THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

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🐝 Join Us Thursday, 8/3/26 – Marin Beekeepers Meeting

📅 Thursday, August 3, 2026 – 6:30 PM

📍 American Legion Log Cabin, 20 Veterans Place, San Anselmo, CA 94960

Join us this Thursday for discussions on whatever is happening in your hives.

Feel free to come a little early and hang out with fellow beeks in the downstairs bar.

CLUB NEWS

Club Elections - Jim Lawson

With Robert withdrawing his candidacy as president, we're seeking nominations for the next MCBA president. Please have your nominations emailed to secretary@marinbees.org by 8/7/26. Voting for the next president will begin on 8/10/26 and end on 8/17/26 with the announcement of the president-elect on the 9/3/26 members meeting at the Log Cabin.

Community Outreach - Dana Pepp & Tom Pillsbury

Thanks to all of our MCBA volunteers for a very successful Marin County Fair!

The energy, passion, smiles and information you shared with thousands of children and families was great!

It was an excellent PR and outreach opportunity,

as well as a great way for our volunteers to connect with each other.

A special shout out to Jim Lawson and David Peterson for coordinating the observation hive.

We appreciate all of your feedback, so 2027 (in a better location) will be even better!

If you have additional thoughts or would like to take a lead in next year's fair, please email Dana, danapepp@gmail.com.

Thanks, again, fabulous volunteers!

Dana and Tom

August Education Director's Corner - Justin Strom

As we move into August, we should be entering the summer dearth here in Marin County. Fortunately, we've had an outstanding year for both our bees and honey production. Many colonies have brought in excellent honey crops, and now is the time to harvest your honey and shift your focus to one of the most important tasks of the season—checking for Varroa mites.

Over the past two weeks, I performed mite washes on 36 of my colonies. Fourteen of those hives had mite levels high enough to require treatment. In other words, nearly one-third of my apiary needed immediate attention with a Formic Pro flash treatment. Interestingly, my largest and most productive honey-producing colonies also tended to have the highest mite populations.

Based on what I'm seeing in my own apiary, I suspect that as many as one-third of the colonies in Marin County may have elevated mite levels this time of year. Of course, every apiary is different, and the only way to know what's happening in your hives is to test them.

As beekeepers, we all hope our colonies will make it through the fall and winter. But when it comes to Varroa mites, hope isn't a management strategy. You have two choices: perform a mite wash and know where your colonies stand, or rely on luck. The decision is yours.

I can't make anyone perform mite washes or treat for mites, but I can encourage you to make informed decisions based on real data. A simple mite wash can tell you whether your colony needs treatment and can greatly improve its chances of surviving into next spring.

If you'd like to learn how to perform a mite wash, understand treatment thresholds, or discuss treatment options, please don't hesitate to reach out. I'd be more than happy to help any Marin County Beekeepers Association member by email, phone, or text.

Wishing you a successful honey harvest and healthy bees!

Justin Strom
Education Director
Marin County Beekeepers Association

MCBA Financial Update - Gary Denison, Treasurer

I am excited to be the new Treasurer of the MCBA. Thank you for your confidence in me! I am extremely fortunate to take over this role from Malcolm Goldsmith who left me a great set of record/books and provided me with key instructions on what to do.

For those who don't know me, I have been a member of the MCBA for almost seven years and actually became a member before I got my bees. As I approached retirement, my wife, Lynette and I were looking for something that we could actively do together. Beekeeping became that activity. We are hobbyists and do it primarily for the health of the bee population. Any honey that we harvest is just an added bonus. We got our first bees from long time members Gary and Bonnie Morse. I think over the course of the last seven years, we have probably made every mistake that a beekeeper can make. But through pure luck and some bee mentoring by Jennifer Berry, we have somehow kept our bees alive.

