



## 2016 Annual Meeting

Jessie Brown, NMBKA President

This year's NM Beekeepers Association Conference was a sweet treat. Entitled "All About the Bees," the event was open to everyone who shares our common goal of protecting honey bees, especially during this time of honey bee crisis. It did not matter whether attendees were experienced beekeepers or "newbees," how many hives they might have or what style; the event was a wonderful opportunity to connect with friends new and old.

The conference took place February 5-6 in Albuquerque, where we were joined by some great guests, including Mark Winston, who talked about his book *Bee Time: Lessons from the Hive*, which recently won the Governor General's Literary Award—the Canadian equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize. We were given a brief glimpse into his extensive research process, and how his experiences with honey bees have changed his worldview. He also took us on a journey through "The Artistry of Bees" and even had participants put pen to paper, trying their hands at writing poems about bees.

The American Honey Queen, Kim Kester, joined us for a talk focused on communicating effectively with the media. While in town, she was interviewed by the Morning Brew on public access television, and visited S.Y. Jackson Elementary, Ernie Pyle Middle School, and Inez Elementary School, teaching over 200 students about the place of honey bees in agriculture. Kim sets a great example, and I challenge you all to be proactive in approaching the media. The keys to a great interview are positivity and enthusiasm!

Dr. Stephen Rankin and Dr. Don Hyder joined us from Farmington, NM, where they are doing fascinating research on honey as medicine, using local honey sourced from their area. Kim Bailey excited us all about making cities in New Mexico more pollinator-friendly through resolutions and community efforts. This work is currently happening in Albuquerque. How about your city?

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### SAVE THE DATE!

March 18, 2016

**Open House at the Carl Hayden  
Bee Research Lab**  
Tucson, AZ

June 18, 2016

**Apiary and Garden Tour**  
Albuquerque, NM

June 18, 2016

**Pollinator Celebration  
at the Botanic Garden**  
Albuquerque, NM

June 20-26, 2016

**National Pollinator Week**

### THE NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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



## Changing Seasons, Changing Habits, Protecting Pollinators

Anita Amstutz

As the days warm up, people begin spring cleaning their yards, slowly clearing away dead leaves and debris left over from the dormant winter. Then comes the fun part: going to your local nursery or big box store and buying wagonloads of flowers, bushes and trees that will soon show forth their glorious profusion of color! However, spring is also the time when backyard and roadside spraying begins, with varied and sundry chemicals bought en masse to keep those nasty weeds at bay.


It is understandable that people want to get a leg up on the weed takeover, lest it overcome our yards on a grand scale. The great spring bloom also marks the return not only of beneficial bugs such as green lacewings, praying mantises and ladybugs, but also persistent pests such as aphids, thrips and flea beetles. Alas, over-the-counter neonicotinoid insecticides and herbicides also have a harsh effect on all pollinators including the native bees, who reside by and large in dirt, dead leaves and brush piles. RoundUp has become the herbicide of choice, locally and globally, contributing to millions of

acres lost for pollinators. It has impoverished soil health, often having the opposite effect of creating more weeds, which are opportunists of poor soil. And vilified “weeds” such as dandelions are the first luscious and tasty morsels for bees when they leave their winter hives, lean and hungry.

As consumers, we have the economic clout to make a statement with our purchases. As bee lovers, we can spread the word to family, friends and community about safe alternatives to neonics. The Center for Food Safety offers viable alternatives in *Managing Pests Safely Without Neonicotinoids*. Pass the link along electronically, or hand out copies in the neighborhood. Try the methods yourself. After all, the bees perform tireless, thankless hours of pollination work, gratis. The least we can do is not poison them!

Policy changes take more time than the simple steps we can do in our backyards, but the NM Beekeepers Association is working with City Councilor Isaac Benton’s office to achieve a Bee City USA designation for Albuquerque. This will help reduce chemical use, create a more pollina-

tor-friendly habitat in public spaces—and make us healthier and happier by strengthening our local food system now and in the future. We must reimagine what “green space” looks like here in the Southwest. Native pollinator habitat is often less showy, green and profuse than warmer, wetter environments, but much more resilient, drought-resistant and co-evolved with native pollinator species. Check out NMBKA’s native plant guide before you start planting. Beekeepers know that we need a change of mind and habit to protect our fuzzy little bee friends and all pollinators. The bees need us to “have their back” as they come out for yet another season, gifting us with all of our favorite fruits and vegetables.

