors, including ultraviolet, and are highly sensitive to movement. This enables the bee to spot flowers and other sources of nourishment, as well as evade potential threats.

But what truly sets the bee’s eye apart is its structure. Unlike our own complex eyes, the bee’s eye is made up of many simple eyes that work together to provide a wide-angle view of the world. With a visual field of 280 degrees, the bee can see almost everything around it without turning its head. This is particularly useful for locating flowers and avoiding predators.

In addition to its impressive visual capabilities, the bee’s eye also processes information at lightning speed. This helps the bee make swift decisions about where to fly and what to do, both essential for its survival.

Overall, the bee’s eye is a crucial part of its anatomy and a testament to the power of nature. It has developed over millions of years to help the bee thrive in its environment.



message from
the education director

Grace Mehl

Punxsutawney Phil was right!

Spring is here early! Things are moving along fast and blooms are happening. Maples, Witch Hazel, Winter Aconite, Swamp Cabbage, Cornelian Cherry, have joined the Crocus. These are just a few of the blooms available now. Bees are flying and bringing in pollen like crazy. I have also seen nectar in the topbar hive at Brentwood when we pulled a few combs to feed them. All of this is food for the hive. They are not actually able to store honey from this as they are growing so fast.

Bees need water right now to thin down the winter food, whether honey or beekeeper provided winter food. So, make sure your water source is filled. Don't let your bees be trained to go to the neighbor's pool cover. The first packages of bees have arrived and they must be fed syrup. You may still have winter food on your hives and that is OK, but over-wintered colonies can also be fed syrup now, as needed. Syrup stimulates the colony to make wax and can help a colony build up to take advantage of the nectar flow that starts a little later. Be aware, if you have a shim or a deep inner cover to provide

room for solid winter food, you must eliminate the extra space and return to "bee space" when you feed syrup, or the bees may fill the space with burr comb. A shim left on too long can make a serious mess when filled with new comb and if the queen lays in it, it is heartbreaking when it must be removed. So, mind your bee space!

Hives that are wrapped can be unwrapped any time now. Moira calls it is a reality check for the bees, letting them know it can still be a little cool at night. Smaller hives or nucs may benefit from a few more weeks of the insulation. This is really a time of transition and every location is a little different in temperature. A hive with a good wind block and good sun during the morning will

be moving along much more quickly than one in the open or in the shade. But, with the temperatures predicted to be around 50 or above for the next 2 weeks, my wraps are coming off. Top insulation can stay for now.

You may still have winter food on your hives and that is OK, but over-wintered colonies can also be fed syrup now, as needed. Syrup stimulates the colony to make wax

Inspecting hives for the first time should be happening soon too. Look in the top box and go further if you need to to see that the queen is doing her job. How much brood is in there? Are there drones already? Take note and make plans for managing your hives. The swarming impulse is started 4-6 weeks ahead of a swarm actually happening. That means you must be thinking 4-6 weeks ahead! What you do now may determine if you have a swarm on May 1st! But, that said, don't get too aggressive with your actions. The nights can still be cool. The bees have to be able to

cover all the brood with the cluster. Opening the brood nest too soon can be a problem if the temperature drops suddenly. Smaller colonies have to be handled with care to avoid chilled brood. Opening the brood nest a little on larger, very populous colonies may mean the difference between a large honey crop and losing your honey crop to swarming. Doing a little bit each time you go into the hives can make the difference. Have a plan and work it!

If you did a good job of cleaning up the Varroa mites in the Fall and early Winter, you should be able to wait until April to do your first Varroa count. The club will have Formic Pro available at the March meeting and after that as well.

By April, you probably can reverse boxes if that is a management tool you use. Opening the brood nest and making sure the queen has space to lay gets more important as the season gets into full swing. You may have to be more aggressive in your actions later, especially if you don't do a little bit each time you go in.

