

THE FIRM LINE - IN THIS ISSUE:

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Bees Are Dying, and It's Going To Hurt All of Us (Starting with Our Pocketbooks)

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How big is the problem?

Bees are dying, whole hives of them, by the millions. These mass die-offs have been happening since about 2006. During the 12-month period ending in April, 2015, beekeepers [reported](#) losing 42.1 percent of their colonies. The normal rate of yearly loss is only 10-15 percent.

All those bee deaths have devastated beekeepers, many of whom have been in the business for generations. According to the USDA, abnormal numbers of bee deaths have [cost beekeepers more than \\$2 billion](#) since 2006.

But it's not just beekeepers who pay for bee losses. Every year in the US, [\\$20-30 billion of agricultural business](#) depends on bee pollination. That represents one in every three bites of food that Americans eat.

And the problem could get much, much worse. According to Jeff Pettis, the [USDA's leading expert on bees](#), "We are one poor weather event or high winter bee loss from a pollination disaster."

How can bee deaths cost you money?

A "pollination disaster" on the scale the USDA is warning about could hit not only US agriculture, but the entire US economy. And that would affect all Americans.

On a more personal level, if you ever eat fruits or vegetables, you will likely have to pay more for them if the bee die-off isn't turned around soon.

"We're right on the edge of losing it, and we need help right now."

-Beekeeper Steve Ellis, quoted in Modern Farmer, "Can a Lawsuit Save America's Bees?" 5/7/13

"Simply put, EPA has not been heeding the warnings of its own toxicologists."

-Toxicologist Pierre Mineau, quoted in Ellis v. Bradbury

"This argument just does not fly."

-US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, 9/10/15, responding to the EPA's argument for registering a new pesticide that may be harmful to bees

Restaurants will have to pay more, too, and they will almost certainly have to pass those costs on to their customers. So if you ever go to restaurants, you'll also be paying for bee losses there.

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Remembering Mitch Ledet

Jones, Swanson, Huddell and Garrison notes with sadness the recent passing of Mitchel Ledet, a legendary figure in New Orleans labor relations.

Mr. Ledet became president of Teamsters Local Union 270 in 1981 and vice president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in 1989. But he was also one of the most formidable political power brokers New Orleans has ever had.

Even the most savvy operators were rarely a match for Mr. Ledet, according to his longtime friend and attorney, Bernard "Bunny" Charbonnet.

"A stop at Mitch's office?" said Mr. Charbonnet. "Oh, you had to pinch your tie before you went in."

We asked Mr. Charbonnet to tell us a little bit about Mr. Ledet, and what it was like to work with him. He warmed right up to the topic.

"He had this real dark office, and these green leather chairs," Mr. Charbonnet remembered. "You'd sink right into them. And his desk and chair were just a few inches higher than everybody else's."

And there, from his subtle perch, Mr. Ledet would direct New Orleans politics.

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JSH&G in the News:

Lynn Swanson and Bessie Daschbach Named *New Orleans CityBusiness* Women of the Year

Jones Swanson is happy to announce that both [Lynn Swanson](#) and [Bessie Daschbach](#) have been selected as recipients of the 2015 *New Orleans CityBusiness* "Women of the Year" award. The issue will be published on November 27 and there will be an awards ceremony on November 12 at the Hyatt Regency.

Bessie Daschbach Named a *New Orleans Magazine* Top Lawyer 2015

[Bessie Daschbach](#) will also be recognized in the upcoming New Orleans Magazine's "Top Lawyer" issue for 2015. New Orleans Magazine recently published the list of select attorneys that will be recognized in the publication, which will hit the streets November 2015.



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Jones, Swanson, Huddell & Garrison, LLC, is a boutique litigation law firm based in New Orleans, with a second office in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The firm primarily handles complex commercial and environmental/property disputes. In those litigation arenas, the firm has a strong nationwide presence, continues to represent many of Louisiana's and the Southeast's largest and most active business entrepreneurs and landholders, and retains a sharp focus on the customized representation of smaller businesses and individuals. Jones Swanson has served as lead counsel in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, California, and Texas, as well as in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana.

The Firm Line is a newsletter designed to inform our clients and friends about legal issues that may impact their lives and businesses, developments at the firm, and other items of interest. Our intention is to keep the information we provide in this newsletter concise. We welcome further discussion on the topics addressed herein, as well as ideas and suggestions as to topics of interest that we could cover in future issues, and thoughts as to how we can deliver better, more insightful information to our readership. Above all, we hope that The Firm Line proves interesting and noteworthy.

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