

# NMBKA



New Mexico Beekeepers  
Association

## NEWSLETTER

September 2015



PHOTO: John Denne

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### SAVE THE DATE!

NM State Fair (Albuquerque)  
*September 10-20, 2015*

WAS Conference (Boulder, CO)  
*October 1-3, 2015*

American Honey Producers  
Association Convention  
(Albuquerque)  
*January 5-9, 2016*

The New Mexico  
Beekeepers Association  
is dedicated to informing  
and inspiring persons  
interested in beekeeping,  
and educating the  
general public.

## TAKE ACTION FOR POLLINATORS!

*Loretta McGrath*

Harvest season: the scent of roasting chiles and *piñon* fills the air here in Santa Fe, pueblos throughout New Mexico celebrate with feast days and dances to honor the abundance of the earth—and we beekeepers can finally enjoy the honey the bees have collected all season long.

Honey is the coalescence of a plant's magic dance with its pollinators, an alchemy of the elements of sunlight, water, air and earth. It nourishes us as it does the bees, and it's a true delight to be able to share it with friends, family and community. With all the rain that New Mexico has received this year, the plants have produced abundant seed and birds are arriving to be nourished by the bounty.

Regarding abundance, an elder friend shared this maxim years ago: "To whom much is given, much will be requested." That makes harvest season a good time to give back to the earth and to the pollinators. The world needs us, stewards whose hearts are mesmerized by honeybees, to step out from behind our veils and share what we know. Fortunately, giving can take many forms that address pollinator decline. In that spirit, here are some ways that you can consider the pollinators and reciprocate...

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### Extension Outreach & Beekeeping Educational Series

This fall, the NMBKA will be conducting beekeeping classes, distributing educational materials, and meeting with beekeepers and County Extension personnel all around New Mexico. Come out and let us know what's important in your community and what information would be beneficial to you!

Sept 18-19: Alamogordo  
Sept 25-26: Farmington

Oct 16-17: Los Lunas  
Oct 23-24: Silver City



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear New Mexico Beekeepers,

On August 22, it was my honor to attend the joyous graduation of the first class of the Certified Beekeepers Program, at the City of Albuquerque Open Space Visitors Center. What is most remarkable about this program is that over the course of two years, each of the students has given back to the community 40 hours of teaching about the importance of the honey bee and a healthy ecosystem for pollinators. The instructors and standing committee of this program all deserve a standing ovation for the remarkable work they have been doing!

I would also like to let you know about Bee City USA, a growing program to get American cities to commit to creating and maintaining healthy pollinator habitats. Here in New Mexico, a group of inspired beekeepers has begun working with city officials to certify and designate Albuquerque as a Bee City USA.

Want to get involved? Contact Anita at [memberatlarge1@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:memberatlarge1@nmbeekeepers.org) or to find out more about Bee City USA and getting your city involved, visit <http://www.beecityusa.org>

I wish you all a bountiful honey harvest.

Kindly,

Jessie Brown  
President  
New Mexico Beekeepers Association

PHOTO: Randy Swartz



### CBP GRADUATING STUDENTS

L to R: Garland Oberle, Mary Lee Moeny, Anita Amstutz, Paul Kline, Pichi Welsh, Tom Day, Carolyn Hammack, Raymond Espinoza, Marlene Brown, Lu Lu Sage, Andy Dula, Allan Emord

PHOTO: Randy Swartz



### CBP STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (PAST & PRESENT)

L to R: Jessie Brown, Marty Carr, TJ Carr, Ted Wilcox, Randy Swartz, Susan Clair, Christina Allday-Bondy. *Not pictured: Taylor Horst, Albert Gibson, Brett Rimer*

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](mailto:editor@nmbeekeepers.org)

### NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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[www.nmbeekeepers.org](http://www.nmbeekeepers.org)

### 2015 NM BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President: Jessie Brown [president@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:president@nmbeekeepers.org)  
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*Craig Noorlander*

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE PIGEON MOUNTAIN TRADING COMPANY FOR THE USE OF INFORMATION AND IMAGES FROM THEIR NEWSLETTER**

There is nothing like tasting your very own honey, and it always amazes me how different honey can taste each year—even if it is from the same location. Remember, though: if this is the first year you have had a hive, chances are you won't actually produce enough honey to extract. It took me three years before I harvested my first honey. "To extract, or not to extract?" is definitely the question for newbees.