The MCBA operates on a June 30th fiscal year, so we have just closed our year end books. We remain in very good financial shape. Our revenues are derived almost entirely from our membership dues. Yearly dues remain at $25 for individuals and $40 for couples. Our biggest expenditure is the monthly rental of our meeting space at the log cabin. We have just renegotiated another yearly lease on those premises. The rent did increase but as long term renters, the American Legion is giving us a break on the rent and is charging uonly 2/3rds of what is their hourly rental rate is on the cabin. We want to remain in good standing with the Legion!

With the election a new MCBA board, we want to provide monthly meetings that are not just

informative but more importantly will help us all to be better beekeepers. The well attended July 1st meeting was a great example. This is the time of the year when beekeepers should be harvesting honey. For those who missed it, our July meeting was a honey harvesting demonstration that members not only saw but also many of our new beekeepers actually participated in and gained valuable first-hand experience.

While there is wealth of knowledge within the MCBA, the board believes there is tremendous value in bringing in outside speakers who can share their knowledge and experiences with us. It is important that we ensure that these presentations are relevant to where we are in the honeybee cycle. For example, there is really no need to talk about re-queening hives in September. In developing our 26-27 fiscal year budget, we have allocated funds to outside speaker fees and honorariums. While we have some speakers lined up. we would still welcome your input on topics and potential outside speakers! Contact education@marinbees.org.

As dues paying members, everyone should be aware that you have access to the equipment owned by the MCBA. This includes, extractors, honey buckets, hot knives, etc….everything you need to harvest honey. However, this equipment does wear out and needs to be periodically replaced or repaired (i.e. the six frame extractor is currently needing repairs.) This is another expense that we have planned and budgeted for.

Additionally, there are costs associated with maintaining our website and communication processes (i.e. Many members benefit from our swarm alerts and those are not produced magically and/or for free). We have had some issues with these systems and we want to improve upon them and have budgeted additional money for that purpose.. Consequently, we need members who have knowledge about webpages and communication….we would love to talk to you! Please contact us! Contact communications@marinbees.org.

Again, the financial health of the MCBA is very good. However, based upon the budget that we have adopted, the Board is projecting to run a deficit for the 26-27 fiscal year. The best way to offset that deficit is to grow our membership and we believe we can do that by offering more meaningful programs and workshops to our members. There are currently 175 dues paying members in the MCBA. A lot of people expressed interest in Beekeeping at our booth at the Marin County fair. We need to transform that kind of interest into action. We have an outreach group that wants to engage the next generation of Marin County Beekeepers. If you are part of an organization that you think would be interested in beekeeping please let us know. Also if you have ideas for outreach would we love to hear from you. Contact outreach@marinbees.org. We seriously want to actively engage our members in growing our Association. We have many individuals who were previously members but have left for a variety of reasons . We need to get those people back. They have experience and knowledge which we can all benefit from. If you know any of these people, ask them to rejoin us and help us build MCBA.

Finally, nobody wants to be the pitch man asking people for money but as Treasurer it comes with the territory. MCBA is a registered 501(3)-(c) non-profit organization. That makes our organization eligible for grants and for charitable contributions. If anyone has been looking to make a charitable contribution to a worthy organization…look no further than the MCBA. We will give you a tax receipt for your contribution. Contributions can even be in the form of purchased equipment for the club (i.e. extractor, etc.). If you hit the lottery keep MCBA in mind!

Again, the financial health of the MCBA is very good. Your Board intends to be entirely transparent with its members not only about financial matters but in all our actions. If you have ideas or concerns please reach out to any of the board members. But more importantly we value your participation and we want you to be active member in MCBA. The tent is wide and

our needs for volunteers is many. For example, we use to have a library at every meeting in which members could check out reference materials. We want to bring that service back to our monthly meeting. Consequently we need someone to serve as the MCBA librarian. It doesn't have to be one person, it can be shared responsibility. Please let us know if you are interested.

