

# SWARMS AND PEACE

## THE RIBA NEWSLETTER

APRIL/MAY 2017

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## Letter From The President

Spring has sprung! Woodenware has been built and painted. Packages are (for the most part) hived. Grant queens have been made available on a number of different occasions already this year with more to come. Things are happening, and starting to happen quickly. This is the time of year we as beekeepers wait all winter for. The build up of bees, the storing of nectar. Swarms, splits, supers, re-queening.

This is the good stuff.

During the next few months, those of us with new colonies will be channeling our collective energies toward getting them ready for winter survival. Those who came out of winter with survivors are prepping for swarm season which is followed very closely by supering and honey harvesting.

So here we are. We've all got these boxes with stinging insects inside of them. We pause and wonder. . . what now?

Thankfully the answer is pretty straightforward. If you need help, ASK. We are here to help. If you don't know which course of action to take, ASK. We may have an option that fits in with your methods.

Your success is RIBAs success. While I'm a big fan of doing things on my own, one of the many lessons that this hobby has taught me is that while you can probably be a solitary beekeeper, it is much more enjoyable and rewarding if you let others into your circle. You'll be surprised how many fellow beekeepers will make time in their day to lend a hand. Take the time to foster relationships within the club and it will pay you back many times over.

Whatever your path this bee season, RIBA has got you covered. Here's hoping that we all have a successful and productive year.

Yours in Beekeeping,

Keith Salisbury



# What Are We Going To Do About These Varroa Mites?

Keeping our bees healthy can be a challenge. Providing good quality forage and avoiding pesticides and chemicals are major factors in honey bee health. Honey bees are also subject to a number of diseases and parasites. However, I think we all agree that the number one threat to honey bee health is the Varroa mite and its associated viruses.

A recent survey of Norfolk County Beekeepers members showed that many beekeepers are working with outdated techniques and attitudes toward mites and treatment. It is critical that beekeepers stay up to date on research and findings relative to mites and treatment. We need to reduce losses if keeping bees is to be sustainable. Over the last few years, the beekeeping community has come to a much better understanding of how Varroa mites and the viruses they vector operate.

Parasites and viruses, like other living organisms, will adapt in order to stay vital. In his recent series on mites in American Bee Journal, Randy Oliver points out that a study has shown that Deformed Wing Virus (DWV) has adapted to exploit the ability of bees to transport (vector) the virus into healthy beehives so they can thrive. And, he explains, both the mites and the viruses take advantage of two things as the afflicted colony dies – 1) drifting bees move from the dying colony and bring the mites into nearby colonies (yours or your neighbors') and 2) neighboring colonies send robbers in to take food from a collapsing colony, where they pick up mites and viruses and bring them home.

It is important that beekeepers, especially those who choose to not treat their hives, understand this point - by allowing your colonies to collapse, you are endangering surrounding colonies. Colonies up to two miles away are put at risk by a collapsing colony. You could be killing not only your bees, but your neighbors' bees as well.

So, the goal is to successfully manage the Varroa mites before the viruses damage the bees and spread to other colonies. Some techniques currently in use include:

- Keeping resistant strains of bees – those that manage mites by hygienic behavior, such as removal of infested brood, killing the mites directly, and other means;
- The use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools such as screened bottom boards, drone comb removal, brood cycle breaks by splitting or queen isolation, combined with minimum usage of chemical controls;
- Testing on a consistent basis and treating when needed. Testing is critical to understanding the mite situation in a colony – you can't effectively manage what you don't know and understand.
- Continue testing after treatment to be sure levels stay low

The bottom line is you need to be aware of your mite situation throughout the season. That means testing for mite loads on a consistent and regular basis, treating when needed, and re-testing after early treatments. Don't assume that one treatment will take care of the mites for the year. Mites are multiplying throughout the active brood season. That means they are multiplying into the fall, and the fall bees really need to be healthy – they are the ones that have to make it through the winter.

