

July 2024

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



MCBA Monthly Meeting July 15th, 2024

Fair booth Cleanup

Monday, 6:00 to 7:30 pm

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

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July Speaker

Monday, July 15th, 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

Upcoming Events

June – Pollinator week

July – Bee Festival, July 20th

August – Club picnic, Medina County Fair

September – Ag Day

December – Christmas Party

MCBA August Meeting

Club picnic: Will take place at 5:00 p.m. on August 19th, at Buckeye Woods Park.

Ellie Jisa and Shelia Maurer are the organizers of the event.

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

Is it dearth time already?

Many members have called me to ask about lack of pollen and nectar coming in. Robbing has started early this year and closing down entrances will help. Please limit the time you have your hive open.

This month is fair booth cleanup! Bring your broom and bucket and join us for a short meeting, pizza, and clean out our booth spaces.

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

Peggy Garnes

Ten Minutes with the Bees – The bee yard in July

By Paul Kosmos

Strong Hives in July

I am hearing from most members that their hives are strong and they are hauling lots of nectar. Most report multiple supers already in place and growing. As we approach the summer dearth it will be interesting to see where they find their food sources. With the early warm weather late Winter and all Spring the dearth could be an issue this summer. There is not much we can do besides



Honeybee on Clover

keeping an eye open to see what plants they choose to visit. Right now, Clover seems to be a favored plant. I normally see some bees on the clover but like so many plants this year it is blooming everywhere, and the bees are all over it.

The strong build up in our hives means we must be diligent about our nemesis... Varroa! Varroa multiplies the fastest when a hive is producing lots of brood. We all know that. Left unchecked they can devastate the strongest of hives in just a couple of months.

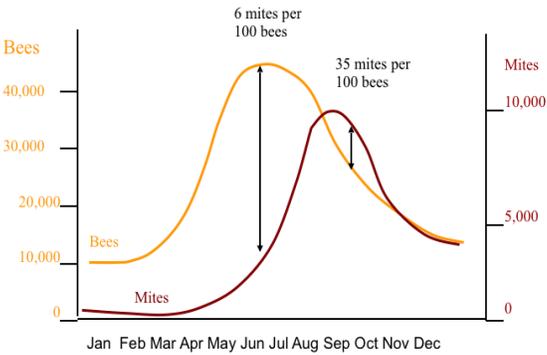


Figure 1. Simplified bee and mite population growth curves for a temperate climate. The mite growth curve lags behind the bee curve. Note how the number of mites per hundred bees greatly increases in fall. A colony is unlikely to survive a fall infestation rate this high.

This graph from Randy Oliver shows the huge build up in Varroa a short time after the peak brood build up. A nearly 600% increase!

I know this message is repetitive, but it is SO IMPORTANT!

It is so easy to put off treating a hive, but we all know the results come late November or early December.

Most of you are aware of the various treatments available. But a reminder of the efficacy of the treatments always helps. Oxalic vaporization is an excellent tool, but only when there is little brood in the hive since the mites are protected in the capped brood.

In July the most effective treatment may be Formic Pro since it can kill mites in the capped cells and can be used

with supers on the hive. Watch the temperature warnings!

The treatment you use is up to you. But It can only be effective if you use it now, before the peak buildup of mites in your hives.

Getting in over your head

By Clint Allen

Sometimes you start out with the best of intentions. This year, I started to do cutouts. As someone who is very handy, from wood working to full blown home remodeling, removing sections of wall or wood would be easy and using a bee vacuum to remove a small honeybee infestation would be a breeze. Well, that all came to a head when I got a phone call from a retirement community here in the city of Medina. While on vacation in June I got the call and advised the person to reach out to another member who would do cutouts as I was out of the country. I followed up with the individual after returning home, only to find out that they had not had any luck removing the bees. I agreed to assess the situation and see if I could help. After walking the job and talking to the onsite maintenance team member, the job seemed straight forward. Remove a small section of double layer drywall ceiling, remove comb, and vacuum up the bees. This is where my assumptions got the better of me. I had assumed that the building would be like standard residential construction, 2"x10" joists, 16" on center, small cavity with not a lot of room for bees to build a home. With all my conversations with maintenance, it really did appear to be a new issue too and I was under the assumption this was spring swarm that had just moved in. So last Sunday, July 7th at 10 AM, I started my task of cutting into the drywall. Finding the studs was super easy with a strong magnet, finding screws that hold the drywall. I marked up a small hole where I thought the bees would be and removed a small

