



Pollinator Photo: Stefan Steinbauer

Report from the 2016 Charles Mraz Apitherapy Course and Conference

Carolyn Hammack

Back when I was a student in the New Mexico Beekeepers Association's Certified Beekeeper Apprentice Program, I attended a session on apitherapy, conducted by Kathleen Miller. Apitherapy involves using bee venom and products made by honeybees for medicinal purposes. I found the subject to be absolutely captivating. I'd been a beekeeper for several years by then, and between pollination, beeswax and honey, I felt like I was putting my hives to good use, but the idea of also using my hives as a resource for healing opened up a new and interesting world for me.

[The American Apitherapy Society](#) holds its Charles Mraz Apitherapy Course and Conference every fall, alternating between the east and west coasts. I had been hoping to make it to the conference for a couple of years, and fortunately this year I received a generous stipend from NMBKA for my work over the past year as Level 1 Coordinator for the Certified Beekeeper Apprentice Program. I knew I wanted to put it to good use in sharing my knowledge as a beekeeper in the New Mexico beekeeping community, so I headed to sunny Southern California—along with my daughter, whom I had promised to take to Harry Potter World in Los Angeles as her high school graduation gift!

Sitting in the conference room of the Redondo Beach Hotel, looking out the open window at palm trees along the Pacific Ocean with a beach breeze blowing in, I found myself surrounded by people from varied backgrounds. There were DOMs (Doctors of Oriental Medicine), massage therapists, people suffering from different illnesses who wanted to learn more about treatment, people who buy bees for apitherapy purposes, and plenty of plain old beekeepers. The organizers were happily surprised at the increased number of beekeepers in attendance this year. New Mexico had one of the strongest showings with five attendees from our state at the conference.

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SAVE THE DATE!

February 3–4, 2017
NMBKA Annual Meeting
Albuquerque, NM

THE NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

is dedicated to informing and inspiring persons interested in beekeeping, and educating the general public.



Message from The President

As snow flakes fall outside the kitchen window, I'm thinking about honeybees nestled in their winter cluster in the back yard, under a blanket of leaves. This a wonderful time to look back on the past year with thanks. I am so proud of the NMBKA Board of Directors, and of all the wonderful people we were able to meet and work with in 2016.

This year, we had a great time visiting different counties around New Mexico, teaching beekeeping classes and meeting with county extension agents. In Las Cruces, I visited with beekeepers and was able to tour the extraordinary "[What's the Buzz? Why Honey Bees Matter](#)" exhibit at the NM Farm and Ranch Museum. This exhibit will be showing until 6/18/17 and is not to be missed! I also visited and spoke with enthusiastic beekeepers in Raton, Clovis and Santa Fe in 2016. Across our great state the questions are the same: How can we grow our community, help support honeybee education, and keep our bees healthy?

In 2016, we partnered and gave out a \$500 grant to help support Think Like a Bee and help the Albuquerque City Council adopt the Albuquerque Bee City USA Resolution. Albuquerque residents can look forward to citywide celebrations in the summer of 2017, as well as an open dialogue with the city regarding bee-friendly practices. You can learn more about Bee City USA and how you can make it happen in your own town [HERE](#).

Congratulations to our latest graduates from the NMBKA Certified Beekeepers Program. With an average of 24 students entering the program from all over New Mexico, and their 40 hours of volunteers work, our state sees about 960 hours of bee education and advocacy each year. These students volunteered to speak about their love of bees at events like the NM State Fair, Santa Ana Environmental Fair, Valle De Oro National Wildlife Refuge Birthday Celebration, and many others.

Our Association also worked with the USDA and NMDA to oversee the completion of the USDA Honeybee APHIS Honey Bee Pests and Disease Survey with an added pesticide portion for NM, where 24 bee yards with eight or more Langstroth hives were tested in different regions around the state. We look forward to hearing the results of the health of our hives, after the test samples have been analyzed. You can learn more about past results of these tests [HERE](#).

The NMBKA also supported legislation crafted by Wild Friends NM for Senate Memorial 103 urging state agencies to protect declining bee populations and requesting the governor to declare "Bee Aware Day." This memorial was passed and local beekeepers traveled to classes all over NM, from Silver City to Rio Rancho, to thank the students and give a talk about honeybees.

Thank you all for your support of the New Mexico Beekeepers Association. We work hard to serve the beekeepers of New Mexico. We would love to hear what else we can do to help improve beekeeping and support the beek community in our wonderful state.

I hope to see you at the NMBKA Annual Meeting on February 3-4, 2017 in Albuquerque, NM. This year we focus on "The Business of Beekeeping."