You should have your equipment ready for the season ahead. Time to super the hives is coming up fast! Start airing out supers that were stored with paramoth so you are ready. Don't get ahead of yourself too much by adding supers too early, but watch the blooms in your area and watch the space in your hives. The balance between too much and not enough is part of the art of beekeeping. Good luck! and may the bee season be your best yet!



the TEACHING APIARY

The teaching apiaries are a great way to get hands-on experience in beekeeping. The sessions are conducted by Master Beekeepers in the club. The normally scheduled classes are mainly for beginner beekeepers, however there is also lots of material for the 2nd and 3rd year beekeeper. Every instructor has different tips and tricks that you can learn.



the next ones:

Saturday, April 6th

Grace & Moira teaching

Contact Grace if you will attend at:

education@longislandbeekeepers.org

Saturday, April 20th

Kathy Luberto teaching

Contact Kathy if you will attend at:

kluberto11@gmail.com

Location:

Sisters of St. Joseph's Honey House
1725 Brentwood Rd, Brentwood, NY

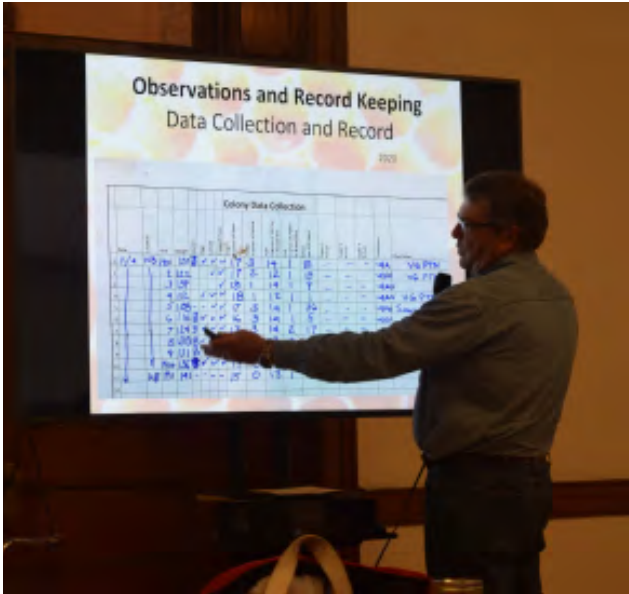
Follow the yellow Bee Meeting signs to the Honey House and meet the instructor there.

The Teaching Apiary hives are to the left of the Honey House.

If you are interested in attending, you must sign up by emailing the instructor for the session. Bring a veil and dress appropriately with long pants and sleeves with closed shoes, as we will be opening hives. There are a few veils available on site for real NEWBEES. The instructors will determine when they have reached a limit for their session in accordance with what they are comfortable with. If there is rain, Sunday will be the rain date for the Saturday session. If both days are rainy, the instructor may opt to have a discussion class inside the Barn. The instructor will notify you if a change in the schedule is necessary, so **provide contact information such as a cell phone when you sign up for easy access/contact.**

photos from the
LONG ISLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB

February Meeting



February Meeting



photos from the

LONG ISLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB

February Meeting



MASTER BEEKEEPERS LIST

Moira Alexander

Smithtown
631-265-8249

Peter Bizzoso

Manorville
631-874-4750

Rich Blohm

Huntington
631-271-7812

Steve Chen*

Holbrook
646-625-9910

Carl Flatow

Oceanside
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Walter Goldschmidts

Lloyd Harbor
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Kathy Luberto

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631-965-7327

Joan Mahoney

N. Babylon
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Grace Mehl

Smithtown
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Fred Munzer

Dix Hills
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Marianne Sangesland

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Walter Scott

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Miguel Valentin

Ronkonkoma
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Wayne Vitale

Setauket
631-675-0302

Laurie

Volel-Wilkowski
New Hyde Park
516-643-6011

Neal Wechsler

Lindenhurst
631-957-7136

*** EAS and Cornell Master Beekeepers Program:** Master Beekeepers are certified beekeepers who have a detailed knowledge of honey bee biology, expertise in the proper practices of beekeeping, and can present this information to the beekeeping and non-beekeeping public in a detailed, accurate, clear and authoritative manner. Master Beekeepers provide education and assistance to beginning beekeepers and serve in other capacities in the community as experts in beekeeping. The Master Beekeeper program was developed by Dr. Roger A. Morse at Cornell University and has been expanded by the Eastern Apicultural Society of North America to other areas.

