

January 2024

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



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MCBA Monthly Meeting January 15th, 2024

Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256 Rooms A & B

Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00
General Meeting 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Topic – Show and Tell

Bring your best advice, favorite item in your apiary or do you have a "why didn't I think of that" idea or a "I can't live without it."

Upcoming Events

February 2024 - Medina Beekeepers Beginner

Saturday Classes

Saturday, February 17, and 24

Times: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Location: Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256

Tuesday Classes

Tuesday, February 27, March 5, 12, 19, 26

Times: 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

[Medina Beekeepers 2024 Beginner Class Link](https://medinabeekeepers.com/resources)

<https://medinabeekeepers.com/resources>

Location: Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256

MCBA February Meeting

Monday, February 19, 2024

Topic – Native Bees and Honeybee interactions

Guest Speaker - Ashley Kulhanek

Q & A 6:30 to 7:00 pm
Monday, 7:00 to 8:30 pm

Location: Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256

Rooms A and B

About the speaker, Ashley has a Master of Science in Entomology from Ohio State

University and has worked with the OSU Extension since 2013. Ashley has specializations in Entomology and good agricultural practices, just to name a few. She is also a member of the Ohio Woodland Stewards program and trains new Master Gardener Volunteers.

MCBA Mission Statement

To promote beekeeping, broaden the knowledge and understanding of honeybees (and all pollinators) and the challenges they face in today's world, and educate by teaching best practices and techniques in apiary management.

President Corner

Welcome to the New Year! It's going to be an exciting year and you can expect more interaction from your board. Looking forward to the beginner classes, a great speaker line-up for our monthly meetings, and more training in the bee yard.

As always, if you have suggestions or comments, please contact me or anyone on the board. We want your input!

Stay healthy, hug your family, and enjoy your bees!

Peggy Garnes

"Sustainable Beekeeping; It's a great idea, but as with all good ideas the topic needs a couple of cheer leaders."

Ten Minutes with the Bees - The Bee Yard in January

By Paul Kosmos

Planning for Your (the Bees) Future

Last January I talked about how challenging it is to try to figure out what to do with your bees. That included the many options you have, and how long you've been a beekeeper.

This is a good time to consider just what your options are. The most calls we get are about swarming, making splits, and queens. Makes sense, yes?

If you have a choice between watching your bees swarm up into a tree or making a split, most of you would probably make a split. If you only knew how to make a split, or what to do with it since you may not want several more hives. So, let's talk about options.

Step number one is to hope our Bee Yard bees make it through the winter. If they do, they should provide us with hands on tools to

demonstrate just how to make a successful split. And prevent a swarm at the same time.

And what about not wanting more hives? Now it's time to talk some more about Sustainable Beekeeping; It's a great idea, but as with all good ideas the topic ***needs a couple of cheer leaders***. Right now, we have growing interest but have not got the ball rolling just yet.



One of Beekeeping's Special Thrills

If we wait to discuss the topic until swarms are in the air it will be too late for this year. By that time, we will not have had time to share the details with you. At least until late July/August.

So, ***let's get the ball rolling!*** It's up to you. At the last meeting you saw a box for suggestion. If

you are interested in Sustainable Beekeeping, let someone know.

And then start thinking about maybe making a split when your bees are growing so fast. It really is one of the easier things to do with bees. All you really need is a 5 frame nuc hive. The other thing you need is a plan to grow that hive or find it another home. If you decide you don't want it there are MANY beekeepers looking for new hives in the Spring! You can pick up a few dollars to recover some of your startup expenses.



A new Split

Of course, starting this program will have challenges, bees must be inspected, must find buyers, etc. But now is the time to start – make some noise!

The passing of a friend



Peter 'Kim' Flottum, 76, passed away Sunday, December 10, 2023, at home in Medina, Ohio after a short battle with cancer. He was the son of the late Arnold and Edna Flottum of Turtle Lake, Wisconsin.

He served as editor of Bee Culture magazine, published by the A.I. Root Company in Medina for 33 years, retiring in 2019. He authored numerous beekeeping books and hosted podcasts with Jim Tew and Jeff Ott.

Kim received his bachelor's degree in horticulture from the University of Wisconsin and then worked as a researcher at the USDA Honey Bee Research Lab in Madison, where he specialized in crop pollination, pesticide problems with honey bees, and 'honey plants' for the home landscape. His career took him to

Connecticut. He was elected president of Connecticut Beekeepers' Association. While servicing as publications manager and editor of Bee Culture, he created a new magazine, BEEKeeping, Your First Three Years. Kim was the Chairman of the Eastern Apicultural Society, president of the Ohio State Beekeepers' Association and president of the Medina County Beekeepers Association. He continued to keep bees in his backyard in Medina up until his death.