*If you need more information, or would like an NMBKA representative to speak with your school, neighborhood association or civic group about pollinator health and habitat, please contact the NM Beekeepers Association, or get in touch with Bee City USA advocate and NM Beeks member Anita Amstutz directly by emailing [afasinger@gmail.com](mailto:afasinger@gmail.com) or calling (505) 514-4982. *

### 2015 NM BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President: Jessie Brown [president@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:president@nmbeekeepers.org)  
 Vice President: Raymond Espinoza [vicepresident@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:vicepresident@nmbeekeepers.org)  
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 Secretary: Danny Sachs [secretary@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:secretary@nmbeekeepers.org)  
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### 2016 BOARD MEMBERS

Jeremy McKeller [memberatlarge1@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:memberatlarge1@nmbeekeepers.org)  
 Janet Yagoda [memberatlarge2@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:memberatlarge2@nmbeekeepers.org)



# Make Money from Your Beekeeping!

## Part Three of Three

### BALM & POLLEN

Joe Westbrook

Several companies make lip balm kits, and they're all about the same. It's the number of tubes or jars you want to make up that will determine your costs. Adding essential oil—peppermint, lavender, pineapple, something with a mild pleasant scent—will help attract customers. To make a dozen tubes, you only need a fraction of a dram of scenting oil (a dram is 1/16 of an ounce) at approximately \$6 per four-ounce bottle, plus one and a half ounces of beeswax (and most beekeepers have pounds of the stuff on hand). Tubes for lip balm are about \$3/dozen, or 25 cents per tube, so your cost for a dozen lip balms is less than \$10, but a single tube of lip balm can retail for \$3. You'll need labels identifying your product and the ingredients, but buying rolls of several hundred will get that cost into the pennies. Think about making a couple of hundred lip balms at a time. Your cost for 300 tubes will be less than \$50 (about 17 cents per tube), you'll still need only a four-ounce bottle of scent (or two if you'd like some variety), and less than three pounds of beeswax, plus labels. Once you've made a batch, give out free samples to customers and they'll be back with cash in hand. Try selling your balms at local stores or co-ops, but be aware that stores want you to give them a discount, leave a dozen or two in a display, have an invoice ready, maybe a tax number – lots of business rigmarole. That's fine if you're willing to spend the time making lip balm a business (think Burt's Bees). But direct sales to the customer—through grower's markets, flea markets, or your neighborhood association—is the more profitable way to go. Another source of revenue you should consider is pollen. I get calls as early as February asking if I've got pollen for allergies. ("Sorry, not yet.") I won't be able to fulfill those

requests for pollen until at least May, depending on how strong my hives are by then. What does it take to sell pollen? A good strong hive, and a good strong pollen trap. Pollen traps cost approximately \$60 from any of the supply houses, but they can be made at home if you have the tools. Wire mesh is readily available at hardware stores. Pollen traps work equally well on Langstroth and top-bar hives, though with top-bars the entry to the hive must be on either end (not the side) for the pollen trap to be most effective. With a good pollen flow, you should be able to harvest at least 2-4 ounces of pollen per week from a single hive. (Remember Ken's Rules: "No Rain, No Flowers, No Honey" and "No Rain, No Flowers, No Pollen.") We sell



pollen for a dollar an ounce, usually in four-ounce packages. You can package pollen in plastic sandwich bags, in jars, in any container that will show off the pollen itself. Because pollen should be refrigerated we keep it in an ice chest at the market, and you should tell your customers to refrigerate or freeze it. Pollen may grow mold if it's not kept in a cool spot, and it may also lose its nutritional value. We also spend time cleaning our pollen—removing the hive trash, bee parts, and quite frequently dead mites. Cleaning the pollen is time-consuming, but it's a "value added" benefit. Depending on the number of hives you have, sales of pollen can add \$10-20 per week, per hive, to your beekeeping wallet.



# THE ART OF THE CUT-OUT

## PART THREE IN A SERIES

Mike Kruchoski

In this final installment, NMBKA members Ray Espinoza and Tyler Schutte talk about the challenges and frustrations they face while working with homeowners. Ray says his biggest hurdle is often the fee for large and difficult cut-outs: "They start out the conversation with 'they want to save bees,' but they don't want to spend any money on actually doing that."

Tyler finds that homeowners often balk at paying his fee, too. Some are quick to say, "Oh, I'll just kill the bees," as if extermination is an easy, cost-free alternative. They don't stop to think that simply killing the bees might cost them \$275, yet they'd like those bees removed for free. Both Ray and Tyler cite the significant, hidden costs for rescuing and caring for bees removed from clients' homes. Besides time and labor, there is the cost of tools and equipment, plus hive costs for maintaining relocated colonies.

