

June 2024

# THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



## MCBA Monthly Meeting June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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

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

## Association Officers

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

**Vice President:** Kimberly Carey  
330-416-3701  
vp@medinabeekeepers.com

**Secretary:** Sharon Carpenter 330-722-0080  
secretary@medinabeekeepers.com

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

**Newsletter Editor:** Clint Allen  
allencli@zoominternet.net

**Webmaster:** Paul Kosmos  
webmaster@medinabeekeepers.com

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

**Directors:**  
2024: John Vrtachnik  
jvrtachnik@windstream.net  
2025: Larry Watson  
mcbalarry@aol.com  
2026: Shari Baker  
Shari.Baker.MCBA@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>

## June Speaker

*Speaker: John Shwartz*

John Shwartz lives in Randolph, OH. His journey with bees began in Oregon around 2006, and Alaska before moving to Ohio in 2011.

John will talk about sustainable beekeeping in your apiary. He now maintains a small blog you can access at <http://thebee.farm> or join his OTS Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/otsbeekeeping/>

John enjoys helping beekeepers become self-sufficient and can be reached via email with questions at [johnschwartz@gmail.com](mailto:johnschwartz@gmail.com).

## Upcoming Events

**June** – Pollinator week

**July** – Bee Festival, July 20<sup>th</sup>

**August** – Club picnic, Medina County Fair

**September** – Ag Day

**December** – Christmas Party

## MCBA July Meeting

Monday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Fair Booth Cleanup

Join us to help prepare the Fair Booth for selling at the Fair. There may also be a final meeting to prepare sellers and get everyone on the same page.

Location: Medina County Fairgrounds, 720 W. Smith Road, Medina OH 44256

## 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's Corner

*By Peggy Garnes*

Warm weather has brought early honey harvesting. Many members have already filled several buckets with much more honey waiting to be capped.

Swarms have slowed down but calls from homeowners with honeybees in their homes have dramatically increased. Please be diligent in your inspections and curb as many swarms as possible.



The club responded to a resident with honeybees in their floor joist. Thanks to Jim Blake, Brian Hall, (main

extractors), Bill Whelan, Dave and Yvonne Gipson, Rocco Alessandro (one of our youngest beekeepers), and James with the “cool” shirts.

The honeybees were removed, comb banded into frames, and then the colony temporarily relocated until they recover from the removal. It was a great learning experience and a wonderful way to give back to our community. Thank you, team!



Next event will be Bee Festival held July 20, 2024, at the Medina library. If you’re looking for a great way to spend time together with your club members- sign up for one of the many stations. We will have stations for honey tasting, candle rolling, observation hive, and equipment for the public to try on. Over 1,000 visitors attend the event each year. Look for the signup link to follow.

So as always –

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

## Ten Minutes with the Bees – The bee yard in June

By Paul Kosmos

Good News for Honeybees in Ohio

Despite the busy swarm season Beekeepers in Ohio seem to have things under control. I decided to check around to see what was happening in the world of beekeeping.

Ohio’s backyard beekeeping is a-buzz Some of you may recall the difficult period in 2006 when Colony Collapse (due to all causes) started to reduce the number of hives in Ohio. By 2010 Ohio had lost half of its hives. But hard work by beekeepers and help from the growing number of new beekeepers is reversing that trend.



*Honeybees, like this one, play a large role in pollinating Ohio’s food*

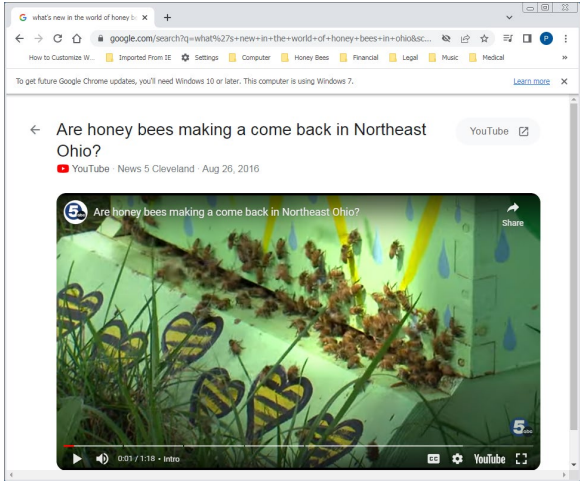
In fact, Ohio increased its commercial honey production by 20% last year! Here is a link to one story about some of this information.

