January 2026

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association

MEDINA beekeepers

MCBA Monthly Meeting
January 19th, 2026

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: OPEN
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 January Meeting

Monday, January 19th, 2026

Topic: Acute Honeybee Paralysis Virus Detection

Speaker: Denzil St. Clair from Queen Right Colonies

Join us for an important discussion on **Acute Honeybee Paralysis Virus (ABPV) detection**, a critical topic for every beekeeper. ABPV is one of the most serious viral threats to honeybee health, often linked to colony collapse and weakened hives. Early detection can make the difference between saving a colony and losing it.

At this meeting, we'll cover:

- How ABPV spreads and its impact on hive health
- Practical methods for identifying symptoms and testing for the virus
- Strategies to protect your bees and prevent outbreaks

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

Upcoming Events

February 4th – 7 PM to 8 PM Norroa Mite Treatment Next generation varroa control ZOOM MEETING, link sent out to members via email!

2026 Beginner Class Dates

Saturday Feb 14th and 21st - 10 am to 5 pm

Tuesday Feb 24th, Mar 3rd,10th,17th,24th - 6 pm to 8:30 pm

April: Earth Day

MCBA February Meeting

Monday, February 16th, 2026

Topic: To Be Announced SOON!

Speaker: To Be Announced SOON!

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

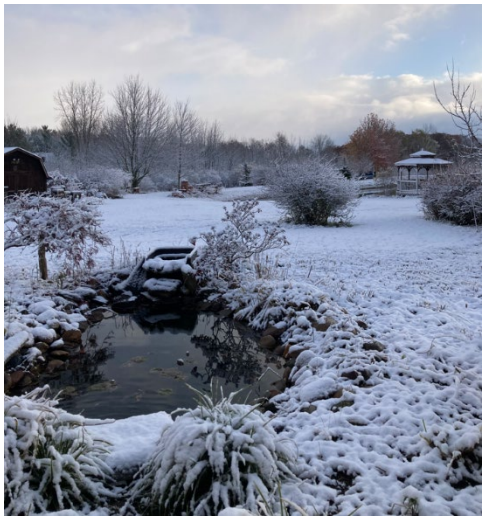
Mission Statement

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

As the New Year unfolds, our beekeeping journey stirs once again. The days are getting longer, and the days of sunshine are warming the hives. Let's hope the next cold snap is a short, mild one.



We have lots to be grateful for coming into 2026 and our club has many members bringing new ideas to the schedule. Watch the upcoming speaker lists, beginner classes, and public events that the club will be

hosting. Volunteer is you can- our club has been built strong by the generous volunteers. Be part of the hive!

Looking forward to early spring, and high survivability numbers. So far, we are looking good at the club bee yards. Many club members have shared with me their hives are doing great! So hopefully we are coming out of winter strong.

Hug your family, stay healthy, and enjoy this opportunity to read, learn, and attend conferences…

Ten Minutes with the Bees – The bee yard in January

By Paul Kosmos

Republished from the January 2024 Bee herder

Planning for Your (the Bees) Future

Last January (2023) I talked about how challenging it is to try to figure out what to do with your bees. That included the many options you have, and how long you've been a beekeeper.

This is a good time to consider just what your options are. The most calls we get are about swarming, making splits, and queens. Makes sense, yes?

If you have a choice between watching your bees swarm up into a tree or making a split, most of you would probably make a split. If you only knew how to make a split, or what to do with it since you may not want several more hives. So, let's talk about options.

Step number one is to hope our Bee Yard bees make it thought the winter. If they do, they should provide us with hands on tools to

demonstrate just how to make a successful split. And prevent a swarm at the same time.

And what about not wanting more hives? Now it's time to talk some more about Sustainable Beekeeping; It's a great idea, but as with all good ideas the topic ***needs a couple of cheer leaders***. Right now, we have growing interest but have not got the ball rolling just yet.

> "Sustainable Beekeeping; It's a great idea, but as with all good ideas the topic needs a couple of cheer leaders.

If we wait to discuss the topic until swarms are in the air it will be too late for this year. By that time, we will not have had time to share the details with you. At least until late July/August.

