

THE BEE HERDER

Published by Medina County Beekeepers Association – February 2021

www.MedinaBeekeepers.com



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Join the MCBA to take advantage of a great lineup of virtual speakers. Start or renew your membership [online here](#) or by sending in the membership form included later in this newsletter.

February 15, 7:00 PM - virtual Zoom Meeting, Michael Palmer, Topic - Sustainable Beekeeping

Michael Palmer, owner of [French Hills Apiaries](#) in St. Albans, VT., is one of the leading beekeepers in the world. He raises queens and nucs for sale and both are always in huge demand. His philosophy has been to maintain a sustainable apiary by using nucs to maintain his colony numbers and by raising his own queens to maintain the quality of his bees.

The [French Hills Apiaries](#) website has some videos and information. Two Little Apiaries has compiled [a list of Mike Palmer's YouTube videos and other resources](#).

March 15, 7:00pm, Dan Conlon, Russian Bees and Queens

Dan Conlon is one of the pioneers and experts in the area of Russian bees. [Warm Colors Apiary](#) produces and sells honey, beeswax candles, products of the hive, queens, and nucs. Dan also provides pollination services. Dan will talk about Russian bees, their traits, and what makes them so desirable in your bee yard. You can listen to a 2018 episode of the [Beekeeping Today Podcast that featured Dan as a guest](#).

MCBA's 2021 Beginner Beekeeping Class

Virtual Zoom sessions with videos where applicable. Class sessions will be February 13, 20, and 27; March 13 and 20; and June 6, 2021. Learn more and register on the website: www.medinabeekeepers.com. Tell your friends!

Ten Minutes with the Bees

By Paul Kosmos, MCBA President

The Bee Yard in February

It's Jan 30, very cold outside, and I'm having a hard time getting my head around the fact that Monday is already February! It doesn't seem possible. There is little to do regarding the bees, unless you have a heated room to paint boxes or clean frames. I did walk through my hives today and put an ear to the boxes. There was a buzz in all of them. So far, so good.

2021 holds promise that we can resume a few programs that were waylaid last year. One of the best might have been Jean Knudson's NUC project. As you know, she organized a group of volunteers who planned to raise several nucs and follow a plan to inspect, treat, and share their results and observations. Learning by doing is always the best way to get it right.



Local Queens (cells) ready for a New Nuc

Another benefit of such programs is raising local queens and bees. The last two years Peggy has held classes on nucs and local queens – and also donated Queen cells to kick start the program. When you have a person with good ideas and organizational skills teamed up with a person with knowledge and resources, you get a pretty awesome team. Here's hoping they choose to pick up where they left off when Covid subsides.

Another area that is really blossoming is the creation of videos on Beekeeping that are more detailed. In addition, since they are being created by beekeeping organizations, what they teach is more reliable. An example is the library of videos that OSBA is creating and posting for public viewing.

In addition, OSBA is also creating a complete set of videos.... (an internship) for first year beekeepers to supplement their class learning and provide follow up through the summer. Check out their website to learn more.

Ohio State Beekeepers... beekeeping at its best!

One piece that was missing last year was Intermediate and Advanced classes. A number of our members have asked for classes to help them move to the "next level". We are planning now for 2021 and trying to figure out if it will happen in person or virtually. If you have topics that you would like to see let one of your board members know!

Spring is just around the corner.... Don't forget our friends in need!



Raising Sam - Such a Joy!

Honey Bucket Heater

John Vrtachnik, (lvrtachnik@windstream.net, 440-327-4971)

John Vrtachnik shares the plans he used to build a Honey Bucket Warmer and his suggestions for improvements.

- I downloaded [plans for a honey warmer](#) submitted by Steven Tilmann from Michigan Beekeepers web page. The cost of materials (not including the temperature thermostat) was around \$100.
- Plans call for a dimmer switch to control temperature but used an Inkbird Digital Thermostat, which I found online.
- Plans call for a wood shelf bracket but I used 1/8-inch stamped metal instead to hold a metal queen excluder that is used as a shelf.
- Instead of material the plan called for, I used 3/4" X 4 X 8 wood for the frame, flexible armor cable, and 12-gauge THWN wire for the electrical.
- Adding rollers to the bottom of the honey warmer helps in moving the warmer when needed.