4"x4" section with a drywall saw. Once removed I noticed some pine needles and leaves in the way, so I reached into the hole and begin to remove the material. Then, bam, my first sting on my hand. Well at least I knew I found the bees. Over the next 30 minutes, I opened the ceiling between two joists and removed about 30 lbs. of pine needles and leaves (a bird had a really nice home some time ago). The section of drywall was approximately 24" wide by 48" long. This is when I



discovered I was in over my head. The building was constructed with engineered I-beams, 24" tall on 24" spacing. What I had thought would be a small swarm, was an established colony that had overwintered once, if not multiple times. Each piece of comb occupied the entire space of 24"x24".

The total length of comb spanned nearly 3' in length. At that point, I was in it to win it (I lost). I ended up removing enough comb with brood to fill a 10-frame hive, 1 cooler of comb of capped honey along 5 more totes full of comb

with capped honey. I also gave the employees about 10 lbs. of comb honey that I had removed throughout the day. The entire job took me 9.5 hours! About halfway through the day, I called my wife and had admitted



defeat. I was overwhelmed. Around that time, I had realized that I hadn't brought enough water to drink and was experience severe cramping in my hands where I couldn't move my fingers for about 10 min every time it happened. I soon started to take breaks every 45 min just to get my heart rate down. The heat with the suit on for that long was oppressive. During the removal there were so many bees my bee vacuum hose had clogged, and I had no idea why it stopped working. My wife helped me by pickup up Peggy's bee vacuum (THANK YOU), but by the time I got it, I solved my own problem and unclogged the hose. In the end, it was a successful cutout, bees

were relocated, and the residents were happy. I've yet to find the queen, but, no matter what, the bees were saved. Next time I take something like this on, I may be reaching out to some of you for an assist. It's great to have help, and doing a cutout, is a great learning experience. Take it from me, ASK for help!

Member Spotlight



Conrad Riffle Passed Away on Saturday When some people retire, they find quiet things to do with their lives. They rekindle old hobbies and crafts such as knitting, painting, gardening, or maybe woodworking. Then there are a fair number who decide to try their hand at something new... like

Beekeeping. Seems pretty easy, helps the bees, and the environment. What's so hard about starting a hive or two in your backyard? Conrad Riffle was one who decided to try his hand at Beekeeping. Conrad spent part of his life as a machinist where he could use his wits to solve mechanical problems. It was a thinking man's profession. When he retired, he wanted to do something new where he could keep using his wits to solve problems...like Beekeeping. That was five years ago in 2019. He was 78 when he started beekeeping! Now, turn the clock ahead to 2024. In five short years Conrad multiplied his new "hobby" into a thriving commercial business. He grew his apiaries to about 70 hives and had a number of people who helped him manage his bee yards. What's more, Conrad decided to begin helping beginning beekeepers by mentoring and teaching what he had learned. He invited newbies to his bee yards to work with the bees to learn the trade. There are now a number of newer beekeepers who are enjoying the fascinating world of

Honeybees thanks to his efforts. Conrad also kept his mind sharp by putting his experience as a machinist to work. He invented his own version of a power vaporizer for beekeepers with larger numbers of hives. It worked so well he decided to start selling them. Conrad lived in New Franklin, OH, with his wife of over 50 years, Darlene, and their cat, Muffy. Darlene filled the honey bottles and put on the labels... thousands of honey bottles. Conrad's quick smile and quick mind made him easy to like. And you always saw the wheels turning as another new idea popped into his head. Medina Beekeepers has been fortunate to have him as a friend and member.

Club Bee Yard Update

Early in July the club was able to demonstrate honey extraction with approximately 15 frames of capped honey from the club bee yard. Club members used both a radial (9 frame) and tangential extractors (4 frame). Members were able to learn multiple uncapping methods



with everyone in attendance able to try it out. We also had about 30 pounds of honey that had been extracted the week before that we bottled into 1-pound jars. There was a great turnout of club members and a huge thank you to those leading and teaching during the demonstration!



MCBA Meeting Minutes

By Sharon Carpenter

MCBA monthly meeting was held at the Medina Library and was called to order at 8:15 p.m., 47 members were present including six board members.

