

THE BEE HERDER

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www.MedinaBeekeepers.com



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MCBA Club Meetings

Third Monday of each month at Williams on the Lake. 787 Lafayette Road, Medina, OH (west of the fairgrounds).

6:30-7:30 pm question and answer session,

7:00 - 9:00 pm meeting and speaker.

January 21 – William Riccio, Certified Public Accountant.

The Business of Beekeeping: Record Keeping. Turning your hobby into a business, tax considerations, and record keeping. William has been in accounting for over 25 years. He serves as Treasurer of Ashtabula County Beekeepers Association, and is a Certified Quickbooks ProAdvisor.

February 18 – Speaker to be announced

March 18 – Earl Hoffman, Owner Essential Honey Bees LLC.

Earl will talk about using microbials to manage honey bee pathogens and pests, with new data for Varroa and SHBs. Earl and his wife Carol collaborate with microbiologists from the University of Milwaukee and support research on Chalkbrood, Nosema, European Foul Brood (EFB), Varroa, and small hive beetles (SHB). They also manage about 100 hives in Michigan, where they raise and sell bees and Michigan Queens. Both are EAS Master Beekeepers.

April 15 - Barb Bloetscher, Ohio State Apiary Inspector, and Ron Zickefoose, Medina County Bee Inspector.

Barbara and Ron will talk about the explosion of Small Hive Beetles in 2018 and ways to deal with them in 2019. SHB are now public enemy Number Two!

2019 MCBA Membership Application / Renewal

It's time for all members to renew their membership! All memberships are based on the calendar year, so if you have not yet done so, please complete a membership form and pay your 2019 dues. If you plan to sell honey at the 2019 Medina County Fair, you must be a member in good standing.

Annual MCBA membership has two options for members:

- \$20 if newsletters will be emailed
- \$25 if you would prefer a printed newsletter mailed to your postal address

Each Membership has one vote in MCBA club matters and includes one family member in all club activities (of course, other than voting.)

You may renew your membership online [here](#)

Or, if you prefer, complete the form below and attach a check payable to Medina County Beekeepers Association to the form.

Mail both to: MCBA Treasurer, PO Box 1353, Medina, Ohio 44258.

You can also bring a check attached to your completed membership form to our monthly meeting. Toni Watson, MCBA Treasurer, will be happy to collect your check and form.

Membership Form - Please complete even if this is a membership renewal. This is the major update / double-check on roster information for the newsletters!

Member Name: _____

e-mail: (please print carefully!): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ (Optional) # of colonies: _____

Medina County Beekeepers Association Minutes

No formal business meeting in December 2918.

MCBA Website

The MCBA website is live! Check it out at <https://medinabeekeepers.com/>. You can see the calendar and list of upcoming speakers, pay 2019 membership dues, access past issues of the Bee Herder, find a mentor, find members who can help catch swarms, and access other beekeeping resources.

Ten Minutes with the Bees

By Paul Kosmos, MCBA President

It's officially Winter but yesterday (Dec 28) was 55 degrees, a great time to check on the bees, maybe add some food if you are feeding them. It is also an opportunity to learn a little more about managing your bees.

Pop the outer cover – what do you see? When you remove the insulation, check for moisture.



If you see water, wet surfaces, or mold, the hive needs a bit more ventilation, perhaps open the insert a small amount, or add a thin shim.

Remove the inner cover (IC) – How many bees? Where are the bees? If the hive is very strong, there can be a mass of bees at the top.



That does not mean they are out of food! It does mean you should check. Sometimes it is hard to see the comb to see if it is still capped. One way is to insert the hive tool near the top and see if it comes out with honey.



Many beekeepers are worried this year about having enough honey in the hive. Putting sugar candy blocks or fondant is cheap insurance.



Note how use of a spacer makes it easy and does not smash bees! Brush them aside with your fingers or smoke them VERY lightly.

It's January, days are getting longer, and your girls are already increasing brood production!!!

Club Bee Yard Update

By Dwain Novak, MCBA Bee Yard Steward

I'll start this report with our MCBA President's opening message to club members for this new year - a rocky start that occurred for our club. With that said, the bee yard, unfortunately, hit rock bottom at the closing of the year, with our last hive perishing. As with the other two hives that previously died, we found the bees on the bottom of the screen board. The two brood boxes weighed roughly 40 lbs. each and the super roughly 30 lbs. An alcohol wash showed a count of 34 mites on 300 bees. Samples will be sent out to The Bee Research Lab in Beltsville, Maryland for analysis.

