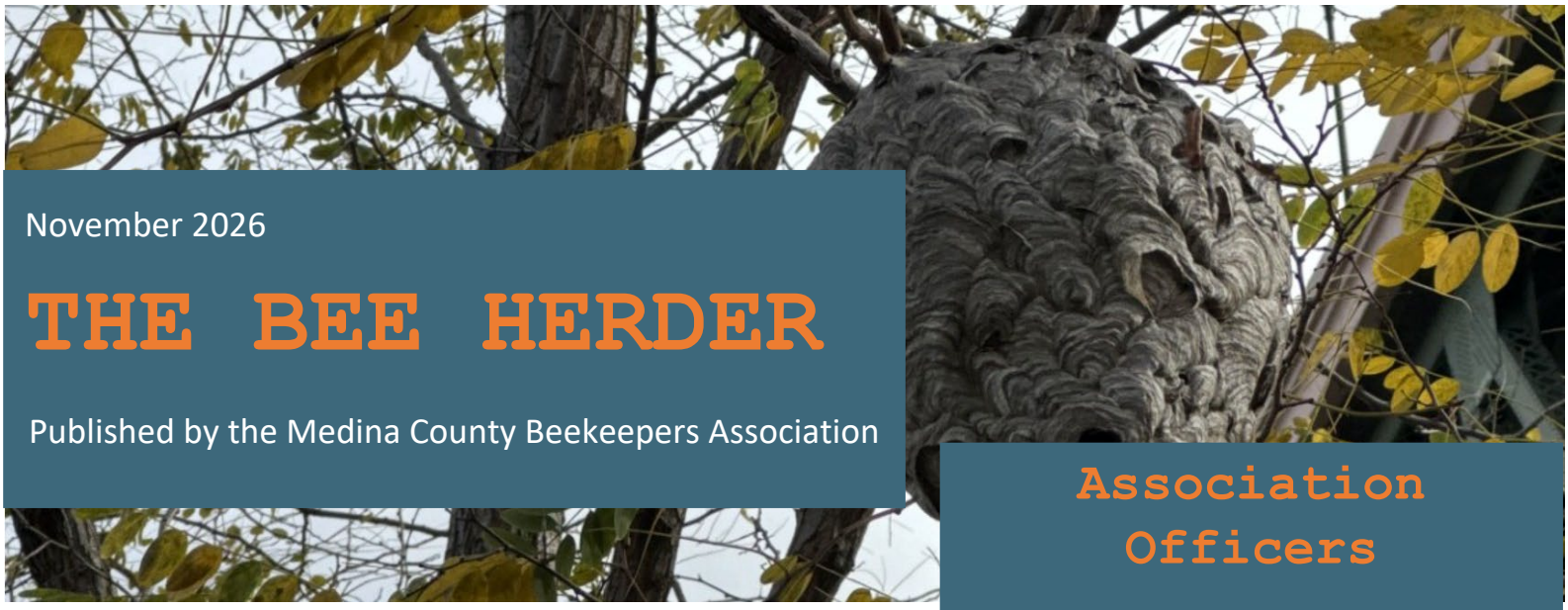

November 2026

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association

MEDINA beekeepers

MCBA Monthly Meeting November 16th, 2026

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

Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00 PM

General Meeting 7:00-8:00 PM

Topic: What's new with mite treatments
Speaker: Jeff Garbric

Association Officers

President: Peggy Garnes 330-723-6265
president@medinabeekeepers.com

Vice President: Greg Johnson 937-416-6159, vp@medinabeekeepers.com

Secretary: Sharon Carpenter 330-723-8492
secretary@medinabeekeepers.com

Treasurer: Kate Reusch 330-416-0284
treasurer@medinabeekeepers.com

Newsletter Editor: Clint Allen
allencli@zoominternet.net

Webmaster: Clint Allen
allencli@zoominternet.net

Refreshment Coordinators:
Elle Jisa - ejisa@roadrunner.com
Sheila Mauer - spmaurer01@gmail.com

Directors:
2026: Shari Baker
Shari.Baker.MCBA@gmail.com
2027: Steve Moysen
s9moysan@yahoo.com
2028: Bill Hall
bchall2005@gmail.com

Medina County Bee Inspector:
Michael Mohn 330-591-5035
mohnandsonsfarm@gmail.com

State of Ohio Inspector:
Brad Deering
https://agri.ohio.gov/divisions/plant-health/apiary-program

MCBA November meeting

Monday, November 16th, 2026

Speaker: Jeff Garbric

Topic: What's new with mite treatments

Varroa mites continue to be one of the biggest challenges facing beekeepers, and the options for managing them continue to evolve. At our upcoming meeting, Jeff Gabric will join us to talk about "What's New with Mite Treatments."