One of Beekeeping's Special Thrills

So, ***let's get the ball rolling!*** It's up to you. At the last meeting you saw a box for suggestion. If you are interested in Sustainable Beekeeping, let someone know.

And then start thinking about maybe making a split when your bees are growing so fast. It really is one of the easier things to do with bees. All you really need is a 5 frame nuc hive. The other thing you need is a plan to grow that hive or find it another home. If you decide you don't want it there are MANY beekeepers looking for new hives in the Spring! You can pick up a few dollars to recover some of your startup expenses.

A new Split

Of course, starting this program will have challenges, bees must be inspected, must find buyers, etc. But now is the time to start – make some noise!

Beyond the Langstroth Hive

By Clint Allen

While the Langstroth remains the backbone of U.S. beekeeping thanks to its modular design, standardized equipment, and proven performance, several alternatives offer compelling advantages—particularly around ergonomics, natural comb dynamics, and wintering practices. This feature explores four systems readily available in the United States: the Horizontal Langstroth, the Slovenian AZ hive, the Warre (People's Hive), and the Dadant hive. Contained herein, is an outline of construction, management style, workflow, honey harvesting, overwintering, pest control considerations, and how each compare with the standard Langstroth.

What the Standard Langstroth Offers

Before comparing, it's useful to recall why the Langstroth has endured. The hive's stackable, modular frames allow rapid inspection, targeted brood management, and high honey yields. Equipment is ubiquitous and interchangeable—boxes, frames, foundation, feeders, and queen excluders are easy to source, and the format scales from hobby to commercial. Migratory beekeepers favor Langstroths for strapping and palletization, while sideliner operations appreciate standardized tools like extractors, uncappers, and frame spinners. The tradeoffs are well known, heavy lifting with full supers, periodic disturbance from inspections, and a management style that can be more production-oriented than "hands-off."

Horizontal Langstroth Hive

Overview & Construction

A Horizontal Langstroth (sometimes called a "long Lang") uses standard Langstroth frames in a single, elongated, waist-high chest. It typically accommodates the width of 20–30 frames in one long body, with a hinged top and

side or end entrances. Because it accepts standard Langstroth frames, sourcing frames, foundation, and accessories is straightforward. Many designs include follower boards to adjust the brood nest and honey storage space without adding boxes.

Management Style & Workflow

Inspections occur from above without stacking or unstacking supers. Beekeepers slide follower boards, space frames, and keep brood centralized while pushing honey storage outward. This design excels for those who prioritize ergonomics and low lifting. Manipulations are more linear: you walk along the hive, inspect frames at eye level, and close up.

Honey Harvesting & Yield

Because the frames are Langstroth-standard, extraction is familiar: pull capped frames, uncap, and spin in a conventional extractor. Honey yields are comparable to vertical Langstroths when colonies are managed for space and nectar flow, though some beekeepers report slightly lower peak production in massive flows due to the absence of multiple stacked supers.

Overwintering & Climate Notes

Horizontal bodies provide good thermal mass and can be insulated along the lid and sides. Ventilation and moisture control remain crucial—top vents, quilt boxes, or absorbent pads can be integrated. The elongated brood chamber may require careful entrance placement and wind breaks in colder climates.

Pests & Disease

Varroa management mirrors Langstroth protocols since the comb format is identical. Monitoring with sticky boards, alcohol wash, or sugar roll is straightforward. Brood breaks and queen confinement are manageable with follower boards and excluders, though moving frames is more linear than vertical.

Pros

- No heavy lifting—ideal for beekeepers with back or shoulder limitations.
- Full compatibility with Langstroth frames and extractors.
- Inspections are at waist/eye level, often faster and less disruptive.
- Easy teaching hive—everything visible without box shuffling.

Cons

- Large footprint requires more yard space.
- Palletizing and migratory transport are less convenient.
- Peak nectar flows may require meticulous space management.
- Fewer off-the-shelf lids/stands—often DIY or specialty vendors.

Availability in the U.S - Readily available through specialty suppliers and as DIY plans. Standard frames and hardware are easy to source locally.