Treating on a calendar basis has shown to be problematic. For example, this year, we tested monthly, and mite levels didn't exceed the treatment threshold until September. If we had just treated on Aug. 1, as we were taught years ago, our mite loads would have been out of control by October. On the other hand, if you just treat on Sept. 15, and your mite populations had exploded in August, it may be too late. We need to observe, predict, and react before the situation gets out of hand. If you want to practice minimal treatment, you don't have to treat if you know you don't have to treat. Keep records; be aware of the health of your bees at all times.

A few things to consider:

-If you have bees that are mite resistant, they must still be monitored and treated when necessary. ---

-There are no mite-proof bees! We can work toward bees that don't need to be treated, or at least treated minimally, but we are not there yet

-If you have bees that are not resistant, and you find that they require continual treatment, consider requeening with resistant or hygienic stock

-If your colonies collapse, they will likely infect other colonies in and around your apiary

Look for signs of disease when you inspect. Know the signs of serious mite and virus infestation – deformed wings, punctured brood cappings, headless pupae, short abdomens, and “greasy” black bees. If a colony gets to that point they must be treated aggressively if they are to survive.

If we practice all of this, we should have the situation pretty well under control, right? Well, there is great concern among responsible beekeepers that, even if they keep after mite levels, nearby collapsing colonies will migrate to their healthy hives and bring in mites and viruses. This is a valid concern. Many beekeepers think that this has happened to them already. Horizontal transmission of viruses is a real threat, and one which is very hard to control.

Is the situation hopeless?

Well, here's an idea that I think shows great promise. Inspired by something I heard in a telephone conference I recently participated in, Norfolk County Beekeepers Association is undertaking an apiary mapping and community treatment project. With the guidance of a board member who has considerable GIS experience, we recently purchased a mapping software package called Maptitude and a premium survey package from Survey Monkey. NCBA members were asked to participate in this survey and provide details such as apiary address, number of hives, past winter survival rates, mite treatment information and more.

Some beekeepers are wary of disclosing their apiary locations, so we have promised the club that this information will not be shared outside of this project. Using the mapping software, we have plotted the location of all known apiaries in the county. Then, we drew 2 mile diameter circles connecting groups of apiaries. We call these Varroa Control Groups (VCG). Contact information for each beekeeper in a given VCG will be shared within the group. When a colony tests above threshold levels, the beekeeper will contact each beekeeper in his VCG and advise them to treat for mites at the same time. By maintaining low mite levels within these areas, it is likely that transmission of mites between neighboring apiaries can be minimized. If other counties in Massachusetts also adopt this practice, we have the opportunity to significantly improve honey bee survival in Massachusetts, and perhaps it can spread to other states as well.

If anyone is interested in starting a project like this in your county, feel free to email me at [lunariafarm@outlook.com](mailto:lunariafarm@outlook.com) and I'll help you get started.

**-Ed Szymanski**

References and suggested reading:

Randy Oliver, “The Varroa Problem” pt. 1 through 7, American Bee Journal, Nov. 2016 – May 2017

Meghan Milbath Ph.D., - “Your bees don't have to die – how can we become treatment-free without killing our colonies?”, American Bee Journal, Dec. 2016

Toni Burnham, “Varroa Bombs are Real”, Bee Culture, Dec. 2016



# Volunteer Opportunities!!!!

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## RIBA Officers

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### President

Keith Salisbury

### Vice President

Malinda Coletta

### Secretary

Stephen Burke

### Treasurer

Lori Dobson

### Member at Large

Dr. Jane Dennison

### Past President

Don Joslin

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## Committee Chairs

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### Bee School Director, Instructor-RIC

Betty Mencucci

### Bee School Instructor-URI

Stephen Burke

### Bee School Instructor-URI

Ed Karle

### E.A.S. Director

Dr. Jane Dennison

### Newsletter

Cynthia Holt

### Photo Journalist

Emily Langlais

### Presentations

John Rodzen

### Programs

Liying Peng

### Queen Rearing Committee

Scott Langlais

### State of RI Bee Inspector

Jim Lawson

### Webmaster

Deb Eccleston

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## **Refreshment Coordinator**