Jeff will cover some of the newer developments in mite control, what beekeepers should know about today's treatment options, and considerations for deciding what makes sense for your colonies. Whether you have two hives or twenty, this should be a timely discussion as we start thinking ahead to the next beekeeping season.

Bring your questions and your own experiences. This should be a good one!

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

Rooms A and B

Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00 PM

General Meeting 7:00-8:00 PM

Upcoming events

December 9th – Christmas Party

February 13th & 27th (10AM-5PM) 2027 – Saturday Beginner Classes

February 23rd, March 2nd, 9th, 16th, & 23rd (6PM-8:30PM) 2027 – Tuesday Beginner Classes

MCBA December meeting

Wednesday, December 9th

Topic: Annual Christmas Party

Attendance is capped at 50 members. Invite coming soon!

Come enjoy good company, amazing food, festive cheer, and share beekeeping stories with your fellow club members. This is a great opportunity to connect with other members and enjoy each other's company during this holiday season. We will again be having our Christmas Party at the Career Center, where Medina County students will show off their acquired real-world cooking skills by preparing our meal. All members are welcome—bring your holiday spirit!

Time: 6:00-7:30 PM

Location: Medina County Career Ctr
1101 W Liberty St, Medina OH 44256

MCBA January meeting

Monday, January 18th, 2027

Speaker: Peggy Garnes

Topic: Getting Ready for Spring

It may seem a little early to be thinking about spring, but January is actually a great time to start getting ready for next year's beekeeping season. At our January meeting, we'll be talking about "Getting Ready for Spring", and some of the things beekeepers can do over the winter to be better prepared when the weather begins to warm up.

We'll discuss preparing and repairing equipment, planning for new colonies or replacement queens, evaluating what worked and what didn't this past season, and getting ready for those first spring inspections. We'll also talk about feeding, early mite monitoring, spring

buildup, and how to stay one step ahead of swarm season.

Whether you're heading into your first spring as a beekeeper or your twentieth, come ready to share ideas, lessons learned, and a few things you plan to do differently next year. Spring beekeeping begins long before the first warm day!

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

Rooms A and B

Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00 PM

General Meeting 7:00-8:00 PM

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's corner

By Peggy Garnes

The leaves are all fallen now as I write this corner… The bees have tried their best to set up for winter and hopefully their beekeeper lent a hand with extra frames of capped honey or heavy syrup to load their hives up to weight for overwintering success.

Here at my yard, it's been a tough year with a cold wet spring, hot dry summer, and now hoping the girls have enough stored. I have had to feed a good bit this fall- mostly Pro Sweet and 2-1 syrup with Hive Alive. Fingers crossed for the winter survival rate numbers.

This month are elections so please contact the Nomination Committee for your opportunity to give back to our club. It's also time to approve the changes to our bylaws – so come to the meeting and vote for new officers and changes to the bylaws.

December will be our last gathering for the year, and we will have our Christmas Dinner at the Medina Career Center again. The students and Chef Tony did an incredible job last year creating our dinner and service was outstanding. Please consider donating to the Care Closet even if you are not attending the dinner. The link is in the newsletter, and you can bring items to the meeting on Monday, and I will make sure that they get delivered to the Career Center.

As always – Hug your family, stay healthy, and enjoy your bees!

Ten minutes with the bees – The bee yard in November

By Paul Kosmos (republished November 2018*)*

Our challenges with the weather continue! It is quite a trick to inspect, feed, and prepare your hives when it is so cold for the bees (and beekeeper). So, what is happening in the bee yard now?

Feeding – All that beautiful goldenrod did not end up in the hives as honey. Don't know why but check the weight of your hives to be sure. It should be hard to lift a side, 150-160 pounds (two deeps, maybe a super for insurance). Note that fondant and sugar cakes are excellent emergency food, but bees do not store it like they do 2:1 sugar syrup (SS). A strong hive will take down 4-6 full quart jars in 24 hours. One gallon of SS should yield approximately one deep frame of food.