Slovenian AZ Hive (Cabinet-Style)

Overview & Construction

The AZ hive, developed in Slovenia, is a cabinet-style hive designed for rear access, often housed within a bee house. Frames slide in and out like drawers, and the beekeeper works from the protected, enclosed back of the apiary structure. The hive body includes built-in ventilation, insulation, and a detachable or hinged rear door. AZ frames are dimensionally different from Langstroth, though some U.S. vendors offer adapters or hybrid designs.

Management Style & Workflow

Inspections are performed from behind the hive, shielded from wind, rain, and sun. Bees remain calm because the brood nest is not exposed from above. Workflow is ergonomic: pull one frame at a time, adjust

spacing, return—all at chest height. The bee house enables a clean, organized workspace with storage, lighting, and controlled access.

Honey Harvesting & Yield

AZ frames can be extracted with compatible extractors or via pressing, depending on configuration. Honey yield is comparable to Langstroth when colonies are strong and well-managed, but the hive caters to comfort and continuity more than rapid super stacking for peak commercial production.

Overwintering & Climate Notes

AZ hives are famous for excellent wintering—the insulated cabinet and bee house reduce drafts and stabilize temperatures. Moisture control is integrated via vents and quilts. Northern beekeepers appreciate the reduced exposure during inspections in cold months.

Pests & Disease

Varroa monitoring and treatment protocols are similar to other framed hives. Rear access can make vaporization or strip placement efficient, and the bee house environment can simplify regular monitoring schedules.

Pros

- Exceptional ergonomics and weather protection with rear access.
- Outstanding insulation and microclimate control, ideal for cold regions.
- Calm inspections—brood not exposed from above.
- Integrated workspace in a bee house improves consistency and safety.

Cons

- Higher initial cost and infrastructure requirements (bee house).
- Frame dimensions are not Langstroth-standard in most configurations.
- Less suited for migratory or large-scale commercial operations.
- Fewer U.S. suppliers: parts may require special ordering.

Availability in the U.S -Available through specialty importers and boutique U.S. builders. Growing interest in colder states and among beekeepers prioritizing comfort and accessibility.

Warre Hive (The People's Hive)

Overview & Construction

Designed by Abbé Émile Warré, the Warre is a vertical, tiered hive intended to mimic a natural tree cavity. It uses top bars rather than full frames, and bees build natural comb. Boxes are typically smaller than Langstroth deeps, and a quilt box filled with absorbent material sits beneath a weatherproof roof to manage moisture.

Management Style & Workflow

Warre management is minimalist. Rather than adding supers on top, beekeepers "nadire" (add boxes below), allowing the colony to expand downward as in nature. Inspections are less frequent, and the beekeeper avoids heavy disruption of the brood nest. This approach favors those who prioritize low-intervention, natural comb, and seasonal rhythms over micromanagement.

Honey Harvesting & Yield

Honey is typically harvested by cutting and pressing comb from top boxes. Yields can be lower than Langstroth, particularly when flows are sporadic, or colonies are kept small. Harvesting is more labor-intensive and less equipment dependent.

Overwintering & Climate Notes

The quilt box and smaller cavity promote excellent moisture management, a critical factor in northern climates. Proper ventilation and insulation are built into

the design. Colonies often overwinter well when left with sufficient stores and minimal disturbance.

Pests & Disease

Varroa management can be more challenging without removable frames. Monitoring requires careful technique, and treatments must suit top-bar architecture. Some Warre beekeepers lean on brood breaks, genetics, and hygiene rather than frequent chemical interventions.

Pros

- Natural comb and low-intervention management style.
- Superb moisture control with quilt box.
- Simpler materials and DIY-friendly construction.
- Encourages a tree-cavity-like environment.

Cons

- Comb pressing is messy and time-consuming.
- Lower honey yields and less granular control over brood/disease.
- Harder to integrate with standard Langstroth equipment.
- Varroa monitoring/treatment is less straightforward.

Availability in the U.S - Plans and kits are widely available through hobby-focused suppliers. An enthusiastic community supports build-your-own approaches.

Dadant Hive

Overview & Construction

The Dadant hive uses larger frames and spacious brood chambers compared to Langstroth. A typical setup features a deep, expansive brood box with shallows or mediums for honey supers. The format, popular in Europe, supports robust colonies with fewer boxes.

