



The

**LCBA BUZZ**



March 2026

*Providing Education in Sustainable Beekeeping*

**Most monthly meetings at 6pm in room 109 of Washington Hall, Centralia College; exceptions will be published in advance.  
Club apiary is at 765 North Fork Road**

## **Upcoming activities and events**

**Bee orders taken at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting!! 5 pm in the hall outside the meeting room.** Order forms will be available at the meeting and links to download and print forms have been sent. Membership dues must be current. State DOA apiary registration number is needed for tax exempt prices from Beeline; form for Wood's tax exempt is attached to their bee order form available at the meeting. Check, venmo or cash, checks to Lewis County Beekeepers Association. **No orders accepted after the end of the meeting.**

**Wednesday March 11:** Paul Longwell will speak on what we should be doing with our bees this time of year

**Wednesday, April 8** - Kay Crawford from Bee Inspired Gardens will speak on plants that are great nectar and pollen sources for honeybees

**Wednesdy, May 13** - Dewey Caron will speak on swarming and the PNW colony loss survey



! Every year Dewey Caron (our upcoming May meeting speaker) conducts a survey of PNW honeybee colony loss. Our county often has a higher rate of participation than other counties, providing valuable information about colony survival - what helped, what hurt. PLEASE take a few minutes to complete the survey open now! There is a long survey, or a fast track option.

You can also read previous year's results on the web page

<https://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/>



Did you miss the February honey tasting event? Here's a link to NPR's talk about the honey (copy and paste the link)

<https://www.npr.org/2025/12/12/nx-s1-5637405/honey-flavor-reaches-new-depths-with-spotted-lanternfly-droppings>

When spotted lanternflies feed on plants, they leave behind a sticky, oozing residue called honeydew. This substance attracts other insects, causes mold growth, and further hurts plants. As honeydew ferments, it can develop an intense, rotten smell. If you see a spotted lanternfly in WA, notify the WA DOA.

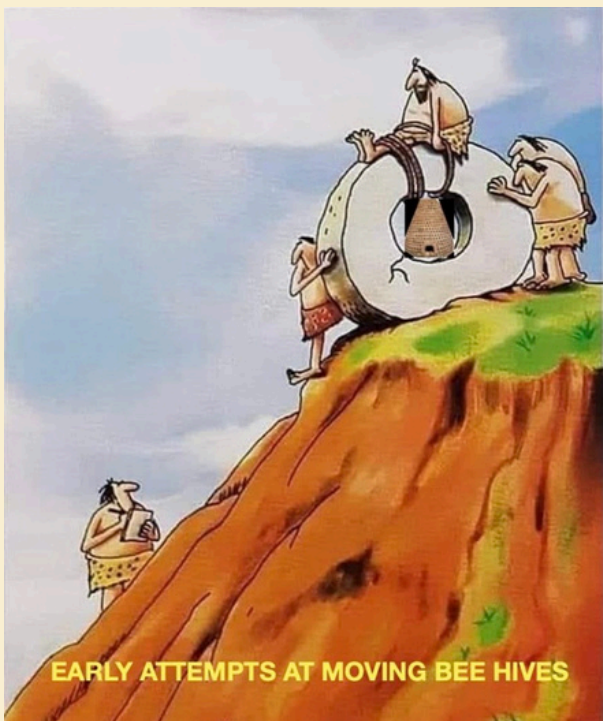
#### Another example of unusual honey:

In 2012, beekeepers in northeastern France were met with a bizarre and unsettling surprise— honey in shades of blue and green dripping from their hives. The colorful substance was unlike anything they had seen before, and their immediate concern was whether it was safe to consume and sell.

The mystery quickly unraveled, revealing an unexpected source: the bees had been feeding on industrial candy waste—specifically discarded M&M candy shells from a nearby factory. This strange phenomenon raised serious concerns about how industrial food waste affects natural ecosystems and highlighted the unexpected ways human activity can influence bee behavior and honey production

! Again! In 2010 beekeepers in Brooklyn NY were seeing bright red honey - turns out they somehow accessed syrup used to dye maraschino cherries red. When the honey was tested, red dye #40 was found in both the bees and the honey.

So, be careful what you put in your compost pile!



**The beekeepers swap meet is Saturday March 7, Oakview Grange on North Pearl. Come for some great BBQ by Big T's, chat with fellow beekeepers, and check out LCBA's booth! See you there at 10am!**

Club member Chris Hops has a limited number of high quality nucs available to sell this spring, from his apiary in Bucoda. Chris asks you call and leave a message (order directly from Chris - not at the March bee order meeting).



Did you get one of the first pollinator license plates available? WASBA was granted the first 25 plates to auction for fundraising; if you followed the auction you may have seen the plate numbered 00001 went for **\$1,500!** If you didn't have several hundred dollars to bid on one of the early numbered plates, you can get a plate at a DOL licensing office.