Inspections – It is best NOT to inspect this time of year unless you have a specific reason or suspect a problem. If an accident to the queen occurs, you have lost the hive. And the cold can chill brood very quickly. The bees have propolised every nook and cranny to keep the elements out and may not be able to repair it if it stays cold.

Note that there will be little brood this time of year. It's hard to spot a small patch of eggs or larvae so you may think the hive is queenless. If your girls are quiet, calm, taking down SS, and doing normal bee stuff, they are probably OK.

Winterizing – It is time to have your mouse guards on, and also to think about wrapping your hives. Still time, but better a little earlier than too late. I like to put a small shim (about the thickness of a popsicle stick) under the inner cover (small entrance DOWN) at the rear of the hive to help control moisture. The bees can handle the cold, but too much moisture is a serious threat. Don't forget to cut holes for the moisture to escape.



Varroa – Yes, always varroa. Treating with oxalic acid mid to late November is an excellent time to treat since there is very little capped brood for the varmints to hide in. Temperatures should be at least 45 degrees or the low 50's. Make sure to follow instructions on product labels before treating them for mites.

Some of my favorite recipes with honey

By Kym Lucas

Honey Popcorn

- 2 tablespoons oil, such as canola, avocado, or coconut oil
- 1/2 cup (104g) popcorn kernels
- 1/2 cup of honey
- 1/4 cup (56g) salted butter
- 1 tsp vanilla (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, optional

Preheat oven to 250°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Make popcorn in a large pot: heat oil in pot (med-high), drop in 3 kernels and put on the lid.

Once they pop, remove from heat, add the rest of the popcorn kernels, cover the pan with the lid, leaving it slightly ajar with open part facing away from you. Replace it back on the burner. Be careful! Hot oil and kernels can be dangerous! When the popping slows down to the point you can hear individual kernels pop, remove from heat and let sit for 30 seconds.

Pour popcorn onto baking sheet, trying to keep unpopped kernels in the pan. Pick over the popcorn on baking sheet, removing any unpopped kernels that you missed.

Wipe out the pot. Add honey and butter to the pan. Stir and simmer for one minute. Add vanilla, if using.

Use the parchment under the popcorn to pour it into the pan. Use a rubber spatula to fold the popcorn into the honey mixture. Continue to stir until all popcorn is coated. Pour popcorn back onto parchment on baking sheet, spreading it to evenly cover the surface. Sprinkle with salt if using. Bake until popcorn is caramel-colored

and firm and dry, 45 minutes, turning popcorn every 15 minutes.

Cool on pan for 15 minutes, then break into chunks. Store in airtight container once completely cool.

Honey Walnuts (I prefer pecans)

- Walnuts (or pecans)
- Honey

Prepare jars: make sure jars and lids are clean and dry.

Toast nuts at 350°F for 5-7 minutes. You'll smell their deliciousness when they are ready. ***Don't burn them!***

Allow nuts to cool, then add to jars, but don't pack too tightly. There should be some space at the top.

Pour honey over the nuts, allowing it to work its way around them, filling the empty spaces. Tap jars to remove air bubbles.

Cover and store in a cool, dry place, turning jars occasionally to keep nuts coated. These are delicious on pancakes or ice cream, over yogurt, and in oatmeal!

Salted Honey Caramels

- 1 cup of honey
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Kosher salt

Line a square pan with parchment paper, allowing it to hang over the sides. Fold in one side so width is only 5". Cut out parchment wrappers for candy; you'll need about 40, sized 3-1/2"x 2-1/2".

Heat cream and salt to a simmer in a heavy saucepan, but do not boil. Add honey and heat to boil. Stir ***constantly*** with a wooden spoon or silicone spatula for 20-25 minutes, until the mixture reaches 250°F -260°F.

Remove from heat, add vanilla, and stir. Pour over parchment in pan, and cool, checking often.

When it is nearly cool, sprinkle with kosher salt. Once completely cool, use parchment to transfer to a cutting board. Cut into ten strips, 1/2" wide with lightly oiled sharp knife. Then cut crosswise into four 2" strips.