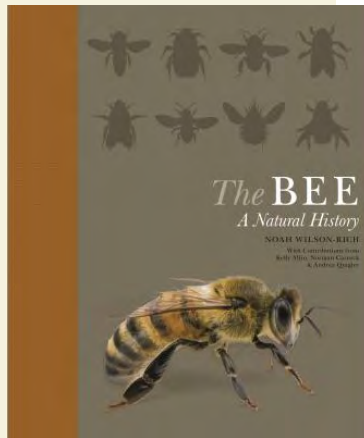
You can learn more about the Master Beekeeper Program by visiting the Eastern Apicultural Society website:
<https://easternapiculture.org/programs/master-beekeepers/master-beekeepers-certification-program/>



the LIBRARY CORNER

The club library continues to grow and provides a variety of different reads. Newly added books this month:

New acquisitions to the library last month:



Activity:

- 9 books were loaned to 7 members
- 4 book loans were renewed
- 5 books were returned by 5 members



Delinquent Borrowers:

- Steve Chen (still looking)
- Bob Linekin
- Keith Macartney
- Cienna Rizza
- Margie Rizza

The LI Beekeepers Club encourages reading and allows members to sign out two books at a time to be returned the following month. Donations are gladly accepted, as are suggestions for purchase. Emails can be sent to librarian@longislandbeekeepers.org 

photos from the LONG ISLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Beekeeping 102

Thanks to a wonderful job by
speakers Bill, Steve,
Walter, Rich, Rick,
Moira and Grace.



HEADS UP!

Bee Culture®

The Magazine of American Beekeeping

Club Member Discounts

Bee Culture Magazine is giving discounts to Bee Club members! Go to their website at <https://simplecirc.com/subscribe/bee-culture>. Here are the codes to use to get your discount:

BEECLB1	\$29, one-year print only
BEECLB2	\$52, two-year print only
BEECLBD	\$19, one-year digital only*
BEECLBB	\$39, one-year print & digital bundle*
BEECLBB2	\$64, two-year print & digital bundle*

* Email required for digital subscriptions

Bee Culture was started in 1873 by Amos Ives Root, a historical figure in beekeeping, in Medina, Ohio. Bee Culture, the magazine of American beekeeping, is designed for beginning, sideline and commercial beekeepers who want the latest information on keeping bees. From industry news to upcoming events, Bee Culture is a must-have resource for beekeepers around the world. Published monthly; print and digital editions are available.

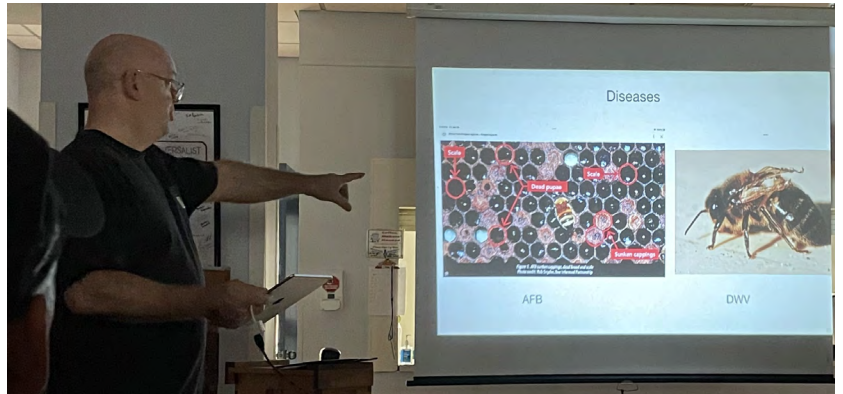
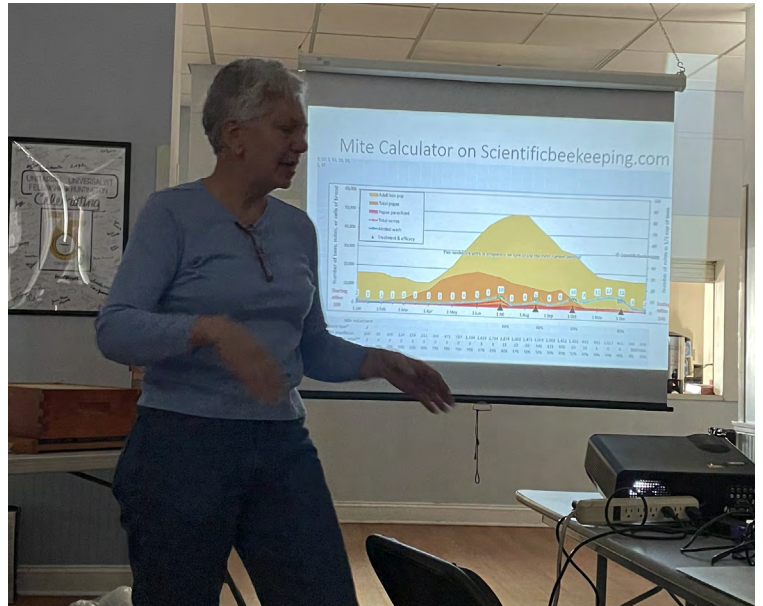
photos from the