Management Style & Workflow

The larger brood nest can reduce swarming pressure when managed for space and ventilation. Beekeepers handle fewer, larger components, which can simplify the apiary footprint but increase the weight of each unit. The approach suits strong colonies and beekeepers comfortable with larger frame handling.

Honey Harvesting & Yield

Dadant hives can achieve excellent yields, much like Langstroth, when equipped with appropriate supers and excluders. Extraction requires compatible equipment sized for Dadant frames and supers.

Overwintering & Climate Notes

The larger brood chamber allows ample winter stores and consistent clustering space. With appropriate insulation and ventilation, colonies overwinter strongly. Attention to moisture control remains essential.

Pests & Disease

Standard disease monitoring applies. Larger brood areas may require careful Varroa surveillance to avoid hidden load growth, but established hive body geometry supports standard IPM.

Pros

- Large brood chamber supports strong, stable colonies.
- Potentially fewer boxes to manage for the same colony strength.
- Competitive honey yield potential with proper supering.

Cons

- Heavier components—demands strength and good lifting technique.
- Equipment is less common in the U.S., limiting interchangeability.

- Some accessories and extractors must be sized appropriately.

Availability in the U.S- Available from select suppliers and specialty importers. Hobbyists exploring European methods can source frames, boxes, and extractors with some planning.

Side-by-Side: How They Compare to the Standard Langstroth

Ergonomics & Lifting

Horizontal Langstroth: Outstanding—no super lifting.

AZ Hive: Outstanding—rear-access, cabinet ergonomics.

Warre: Moderate—boxes are smaller, but comb pressing is physical.

Dadant: Demanding—larger, heavier frames and boxes.

Langstroth: Variable—moderate to heavy lifting with full supers.

Choosing the Right Fit

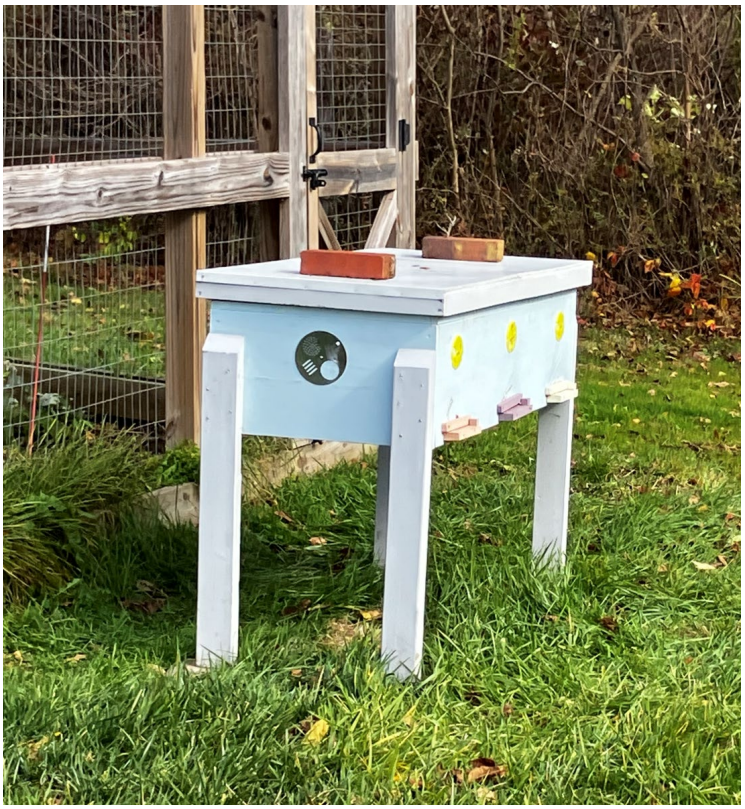
If you want production efficiency and the broadest support network, stick with Langstroth. If your priorities are ergonomics and low lifting, the Horizontal Langstroth is the easiest transition, preserving your frames and extraction workflow. In cold climates where winter inspections and comfort matter, the Slovenian AZ inside a bee house can transform your beekeeping experience. For natural comb and hands-off management, the Warre offers elegance and simplicity—just accept that harvesting is slower, and yields may be lower. If you favor big, powerful colonies and fewer boxes, the Dadant hive is a robust option, provided you can handle the weight and source compatible gear.

