



Greater Cleveland
Beekeepers
Association

March 2024



the HONEYBEE TIMES

A Message from Our President

Hello Everyone!

I am excited to announce we have completed another February of our Beginner Beekeeping Classes and we are headed toward warmer weather!

Beginners, if you haven't already, order your bees soon! April is right around the corner and so is the arrival of your new bees. Hopefully you are in the process of planning your apiary. Remember, location, location, location and south/southeast facing entrance with access to early morning sun. Remember, we are here to help you be successful. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Veterans, you all probably know a lot more than me, so there is not much I can tell you, but I do hope all your bees have successfully overwintered and they head in to spring ready to build up.

Enjoy your longer days and warmer weather and I hope to see you all soon.

Mike Alonso
President of GCBA

Inside this issue:

President's Message

Inspector's Corner

March Meeting Speaker

GCBA Happenings

Member Spotlight

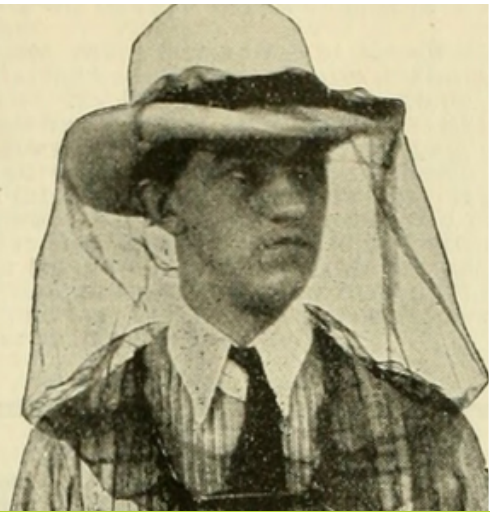
Pollinator Facts

Bee Yard Updates

Recipe of the Month

Classified Ads

GCBA Board Members



Inspector's Corner

Hello Everyone,

Weather is starting to warm up, hopefully your hives are flying. If your bee's are alive you might want to check if they moved up and need food. You shouldn't really be pulling frames, just looking. You might notice the ladies are bringing in pollen. I always find it amazing that nothing is in bloom and they still find pollen!

Time to check your equipment... smoker, suit, hive tools, extra boxes might need repairs or paint.

Don't forget to mail in your Apiary registration forms early. Inspectors meet end of March and we get our inspection reports and apiary lists then. If you mail them in late March you might not be on the first inspection list, the 2nd list comes out late May then trickle in the rest of the year. This is an exciting time of year for beekeepers, I know I'm excited!

Thanks,
Phil BARTOSH
Cuyahoga County Apiary Inspector

March Meeting Speaker Topic Spring Management

Featuring Chris Merkle - Seasoned Beekeeper and active member of the Tri-County Beekeepers Association (TCBA)

Chris Merkle is a long time member of the Tri-County Beekeepers Association (TCBA) in Wooster, Ohio. He is a third generation beekeeper that has kept between 10 and 20 hives on his property near Orrville, Ohio for the past 52 years. Chris is very active in TCBA's live bee and beekeeping exhibit at the annual Wayne County Fair. He enjoys educating the public about honey bees by speaking at bee clubs and community events. Chris also likes mentoring newbies and experimenting by developing equipment that makes keeping bees easier and more successful.

Now that our Spring Fever is in full swing, it's time to get out there and enjoy your bees. This month's speaker (Chris Merkle) will discuss what's going on in the hives right now, through June, and what we can do to help them out. From the care of a package of bees you install, to swarm control of a colony that survived this winter, Chris will suggest what to look for and give you some options for care.





Any member in good standing may place an ad for beekeeping related items for sale or trade once a quarter free of charge. This ad will not exceed 1/8th of a page in size.

Additional ads will be subject to advertisement fees.

Advertisement Fee Schedule:

1/8th Page: \$5 month,
1/4th Page: \$7 month,
Half Page: \$10 month,
Full Page: \$15 month

Please note: Information posted is a courtesy to GCBA Members and/or a paid advertisement for business entities. GCBA does not endorse or guarantee quality or pricing.

GCBA Events



Volunteer, Donate, Jump in and Lend a Hand!