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RIBA needs a volunteer to coordinate the purchase and delivery of beverages for the monthly General Membership meetings. If interested, please contact Keith Salisbury [pkbees@verizon.net](mailto:pkbees@verizon.net) or Malinda Coletta [malindacoletta@yahoo.com](mailto:malindacoletta@yahoo.com)

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## **Washington County Fair Volunteers**

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RIBA needs a person to coordinate and run the RIBA booth for all of the days of the Washington county fair as well as a team of volunteers to assist. The dates are August 16-20. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Keith Salisbury [pkbees@verizon.net](mailto:pkbees@verizon.net)

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## **Got Space For Everyone ?**

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During the summer months, RIBA holds all general membership meetings outside at the homes/properties of generous RIBA members. If you have space and perhaps beehive to take a peek at (not a requirement) and would like to host a meeting, please contact:

Liying Peng, Chairperson of Programs committee

[liyingpeng@hotmail.com](mailto:liyingpeng@hotmail.com)

Malinda Coletta [malindacoletta@yahoo.com](mailto:malindacoletta@yahoo.com)

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## **Presenters Needed!**

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If you would enjoy speaking to and educating the public about bees, then the presentation committee needs **YOU!** Please contact John Rodzen, chairperson of the Presentation Committee at

[rodzen.john@gmail.com](mailto:rodzen.john@gmail.com)

# What's Happening?

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

### E-Board Meetings

**June 5, 2017 at 6:30p**

**July 3, 2017 at 6:30p**

Board meetings open to all members and are currently held at

**Warwick Public Library**

**600 Sandy Lane**

**Warwick, RI 02889**

### General Membership Meetings

**Sunday, June 11, 2017**

**Snake Den State Park and Farm**

**90 Brown Ave**

**Johnston, RI 02919**

1-1:45p New Bee Mtg with Keith Salisbury

2-4p General Membership

round table about what beekeepers are

seeing in their hives around the state

Hive inspection led by Betty Mencucci

**Saturday, July 15, 2017**

**2p-6p**

**RIBA FIELD DAY**

**Salisbury Farm**

**11 Peck Hill Road**

**Johnston, RI 02919**



## Take the Bus!

RIBA is looking for interest in renting a bus for a "field trip" to the Mass Bee Field Day on June 17th 8am-3:30pm.

Open to RIBA members, the cost is \$15.00 round trip

Departure 7 am from a centralized location

Return approx. 5:30pm

Admission to the Mass Bee field day is free with many vendors, exhibits and presentations.

If you are interested, please email Liying Peng [liyingpeng@hotmail.com](mailto:liyingpeng@hotmail.com) or comment on the Facebook post.

## Display at the Greenville Library

Scott and Emily Langlais will be setting up the main display cabinet at the Greenville Public Library for Pollinator Month that will include selections from the RIBA collection. . If you are in the area during the month of June, be sure to stop by and check it out! Greenville Library is located on 573 Putnam Pike, Greenville, R.I. 02828

# What's Happening?

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## Queen Grant Update

250 queens handed out in the month of May both in re-queened packages and individually with 50 more New World Carniolans coming mid June.

People who have received the new “grant” queens are asked to pay attention to the following:

- Remember that varroa hygienic behaviors will show as the bees tearing out infected brood so the brood pattern might look spotty.
- DO NOT drone comb trap the study queens, we want the drones out there
- Monitor and TREAT for mites as these queens are not resistant to all the varroa, and you need to protect from the viruses the mites transmit.

Volunteers with the queen grant will take a poll in the fall to capture the known losses this summer. They will also collect the tags of dead queens at a meeting at the end of the fall, so please save them for now.

