

EAS Master Beekeeper report for 2016 by Dewey M. Caron, EAS advisor

At NJ, 10 of 27 candidates were passed into the rank as EAS MB. Five of 18 were “new” candidates (pass ratio of 28%) meaning they passed all 4 exams; the remaining five successful candidates were re-takers, all needing to pass a single exam (2 written and 3 orals) to complete certification. For candidates taking written & Lab tests, 26 passed and 17 did not pass, the exact same pass/fail number for those taking the oral and field test.

The EAS Master Beekeeper program, now in its 36th year, requires passing o 4 rigorous examinations during a 2-day testing period. There is a **written exam** (equivalent to a college course examination), a **laboratory exam** (identifying 40+ items of beekeeping equipment, bees, bee products, materials used in bee care, etc.), an **oral exam** (including both a prepared 5 minute and 3 additional questions typical of those media or beekeepers might pose) and a **field exam** (demonstrating ability to open, examine and explain what is happening in a bee hive).

2015 EAS Beeyard, Guelph University, Ontario, Canada



Here is a thumbnail sketch of our 10 new EAS Master Beekeepers joining the approximately 160 current other individuals who have achieved EAS Master status:

Alexandra Bartsch from Lexington, MA, was a MA apiary inspector during and following college days. She was also Massachusetts honey queen. Currently a 10 colony backyard beekeeper, she is active in the Middlesex Beekeepers Association and with the recent Massachusetts MP3 and pollination bills considered by the Massachusetts legislature. She has kept Africanized bees in the Virgin Islands while living there for a couple of years.

Anne Fraser of Strasburg, VA, was recommended by MB Jim Haskell of Northern Virginia (NVBA), Beekeepers Association. She currently has 20 hives. She is active with the NVBA queen rearing project and is especially interested in the survivor stock project of the group. Jim Haskell in his nomination letter indicates Anne has shown ".....remarkable skills in grafting, making starter and finishing colonies and the other steps necessary in producing quality queens." She is a mentor to new beekeepers in her area and assists with the local beekeeping course.

William Hesbach of CT, with the Connecticut State and Backyard Beekeepers group, is a contributor for Bee Culture (3 articles in last year) and is currently completing a section for *Beekeeping for Dummies* by Howland Blackiston. He has a most interesting book with Northern Bee Books (of England) *Splits and Varroa* covering how to reduce mite populations with this non-chemical control. He was delighted to be completing the EAS MB certification as he is "...being given the opportunity to expand [his] teaching and writing....[and] is excited about the EAS certification, becauseit will open more doors and allow [him] to continue to grow".

Larry Truchon of Finksburg, MD prepared for the EAS exam with a study group. He is VP of the Carroll County Beekeepers, an instructor in their beekeeping course, and an active mentor for new members. A relatively recent beekeeper (6 years' experience) he currently has 5 colonies and double that number of nucs. He raises his own Queens, overwinters nucs, and is striving to keep his apiary self-sustaining. Larry has presented to the MSBA and other local clubs demonstrating his queen rearing methods. His application was seconded by Steve McDaniel and Allen Hayes, well-known Maryland MB.



Candidates taking the 2016 Laboratory exam, Stockton University, NJ

Ann Zudekoff, Huddleston, VA, one of three newly recognized MB from VA, has been the VA representative to the EAS Board of Directors. A 13 year beekeeper, she currently has 25+ hives, in addition to managing the training apiary for her local organization, Piedmont Beekeepers Assoc. in Lynchburg. She is an extremely active beekeeping teacher presenting many bee talks to bee clubs, garden clubs and other groups. Ann is another of the VA beekeepers recommended by the Haskell's.

Bruce Jackabon of Springfield, VA, (NVBA) returned to complete his requirements with the oral exam. As a teenager Bruce recalls his dad keeping bees but did not start himself until 8 years ago when he "... re-

entered beekeeping to increase the local pollinator population "... after he "...noticed that there were very few pollinators in my flower and vegetable gardens". His plan is to "... devote myself to beekeeping (both in the field and classroom teaching) full time once [he] retires."

Frederick Proni completed his last requirement of the oral exam. He currently resides in Hickory, NC. He is a member of NCSBA and Catawba Valley Associations. He manages 300 colonies and is expanding his colony number, along with the bee business. He formerly worked for NY commercial beekeeper William Crowell of Rome, NY, and then started and built a full time NY beekeeping business which he sold to return to school to pursue a terminal graduate degree.

Jerry Futrell, our single new NJ MB, started his journey at the 2013 EAS in West Chester, PA. He finished his oral exam requirement this year. Jerry started with 3 hives and now has near 25 in South Coastal Jersey. He is seeking to rear his own queens. He has been teaching the local beginner beekeeping course. His mentor was NJ State Apiarist Tim Schuler, and has assisted Tim with local disease inspections. Tim said in his recommendation Jerry has "good knowledge of honey bee biology and management ...he is an up and coming leader among NJ Beekeepers"



Photo from 2015 EAS Lab exam, Guelph University, Ontario, Canada

Ben and Kimberly Carpenter are our newest husband/wife MB team. They operate Hungry Bear Farms in Canaidsauga, NY. They sell honey, use their bees for pollination service and are a local bee supply dealer. They also make and sell nucs for beginners and discussed their management during the NJ conference.. They help teach courses for beginners for the Ontario Finger Lakes Beekeeping Association as well as organize and teach at their bee farm. They manage 100+ colonies.

The MD and VA candidates prepared for the exam in their home clubs as study groups with current MBers, something the Maine MB have also done in the past. The Written and Lab exam answers for 2016 are posted to the EAS website along with the answers to the exams of 2 previous years. You may note, I used some questions from the very first EAS MB exam back in 1981, 35 years ago at Rutgers, on the written and lab exam – and will use questions from the 1982 exam when I develop the 2017 exams at UD.

The past exams are good to review if you are thinking of applying to take EAS MB certification at UD. You must have minimum of 5 years of experience, be nominated by someone who can speak to your skill and knowledge about bees and beekeeping, register and attend the 2017 meeting, be(come) an EAS member and then pass oral, field, as well as written and lab tests. Registration will close by end of June. If you pass some but not all four exams you can return another year and will only have to take the tests not passed in a previous attempt.

New this year, the field test August 2 will utilize colonies at the UD apiary (about ½ mile from our Clayton Hall Conference Center) and we will use Ag campus for our testing both days (Aug 1&2). It is not too early to start preparing – in addition to the previous exams, there is good advice on the EAS website on how to prepare. Also it is recommended you find a current EAS MB to help in your preparations or join with others preparing for certification in a study group. **SEE YOU in DE Aug 1 & 2.**