As much as you may love honey, it's imperative that you leave enough for the bees to eat so that they can survive the winter. For a two-story Langstroth hive, that means at least 10 full frames for New Mexico, 12 for good measure in colder areas. If the bees are healthy and strong going into winter, and you provide them with enough honey to survive, then there is a good chance that you can harvest some honey the following season—provided we get rain!

Once you do have honey to harvest, you have various options when it comes to extraction methods and equipment. If you have just one or two hives, you may prefer not to use an extractor at all. You can cut the comb away from the foundation (being careful not to cut into the plastic foundation) and smash the honey out as you would for top bar combs. You can strain and bottle it as you would from an extractor. If you have multiple hives, however, an extractor may be just what you need.

An extractor spins the frames around, forcing the honey out. The honey runs down the sides of the extractor and comes out of the honey gate. You can then have it pour out into a five-gallon bucket

through a filter so that you have clean-looking honey. It is great to have a gate on the five-gallon bucket as well so that you can drain it thru a funnel into your bottles. Let the honey sit for a day in the bucket in a warm (room temperature) location to get the air to settle out of it before filling your bottles.

Which extractor to get? Manual vs. Electric is the most obvious difference in extractors. If you have two hives, a manual extractor is a more logical choice for your budget. As the name implies, these require good, old-fashioned manual labor. To get your honey out, you are going to have to turn the crank... a lot. If you get a two-frame extractor for your 10-frame hive, you will have to use the extractor five times to get all of your honey. If you aren't able to maintain the extended labor that is needed, a manual extractor might not be for you. Electric extractors can save lots of personal sweat, but they do cost more than the manual extractors. If you have many hives, then you definitely need to consider an electric extractor. Aside from the modern convenience of electricity, they can hold more frames (2 to 96 or more) than manual extractors (which typically hold 2 to 6) allowing you to extract more honey at one time.

As for extractor size, base that on the number of hives that you have. Once again, first-year beekeepers will want to wait a year or two before making this decision. Otherwise, you may buy a 20-frame electric extractor, only to find that you don't have the honey to extract because it was too dry. Or you might buy a two-frame manual extractor, only to decide that you really love beekeeping and want 20 more hives!

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**TANGENTIAL  
EXTRACTOR**



**RADIAL  
EXTRACTOR**



# ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS: YELLOW FLOWERS OF FALL

Long-horned bee on Sunflower

Kate Whealen & Betty Sperlich  
(PHOTOS: Kate Whealen)

Have you ever wondered about all the yellow-flowering plants that spring up along roads this time of the year? They might look like weeds, but many are very useful and are much appreciated by pollinators and herbalists.

For example, consider, *Grindelia squarrosa*, also known as **STICKY GUM PLANT**. Native Americans and other herbalists use *Grindelia* to treat bronchial asthma, to clear mucus, as well as to treat skin problems, including allergic reactions to poison ivy. The flowers are much loved by honey bees and native bees.

**GOLDEN CROWNBEARD** (*Verbesina encelioides*) is very common along roadsides, arroyos, and other disturbed areas in the fall. It

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE  
*Santa Fe Master Gardener Newsletter*

is beloved by honeybees for nectar, producing a strong, amber honey. Native Americans use it to treat spider bites and skin ailments.