Dr Jane Dennison would also like to extend a special thank you to all the volunteers who made this happen. There will be one more hand out period in June, with a final series in Spring 2018.



*Happy Beekeeper with her new grant queen*

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## Register your Hive!

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*People interested in a free queen from the Queen Grant MUST have a registered hive in order to be eligible!*

Please follow this link to find the form and register your beehive with the state of Rhode Island.

[RI DEM Apiary Registration Form](#)

# What's Happening?

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## Beekeeping Talk at the Weaver Library

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Dr. Jane Dennison presents a slide lecture Beekeeping Today at the Weaver Library on Tuesday, May 30, 2017 at 7pm. Dr. Dennison is a pediatric and adolescent physician and has been a beekeeper for over ten years. An active member of the Rhode Island Beekeeper's Association, she offers a brief history of bee husbandry and discusses current issues in beekeeping, including a grant-funded project to re-queen 600 hives in RI for genetic diversity.

Learn what it takes to be successful as a Rhode Island beekeeper at a time when there is much concern about the survival of honeybees.

Weaver Library is located at 41 Grove Avenue, East Providence, RI 02914. Questions? Call 401-434-2453. This program is free and open to all.

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## USDA Honey Report

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The link to the monthly USDA Honey Report written by James Prasky can be found here:

<http://marketnews.usda.gov/mnp/fv-home>



# Would you like to increase your beekeeping skills?

An Intermediate Bee School, co-sponsored by RIBA and RIC will be held in July 2017 at Rhode Island College. It consists of a 2 hour classroom session and a 1 hour lab in the apiary at the college. The school will be taught by Betty Mencucci and is open to all members of RIBA who have some beekeeping experience or who have taken the beginner class and are seeking to advance their beekeeping knowledge and skills.

The class will deal with subjects such as colony inspection, finding the queen, requeening a colony, evaluating the strength and health of the hive, swarm prevention, creating splits, best practices for colony management and expansion, and determining levels of varroa mites and best treatment methods.

The cost of the class is \$35 for members and \$50 for non-members. The number of enrollees will be limited to 25 students per class.

You can sign up for the Friday morning class or the Saturday morning class:

Friday, July 7th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. then out to the bee yard. Rain date for lab: Sunday, July 9th – 11:00 a.m. – Noon

Saturday, July 8th from 9:00 a.m to 11:00 a.m then out to the bee yard.  
Rain date for lab: Sunday July 9th – 11:00 a.m. – Noon.

Please contact Betty Mencucci at 568-8449 or [bmencucci@verizon.net](mailto:bmencucci@verizon.net) for additional information.



# Recipes From The Hive

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## SPICED HONEY HUMMUS

1 Cup Dried Chickpeas OR Large can Chickpeas

1/2 cup Tahini

1/2 Tsp ground cumin

1/2 Tsp ground Coriander

1/2 Tsp ground Chile

3 Tbsp Lemon Juice

1 Tbsp Olive Oil

1 Clove Garlic

1 Tbsp Honey

Salt & black Pepper



Place the chickpeas in a colander and rinse thoroughly with cold water, then drain and transfer to a large bowl. Cover them with cold water and soak for at least 12 hours.

Drain the chickpeas, rinse again with cold water, and transfer to a large saucepan. Cover with plenty of water and place over medium heat; bring slowly up to a boil, then simmer for 2 hours, skimming off any foam that accumulates.

When the chick peas are tender, drain and reserve the cooking water. Rinse the chickpeas briefly under cold water and drain well, then transfer them to a food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped.

If using canned chick peas: Rinse the chickpeas briefly under cold water and drain well, then transfer them to a food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped.

Add the tahini, spices, lemon juice, oil, garlic, and honey and process until smooth- add a little of the cooking water if you want a smoother hummus.

Season with salt and pepper and spoon into a serving bowl, Drizzle with a little more honey and serve pita chips.