A second challenge Ray faces is that some clients quickly forget all he has explained about the removal process and its aftermath, even though he puts it all into writing beforehand. "I spend a lot of time with them," he says. "I make every effort to make it really clear." But homeowners still sometimes try to second-guess him about how to do a job. They might not like the anticipated inconveniences, or want to make proper repairs. Or they don't agree with Ray's judgment



*A poorly repaired cable installation allowed a swarm to take up residence in this Four Hills home.*

Photo: Mike Kruchoski



*Saving viable brood is a high priority, because it helps sustain the strength of relocated colonies.*

Photo: Tyler Schutte

about where he really needs to cut in order to get at the colony, especially if the colony is not easily accessible from outside. Owners often need time to understand and accept his advice.

For Tyler, one initial challenge is simply locating the bees; they aren't always where he first predicts. "You tell someone where [the bees] are supposed to be, but then they're not there! They're not in the parapet wall, they're in the joists. So you tell them, 'Well, we're going to have to go in from inside.'" This kind of news can alarm some clients, who imagine their homes filled with bees. Tyler reassures them the inconveniences and dangers are minimal, but it can still take time to get them to agree to a new plan.

Like Tyler, I sometimes find it difficult to locate the bees, despite all the clues from their buzzing sounds and honey aroma. To minimize damage to




*Sometimes colonies will build comb in a sheltered spot outside, like under this eave.*

Photo: Tyler Schutte

a building, I'll drill tiny holes into the most likely spaces to carefully probe with a bamboo skewer. This helps me both locate the studs and determine the extent of the honeycomb. But as Tyler notes, bees aren't always predictable, so it might take several hours to finally decide where (and how) to start cutting.

Tyler also adds, with an exasperated chuckle, "And keeping up with the honey supply for everybody whose cut-outs I do... they all want to take the honey!" I know what he's talking about: I always have to explain to clients that I need the honey to keep the bees alive during the relocation.

Finally, about 30 percent of calls I get aren't about honeybees at all. Instead, they're yellow jackets or bumblebees, both commonly mistaken for honey bees. Less often, they're hornets or wasps. To reduce the number of false alarms I respond to, I ask for photos via cell phone or email first. That helps cut down on unnecessary travel and affords me an easy opportunity to educate the public about other flying, stinging insects. 



## 2016 Annual Meeting

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Overall, the conference was a huge success thanks to these and our other guests, and the hard work of all our volunteers—especially Konnie Nelson and Kathy Boardman. I also want to thank the remarkable Jane Huisingsh, who handcrafted a bee quilt that was raffled off at the conference, with all proceeds going to education, outreach and advocacy efforts. Big thanks are also due to the students from Ernie Pyle Middle School who helped with drinks and making pollinator seed balls with us. Finally, the South Broadway Cultural Center was a perfect location; I think everyone who attended will agree that we have found a new home for future conferences!

The annual NMBKA business meeting was also exciting, as we welcomed new members to our 2016 Board of Directors. As NMBKA has grown, we have been very fortunate to have more candidates to fill seats on the Board, but this has also led to concerns expressed about our election process. Therefore we have created a committee to review our procedures and recommend protocol changes for future elections. NMBKA thrives on your participation, and we want to maximize opportunities for you to get involved.

Here's to a buzzing 2016! 



Top: NMBKA President Jessie Brown with American Honey Queen Kim Kester **Photo:** Dan Mayfield  
Bottom: Dr. Don Hyder and Dr. Stephen Rankin



### Want to Learn More About Cut-Outs?

Thinking about adding cut-outs to the beekeeping services you offer? Or maybe you already have hard-earned experience and “lessons learned” to share? Either way, if you are interested in getting together to explore “best practices” for cut-outs, share tips about boosting colony survival, maximizing honey retrieval, essential tools and equipment, pitfalls to watch out for, or even proactive services to help businesses and homeowners deter bee infestations, please get in touch with Mike Kruchoski at [mgr.llc@kruchoski.com](mailto:mgr.llc@kruchoski.com) or 505-480-5000. If there is enough interest in the community, we will set up a date, time, and place for a meeting—perhaps a Saturday afternoon in late April!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

March 18, 2016

**Open House at the Carl Hayden Bee Research Lab** Tucson, AZ  
Learn about honey bee nutrition, varroa mites and pesticides. Includes hands-on demonstration of queen rearing and a tour of the laboratory. RSVP required!  
[More information HERE](#)

June 18, 2016 **Buzz Tour**

The 2nd Annual Albuquerque Apiary and Garden tour, sponsored by the NM Beekeepers Association, Abq Beeks and Slow Food Abq, will take place from 9 am–Noon. Participation is free, but you must register for the event on [abqbeeks.org](http://abqbeeks.org). Directions will be emailed out 24 hours before the tour to those registered.