**Hops Honey Farm LLC**  
Our Hives Our Honey

We are offering a limited number of nucs this spring, about 50 still available. We are a smaller operation dedicated to hive health as our first priority, for us that is heavily emphasized in the health of our wax, comb and bees. Consequently we won't use anything in our hives that leaves residues in our wax, never any synthetic treatments, no exceptions. Wax is like a sponge, it absorbs these toxins as well as other negative health related things. We don't do commercial pollination in the pesticide and disease environment or migrate our bees for this reason. Our management practices do not tolerate sick or diseased hives. In the event that we find one, which is exceedingly less each year, we immediately dispose of the entire hive and bees to keep our operation at its healthiest possible level. This includes the "incurable" diseases, spores, viruses, etc., we don't want any of it. Our overwintering success rate since adopting these management practices have been very good, sometimes 100%, but always in the low single digits. If we happen to lose a hive over the winter, we diagnose what caused it and if it even looks remotely like health issues, we dispose of the entire hive. In reality, the only two reasons we would reuse the equipment is queen issues or starvation, both of which we try to avoid, but it does occasionally happen. That said, our Carniolan nucs are five frames of Healthy Wax and Bees and run \$250.00, we ask for 50% to reserve them. They should be available the end of March or the first part of April depending on the weather. We monitor them before release to make sure they are performing well.

Thank you  
Hops Honey Farm  
Chris

360-278-3513  
Leave message

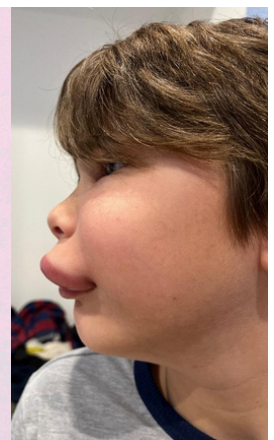
P.S. I strongly recommend scrubbing your dead out or old equipment before considering to reuse it. Putting strong bees on clean wax into compromised equipment will likely result in a compromised colony at best, failure at worst. Installing in new equipment is best if you have any doubts, but of course they will have to draw the new equipment out.

## Technology in the bee yard - notes from February meeting

Jeff Ott is a master beekeeper and host/producer of the #1 podcast in the US, Beekeeping today. There are over 300 past episodes available for free listening; the three highest 'listening' countries are the US, Canada and Australia. Why use technology to monitor your bees activity? Consider that every time you open the colony, the bees are disrupted and spend a day cleaning up the mess we make - drips of honey, bits of wax, etc. Monitoring without opening can minimize bee disruption, and it's fun - and interesting. There are several types of sensors or monitors available. **Temperature** sensors offer the most useful information for the price. What several of us found most interesting was seeing Jeff's temperature graphs - you could actually see the point where the temperature rose and stayed steady, indicating the bees had brood frames to keep warm. You can determine when your queen is laying without opening your hive! **Hive scales** are another useful technology - you can determine when a swarm occurs, and what the status of food stores are. Nectar flow beginning and ending can also be identified. Scales can be a whole hive scale that sits under the bottom box, or as simple as a luggage scale. **Bee counting sensors** are placed near the entrance to track number of bees entering and exiting the colony. **Video** monitors are a small camera attached to a frame if you want to look at activity within the hive. To add a temperature sensor and a hive scale to a hive, you will likely spend around \$250 up. There are also apps available that allow remote record keeping (limited range) and remote wifi hubs where you can access data remotely. Weather stations can be placed in your beeyard for monitoring conditions of the exact apiary location.

Some of the brands mentioned were Broodminder (the most prevalent temperature sensors); bee apps include Hivetracks (#1 record keeping app); Hive Bloom, Apiarist, OSBeehives and more.

Do you have a beesting picture from one of your less pleasant beekeeping experiences? Please email a copy of your photo to [bev003@gmail.com](mailto:bev003@gmail.com) if you are OK with having that picture on an educational poster. Thanks in advance!! Bev

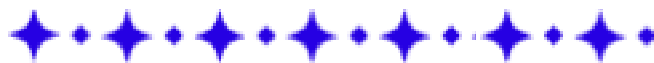


## Bee Anatomy Lesson: The Johnston's Organ

The Johnston's organ is a sensory organ located in the second segment of a honey bee's antenna. It's not used for smell — instead, it helps bees sense movement, vibration, and sound. This organ allows honey bees to:

- Detect air movement and wind speed while flying
- Sense vibrations inside and outside the hive
- Stay oriented during flight and landing
- Communicate effectively inside a dark hive

One of the most fascinating roles of the Johnston's organ is during the waggle dance. Bees don't just watch the dance — they feel it. The Johnston's organ helps follower bees detect tiny movements and vibrations from the dancing bee's antennae and body, allowing them to understand direction and distance to food sources. It also plays a role in swarming, helping bees stay together by sensing the movement of nearby bees and changes in air flow, yet another example of how the colony functions as one highly coordinated unit. Beekeepers talk a lot about pheromones (and rightly so), but this organ is a great reminder that honey bees communicate through touch, vibration, and movement too — not just smell. Honestly... the more you learn about bees, the more impressive they become !



### Honey can have healing benefits

Herpes simplex (also called cold sores) is painful and unsightly. It also seems to take forever to heal. Honey, with its antiviral properties, can help speed up the process. Remember: only the raw stuff will provide full benefits.

As a Hangover Relief; Use honey instead of ibuprofen after a night with a few too many. The fructose in honey speeds up the metabolism, hence the shorter hangover time.