Whichever path you choose, define your goals first, ergonomics, yield, wintering performance, management philosophy, and budge. Then match the hive system to your priorities. The right fit will make your beekeeping safer, more enjoyable, and better aligned with your bees' needs.

Winterizing LoLa, Our Long Langstroth hive

By Kym Lucas

Although my husband Dave and I no longer name our hives, our sole long hive LoLa is the exception.



We'd been beekeeping for about five years when we developed an interest in long (aka horizontal) hives. As the name suggests, these hives are expanded horizontally rather than vertically, and after researching the topic, we decided a Long Langstroth would work best for us. This was mainly because they use regular Langstroth frames, making them interchangeable with our other hives.

If you're new to the concept, the Horizontal Hive website ((https://www.horizontalhive.com/) provides a wealth of information the subject, as well as plans for a variety of long hive styles.

Since Dave was uninterested in, and I am incapable of, building one, we'd need to find one that was already constructed.

This was more challenging than it sounds. Demand for this hive style is low and transporting them is a pain, so most bee equipment suppliers don't bother.

A local bee supply shop had a beautiful one, but the price was more than we were willing to pay for what was essentially an experiment.

Eventually, I got the idea that Arrowhead might build one for us. We buy most of our wooden ware from this Amish-owned business and were already familiar with the family and their shop down in Ashland County. Perhaps if we supplied the plans, they'd be willing to take on a different kind of project.

I printed out the Long Langstroth plans from the Horizontal Hive website and took them to the Tri-County workshop, where I shared them with the senior Mr. Yoder.

After reviewing the plans, which gave a clearly outdated supply cost of $50, Mr. Yoder said he'd be willing to build the hive, but warned us the price would significantly more, at least $300.

Since this was several hundred less than the other, admittedly fancier, hive, a deal was struck. The Yoders would let us know when they began work, and I'd send a down payment.

About a month later, we received an early (7:30 am) morning call telling us they would be building our hive that week, would let us know when it was complete, and we could pay in full when we picked up. A few days later, we drove to Ashland to get our hive.

Dave painted the box, and we homed one of our spring splits in it.

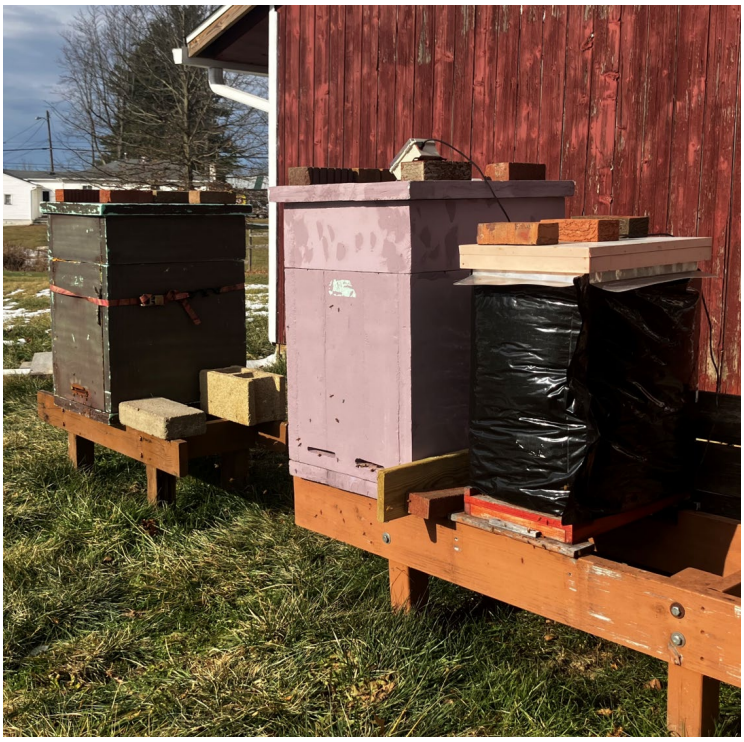
Although the colony grew to fill all 31 frames with honey and brood, they were less successful overwintering.