# Recipes From The Hive

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## All Purpose Healing Salve

Use equal parts of

Carrier base such as Aquaphor Ointment\*, liquid pectin\*\* or “un-petroleum” jelly

Raw Honey

OPTIONAL-A teaspoon of Calendula infused oil or some drops of essential oil such as Sandalwood or Lavender

Use a double boiler and separate containers to *gently* heat all ingredients. Once the consistency of the ingredients loosens, mix together and pour into clean containers. Allow to cool.

\*Do not use a base of Aquaphor if using salve to treat eczema due to the lanolin in the ingredients.

\*\*Liquid pectin may take longer to set.

Good for cuts, minor burns and skin irritations in place of antibiotic ointment.



# Meeting Re-cap April 2017

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April 2, 2017 - Spring Banquet at Quidnessett Country Club

The elegant Quidnessett Country Club was the site of RIBA's annual Spring Banquet. From 1pm - 3:30pm attendees enjoyed the fellowship of their beekeeping friends and neighbors, a plated dinner, and coffee and dessert. At 3:30 our guest speaker, Kent Williams, a commercial beekeeper from Kentucky, took the stage. Kent started with 2 hives and expanded to 51 within 5 years. Currently he runs over 700 hives, producing about 85,000 lbs of honey last year, as well as 3,000 queens. Much of his talk focused on the business aspects of commercial beekeeping, and how he has changed his operation to be successful.

On the topic of making bees pay for themselves he offered this advice: "Find a need and fill it." Pollination, queen rearing, honey, woodenware, etc are some options. He notes there is as much call for nucs as for honey (ie money to be made servicing that need). Build good business relationships where both sides are happy with the deal, and do something the other side doesn't want to do (extracting honey for them, for example). He states that making \$100 net per hive is his baseline minimum for running a financially successful apiary.

His opinion on the problem with most package queens: not enough drone yards to service the higher numbers of queens being produced. He always evaluates a queen's brood pattern at the egg stage since other issues can impact the larval/pupal stages. In his Florida yards, he does not allow his queens to mate due to the possibility of introducing Africanized genetics. It costs him \$6 per queen to produce.

On varroa control, he uses formic acid in the spring, Hopguard II in summer "when counts dictate." He uses Apivar when severely infected, Apiguard occasionally, but feels it is too labor intensive. He also sprays oxalic acid on top of his bottom deeps as a fast and effective treatment with "not much queen loss, some brood loss." He doesn't think OAV is very effective on double deeps, but is good for singles. His annual losses are around 20-30%, with the fewest losses (5%) in his queen yard where the bees aren't moved. The stress of moving colonies kills about 10%.

Some quotes:

"The more you're in a hive, the more they're gonna hate your guts."

"Recognize what's going on in the hive and fix it."

# Meeting Re-cap May 2017

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May 05, 2017 - General Meeting

New beekeepers Q & A from 1-2pm. At 2pm a short business meeting was held. Dr Jane Dennison gave an update on the progress of the queen grant. Betty Mencucci reported that July 7-8 was the tentative dates for the Intermediate Bee School at RIC. Carolyn Fleur-Lobban said the report on the RIC small hive beetle study will soon be available (hopefully linked on RIBA's website).

Our first of three speakers was EAS Master Beekeeper Ed Karle on "Managing Hives for Honey Harvest." As always, Ed packed a lot of info into his talk so following are some bullet points:

- If bees are spread over 80% of frames in top box, add a honey super.
- The optimal brood space below a honey super consists of six frames of brood centered in the deep, with a frame of pollen on each side, and a frame of honey against the outermost walls. Brood frames should NOT have a solid band of capped honey/nectar at the top of the frame or workers may not cross up into the super.
- Ed always starts with 10 frames in a super when starting new foundation; he removes one frame when they are built out, running 9 frames in the super.
- Ed favors using queen excluders below supers and cleans excess wax from them with a propane torch.
- Use fume boards to get bees out of supers, or escape boards.
- Check hive health BEFORE supering, since it will be more work and less convenient afterward.
- If you have top and bottom entrances, watch where the pollen is entering the hive to get a clue where brood is being raised.
- 5 or more frames of honey in a 10-frame hive body can be considered a honeybound situation.