**COMMON SUNFLOWER** (*Helianthus annuus*) frequently grows wild along roadsides. Native Americans cultivated sunflowers for food and medicine. Birds love the nutritious seeds. Honey bees produce an amber-colored honey from the flower nectar, and the pollen is attractive to many bee species, especially sunflower bees. Sunflowers face and seemingly “track” the sun. However, it is actually not the flower that turns, but the stem. The stem grows faster on the shaded side, which turns the flower in the direction of the sun.

**SNAKEWEED** (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*) is fast-growing shrub about one foot tall with slender, linear leaves and flat-topped clusters of yellow composite flowers. For the Ute, Dine and Pueblo people, snakeweed was an important medicinal plant for the treatment of respiratory problems, dizziness and lice, either as a tea or topical, fat-based ointment. Southwestern Indians and Mexicans gathered branches of snakeweed for use as a broom. Flowers were boiled to use for indigestion. Pieces of the plant were chewed and placed on bee and wasp stings.



Leafcutter bee on Golden Crownbeard

**GOLDEN ASTER** (*Heterotheca* spp.) is a good nectar source for small butterflies. Chickadees, porcupines, caterpillars and native bees also find it attractive. The Cheyenne boiled the tops and stems and used the resulting extract as a sedative to aid sleep.



Golden Aster

**GROUNDSEL** (*Senecio* spp.) This member of the sunflower family is attractive to honey bees, producing a strong-smelling yellow honey. Hummingbirds, butterflies and other insects also collect nectar from the flowers, and some *Senecio* species are larval hosts for butterflies. Seed eaters eat the seeds.



Groundsel

**CHAMISA or RABBITBRUSH** (*Ericameria nauseosa*); formerly *Chrysothamnus nauseosus* (*Chrysothamnus* means "golden shrub" in Greek). Brilliant yellow blossoms are attractive to a wide variety of native pollinators and honey bees. Because it is highly drought-tolerant and adapted to poor soils, it is an important plant for water-wise landscaping in the West. Chamisa blooms reliably in late summer and fall, providing forage even during drought.

**GOLDENROD** (*Solidago* spp.) Yellow flowers in midsummer and fall provide nectar and dark yellow pollen. There are many species of goldenrod, ranging in size from two to six feet tall. The flowers are shallow, attracting many species of native bees and other pollinators. It is drought-tolerant and loves full sun.



Goldenrod

***These are just some of the many native flowers gracing our roadsides in the fall. Pollinators will thank you if you protect these useful and valuable plants!***



# THE ART OF THE CUT-OUT

## PART ONE IN A SERIES

Mike Kruchoski

Many beekeepers get their bees via package orders or swarm capture, but here in Albuquerque, the easiest way is to suddenly realize, “Hey, I’ve got bees in my wall!” Obviously, discovering a bee infestation is also the least welcome method for getting bees—particularly if you’re not a beekeeper.

Our fair city is a wonderful place to be a bee. Albuquerque abounds with the greenery that provides nectar and pollen for some amazingly strong colonies. This leads to ample swarms. Many are never captured, but they’ve still got to go *somewhere*. So off to a nearby home or yard they fly, finally settling into a cozy new space to grow and prosper.

Why do New Mexicans have unwelcome feral bee colonies in their buildings? In my experience, the main culprits are poor construction quality, shoddy maintenance practices, and long-ignored yard care. A quick inspection of clients’ homes and yards generally reveals improperly installed canales, numerous unplugged holes from past cable TV installations, and eroded mortar on the ubiquitous cinderblock walls of our community. This is why I never get sucked into that endless argument about whether Langstroth or top-bar hives are best for bees: every Nuevo Mexicano *knows* that bees prefer cinderblock and parapets for their homes!

That’s why intrepid beekeepers like Tyler Schutte, Ray Espinosa, and a handful of others get called into action to help. I talked with Tyler and Ray recently to compare notes on our motivations,



PHOTO: Mike Kruchoski

approaches, and the challenges we face in doing bee removals, otherwise known as those dreaded *cut-outs*.