The club meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with a time for Q & A. Our featured speaker, John Shwartz, began his presentation at 7:00 p.m. The topic was his presentation was “Sustainable Beekeeping.”

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 May meeting were posted in the June newsletter for all members to read. They were voted on for approval – motion carried.
2. Financial report update was given by Kate Reusch
3. 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, Chairperson, 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 enter products for judging.
4. Club bee yard: Volunteers are still needed to help demonstrate hive inspections. A sign-up sheet has been posted on “Signupgenius”. Everyone is welcome to observe the inspections.
5. Bee Festival: Takes place at the Medina Library on July 20 from 10:00 – 3:00; volunteers will be needed, Kim Barkfelt, Chairperson, is in charge and will have a “Signupgenius” posted.
6. Help is needed before each club meeting to set up chairs. If you are able to help, please come at 5:45. You don’t have to commit to every meeting, once in a while is helpful as well.
7. Club picnic: Will take place at 5:00 p.m. on August 19th, at Buckeye Woods Park. Ellie Jisa

and Shelia Maurer are the organizers of the event.

8. 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. Thank you for all that helped with the swarm cut-out.
2. We have a second cut out that is on commercial property – we are now getting a crew together since we have a lift certified helper to get a beekeeper or two up to the exterior second floor.
3. We had a motion to support the Ag building for \$500. The motion carried.
4. Honey Jars will be purchased for new participants entering honey in the fair this year to encourage participation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Bee Practical Award

American Beekeeping Federation

Request for Applications

The American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) is offering an award for up to \$2,000 to a beekeeper with a practical beekeeping idea that is relevant to other beekeepers. The \$2,000 will be split in the case more than one awardee is chosen. We are looking to fund one or more individuals that have developed a practical beekeeping practice OR have a practical beekeeping idea that needs funding to be developed. Examples of practical ideas include but are not limited to a novel way of utilizing old bee boxes, an air conditioned bee suit, a more accurate method of sampling for varroa mites, a method of

collecting colony information, or a hive design for people with disabilities. Novel ideas will receive a higher rating.

Awardee(s) will be asked to share their idea with ABF membership in two ways. One, present their idea at the ABF annual conference in January 2025 hosted in Reno, Nevada. Free registration will be included. Two, the awardee(s) must write an article about their idea for the ABF's Quarterly magazine.

Applications will be accepted through October 1, 2024

Awardee(s) will be notified by October 15, 2024

Application Submission:

Submit their applications to Garett.slater@ag.tamu.edu. Each application must include:

- Applicant's name, mailing address, email address, and phone number
- Summary of idea (1-2 sentences)
- If the idea has been completed or if it is an idea that will be developed with the award money
- One-page description of the idea for a practical beekeeping practice
- One or more images that describe the idea and does not include the applicant

Qualifications:

- Must be a member of the American Beekeeping Federation. Go to abfnet.org to become a member.
- Must be a beekeeper. Researchers, including students, may apply if you are also a beekeeper.

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of distinguished ABF Research Committee members and the funds awarded based on the originality, practicality, and feasibility of the idea. One application per person is allowed. Teams, like a beekeeping club, may apply if at

least one person is an ABF member. Prior to submission, anyone interested in seeking a patent for their idea should apply for the patent before applying to avoid invalidating the patent application.

For questions or additional information, contact garett.slater@ag.tamu.edu

Medina Library Bee Festival

Below is the URL to sign up to help with the Bee Festival on July 20th. This is one of the best activities the club gets involved in. Maybe since there are no strings attached, just an excuse for kids AND their parents to have some fun and learn about the Honeybees. Each year the library draws well over 1,000 visitors to the festival.



If you can spare a couple hours, you won't be sorry!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F45ADAB28A5FB6-50127227-beefestival#/>

Hope to see you there!

From Around the Web

Neonicotinoid Exposure Worsens Varroa Mite Infestations in Honeybees, Study Shows

<https://entomologytoday.org/2024/06/20/neonicotinoid-exposure-worsens-varroa-mite-infestations-honeybees-study/>

Minding your bees and cues

<https://www.beeculture.com/minding-your-bees-and-cues-17/>

OSBA Fall Conference Registration

<https://ohiostatebeekeepers.org/fall-conference/>

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.

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 honey does not have an expiration date?