We had found little guidance on winterizing a long hive and made mistakes that led to a very small, very damp colony making it through the winter.

We could probably have built the hive back up, but chose instead to let nature take its course because we knew we'd be moving within the year. As mentioned earlier, long hive boxes are challenging to transport and moving one full of bees was more daunting than move all six of our traditional Langstroths.

For those who are interested, yes, we did successfully move six traditional Langstroths from Hinckley to Lafayette in late July when all of them were 3-5 boxes tall.

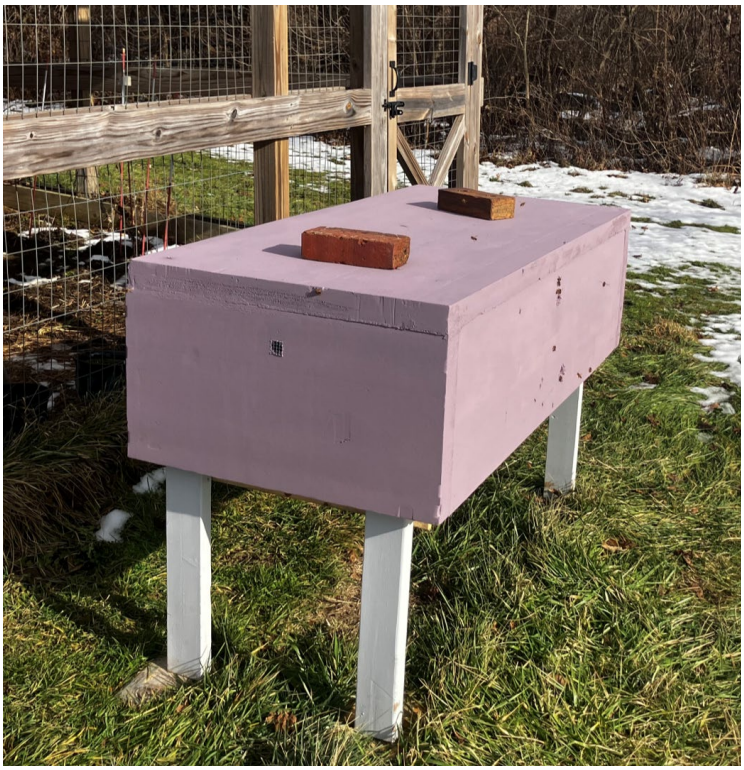
The following spring (2025), we were ready to recommission LoLa, and when one of our hives threw a large swarm, we knew just where to put it.



The colony thrived, but as the end of summer approached, we began to worry once more about winter. Luckily, I had another idea, inspired by the foam boxes we use for two of our other hives.

Obviously, we can't set LoLa on top of a foam board, but we could probably slide a foam box over the top.

Dave designed and made a box that would fit around the hive, with spaces cut out for the legs. This design also allows the bees space to get out of the hive without actually going outside into the cold. My husband (aka The Engineer) also fashioned a foam board to fit under the bottom of the hive, using large binder clips to keep it in place.



Yes, it looks like a pink coffin. But it works.

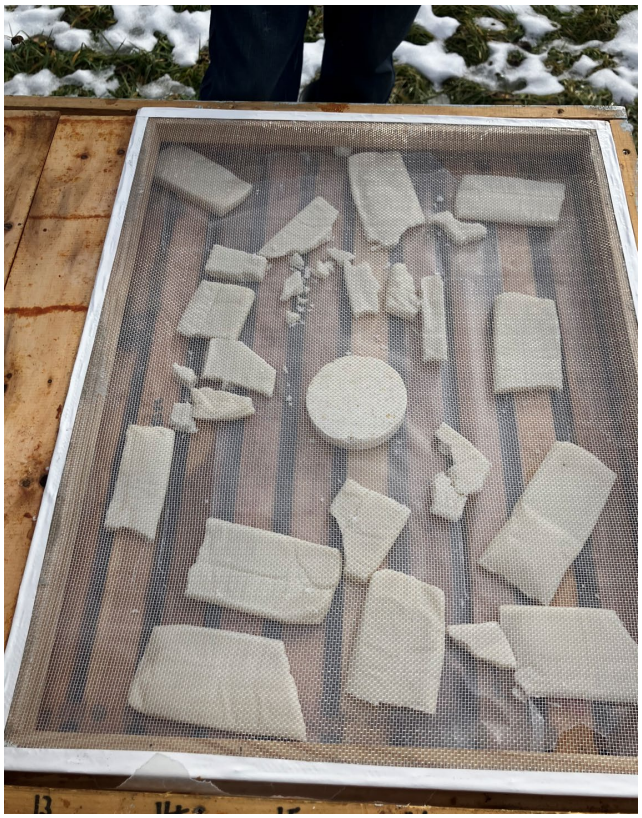
The bees are able to enter and exit the box through openings that line up with some of the hive entrances.