The honey warmer works great to warm crystalized honey in pails and bottles of honey with the digital thermostat at the set temperature. If you have any questions my contact information is at the top of the article.



Shims (spacers) for Your Hives

John Vrtachnik made some shims/spacers for member use on their hives. These go on top the hive, under the inner cover. John donated his time and charged only for the materials. The cost is \$3.00 each. They are for ten frame hives. Contact Peggy if you are interested.

Club Survey – Survey Monkey email

Watch your email for a Survey Monkey. We would like your input regarding some of the programs we have run and also topics you would like to see or learn more about this year. Take a minute to respond so that we can better plans events based on what you want.

The Northeast Ohio Bee Yard – February

There haven't been many days lately warm enough to pop inner covers for a quick peek. When the temperature is 50 degrees or higher, take a quick look into the hive.

- 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.
- Do you see bees at the top of the frames when you open the inner cover? Although it is possible that bees at the top of the frames mean that there is no food, this is not always the case. Check to see whether your hive feels light.
- If you do not see capped honey in the top frames, you might want to do emergency feeding:
- Winter patties. Winter patties are higher in carbohydrates and lower in protein than spring pollen patties. You can purchase them through a local bee supply store and pop them on top of the frames.
- Candy boards. You will cook sugar, pour it into a wintering cover, and when it cools, invert the cover over the hive in place of an inner cover. Candy boards provide accessible food and help absorb condensation and moisture. Check out Paul's recipe on the following page.



Medina County Soil and Water Conservation District Seedling Sale

Visit <https://medinaswcd.org/seedlings/> to see this year's offerings, which include trees, garden kits, bluebird houses, wildflower and cover crop seeds, and mushroom kits. Deadline for orders is April 2, 2021, but often seedlings sell out before that date.



Learning Opportunities

Ohio State Beekeeping Association (OSBA) Live Webinar Training

The Ohio State Beekeeper's Association holds free, live Zoom conference calls on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month from 7:00-8:30 pm. [Information about the webinar series can be found at this link.](#) Upcoming speakers include Mr. Dana Stahlman – Stress Factors Affecting Honey Bee Survival (February 14) and Dr. Jamie Ellis – Recognizing and Addressing Queen Events (Feb 28).

Candy Board or Bricks

Paul Kosmos' recipe for emergency feeding can fill a candy board (shown at right) or for candy blocks.

Large recipe - makes 20 lbs.

- Bring 1 qt water to a boil in a 16 qt pot or canning kettle
- Add ¼ c white vinegar OR lemon juice (¼ c = 12 tsp)
- Slowly add 15 lbs. white sugar
- Heat on high, stirring constantly, to 248 degrees
- Turn off heat
- Stir in 5 lbs. more sugar
- Add 1 lbs. honey (optional)
- Add a small amount of Honey Bee Healthy (optional)
- When the mixture cools slightly, pour into frames. Or pour into 4 regular size cookie sheets, 5 pie pans, and a serving tray to make ½" thick cakes that you can cut into about 50 small 3 or 4-inch squares.



Smaller batch (makes 10 lbs. of candy)

- Bring 1 pint water to a boil
- Add 2 tsp vinegar or lemon juice
- Slowly add 7 lbs. sugar
- Heat on high, stirring constantly, to 248 degrees
- Turn off heat
- Stir in 2 ½ lbs. more sugar
- Add ½ lbs. honey (optional)
- Add a small amount of Honey Bee Healthy (optional)
- Pour into frames, thin containers, a cookie sheet with a rim, etc. Cut into 3 or 4-inch squares



2021 MCBA Membership Application / Renewal

MCBA offers webinars and lectures by local and national beekeeping experts organized by the MCBA and other bee clubs, a monthly newsletter, and email updates with timely information. Membership is \$20 for emailed newsletters or \$25 for a printed newsletter mailed to your postal address. Membership provides one vote in MCBA club matters and includes one family member in activities other than voting.

Renew your membership [online here](#) or complete the form below, make a check payable to Medina County Beekeepers Association, and mail to Medina Beekeepers, PO Box 1353, Medina, Ohio 44258.

Membership Form - Please complete so that we have current roster information for the newsletters!

Member Name: _____

e-mail: (please print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ (Optional) # of colonies: _____