June 18, 2016 **Pollinator Celebration at the Botanic Garden**

BioPark Botanic Garden - Albuquerque, NM  
Learn how to create habitat for pollinators to keep them happy, healthy and hard working! Price included with regular admission. [Details HERE](#)

June 20-26, 2016 **National Pollinator Week**

July 23, 2016 **NM Beekeepers Association Varroa Monitoring Workshop**  
South Broadway Cultural Center – Albuquerque, NM  
\$15 for this all day workshop featuring speaker Megan Mahoney of the Bee Informed Texas Tech Transfer Team.



## AHPA Spotlights Bee Health, Honey Quality

Raymond Espinoza

The American Honey Producers Association (AHPA) held its general business meeting in Florida on January 9, at the tail end of the American Beekeeping Federation's 2016 Conference & Tradeshow. With an annual budget of approximately \$750,000, AHPA is active on a broad range of industry initiatives, as well as lobbying for laws and regulations that protect the interests of association members, and participating in industry-related litigation. The January meeting included a review of AHPA's priorities, which address a broad array of challenges faced by the honey industry, and will guide those activities for the coming year. Some areas of focus included:

- New USDA studies to compare the nutritional value of GMO and non-GMO crops for honeybee forage
- Enhanced EPA testing of products for potential toxicity to honey bees and their environment
- Increased funding for honey bee research in areas such as: colony decline and mortality, varroa mites, fungicides and insect growth regulators, viruses, small beetle, bee genetics, practical wax moth control, chalk brood, the effects of pesticides, parasites like Nosema
- apis cerana, and biological controls for honeybee pests
- Suspension of live honey bee and queen importations into the United States until testing can determine that imported bees are free of disease, parasites, and harmful genes; preventing use of resin technologies to circumvent country of origin identification on honey imports
- Greater freedom for beekeepers to use natural substances (such as organic acids and oils) that help control mites
- Improved bee access to federal and state lands
- A nationwide pesticide usage database, and a USDA pesticide summit
- Reinstatement of beekeepers' classification as "farmers" instead of "farm labor contractors" under the H-2A temporary agricultural program



Photo: Randy Swartz

- Department of Agriculture funding for personnel and efforts to keep the nation's food supply strong by promoting understanding of the value of honey bees to production agriculture, and pollinator-friendly practices such as integrated pest management
- Uncapped funding for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP)
- Research on beneficial predators of crop pests

Many of the challenges identified by the AHPA will require extensive research and development, while issues concerning exports, dumping and blended or fraudulent honey will require legislation and improved monitoring and testing to ensure that the American public has access to unadulterated and healthy honey.

*The full list of AHPA resolutions for 2016 can be found here:*

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ahpanet.com/resource/resmgr/AHPA\\_Documents/AHPA\\_Resolutions\\_2016](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.ahpanet.com/resource/resmgr/AHPA_Documents/AHPA_Resolutions_2016)



NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

PO Box 7188, Albuquerque, NM 87194

info@nmbeekeepers.org

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

# Membership Form

March 2016



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**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  
Albuquerque, NM 87194

## MAKE CHECKS OUT TO:

NM Beekeepers Association

Questions? Email: [info@nmbeekeepers.org](mailto:info@nmbeekeepers.org)




## Make Money from Your Beekeeping!

*Continued from page 4*

There are other ways to make money in beekeeping. If you have the skill and the patience, there are new beekeepers waiting to be taught. If you're a woodworker, consider making hive bodies, or tops and bottoms, or even top-bar hives, nucs, or other woodenware. If you've got a particularly productive top-bar hive, consider selling a top-bar nuc with bees (for anywhere from \$50-\$100) several times during the season. If you've got a nuc or a split early in the season, you're almost guaranteed to make money from beekeepers that need the bees. Post an ad online and watch how quickly those bees find a new home. Nucs

and splits can often be more profitable than any other revenue source. If you grow herbs and flowers, consider harvesting some of them and mixing them with beeswax for sachets, or beeswax balms. If you've got extracting equipment, consider renting it out. If you're particularly adept and have good eyesight, consider queen rearing. There is always a market for queens, especially local queens. There is money to be made in beekeeping. You, and your bees, just have to work for it.

*Joe Wesbrook started beekeeping in Albuquerque, in 1978.*

*He stopped counting stings after the first million.* 

NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

PO Box 7188

Albuquerque, NM 87194