Then I started to worry about winter feeding.

Unlike a vertical hive, LoLa doesn't have an inner cover; it has strips of wood laid across the tops of the frames. To inspect, we remove a few strips at a time, replacing them as we move through the hive. Thus, we can look at each frame without having to all the frames in the box. (If you're not sure what I'm talking about, take a look at the hive at the Bearsville link below.)

The downside is our regular feeding shims won't work with this design because they aren't sized to match where the strips begin and end. Also, they are open on top, and the bees would be able to munch on the box's foam.

I'm not joking when I laid awake at night thinking about the problem. That's actually when I do my best thinking, and one night I realized Dave could probably make a shim the same depth, length, and width as a certain number of strips, with hardware cloth on top. We could put fondant or sugar on waxed paper or newspaper on the frames and place the shim on top and around the food.



As you can see, it works perfectly. This picture was taken immediately after we installed the feeding shim. When

we peeked in on a recent 60-degree day, they had begun to consume some of the food.

Now that you know how we winterized LoLa, I'd like to share a few things we've learned from raising colonies in a Long Lang.

1. Dave and I agree the hive would be better with a screened bottom board. There's plan for this on the Horizontal hive site, but I didn't notice it when we started the endeavor.
2. The original hive plan had only three entrances, each with a small landing board. Dave modified these so we can adjust the size of the openings. He also drilled some other openings for whiz-wheel type entries (See the first photo.) These provide more ventilation.
3. Although gabled roofs on some long hives look quite attractive (and serve a purpose in the case of the Bearsville hives — insulation and ventilation), we like having a flat lid that lifts off. The Yoders asked if we wanted a chain so we could prop it open, but I worried about the lid dropping during an inspection and said no. Also, we've sometimes had LoLa set up next to our other hives, and it's helpful having a spare flat surface to set things on.
4. Working a long hive is much easier on the back than working a vertical hive because you never have to lift a box.
5. Using follower boards allows us to control the amount of space the bees can access. We could conceivably house two colonies in hive, albeit temporarily. I say "temporarily" because the box only holds thirty-one frames, which means it would only fit two relatively small colonies. We've not yet tried this but consider it an option for unexpected swarms (is there any other kind?).

Are we glad we invested the time, money, and energy in keeping a long hive? Yes.

Would we recommend it? That depends. If you are willing to take the time to learn how to manage a different kind of hive and have already successfully kept bees, then yes, you might enjoy experimenting with a long hive. But only you can make that decision, hopefully after doing as much research as possible to help ensure you are successful.

Vice President Position Open

The Medina County Beekeepers Association currently has an open Vice President position on the Board. This is an important role that helps keep our club active and engaging throughout the year. The Vice President primarily coordinates monthly speakers for our meetings, ensuring we have informative and interesting presentations for members. In addition, this position participates in monthly Board meetings to help guide the direction of the club.

If you enjoy connecting with people, organizing events, and playing a key part in supporting our beekeeping community, this is a great opportunity to get involved. Serving on the Board is a rewarding experience that allows you to contribute ideas, learn from others, and help shape the future of the club.

If you are interested in filling this position or would like more details about the responsibilities, please reach out to any Board member. We'd love to hear from you and welcome your participation!