Kindly,

Jessie Brown
President
New Mexico Beekeepers Association



Photo: Warren Walton

Beek Stories:

Warren Walton (Raton, NM)

"I had always been interested in trying beekeeping, so when a friend was selling all of his hives and equipment, I invested. With no knowledge, I jumped at the chance to take a small swarm that a friend captured in August of 2014. Little did I know that this was not a good time to take bees. Needless to say, they were all gone in October. So, with reckless abandon, I began to read all I could on bees and I took a class at Trinidad State Junior College, taught by Jim Conley, a well-known entomologist. I ordered my first package of bees the spring of 2015. I have since caught swarms and have had some success with the bees. This year, with one established hive and one wild swarm, caught in early June, I harvested 55 lbs. of honey. I have received a few stings and suffered some failures. I am still reading and learning from beekeepers all over New Mexico and other states. Sometimes, instead of researching a problem in all of the popular books, I call Bob Skaggs, a longtime friend and beekeeper from Nambe. With over 60 years of experience, Bob is just about the most valuable resource I have found! I realize not everyone is lucky enough to have an experienced beekeeper to bounce things off of, but I strongly recommend meeting and learning from other New Mexico beekeepers. The Internet, although full of information on bees, is not always the best place to find answers for your bee problems. What works in Alabama, or Missouri, may not work in New Mexico."



It's a Community Thing

While NMBKA connects beekeepers all over New Mexico, there are also smaller local beekeeper communities who work together formally or informally. Here is information about a few of these groups...

Albuquerque Beekeepers, better known as the ABQ Beeks, is an informal, public forum for the exchange of beekeeping information, knowledge, materials, and support through a website, monthly educational meetings, and events. The heart of this forum is the [ABQ Beeks website](#) on which a robust public exchange about beekeeping and related activities in New Mexico takes place. Currently, there are nearly 1,300 non-fee members that span other states and countries. For more information, visit [ABQBEES.ORG](#) or call Jodi Hedderig at (505)377-1076.

Paseo del Norte Beekeepers Association in Southern New Mexico was kick-started this past summer to provide a platform for locals to learn and share experiences. Total

membership is already over 60, including many new and future beeks. Members work with all types of hives, and have conducted educational and fund raising events—as well as a large number of bee rescues and swarm recoveries. There has even been discussion about raising queens. The Association was recently featured in the El Paso Inc., in a [story](#) about co-founder Michael Duchouquette and his honey business. The group is looking forward to its first formal meeting very soon! Find them on Facebook at "[Paseo del Norte Beekeepers Association](#)"

Raton does not yet have an "official" group, but Warren Walton reports some great success getting other folks in the area interested in beekeeping. He estimates that by next summer, Raton may be supporting upwards of 20 to 25 hives. Warren writes, "My goal in all of this is to re-establish a healthy bee population in our area. Educating our citizens about the issues and problems bees are facing gives me the hope that we could turn our bee population around for a healthy rebound." (See sidebar for Warren's personal beekeeping story!) Area beeks can contact Warren at warren.walton50@gmail.com

Sacramento Mountains Beekeepers is a loose online community of beekeepers in and around the area of the Sacramento Mountains. The focus of the group is to aid and educate new members and to be of service to the local community through the exchange of beekeeping opportunities. SMB has 147 online members. Find them on Facebook at "[Sacramento Mountains Beekeepers](#)."

We know there are more groups out there, so in future issues we hope to share information about beek communities in other spots around the state! *Please get in touch if you are part of a group and would like your information included.*
Thanks!



Photo: Michael Duchouquette

Paseo del Norte beekeepers conduct a "Forced Abscond" from a tree with an unsuccessful trap-out.



Bees in the classroom

The [Wild Friends](#) program is based at the University of New Mexico's law school. Each year, hundreds of elementary, middle and high school students from a dozen schools across New Mexico take part in Wild Friends, which combines wildlife conservation with civics education. These photos were taken during some school visits in September.



Photo: Tracey Kincaid

Jodi Hedderig and students observe live bees in an observation hive at Rio Rancho Cyber Academy



Photo: Tracey Kincaid

Marty Carr shows a bee frame to fourth grade students at North Star Elementary (Albuquerque)



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Have an idea for an article or feature that you would like to see in the NM Beekeepers Association Newsletter?

Please get in touch!

editor@nmbeekeepers.org



Report from the 2016 Charles Mraz Apitherapy Course and Conference

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Session topics covered over the three days included all aspects of bee medicine, such as the basics of using honey, royal jelly, propolis, pollen, and bee venom for better health. One of my favorite sessions, taught by New Mexico beekeeper Amelia Moody, demonstrated how to make medicinal propolis salve. Glen Perry, whose research resulted in a highly bioavailable form of propolis and earned him a medal at Apimondia 2007 in Melbourne, Australia, for innovation in the use of hive products, taught a full-hour session on the medicinal uses and benefits of propolis. Glen also taught a session on propolis and cancer. I even took home a recipe for medicinal bee bread

for human consumption (I have a batch brewing up in my kitchen as I write this).

Other sessions covered practical topics such as apitherapy intake and technique, and informed consent and legal issues. Because there is no certification for apitherapists, anyone who performs bee venom therapy (also known as “stinging”) can ultimately be held liable, whether they are a medical professional or not. The main difference is that a medical professional is within their scope of practice to diagnose a condition, whereas a “lay stinger” like me is not qualified to make any type of diagnosis—though I would consider “stinging” a client who came to me with a diagnosis.