In beekeeping and friendship
treasurer@marinbees.org

Club Equipment - David Peterson

The club has electric extractors for harvesting your honey. Each extractor comes with an extraction kit that includes uncapping bin, electric knife, and a scratcher.

David Peterson, in Ross, manages six and 12 frame extractors. He also has a hand crank two frame extractor for those who need the exercise. Mary and Neil Nordquist, in Novato, manage six, 12 and 20 frame extractors.

The six and 12 frame extractors can generally fit into an SUV, station wagon or minivan. The 20 frame extractor requires a pick up truck or something equivalent.

You can schedule a request for use by contacting them at:

dpeterson307@aol.com

neilmary@verizon.net

OTHER EVENTS

Learn from the Bees Classes - Jennifer Radtke

Prepare Your Hive for Winter Class - on Zoom

Part 1: Saturday, August 15th, 9am - 10:30am

Part 1: Saturday, August 22nd, 9am - 10:30am

$50, recordings included

Learn how to keep your hive alive for multiple years by keeping your varroa mite levels low. We focus on organic treatments that have worked for me and my students in the Bay Area. We'll cover the sugar roll test, drone comb frames, formic acid, and oxalic acid glycerin.

Taught by Jennifer Radtke, Learn from the Bees

Click here for the full description and to register!

Year Round Varroa Mite Management - on Zoom

Part 1: Sunday, August 30th, 6:30pm - 8pm

Part 1: Sunday, September 13th, 6:30pm - 8pm

$50, recordings included

Learn how to keep your hive alive for multiple years by keeping your varroa mite levels low. We focus on organic treatments that have worked for me and my students in the Bay Area. We'll cover the sugar roll test, drone comb frames, formic acid, and oxalic acid glycerin.

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Click here for the full description and to register!

Jennifer Radtke

LearnFromTheBees.com

Bee Teacher @ Urban Farm Oasis (formerly BioFuel Oasis)

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Membership Dues are now $25.00 for the year for single members, $40.00 for families.

We need to hear from you. Please renew your membership Online at www.marinbeekeepers.org. There are many benefits from being a member, aside our monthly meetings, where you can chat with guest speakers from all over the beekeeping world:

- Use of the Club's extractors, electric uncapping knives, wax-melter, hive carrier, embedding tool, and other beekeeping equipment;
- Free subscription to the Marin Beekeepers Newsletter (11 issues a year). Back issues on the website are available for background information and beekeeping tips;
- Preferred registration for beekeeping workshops (usually 4 or 5 per year) and special events;
- We have a great library that includes books, magazines and catalogs on everything from starting your first hive or baking with honey to raising your own queens.
- Free admission to our monthly meetings, where we have speakers among the foremost bee experts in the world (normally a $10 donation);
- Subscription to our "BUZZ" email listserv which is where we converse online about beekeeping in Marin;
- Subscription to our "SWARMS" email listserv which is where we notify members of any swarms that need hiving;
- Subscription to our "Event List" email listserv which is our general notification list of events and workshops.

The best and easiest way to pay your 2025-2026 dues is online at www.marinbeekeepers.org. You do not need to sign in or use a password. Just click on "become a member", fill out the form and submit. Be sure to complete the payment section at the end, which is via PayPal. You do not need to have a PayPal account to pay using a credit card. There is a small transaction fee added to your dues that is assessed by PayPal.

ABOUT THE MARIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

We are people who share an avid interest in honey and native bees. We are a mix of hobbyists as well as professional beekeepers. We have a wide range of interests, covering bee biology, pollination, sustainable bee breeding, health aspects of bee products, international beekeeping, and other bee-related topics. We welcome you to attend our meetings and to become a member:

https://marinbeekeepers.org/become-a-member/

Monthly meetings are typically on the first Thursday of the month and usually feature a knowledgeable speaker and/or project and includes informal sharing of information by members throughout the meeting ($10 donation for non-members). Meetings are a good way to learn about beekeeping. Please consider becoming a member whether you have bees or not.