Roll each in a pre-cut parchment wrapper and twist ends to seal.

When is old comb too old?

By Clint Allen

If you've been keeping bees for a few years, chances are you have some frames of comb that have seen better days. You know the ones. What started as beautiful, almost white beeswax gradually turned yellow, then brown, and eventually something approaching the color of an old work boot. At some point, you pull out one of those frames during an inspection and wonder, "Should I really still be letting bees raise brood in this thing?"

The answer isn't quite as simple as the color of the comb might suggest.

Newly drawn beeswax is surprisingly clean and light in color. Brood comb begins to change as soon as the first generation of bees is raised in it. As a developing bee prepares to become an adult, it spins a cocoon inside the cell. When the adult bee eventually emerges, portions of that cocoon remain attached to the walls of the cell.

The worker bees clean the cell and prepare it for its next occupant, but they don't return it to its original condition. Another bee is raised, another cocoon is left behind, and the process repeats itself. After generation upon generation of bees, those tiny layers begin to add up.

That's not all that happens to the comb. Thousands of bees walk across it. Pollen and nectar are stored in it. Propolis gets moved around the hive, and the normal business of running a bee colony leaves its mark. After a frame has helped raise thousands of bees, it's really no

surprise that it doesn’t look the way it did when it was first drawn.

The dark color, by itself, doesn't necessarily mean something is wrong. In some ways, it’s simply evidence that the comb has done its job.

There is another interesting change taking place that we can’t easily see. As those layers of cocoon material accumulate inside brood cells, the available space inside the cells can gradually decrease. The difference from one generation to the next is tiny, but after years of use it can become measurable. Old brood comb, therefore, isn’t simply new comb that happens to be darker. The comb itself has slowly changed.

There is also the question of what may accumulate in the wax over the years.

Beeswax can retain certain chemical compounds. Residues from some mite treatments, pesticides and other environmental contaminants can remain in the wax and potentially accumulate over time. Some may have been introduced intentionally by the beekeeper while trying to control Varroa mites. Others can arrive with bees, pollen or nectar brought back from outside the hive.

That doesn’t mean every dark frame is contaminated, nor can we look at the color of a frame and determine its chemical history. A nearly black frame isn't automatically dangerous simply because it is old. Still, the potential for accumulating residues is one good reason not to expect brood comb to remain in service forever.

So, how often should we replace it?

Ask five beekeepers and you might get five different answers.

One common approach is to replace a portion of the oldest brood comb each year rather than replacing a large amount at one time. For example, replacing roughly 20 percent of the oldest frames annually would gradually turn over the brood comb over about five years.

That makes more sense to me than treating the age of a frame as an expiration date. A perfectly good frame doesn't suddenly become bad because the calendar says it is five years old. Instead, regular inspections give us opportunities to identify the frames that should be next in line for retirement.

Maybe the comb is extremely dark. Maybe it has become damaged, misshapen or full of drone comb where you don't want it. Perhaps the wooden frame itself is beginning to deteriorate. Those are good candidates to work out of the brood nest and eventually replace.

One simple trick is to write the year on the top bar when a new frame goes into service. A paint marker or permanent marker is all it takes. A frame marked “26” tells you immediately that the comb entered service in 2026. Years later, you won't have to stand there holding an ugly frame and trying to remember whether you put it into the hive three years ago or sometime during the Obama administration.

Before we get too enthusiastic about replacing old comb, however, it is worth remembering that drawn comb is valuable.

Bees have to consume resources and expend energy to produce wax. A colony with drawn comb already has someplace to raise brood or put incoming nectar. A colony staring at sheets of foundation has additional work to do before those cells become useful. Throwing away perfectly serviceable drawn comb just because it has gotten a little dark can mean discarding a valuable colony resource.

The better approach is gradual rotation.

When conditions allow, work undesirable frames toward the outside of the brood area. Once the brood has emerged and the frame can reasonably be removed, replace it with foundation or another suitable frame. Timing is important. Putting undrawn foundation into the middle of the brood nest when bees aren't drawing wax can create a problem instead of solving one.

Old brood comb is one of those subjects in beekeeping where there probably isn't a single answer that fits every colony.

Dark comb doesn't necessarily mean an unhealthy hive. In fact, an old dark frame may represent many successful generations of bees. But comb isn't permanent either. Years of brood rearing slowly change it, and unwanted residues can accumulate in the wax.