Liyang Peng was our second speaker on the subject of "Spring Splits and Nucs." She recommends looking at the underside of hive bodies for queen cells during swarm season. She makes 5-frame nucs consisting of the following: 2 frames of brood, 2 frames of honey/pollen, and one empty comb. For swarm prevention she will also add the queen from a hive that is in danger of swarming. Then she moves the nuc 3 miles away (or shakes in extra bees to compensate for loss of foragers back to the original hive).

As far as using purchased mated queens, the pros are that it saves time, you get an assurance of quality, and less uncertainty. The cons are: it costs more money and mated queens can be hard to get at certain times of year. If you are going to allow the hive to raise a queen naturally, cut out all but two swarm cells. Four days later check for emergency cells. 10-17 days from the date of the split you may expect to see eggs.

Third speaker Betty Mencucci spoke on catching swarms. Swarms generally land close to where they issued from (ie the swarm in your yard was most likely your hive that swarmed). Inspect weekly during swarm season to prevent swarming. She warns that weaker hives CAN swarm too. She urged prospective swarm catchers to have equipment ready and available, and be prepared to go after them at a moment's notice since you don't know how long the swarm has been there and can depart at any time. Her swarm catching kit consists of hive bodies, loppers, ladder, brush, an old bed sheet, a saw etc. If the property owner allows it, it is better to cut a branch with a clinging swarm, rather than shake it. When a swarm has accepted a new home, workers will fan from their Nasonov gland. Finally, she recommends you move the newly hived swarm at night once all the foragers have returned, and put it in the place where you want the hive to live permanently.



*May Meeting Speakers, Ed Karle, Liying Peng and Betty Mencucci*

# HOW TO GET YOUR FRIENDS TO CATCH A SWARM FOR YOU

by Stephen Burke

Tom Sawyer convinced his friends to whitewash a fence. With a little effort and only a small loss of blood, I have discovered a way to get my beekeeping friends to catch a swarm for me and deliver it to my door. . . here's how!

On the day in question, make sure you're wearing your best Brooks Brothers suit, and the Ferragamo tie. Check yourself out in the mirror and enjoy that pressed, clean starchy goodness, because this will be the last time you wear them. Leave your bee jacket, along with your equipment, in the trunk of your car, kiss your wife good bye, and go to work as you usually do.



When you receive the a telephone call that there's a swarm in the cherry tree about a mile away, depart the office at top speed and rush over to evaluate the situation. The swarm should be about 8 feet up on an easily accessible branch. You won't have a ladder, but you should be able to see that if you did have a ladder, this would be an easy score.

Put on your veil and bee jacket so no one accidentally mistakes you for a normal person. Thus nattily attired, walk to the adjacent hardware store and ask the guy at the desk if you can borrow a ladder for a few minutes while you do this extremely interesting and exciting swarm-catching thing in his backyard. He'll be reluctant at first, but impress him with the bee suit, and your overall air of bad-ass beekeepitude, so that eventually he'll let you borrow a lightweight aluminum stepladder.

Now, pay attention. This next bit works best on a slight incline, covered with green grass, after a heavy rain.

Set up the ladder under and slightly to the left of the swarm. The legs should be level and the ground should be . . . well, quicksand is best, but mud will do. Don suit and gloves to maximize bulky awkwardness, and ascend the ladder. Reach to your right and balance your catch box on your right hand directly under the swarm. Let go of the ladder with your left hand so you can use that hand to shake the branch.

Ready? Lean hard to your right, so your center of gravity is no longer directly above the ladder. The ladder will compensate for this by leaning to your left, causing two ladder legs to sink deeply into the ground. It's important that you not stop at this point. Keep the catch box balanced on your right hand and keep shaking the swarm into the box. This sounds difficult but it's actually the work of but a moment to increase the weight of the box substantially, until one leg of the ladder actually buckles and breaks.