We all share two primary reasons for providing this valuable community service. First, we want to “save the bees.” There’s been a remarkable shift in public awareness and concern about honeybee health and survival, so more and more people are calling upon us because they share that same goal and are at least willing to *consider* removal rather than extermination. Just as important, however, is the pleasure we get from educating the public about honeybees. We talk about how docile most colonies are; how seldom we encounter “killer bees” (and how we handle them); how valuable pollinators are to our diet, economy, and environment; the other stinging flying insects most people mistake for “blood-thirsty bees” (that “bite” them, their children, and their pets); and how easy and rewarding it is to become a responsible urban beekeeper. But I’m preaching to the choir...

Ray Espinosa also finds that doing cut-outs strengthens his apiaries with good feral stock. I personally love the bragging rights that come with the job; when I stick my arm deep inside a wall cavity to determine the extent of a colony, that wide-eyed look on people’s faces is priceless. It also leads to more teaching moments: No, most people are *not* deathly allergic to bee stings. According to several reliable scientific estimates, only one adult in 30 suffers severe or dangerous reactions, and even fewer children do.

Still, homeowners are often anxious about the supposed dangers of honeybees, so part of our education process is demonstrating both caution and comfort during a cut-out. Both Tyler and Ray offer safe ways for clients to observe,

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JUNE 2015

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# NMBKA

## New Mexico Beekeepers Association

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

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

#### CONTACT INFORMATION (PRIVATE)

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE:

EMAIL:

#### FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

☐

FULL-YEAR  
\$30

☐

JULY-DECEMBER  
\$15

#### NEWSLETTER

☐

EMAIL  
(FREE)

☐

PAPER  
(\$5.00/YEAR)

#### LISTING (PUBLIC)

*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 a 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 & PAYMENT TO:

NM BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 7188  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87194

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO:

NM BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

QUESTIONS? EMAIL: [info@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:info@nmbeekeepers.org)



## TAKE ACTION FOR POLLINATORS

*Continued from page 1*

### INFORM OTHERS ABOUT NEONICOTINOID PESTICIDES AND GLYPHOSATE

Share lists of bee-killing pesticides with your networks and encourage friends and family to replace them with safe alternatives. The Center for Food Safety has a fact sheet for how to manage pests safely without neonicotinoids. Go to: [www.centerforfoodsafety.org](http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org) for factsheets, updates on policy issues and to submit a letter to the White House Pollinator Task Force to urge them to include stronger, immediate action on pesticides in the pollinator protection plan.

### COLLECT SEEDS

As local, native and culinary plants set seed, gather and share with friends, family, beekeepers, gardeners, neighbors, farmers. Get ready for next season now.

### PLANT OR TRANSPLANT POLLINATOR PLANTS

Late summer is a great time to do this. Purchase from local nurseries that grow or distribute plants that haven't been treated with neonicotinoid pesticides. You can even host a honey and pollinator plant-sharing party!

See the NMBKA website for plant lists for bees and local nursery lists. Visit one of my favorite nurseries for native plants: Plants of the Southwest. [www.plantsofthesouthwest.com](http://www.plantsofthesouthwest.com)

### BUILD A NATIVE BEE HOUSE

For examples, search the internet for native bee houses/pollinator hotels/bee hotels. Gather old dried untreated wood to drill holes, use other recycled materials, and get artistic! Make two and gift one to a friend—and in turn, to native bees such as the leafcutters. Share images and know-how through social media.

### PRESSURE CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE SAVING AMERICA'S POLLINATORS ACT

This legislation, reintroduced in March 2015, would suspend the use of four of the most toxic neonicotinoids until the EPA conducts a full review of their safety. Tell your Congressional representatives to support this bill.

