



**To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors**

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## **State Apiarist receives Divelbiss Award**

At the closing Awards Banquet of the Eastern Apiculture Society Conference last week, Robert Mitchell, Delaware State Beekeeper was honored as the recipient of the Divelbiss Award. This award is presented to the person or team that has reached beyond the beekeeping community to educate the non-beekeeping public about the values and virtues of honey bees.

Robert (Bob) Mitchell has had a long and illustrious career in the beekeeping field and at the Delaware



Department of Agriculture (DDA). He became Apiary Inspector (State Beekeeper) in 1985 and continues in the position today. He is the longest serving State Apiarist in Delaware history. Mitchell is also a beekeeper in his private life. He has kept bees since 1972 using them to pollinate vegetables on his family's Century Farm and as a pollinator for watermelon growers in Delaware.

Dr. Faith Kuehn, Mitchell's supervisor and DDA Plant Industries Administrator, said, "Bob's dedication to Delaware agriculture, straight talk and quick wit have earned him great respect within the agricultural community. He has supported the beekeeping industry in many ways, from presenting educational displays and outreach programs at schools, to working diligently with industry on disease prevention programs, and raising awareness about prevention of the spread of Africanized honeybees."

Bob Mitchell was nominated for this distinguished award by a group of his peers who said the following:

*Bob has given extraordinary service to education of the general public about honey bees, well above and beyond his job duties. And he has done so in an extremely effective manner. Bob annually visits over 20 classrooms to bring the honey bee message to 2-5<sup>th</sup> graders, the age-group that includes a series of science lessons on entomology. He tailors his presentation for the age group and brings a good mix of show-and-tell items to get his point across. We hear constantly how he did such a good job from teachers and parents. He is well prepared and doesn't 'talk down' to the youngsters. His focus is on the importance of bee pollination and our need for healthy honey bees.*

*Bob gives a number of other presentations annually to adult groups like garden clubs, service organizations and the like. His message is straight forward and delivered with humor and grace. He gets his points across and doesn't go on at length, making him a popular program participant. He has recently carried our message on Africanized honey bees very effectively and always hits on the importance of bee pollination. He has been*

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*active with our major Ag museum in Dover and helped develop a honey bee exhibit (since retired). He is always taking the lead to get the beekeepers display at the State Fair to have a professional look and whether it is Ag week display or one of several festivals where the beekeepers have a display, we have counted on Bob for the details and for pulling a great display together for the public. He often then mans the booths putting in countless hours when volunteers are lacking.*

*Bob has two special projects going this spring. Bob has been the technical advisor to a honey bee project at Sussex Tech HS, Students care for the colonies with Bob's generous assistance and a recent student who did a senior project was given a scholarship by the Farm Bureau for his efforts. A new project was just started at Sussex Correctional Institute by Bob. He is helping the guards get an apiary established for inmates to manage. The bees are considered important to pollinate the variety of vegetable crops the inmates raise for distribution to DE state institution kitchens. Inmates are building their own equipment and with Bob's assistance develop some skills necessary to keep bees for when they are released (it is a minimum security prison). Bob helped get beekeeper donations of nucs to establish the colonies this spring.*

*We are most pleased to recommend Bob Mitchell for the Divelbiss award at the 2007 conference. He is a tireless promoter of the honey bee and their pollination service for the public of all ages and he brings a great enthusiasm and energy to insuring that his and state/county bee presentations and displays are always first rate and well received.*

Charles Divelbiss was a dedicated Ohio beekeeper from Mansfield, Ohio. He was a lifelong school teacher and school administrator but was also dedicated to beekeeping. In his honor, The Eastern Apiculture Society established Charles Divelbiss Education Award for selected beekeepers that were doing exemplary work with both beekeepers and non beekeepers.

The Eastern Apicultural Society of North America, Inc. (EAS) is an international non-profit educational organization founded in 1955 for the promotion of bee culture, education of beekeepers, and excellence in bee research. EAS is the largest non-commercial beekeeping organization in the United States and one of the largest in the world.

An electronic copy of the picture is available: [anne.fitzgerald@state.de.us](mailto:anne.fitzgerald@state.de.us).

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