From Around the Web

The Bee Smoker

https://carolinahoneybees.com/the-beekeepers-smoker/?adt_ei=%25Email%25

Beekeeping in Winter – Essential Chores

https://carolinahoneybees.com/winter-beekeeping/?adt_ei=%Email%&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=understanding_the_winter_cluster_success_starts_now&utm_term=2026-01-04

Why Bees Sometimes Get Drunk on Fermented Nectar

https://www.newsbreak.com/discover-wild-science-318442312/4420249749452-why-bees-sometimes-get-drunk-on-fermented-nectar

Young beekeeper finds empowerment in the art of keeping bees

https://www.ktbs.com/community/young-beekeeper-finds-empowerment-in-the-art-of-keeping-bees/article_481796b5-4c5e-4cba-9f7b-8ff77774c466.html

Canadian Food Inspection Agency defends bee replacement stance

https://www.producer.com/news/canadian-food-inspection-agency-defends-bee-replacement-stance/

Time for Beekeepers To Shine and Learn at Winter Conferences

https://www.lancasterfarming.com/farming-news/livestock/time-for-beekeepers-to-shine-and-learn-at-winter-conferences/article_9c8b217b-ced7-5f50-9b99-300ac712ab25.html

Sparse tongue hair explains why queen bees stop foraging when workers emerge

https://phys.org/news/2026-01-sparse-tongue-hair-queen-bees.html?

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

Sources for Long Langstroth hives

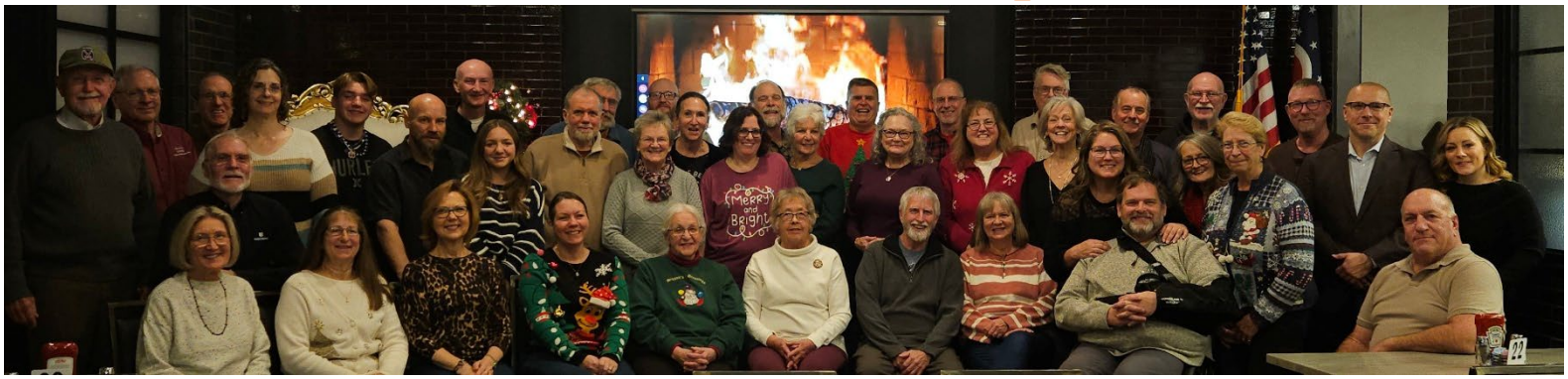
https://bearsvillebees.com/?s=long+hive&post_type=product

Bearsville Bees was at OSBA this year. Their Long Langstroth is built with the internal insulation, as well as some other features that may justify the higher price point. Interestingly, they also stock Layens hive supplies. Located in Parkersburg, West Virginia.

https://www.queenrightcolonies.com/product/long-langstroth-hive/

Queen Right Colonies also sells a nice long hive, complete with screened bottom board.

Christmas Party



Dear Medina Beekeepers Members,

We can't thank you enough for all your generous donations to the Medina County Career Center's Care Closet. We are serving a record number of students and families this year and we couldn't do it without the support of wonderful people like you. You are a blessing to many. Wishing all of you a healthy and happy holiday season.

Warmly,

Liz Chrisumbole and the MCCC Staff

2026 MCBA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

MCBA offers webinars and lectures, a monthly newsletter, the opportunity to sell honey at the county fair, and email updates. $20 for emailed or $25 for a printed, mailed newsletter. Membership 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: _____

Email Address (Please Print): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Optional # of Colonies: _____