### THANK LOWE'S HOME IMPROVEMENT FOR AGREEING TO PHASE-OUT BEE-KILLING NEONICOTINOID

This is the first public commitment from a retailer of its size to take action. Keep informed about changes at the store and share the news. See the Center

for Food Safety website for more information. <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/issues/304/pollinators-and-pesticides>

### SIGN PETITIONS

Over four million people pressured the Obama Administration to take action to protect bees. Stronger pollinator protections are still needed. Stay updated, sign petitions, share on social media.

### WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Encourage the community to support bees, eliminate pesticides, and take local action.

### GET INFORMED ABOUT MUNICIPAL PESTICIDE/HERBICIDE USE

Seek information about chemical use in your community. If you experience bee die-offs from chemicals, inform local government and related NGOs, neighbors, other local beekeepers.

### REQUEST POLLINATOR PLANT-FRIENDLY MUNICIPAL PRACTICES

Encourage local governance to eliminate destructive landscape practices, such as mowing and

*Continued on next page*

## TAKE ACTION FOR POLLINATORS

*Continued from previous page*

spraying, that destroy native pollinator plants. Inform them of alternatives.

### PUT YOUR HAVEN ON THE MAP WITH PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK NORTH AMERICA

Go to [www.panna.org](http://www.panna.org), click on "Map your Haven" and take the pledge to provide safe habitat for pollinators.

### JOIN THE BRING BACK THE POLLINATORS CAMPAIGN WITH THE XERCES SOCIETY

Go to [www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org) and sign up to promote their four principles: grow flowers, provide nest sites, avoid pesticides and share the word.

### JOIN THE NATIONAL POLLINATOR GARDEN NETWORK

Create or enhance pollinator habitat for bees, butterflies, birds, bats, wasps, moths and other beneficial insects. Go to: <http://millionpollinatorgardens.org/>

### JOIN MICHELLE OBAMA'S MILLION POLLINATOR GARDEN CHALLENGE

Started in June 2015, this links with the National Pollinator Garden Network. Sign the Pledge to be part of the national campaign to create a million public, private and garden landscapes to protect pollinators. Go to: <http://millionpollinatorgardens.org/>

*Loretta McGrath has been a topbar bee steward for nine years, directs the Pollinator Partners Program at Farm to Table, conducts lectures and workshops on pollinator protection and beekeeping, and fosters communities to create pollinator habitat in school and community gardens, farms and public spaces. She can be reached at [loremcgrath@gmail.com](mailto:loremcgrath@gmail.com)*

## EXTRACTING HONEY

*Continued from page 3*

Radial vs. Tangential refers to the way the honey is spun out of the comb. If the extractor is tangential, the frames fit in like the rim of a wheel (see photo). Using this type of extractor only removes honey from one side of the frame at a time, so you have to spin each frame twice. The comb faces the sides of the extractor. I have found it better to spin each frame three times to remove all the honey. It is smoother extracting if I only extract half of one side, then flip the frame and extract that whole side, then flip it back and get the rest of the honey out from the first side. This helps balance the extractor better and you don't have as much weight to crush the comb as it spins. In a radial extractor (see photo), the frames fit inside like spokes in a wheel, and all of the honey is removed with one spin cycle. You need to make sure that the tops of the frames are next to the wall of the extractor so that your honey will readily come out.

Don't worry if you don't get every drop out. The bees will appreciate any honey they get to keep. The average yield for commercial beekeepers in New Mexico (last statistic I saw) was 47 lbs. of honey per hive, or about two thirds of a five-gallon bucket. A full bucket is 60 lbs. I have had years when I did not get any honey, and years when I have averaged 60 lbs. per hive. Other states can expect 200 to 300 lbs. of honey depending on location and rainfall.