<https://www.stateneews.org/news/2023-07-07/ohios-backyard-beekeeping-is-a-buzz>

Here is another link to a short news video highlighting the same story about this year being particularly good for the bees.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HERw4WE\\_II](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HERw4WE_II)

Seems the mild winter, warm weather, and continued interest from new beekeepers has led to a very good start to the year.



*Honeybees in Ohio Making a Comeback!*

It is certainly encouraging to me to hear some good news to reward those of us who care for our fuzzy little friends!

That said, don't forget your mite checks and/or treatments due soon.

## Creating a Bee Friendly Garden: Part II

*By Karl Bartz*

Like many of our members, I also support growing native whenever possible. I especially like plants that are multipurpose; edible, medicinal, or some other permaculture attribute. I avoid doubled flowers where bees can't access any food or plants that are sterile or invasive.

Willow (*Salix*) is worth a second mention since a study published by the OSBA found that was the top detected plant in honey samples collected from a variety of apiaries in Ohio. Cherry was the second most abundant next to Pear and Clover. Clover makes a great ground

cover, is a nitrogen fixer, and has been used as a treatment for coughs, colds, and fevers. It's also edible and according to Plants for a Future ([pfaf.org](http://pfaf.org)), it's very wholesome and nutritious.

Alsike Clover (*Trifolium Hybridum*) is one of the best honey plants in America! I buy seeds by the pound from Outside Pride ([outsidepride.com](http://outsidepride.com)). It grows well even in wetlands where my hives are located.

White Dutch clover (*Trifolium Repens*) is great in a lawn seed mixture or even as a lawn alternative.

Bee Bee Tree *Tetradium* (*Evodia Daniellii*) If you haven't heard of it, visit the Cleveland Zoo in the summer, I was amazed at the huge number of bees feeding off this tree. What an appropriate name for it.

Many articles mention varieties of plants to cover all seasons but often fail to give specifics. Here are some recommendations to cover all seasons.

### *Late Winter (January – March)*

Snowdrops (*Galanthus Nivalis*), Winter Aconite (*Eranthis Hyemalis*) and Crocus "Tommy" (*Crocus tommasinianus*) are some of the earliest blooming flowers. Plant these bulbs close to the hives since bees won't be flying much when they spring up. In fact, plant them all over the bee yard. They'll die back before it's time to mow.

Cornelian Cherry (*Cornus mas*) is a small understory tree that is also a very early bloomer. It produces a small fruit that's great for jams or wine. When fully ripe it has a plum-like flavor and texture.

### *Early Spring*

Dandelions, I used to hate them but have learned to love them. No need to spread their seed. Just stop killing them and they'll grow all over. Turns out they have many uses besides being an important food for brood rearing, they also make excellent wine.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus*), Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Redbud (*Cercis*) and American

Plum (*Prunus americana*) are all wonderful native trees with edible fruit and beautiful showy blooms in the early spring.

### *May Flowers*

Blackberry and Raspberry (*Rubus*) are major sources of nectar in May. Asparagus, Chives, Candytuft (*Iberis sempervirens*) and the Giant Onion (*Allium giganteum*) are also in bloom.

American Elderberry and Blueberry have excellent fruit with native varieties. The Oak-Leaved Hydrangea (*Hydrangea Quercifolia*) is a beautiful shrub that'll bloom through July, but the Tulip-Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) is a major source of nectar. I also highly recommend the Black Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) because who doesn't like Tupelo Honey?

### *June Blooms*

Melons, Cucumbers, Pumpkins and Squash are all good for bees and good for you too, but the native Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus glabra*) is even better for bees. You can make a lemony tea with the berries and then dry them out to use in your smoker, and don't forget the Marigolds, the wonder-drug of the companion plant world. Plant them everywhere in your garden.

Herbs such as Oregano, Lemon balm, Peppermint, Catnip, Basil, and Thyme, especially Red-flowering thyme (*Thymus praecox*) can be a major nectar source and help keep mosquitoes away. We rescued a honeybee colony and had to take it home with us. They loved the catnip and peppermint growing around our house. We were rewarded with a wonderful honey that had a hint of mint.

I would be remiss if I went without mentioning a few medicinal herbs such as Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Speedwell (*Veronica spicata*) and the shrub Winterberry Holly (*Ilex Verticillata*). I should also mention my Common Privet is loaded with honeybees this time of the year.

### *July as things go dry!*

The summer months are when things begin to dry up in my area. I have a small field dedicated to Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), which is a major source of nectar. All milkweeds are good and let's not forget how the Monarchs depend on them.