As the ladder collapses beneath you, fling the container as hard as you can directly into the center of what's left of the swarm, and fall 8 feet to the ground. Try to hit the ground headfirst. Get up and look around nonchalantly to assure that no one saw you. Try to appear as if this is normal swarm catching procedure. Notice that the view to your left is obscured by something dripping into your eye socket, and realize that you have a small cut on your head. Tomorrow you will wonder if your judgement might have been affected by the blow to the head, but for now take a deep breath, collect your thoughts and remain calm – while it does seem like an awful lot of blood, direct pressure with a paper towel will take care of everything.

OK, maybe two paper towels.

Since you don't normally carry two paper towels, return to the hardware store to buy some. Receive a slightly cooler welcome from the proprietor this time because you are completely soaked in blood. Catch the roll of paper towels he hurls at you from behind the counter while he orders you in no uncertain terms to forbear from entering the store dripping bodily fluids on the his clean floor. As you leave to go sit on the curb to attend to your wound, observe him calling 911. Wonder why he is doing that. Note that passing strangers also appear to be dialing 911. Be concerned that all these calls may be tying up important emergency lines. What if there's a fire, or an accident of



As the emergency vehicles arrive (3 police cars, 2 ambulances, and a fully manned and equipped municipal fire engine), begin to suspect that perhaps there's more blood leaking out of your head than you originally thought. Observe that you have used up all the paper towels, plus your Ferragamo tie, plus that rag that the firefighter pulled from under the seat of the truck, and that blood is still soaking your shirt, tie, jacket, trousers, and most of the surrounding environment.

Wonder if you're on fire, or about to be?

At this point ambulance guys will be in hyper ambulance guy mode. Even though you're not trying to get away, they will strap a collar around your neck, strap your body to a board, strap the board to a stretcher, clamp the stretcher to the floor of an ambulance and begin cutting off your clothing with scissors. Begin to wonder whether they've read *Fifty Shades of Gray* and what their home lives are like.

When the President of the Beekeeping Association shows up (he also got the swarm call), it will take him a few minutes to figure out who you are, what with all the blood, the bees, the firefighters, the police, the EMTs and the angry hardware store guy. When he realizes who you are, after he

stops laughing and volunteers to catch the swarm for you, respond that while his is a really nice gesture, you're feeling great and that you'll be up and about in a few minutes, and will be happy to handle it yourself. Watch him getting smaller in the ambulance window as you are driven to the hospital.

This will be the last time you see him for three days. During that time, he will not only catch the swarm and deliver it to your house, but he will also arrange to have your car driven back there also. Mission accomplished!!

Now that you've accomplished your goal of having someone else catch the swarm for you, attend to the post-operation cleanup activities as you relax in the Emergency Room.

For example, now will be a good time to call your wife. Explain that you had a little accident with some bees, but that everything's fine now, you're out of the ambulance, the bleeding has stopped, you're all stitched up and they're taking the cervical collar off. Since they've decided not to admit you, ask if she can meet you at the hospital and bring you a clean suit.

Your wife will find all this this exceedingly amusing, and she will emphasize just how amusing she found it for the next several months.

Oh, I almost forgot. Post a selfie to Facebook of you, lying on the ER table, with your eyes glazed and your hair matted to your face with dried blood. Make sure the cervical collar is in the picture and caption it "Cervical Collar Monday" with no further explanation. Your friends and family will find this so hilarious that they will be Rolling On Floor Laughing Out Loud. It will probably be a year or so before they will speak to you again.

You can discard the suit and the tie. Also the shirt, the belt, the socks, the shoes, the bee suit, the gloves, and your underwear.

Next month: Now That I Have the Swarm in the Box, How Do I Get off This F\*\*king Roof?