*If you have questions about extracting or beekeeping in general, please feel free to contact me and I will do my best to answer! [www.papabearshoney.com](http://www.papabearshoney.com)*

*I also recommend signing up for the Pigeon Mountain Trading Co. newsletter: <http://www.pigeonmountaintrading.com>*



## ART OF THE CUT-OUT

*Continued from page 6*

and occasionally even help, during a cut-out. Sometimes all that's needed is a spare veil and pair of gloves, but having additional bee clothing on hand can alleviate fears even more. It's great when the anxiety gives way to "Can I get my camera? Can I invite the neighbors?"

A cut-out removal is generally the best long-term solution, but other teaching moments arise as we explain the clients' options. We discuss the relative pros & cons of cut-outs, trap-outs, the all-too-common "poison-in-place" extermination (whether do-it-yourself or by a pest control contractor), and even the rare possibility to "just leave them be."

**Next time, we'll share how we work with potential clients in their home or office to manage their expectations and get the best results!**





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NEW MEXICO STATE FAIR

*September 10-20, 2015 – Albuquerque, NM*

Come one, come all—and come say hi to the beekeepers at the Abq Beeks and NM Beekeepers Association bee booth, during weekends in the Agriculture Building. (It's not too late to get your Honey Division entries ready for the September 8-9 entry dates!)

<http://nmbeekeepers.org/events/nm-state-fair-honey-division/>

### TED TALK: "THE BUZZING JOY OF BACKYARD BEEKEEPING"

*September 12, 2015 - Albuquerque, NM*

NM Beekeepers Association president Jessie Brown will deliver this talk as part of TEDxABQ at UNM's Popejoy Hall.

<http://tedxabq.com>

### "PUTTING THE BEE IN BOULDER" WESTERN APICULTURAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

*October 1-3, 2015 – Boulder, CO*

Hosted by the Colorado Beekeepers Association, Boulder Colorado, with keynote speakers Mark Winston and Dr. Marla Spivak

<http://www.westernapiculturalsociety.org>

### AMERICAN HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION 2016 ANNUAL CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW

*January 5-9, 2016 – Albuquerque, NM*

Hold onto your hats, the American Honey Producers Association will be holding it's 2016 convention at the Embassy Suites in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mark your calendars!

<http://www.ahpanet.com>

## NMBKA Nominating Committee / Auditing Committee

We are looking for NM Beekeepers Association members interested in serving on the Nominating Committee or the Auditing Committee this fall, in preparation for the Annual Meeting early next year. If interested, kindly contact us at [secretary@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:secretary@nmbeekeepers.org).

Did you miss the NMBKA Annual Meeting featuring Marla Spivak and Beth Conrey? Watch their talks on our website under VIDEOS & WEBINARS: <http://nmbeekeepers.org/>



Like NMBKA on  
**Facebook**

### NM Beekeepers Association Invites Grant Applications

The New Mexico Beekeepers Association's Grant Program seeks to assist individuals and organizations whose work can better the beekeeping industry in New Mexico and can help raise public consciousness toward the importance and rewards of beekeeping. For details about what types of projects are funded, and how to apply, please visit our website at <http://nmbeekeepers.org>

REMINDER: Please visit [www.DriftWatch.org](http://www.DriftWatch.org) to register your apiary site(s). It's free, and registering is the first step in opening up communication between pesticide applicators and beekeepers!

Healthy Bee ◊ Bee Healthy

... Puttin' the Bee in Boulder!

**Boulder, CO  
WAS CONFERENCE**

Oct. 1-3, 2015

Save the date for our 38th  
Annual 2015 WAS Conference  
in Boulder, Colorado  
"Healthy Bee — Bee Healthy"  
October 1-3, 2015

Featuring:

- SUSAN KEGLEY
- JONATHAN LUNDGREN
- MARLA SPIVAK
- MARK WINSTON

And many, many more!

Hosted by: Colorado State Beekeepers Association (CSBA)

Vendor/sponsor opportunities available!  
[www.coloradobeekeepers.org/western-apicultural-society-was-meeting](http://www.coloradobeekeepers.org/western-apicultural-society-was-meeting)

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