So the next time you're working your hives and pull out that really ugly black frame you've been meaning to replace for the last four years, take another look at it. Maybe it doesn't need to come out today. But perhaps it's time to start working it toward the exit. After all, the bees know how to make another one.

October meeting minutes

By Sharon Carpenter

Meeting Date: October 19, 2026

Call to order: The club meeting was held at the Medina Library and was called to order at 7:55 p.m. Five members of the Board were in attendance along with 57 members and visitors.

1. The Treasurer's report was given.
2. The September Minutes were posted in the October newsletter for the members. A vote was taken to accept the minutes as written. All were in favor.
3. Club bee yard: All the hives are doing well and will be prepped for winter as soon as the weather allows.
4. Fair News: There are plans to plant Echinacea and Black-Eyed Susans in front of the agriculture building. There was discussion about choosing either 8 oz or 12 oz creamed honey for 2027 fair entry along with changing lip balm submissions from tubs to tubes.
5. The Bee Herder, website and Facebook page are going great.
6. Speaker/meeting line-up: November – Getting ready for spring; December – Christmas party on the 9th from 6:00-800 p.m.; February – Plants for bees, Katherine Frey; March – Bee yard safety, Laurene Kiel
7. During the November meeting, we will have a raffle, and all proceeds will go to the Care Closet at the Career Center.
8. The nominating committee of three people was introduced to the club, and members were asked to speak to one of them if they were willing to step into one of the roles on the Board. Elections for the positions of President, Secretary and one Director will take place during the November meeting.
9. Honey Breakfast is on November 16 - 20. Volunteers are needed to give a presentation to children in the Euclid, Ohio school district
10. The MCBA's Bylaws have been updated and sent to every member via email and hard copies were available at the October meeting. A vote to accept the Bylaws as written will take place at the November meeting.
11. Parks and Recreations is asking if MCBA would like to give a winter presentation. We are currently giving presentations on: Extracting honey, Candle making, Beginner beekeeping and have a booth set up for Earth Day. No decision was made; ideas are being discussed. "Cooking with Honey" was one idea mentioned.
12. Eventbrite is up and running, ready to accept payments for the beginner classes and membership.
13. The OSBA conference is this weekend in Ashtabula.

New Business:

1. A middle school robotics team visited during our club meeting to seek feedback and help for their club's project. They want to address the "pollinator decline problem" by making sensors to put in a beehive to help beekeepers know what is going on in their hives without opening them up. Their vision was shared and MCBA plans to have more discussions with the club to share ideas and information about bees and beekeeping.
2. A motion was made to purchase one "Hive Hugger" for the Club's bee yard. The motion was voted on and approved by the members.
3. The family of a deceased, former bee inspector wants to give the Club all his bee equipment. There was discussion about taking all the equipment to the bee yard and having either a garage sale or allowing interested parties to donate for equipment they need. There will be more information on this topic at a later time.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM

Minutes submitted by: Sharon Carpenter – Secretary

From around the web

Beekeeping is a Crime

https://beeculture.com/beekeeping-is-a-crime/

DIY Beeswax Christmas Ornaments

https://carolinahoneybees.com/beeswax-christmas-ornaments/?adt_ei=%25Email%25

Honeybee Hives are Living Immune Systems, Scientists Say

https://www.sci.news/biology/honeybee-hives-living-immune-systems-15142.html

Antibiotic pollution may be key factor in honeybee colony collapses

https://www.avma.org/news/press-releases/antibiotic-pollution-may-be-key-factor-honeybee-colony-collapses

Honeybees Bullying Other Bugs Linked to 14% Drop in Bumblebees as Scientists Document Aggressive Battles Over Flowers

https://people.com/honeybee-aggression-linked-to-14-drop-in-bumblebees-12188174

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.

References & citations

Intentionally left blank

The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and is not intended to guarantee your success as a beekeeper. While MCBA strives to offer accurate and up-to-date advice, beekeeping involves various factors beyond our control. Therefore, MCBA cannot be held responsible for any outcomes resulting from the application of the information provided. By using the advice and tips shared in this newsletter, you agree to hold harmless the MCBA, authors, publishers, and any affiliated parties from any liability, loss, or damage that may occur.