As of right now, I have no explanations as to why or what happened in our hives. Hopefully we will get answers from the Beltsville lab to help us start off the new year with what we learned from our past.

I'm trying to put together an itinerary for this year for the bee yard with the help of Peggy and Paul. It will all hinge on the Bee Research Lab results - whether we need to move the bee yard, and then where we could move it. The club will have to purchase bees and will have to decide whether to purchase packages from California or Georgia, or if it would be possible to do local nucs. We will have to put in orders ASAP because of availability. I have a lot of uncertainties to overcome with this new year.

The Northeast Ohio Bee Yard – January

Happy New Year! In just a few months we'll be in the midst of the fun spring bee season. During the winter, bees cluster in the hive in a spherical brood nest. This allows the colony to conserve heat and maintain a hive temperature around 59 degrees Fahrenheit.¹ The temperature in the center of the cluster is about 70 degrees Fahrenheit when there is no brood present, and increases to about 90 degrees as the days lengthen and brood rearing starts. During warmer days, the bees move honey from storage cells close to the cluster. The cluster moves upward in the hive over the winter to be close to the stored honey.

Until the weather turns warmer, there is not much to do other than to watch the activity at the front entrance of your hives. On a warmer day, you may hear activity in the hive, see bees on the landing board or taking cleansing flights, or notice dead bees on the snow outside the hive. Here are a few January housekeeping activities:

- Put a weight on the hive so that the cover does not blow off during heavy winds.
- Provide an upper entrance, particularly if the bottom entrance is covered in snow or ice.
- Lean the hive forward so that any moisture in the hive drips out of the front entrance.
- Some beekeepers keep the bottom of the hive open while others close up the screened bottom board.
- To check if your colony is alive, put your ear to the hive, lightly tap, and listen for a buzz. If your colony has not survived, remove the hive and clean and store equipment. Know that you're in

¹ Caron, D. M. & Connor, L. J. (2013). Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping. Kalamazoo, MI: Wicwas Press.

good company; if you read the Bee Yard report, you know that all of the club's hives have perished. Call a local bee supply house or a local nuc producer to place an order for bees.

- Take a look at your woodenware – now is a good time to clean and repair equipment and place orders for new or additional equipment. You might also want to order spring varroa treatments so that you have them ready when you need them.
- Catch up on your reading of bee journals or books. Now is a good time to review beekeeping strategies and make a plan for the new year.

Local and Regional Bee Events

MCBA 2019 Beginner Classes

Choose from two options – two full Saturdays **or** five Tuesday evenings. The content of both classes is the same and registration includes the class, a reference book, a one-year membership in MCBA, and a variety of magazines and catalogs from the beekeeping industry.

The cost is \$85 for an individual or \$100 for a family. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged so we know how to prepare, but late registration will be available at the door as long as space is available. Current MCBA members who have paid for and taken the class before may retake the class for free.

The class will cover an introduction to beekeeping, history of beekeeping in Medina, honey bee biology, types of bees, where to get bees, where to set hives, beekeeping equipment, inspecting hives, pests and diseases of the hive, what bees will eat (Ohio forage), harvesting and extracting honey, marketing hive products, winterizing hives, honey tasting, and mentors to help install packages and answer questions.

Saturday 2019 MCBA Beginner Class

February 2 and February 9 from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Brunswick Public Library, 3649 Center Road, Brunswick, Ohio 44212. Register for the Saturday class [here](#).

Tuesday 2019 MCBA Beginner Class

February 19, February 26, March 5, March 12, and March 19 from 6:00 to 8:15 pm at the Medina County Library, 210 S. Broadway St., Medina, OH 44256. Register for the Tuesday class [here](#).

17th annual Honey Bee Expo, Parkersburg, West Virginia

The Mid Ohio Valley Beekeepers' Association, in conjunction with the West Virginia Extension Services, will present the 17th annual Honey Bee Expo. This event will be held Saturday, January 26th, 2019, on the Campus of WVU Parkersburg, in Parkersburg, WV. Dr. Brock Harpur, Assistant Professor in the Entomology Department of Purdue University, will be the featured presenter. In addition, Krispn Given, Apiculture Specialist at Purdue University's Department of Entomology in West Lafayette Indiana, will be conducting workshops. There will be workshops for all levels of beekeepers from beginners to advanced. Register by January 13th, or pay at the door. Doors open at 7:30am for registration and complimentary coffee and pastries.