Some other great flowers for the summer are American Germander (*Teucrium canadense*), Anise hyssop (*Agastache Foeniculum*), Culvers Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) and Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*). Which are also great attractors for beneficial insects! Especially Culvers Root.

### *August Dearth*

August is a tough time for bees with most plants already bloomed and gone to seed but there are a few plants that will feed your bees through these tough times. Globe thistle (*Echinops ritro*) and Smartweed (*Polygonum spp.*) are two major sources of nectar.

Garlic chives (*Allium tuberosa*) and Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*) are good crops for bees. Joe-Pye weed (*Eutrochium* or *Eupatorium*), Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum flexuosum*) and Tall Ironweed (*Vernonia altissima*) are all good flowers for bees to snack on.

### *September Prep for Winter*

My two all-time favorite choices to fatten our bees in the fall are New England Asters and Goldenrod. I highly recommend planting these. Or if your neighbor hasn't kept up with their lawn, perhaps you can toss them a few seed bombs... just kidding... Not, really!

Hydrangea Pigi (*Hydrangea Paniculata*), Stonecrop - autumn joy (*Sedum spectabile*) are also good choices.

### *October - November*

Mums the word before winter! Chrysanthemum (*Rubellum* Group) and Gold & Silver Chrysanthemum (*Ajania pacificum*) are great choices. Another fun crop is Saffron (*Crocus Speciosus*) because I'm just mad about Saffron.

*December*

Hopefully your bees are all wrapped up for the winter with candyboards and reserves. They'll be clustering for warmth during these colder days but on those few days of warmer weather, or when they leave for potty breaks. They'll be happy to see some witch hazel growing nearby. It's the only thing I know that's in bloom during December.

This may all seem like a lot to grow, but if you start with one small area of your lawn you can continue adding until there's no more grass to cut. Just honeybees to feed and a food forest to fend for yourself.

Two of my favorite resources on this topic are Wikipedia's "List of Northern American nectar sources for honeybees" and "Garden Plants for Honey Bees" by Peter Lindtner.

## A Beginner's Guide to Reading Frames

*By Clint Allen*

So, you've got your beekeeping suit on, smoker at the ready, and you're about to dive into your first hive inspection. It can feel a bit overwhelming at first, but don't worry—MCBA is here to help you understand how to read the frames inside your hive. Let's break it down into simple steps so you can feel confident and excited about what you find.

*Getting Started: Preparing for Inspection*

First things first, make sure you have all your gear: a bee suit, gloves, a hive tool, and a smoker. Smoke the entrance of the hive gently to calm the bees. This makes them less likely to sting and more manageable while you inspect the frames.

*Removing the Frames:* Carefully open the hive and use your hive tool to lift out a frame. Go slow and be gentle—

these frames are home to thousands of bees, and you don't want to crush or overly disturb them.

*What to Look For:* When you pull out a frame, here's what you should be looking at:

*Brood Patterns:* Eggs and Larvae: Look for tiny white eggs standing on end inside the cells. They should look like little grains of rice. As eggs hatch, they turn into larvae, which are curled up and look like small white grubs.

*Capped Brood:* These are cells covered with a light brown wax cap. This means the larvae are turning into adult bees. A healthy frame will have a solid, consistent pattern of capped brood with very few empty cells.

*Honey and Pollen*

*Honey Storage:* Bees store honey at the top and around the edges of the frame. It looks like a shiny, golden liquid. Some of the cells might be capped with white wax, which means the honey is ready for the bees to use.

*Pollen:* You'll see cells filled with colorful pollen—reds, yellows, oranges. This is bee bread, a crucial protein source for the colony.

*Queen Cells*

*Regular Queen Cells:* These are larger cells, usually found at the bottom or sides of the frame, and they can indicate swarming or the colony raising a new queen. If you see these, it might mean the hive is getting ready to swarm or replace their current queen.

*Supersedure Cells:* Found in the middle of the frame, these also indicate the bees are planning to replace the queen.

*Bee Health*

*Mite Checks:* Look for tiny red or brown mites on the bees or in the cells. Varroa mites are a common pest and can harm your bees.

*Disease Signs:* Be aware of any unusual spots or deformations. For example, chalkbrood looks like white,

chalky mummies in the cells, while foulbrood has a distinct, foul smell and sunken, darkened cappings.