Beekeeping 102 Class

Saturday, February 3rd



photos from the
Beekeeping 102 Class
 Saturday, February 3rd



from the editor:
Conni Still



Dear Beekeepers, I am sorry you did not receive a February Bee-line. Between the scheduling of Savitha and my hand surgery and other procedure there was not enough days, even though we had an extra one. So here is a combo, February and March, hopefully you will all have your memberships straightened out and you are prepared for the warm days ahead. See you soon. Conni Still 🐝🐝🐝

please participate in the **Monthly Beeline Poll**



Thank you to everyone who participated in last month's Beeline Poll! We appreciate you sharing information on your apiaries and helping us learn about our membership! A few reminders about our Monthly Poll:

- We hope the poll can shed some light on what's happening in our apiaries, as a collective entity, our club as a whole.
- This Beeline Poll will be included monthly along with the results of the previous month's poll.
- The poll is short (max 2-question). Topics will vary month to month.
- The poll is completely anonymous.
- The more people who respond, the more informative these polls are! <nudge, nudge. wink wink.>

If you haven't participated, please do. It will only take 1 minute of your time. Thanks in advance for participating. We're excited to learn about you and your bees!

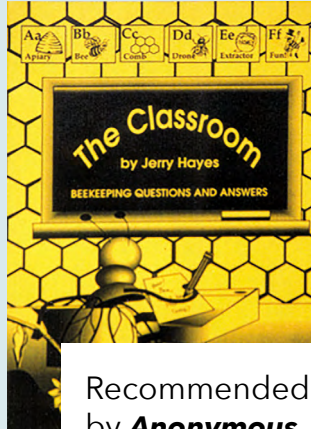
[Here is March poll.](#)

Click the button:



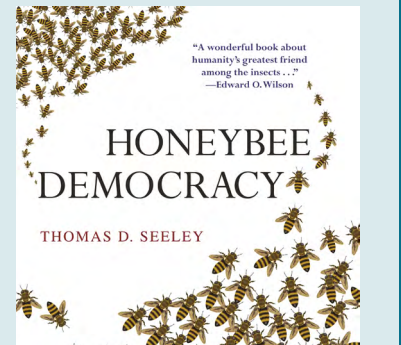
Here are the results from January. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

1) What's one good piece of advice you've gotten from a beekeeper?



Recommended by **Anonymous**

Intro to Beekeeping, Recommended by **Tom McCaffery**



Recommended by **Laura Galati**



Recommended by **Anonymous**



Recommended by **Tim Mcquade**



Recommended by **Cynthia McKenna**

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared a book with our club members! Stay tuned for March's poll results. **Happy Spring-is-Coming!**



**As of January 2024,
Annual dues will be \$40.**

PLEASE send a check payable to LIBC to Conni Still at 82 Stephen Road, Bayport, NY 11705, or go to the club website Longisland-beekeepers.org.

Any member who does not pay their dues will not receive future newsletters nor have free advertising in future newsletters, Also please update your copy for your ads. Send your information to Moira Alexander at ramoi@aol.com and put LIBC Classified Ads in the subject line.

CLASSIFIEDS

Ads are complimentary for members of LIBC in good standing. For current [Classified Ads](#) see the Club Website.

If you've posted an ad, please update any information for your classified ads. Only current members have this privilege. [Go to the LIBC website, log in](#) and go to **"My Account"**. You will see a Green Button on the right lower side saying **"Submit Ad"**. Click on this and the form will come up for you to fill out. Nick, the IT Director, will review it and post or contact you for any problems.

CLASSIFIED ADS DO NOT CONSTITUTE ENDORSEMENT BY THE CLUB. THEY ARE SHARED AS INFORMATION ONLY.



Visit the club web site at
WWW.LONGISLANDBEEKEEPERS.ORG

Check your account on the website every month to access this newsletter!



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