The conference ended with hands-on stinging demonstrations during the Treat and Be Treated session. Attendees volunteered to be stung, or to try their hand

at stinging others. Conference organizer Frederique Keller, L.Ac, DOM, and current president of the American Apitherapy Society, demonstrated how to perform a preliminary sting to test a new client for reactions, how to use the technique of “tapping” where the apitherapist takes the venom-filled stinger and lightly taps it into the body in a series of micro-stings to spread out the reaction, and how to complete a full-on sting where the client is stung and the stinger is left in for many minutes until it stops pulsing and all of the bee venom is released into the client’s tissue. A California-licensed DOM

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Report from the 2016 Charles Mraz Apitherapy Course and Conference

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demonstrated how to use a bee stinger in conjunction with an acupuncture needle to get maximum effect. One participant brought her dog in for the veterinary apitherapy hands-on session. The dog was coughing consistently until the apitherapist, who was also a DOM, stung him on his Chinese medicine heart and lung points. With all the people around him he barely noticed the sting, but stopped coughing within several minutes.

One final thought: as impressed as I am by apitherapy, I have always struggled to reconcile my love for bees with the idea of taking the life of a bee for the purpose of apitherapy. One of the apitherapists at the conference, who had been reproached by someone for taking the lives

of bees, asked that person if she ate honey. When she said she did, the apitherapist pointed out that many more bees are killed or injured in the act of honey harvesting than in the act of apitherapy. The apitherapist also made the point that most of the bees she collects are foragers close to the end of their hard-working lives. When I go out to my hives, I ask the bees for volunteers. I also notice that when they sting me it is usually somewhere where I need bee medicine. Bees know these things.

Carolyn Hammack is beekeeper living in Albuquerque, and is a Co-chair of ABQ Beeks and the Level 1 Coordinator of the NMBKA Certified Beekeeping Program. Contact her at littletreesbees@gmail.com



ALBUQUERQUE BEEKEEPERS
URBAN BEEKEEPING IN NEW MEXICO'S LARGEST CITY.

An important message for supporters of ABQBEEKS.ORG

As most readers of the NMBKA newsletter know, Albuquerque Beekeepers, better known as the ABQ Beeks, is an informal, public forum for the exchange of beekeeping information, knowledge, materials, and support through a website, monthly educational meetings, and events. The heart of this forum is the ABQ Beeks [website](http://ABQBEEKS.ORG) on which a robust public exchange about beekeeping and related activities in New Mexico takes place. Currently, there are nearly 1,300, non-fee, members that span other states and countries!

Launched in 2008, the website is the backbone of our group, the spine of our comb—but keeping AbqBeeks.org up and running costs money. Over the years, generous members have quietly helped defray those costs. This year, Mark Sommers donated a topbar nuc for raffle to help raise the necessary funds. However, in late summer we received a notice that website costs would more than double in 2017!

While we cannot accept advertising, we can help promote your beekeeping business by offering community members the opportunity to “underwrite” the website. This means we can post information about your beekeeping business on the ABQ Beeks website, provided it doesn’t include a “call to action.” For underwriting opportunities, or to help support the website in other ways, please call Jodi Hedderig at (505)377-1076.

Help keep this important community service running! If you haven’t yet visited our website, go to ABQBEEKS.ORG to explore the services this website provides. . . and to find out what we would all be missing if it were lost.

Sincerely,

Jodi Hedderig & Carolyn Hammack
Co-Coordiators, AbqBeeks

Membership Form



Join us! Members receive perks like free admission to events, website listings and newsletters!

CONTACT INFORMATION (PRIVATE)

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

☐

FULL YEAR
\$30

☐

HALF-YEAR
\$15

NEWSLETTER

☐

EMAIL
FREE

☐

PRINT
\$5 PER YEAR

NMBKA MEMBERS CAN ADVERTISE FOR FREE!

if you wish to have your information added to the Bee Services section of our website, please fill out this section:

NAME OR COMPANY

PHONE

EMAIL

WEBSITE

CITY OR AREA

List for swarm capture? ☐ YES ☐ NO

List as bee educator? ☐ YES ☐ NO

List for selling honey? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you sell queens or bees? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you sell wax/pollen/propolis? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you sell hive equipment? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, what kind?

MAIL COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

NM Beekeepers Association
PO Box 7188
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MAKE CHECKS OUT TO:

NM Beekeepers Association

Questions? Email: info@nmbeekeepers.org



New Mexico Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting: **The Business of the Bee**

February 3-4, 2017

**South Broadway Cultural Center
1025 Broadway Street SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102**

Please join us for NMBKA's 2017 Annual Meeting, which will take place at the beautiful South Broadway Cultural Center in Albuquerque, NM. The event will be a great opportunity to learn more about building a business, or maybe just earning some extra income by keeping honeybees. Topics will include Products of the Hive, the Business of Beekeeping, and Native Bees and Beekeeping in New Mexico. We will also have hands-on activities, honey samples, vendors and food trucks.

Check our website for more details!

<http://nmbeekeepers.org>



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