### *Interpreting What You See*

As you inspect, think of it like a story your bees are telling you:

**Healthy Brood Patterns:** If you see lots of healthy brood in various stages, your queen is doing a great job.

**Honey and Pollen:** Plenty of stored honey and pollen means the bees are well-fed and prepared for bad weather or winter.

**Queen Cells:** These need your attention. If there are many queen cells, you might need to take action to prevent swarming or ensure the new queen's success.

### *Taking Action*

**Based on what you see, you might need to:** Feed the Bees: If there's not much stored honey or pollen, consider giving them sugar syrup or pollen patties.

**Manage Queen Cells:** If you see swarm cells, you might need to split the hive to prevent losing half your bees. For supersedure cells, let nature take its course but keep an eye on the new queen's progress.

**Treat for Pests:** If you find mites or signs of disease, start the appropriate treatments to keep your colony healthy.

### *Wrapping Up*

After you've inspected a few frames and gotten a good idea of the hive's health, carefully replace the frames and close the hive. Thank your bees for their hard work and leave them to carry on with their buzzing business.

Remember, every inspection is a learning experience. Over time, you'll get better at reading the frames and understanding what your bees need. Happy beekeeping and enjoy the sweet rewards of your efforts!

## Member Spotlight

Chris Fullerton



**Where do you live:** Just inside the Medina City limits south of the square.

**What got you interested in beekeeping?** My daughter, Tess. At the time she was a student at Ohio State studying sustainability and environmental engineering. Fun fact: later my mom told me that her father used to keep bees.

**How long have you been keeping bees?** 6 years.

**How many, and what kind of hives do you have?** Since I'm in the city limits, I can only have 4 hives. I currently have 3.

**Are you looking to add to your apiary?** Not at this time, since I am almost at my limit. :0)

**Do you share your beekeeping hobby with anybody else?** Of course, Tess, and my sister-in-law, JoEllen.

**What is your most memorable beekeeping moment?** I had a drone laying worker a few years ago. I didn't want to give up on the colony and I didn't want to add a queen for her to be assassinated. Denzel at Queen Right advised me to take each frame and shake the bees off at least 100 yards from the hive boxes. He said the laying worker should be too fat to fly back to the hive. I did as he instructed, then 3 days later introduced a new queen. She was accepted right away!

**What is the best and worst part of beekeeping?** I love that there is so much to learn, even after years of keeping bees. I love the smell of a honey super.

The worst part aside from Varroa mites, is losing a colony even after I thought I had done everything right.

**What is your favorite food to add honey to?** My coffee every morning. I also love habanero honey drizzled on pizza.

**Do you have any tips for beginner beekeepers?** Volunteer to help in the bee yard! The more times you experience opening and inspecting a hive, the more confident you will become when caring for your own hives.

**Other than beekeeping, do you have any other hobbies?** Gardening in the summer, skiing in the winter.

**What do/did you do for a living?** I'm a fiction writer. I'm currently working on a small-town series involving a family of beekeepers. They always say to write what you know, right?

## Club Bee Yard Update

Remember, if you plan to visit the bee yard this year, consider parking across the street at the Medina Country Parks District Headquarters. We don't want to create traffic issues on Deerview Lane or Wedgewood Road, upsetting the residents in the area.

**June 6, 2024**

Kate Reusch—meet Steve to sell Nuc.

Hive 1: 2 mediums, top medium almost full of honey, some brood in with the honey, 10 frames bees on bottom and top medium—needs another medium box.

Hive 1a–8 frame: top medium, not building it out. Bottom deep, 6 frames of bees, queen is working, some consistent brood, but not a strong hive yet.

Hive 2: did not check, day 11 of requeening (queen was moved to nuc) heavy ant infestation, replaced inner cover.

Hive 2a: did not check, day 27 of requeening (was made from hive 1)

Hive 3: 2 deeps, 2 mediums, saw queen in upper deep, has room, bottom deep has room, one super is fully capped and needs pulled, the other super is almost full but has some brood. Got cranky so closed them up.

Hive 3a: 2 deeps, one medium,

Queen is great, patten is nice. Not working the medium frames (new white plastic, bees don't seem to like those) swapped out for black plastic mediums that had some wax left on them, check to see if they like those better. Need to put wax on the white plastic mediums to help get those going.

### May 26th

Rick and Kerry Gleisinger, Paul Mcincke, Greg Johnson  
Jessica Winchell, Shari Baker, Kate Reusch

HIVE 1A—quick look, 6 frames bees in deep

HIVE 2—2 deeps, 2 mediums

Heavy ants on top of inner cover, need to replace inner cover, they are in the wood.