His passion for bees, his wisdom about all things bees, his generosity, and his kindness, will never be forgotten.

Kim is survived by his wife and partner in every respect, Kathy Summers of Medina; daughter, Jessica Flottum (Matt Barcus) of Akron, Ohio; stepsons, Grant Summers of Medina and Matt (Christina) Summers of Medina; siblings, Julie Hugg of Ashland, Wisconsin, Bob Flottum (Carrie) of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, Sue Flottum-Zurcher (Dave) of Wales, Wisconsin and Tom Flottum (Linda) of Turtle Lake, Wisconsin.

Winter Feeding Best Practices

Our bees will typically feed off their honey stores throughout the winter months, however, there are times, as beekeepers, that we must intervene for the good of the colonies we keep. There are many factors that could lead to your bees

needing a little help; from weak nectar flows, climate, and weather or the size of your colony just to name a few. There are even times where bees don't use the stores available to them.

We'll first discuss what not to feed your colonies during the cold winter months. Feeding your colonies sugars that contain additives is never a great idea. If our bees are feeding off commercial fondant or other sugar sources, additives such as molasses, flavorings or colorants may increase the risk of dysentery. Also, do not feed your bees honey that has come from an unknown source. There is a possibility that honey from untrusted sources could contain additive such as High Fructose Corn (HFC) syrup or worse, spores for American Foulbrood. Lastly, avoid feeding bees HFC. If HFC is heated (at temperatures above 120 °F), it can produce hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF). HMF is very poisonous to bees, leading to ulcerations of their gut. Feeding your bees pollen patties should also be avoided. Food sources with too much protein may encourage brood rearing, and during the winter months, the colony may not be able to sustain additional brood or maintain a temperature to facilitate healthy brood development.

During the winter months when we see prolonged temperatures well below 50 °F, we need to consider feeding our colonies something other than 1:1 or 2:1 sugar syrup. During those cold months when we need to intervene,

consider feeding your colonies, Fondant, Sugar



Cakes/Candy Boards (pictured) or even granulated sugar. However, you should also know, that sugar alone does not contain enough nutrients to sustain our bees. If your colonies are severely deficient in honey stores, it may be prudent to also consider nutrient additives such as Honey-B-Healthy or ProHealth.

You could also consider using a commercially available food source such as Pro Winter. All of these are readily available from your typical beekeeping supply houses. As a final tip, once you decide you need to help, you will need to continue feeding your bees for the remainder of the season. Remember, take advantage of any warmer day to inspect your colony, checking to see if they need any additional food.

Simple - Sugar Cake/Brick Recipe

In a 4 cup Pyrex measuring cup, add 2 cups of white sugar, 1 teaspoon of lemon juice, 3 tablespoons of water, mix thoroughly and then place into the microwave. Microwave on high for 4 minutes. Immediately remove from the microwave (be careful as the dish may be very hot) and pour into a form and allow to cool forming a sugar brick. Once cooled to room temperature, remove the brick and place into your hive for supplemental feeding.

MCBA Christmas Party

A great time was had by all who were able to attend this year's gathering. As always, it is great to see so many familiar faces and enjoy time with friends and fellow beekeepers.





Club Meetings

Please remember to sign in before the meetings and grab a name tag (if available). Guests are always welcome and encouraged. If you bring a guest, please make sure to grab them a name tag too!



Ideas & Suggestions

This newsletter is for you, our members. If you have any ideas for content, format, corrections, or anything else, please, don't hesitate to reach out to me, Clint Allen via email.

*Did you know; There are over 20,000 known bee species in the world, and 4,000 of them are native to the United States. They range from the tiny (2 mm) and solitary *Perdita minima*, known as the world's smallest bee, to kumquat-sized species of carpenter bees?*



2024 MCBA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

MCBA offers webinars and lectures, a monthly newsletter, the opportunity to sell honey at the county fair, and email updates. \$20 for emailed or \$25 for a printed, mailed newsletter. Membership includes one family member in activities other than voting.

Renew your membership online [here](#), or complete the form below, make a check payable to **Medina County Beekeepers Association**, and mail to Medina Beekeepers, PO BOX 1353, Medina, Ohio 44258.

Membership Form – Please complete so that we have current roster information for the newsletters!

Member Name: _____

Email Address (Please Print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Optional # of Colonies: _____



Citations / References

Sugar Brick Recipe

Zickefoose, Ron. "100% Overwintering Success in Ohio" John Vrtachnik, Nov 19, 2018