Deeps are getting filled in with honey and working on capping them, some brood in first deep that will need to clear out.



Top deep, outer honey and pollen, good brood pattern, found queen on open egg/larva frame, marked her green, moved her to nuc with 1 frame honey, 1 blank, 1 mixed brood, 1 capped brood, and the frame we found her on.

Bottom deep—great brood, honey, pollen, check the green marked frame for queen cells.

Needs 28 days to requeen.

New nuc— Queen is marked green

## MCBA Meeting Minutes

*By Sharon Carpenter*

MCBA monthly meeting was held at the Medina Library, 62 members were present, including five board members.

The club meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with a time for Q & A. Our featured speaker, Peggy Garnes, began her presentation at 7:00 p.m. The topic was his presentation was “Hive products can bring in cash! It’s not just about honey.” We also had a plant swap. Club members shared plants from their yards with other interested members.

Following the presentation, we had a 10-minute snack break and resumed to a formal business meeting facilitated by the club president. The following updates were presented:

1. The minutes from the April meeting were posted in the May newsletter for all members to read. They were voted on for approval – motion carried.
2. Financial report: given by Peggy Garnes
3. Beginner class: The library conference rooms have already been reserved for the 2025 beginner classes.
4. Medina County Fair: The fair will be from July 29th – August 4th. A sign-up sheet for working at the fair booth this year is expected at the June Membership meeting. Please contact Tim Moore

for forms needed to sell your products at the fair. It was made clear that if you plan to sell products at the fair, you must also enter at least one product for judging.

5. Club bee yard: Volunteers are still needed to help demonstrate hive inspections. A sign-up sheet has been posted on “Signupgenius”. There were three hives that were overwintered and now we have six hives, the maximum number we can keep at the bee yard. All the hives are doing well. Everyone is welcome to observe the inspections.
6. There was a great turn out for Earth Day and World bee day. Thank you to all the volunteers who worked those events.
7. The observation hive was set up in the children’s wing of the Medina Library on May 20th.
8. Pollinator week is coming up in June.
9. Bee Festival: Takes place at the Medina Library on July 20; volunteers will be needed, Kim Barkfelt will be reaching out soon with a sign-up sheet.
10. Help is needed before each club meeting to set up chairs. If you can help, please come at 5:45. You don’t have to commit to every meeting, occasionally is helpful as well.
11. Club picnic: Will take place in August at Buckeye Woods Park
12. Ag Day is on September 27th from 8a.m. to 3 p.m. Presentations will be geared to older students and aimed at teaching about careers in beekeeping.

New Business:

1. Mentor/Mentee contracts are complete and will be posted on our website.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

## Library Observation Hive

The library observation hive was installed on Monday, May 20th, World Bee Day. Paul Kosmos and Shari Baker installed the hive.



The installation went smoothly, the bees were calm and cooperative. The library staff and children were excited to have their bees back. The library will be having a name the queen contest soon.



## From Around the Web

### Mad Honey

[https://www.atlasobscura.com/foods/mad-honey-red-hallucinogen?utm\\_source=Gastro+Obscura+Weekly+E-mail&utm\\_campaign=49ed94d303-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2024\\_05\\_28&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_-eb7ceb363f-\[LIST\\_EMAIL\\_ID\]&mc\\_cid=49ed94d303&mc\\_eid=4cf38a0f67](https://www.atlasobscura.com/foods/mad-honey-red-hallucinogen?utm_source=Gastro+Obscura+Weekly+E-mail&utm_campaign=49ed94d303-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_05_28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-eb7ceb363f-[LIST_EMAIL_ID]&mc_cid=49ed94d303&mc_eid=4cf38a0f67)

### Hopes beer made from killer bees will create buzz

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4n1nn1z649o>

## Honey Extractor

The club owns a honey extractor that is available to all paid members to rent for a \$20 deposit. If you need to borrow the extractor, feel free to reach out to Peggy Garnes at 330-723-6265 to make an appointment.

## Change to MCBA Website


We have made a small change to the website. Under Resources you will see two new headings.

Mentor/Mentee Information and Available Mentors. The first displays downloadable copies of the Mentor/Mentee expectations and Forms to volunteer to be a mentor or request a mentor.

The second is our list of members who have volunteered to be mentors. We moved this one from the main menu to make it easier to find things together.

## 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 that some honey is thixotropic? When in the comb it acts like a solid but if stirred, will act more like a gel or very thick fluid.*