- Monthly Member Meetings
- World Bee Day in May
- Picnic in July
- Cuyahoga County Fair Booth in August
- Holiday Party in December
- Live Demonstrations year round

Recap - February Beginner Beekeeper Classes

- Topics ranged from equipment needs, how to install a new package of bees, varroa mite treatments, and much more.
- GCBA gained 58 new memberships through the classes - some came as individuals and others brought along the whole family!
- We now have 109 active memberships for 2024!



Don't Forget!

Pastries for the bakery table at our monthly meetings are always welcome, especially if they are made with honey!



Jan Petrek, GCBA Hospitality Coordinator



March Member Spotlight

Adam Price - Vice President of GCBA



Hello everybody, my name is Adam Price, and I am serving as the association's Vice President this year. I live in Strongsville with my wife and 4 sons and I am an Accountant in a Private Family Office.

When I am not working, I enjoy learning new skills as I DIY projects around the house.

I am currently in my first winter of beekeeping. So far both of my hives of Saskatraz bees are still alive and well, fingers crossed they both make it through the end of winter! I am hoping to expand my apiary up to 6 hives this year and I am going to try my hand at doing splits and catching swarms. I don't know how many hives I ultimately want to end up with, but I'll just take it a year at a time.

There is still so much I am learning and want to accomplish. I enjoy coming to our meetings each month because you all teach me so much.

As Vice-President, I want to help make our association welcoming and beneficial to all potential and current beekeepers. There are many members that I do not know yet, and I'd love to know all of you, so I am going to try to meet more of you each meeting. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any ideas or requests for monthly meeting topics or member activities.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Adam Price

Vice President of GCBA

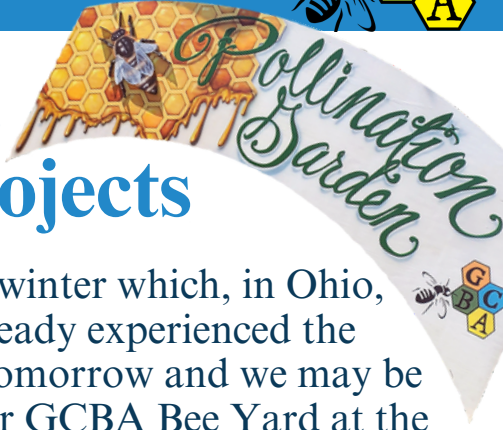
Pollinator Fun Facts!

- There are over 200,000 different species of pollinators, and 1,000 of those are small vertebrates. Bees aren't the only pollen movers out there!
- Monarch butterflies are colored to warn predators that they are foul-tasting and poisonous. This is due to monarch caterpillars voraciously eating milkweed.
- Honey is kind of like bee vomit. Forager bees collect nectar in their honey stomach. When the forager bee's stomach is full, she flies back to the nest, regurgitates the nectar, and passes it on to a house bee, who swallows it.
- Honeybees eat pollen to get protein and nectar to get carbohydrates. Bees are out on the hunt for both nectar and pollen, and the flower is a one-stop shop.

Source: Iowa Literacy Foundation



Bee Yard & Barn Beautification Projects



We are in the last few months of winter which, in Ohio, means anything goes! We have already experienced the whiplash of 50's today and snow tomorrow and we may be wondering, how are the bees in our GCBA Bee Yard at the Cuyahoga County Fair Grounds doing?

As of February, with the help of our Bee Yard Manager, Eric Mathney, our three hives are alive and well populated. On the warmer days throughout winter, he has been able to complete a few oxalic acid treatments for varroa mite management, and peek into the hives to check on food stores, supplementing with sugar fondant when needed. He has also pulled together an "equipment hive" where we will store equipment needed to maintain the hives such as veils, a hive tool, smoker fuel, etc.

In March, and as the warmer days become more consistent, he will start checking to see if there is any brood production and begin planning educational demonstrations for our members.

And what is a bee yard without its pollinator garden? We are accepting any perennial donations to build out our garden in May. The sooner we get it filled, the less worry we will have, except for the maintenance and mulching of course!

Thank you all,

Sheila St.Clair
440-647-2602
Beyard and Garden
Beautification Project

Eric Mathney
216-313-0550
Bee Yard Manager

Amanda Herzberger
Newsletter Editor



- People on the Move
- Congratulations to Barb Bloetscher for an outstanding job for over 15 years as the State Apiarist/Entomologist for the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
- Barb will be starting a new chapter in her carrier for Ohio Beekeepers: "Bees And Trees Dr."
- If you need a speaker or consulting, just call the Bee And Tree Dr.!



An Interview with Barb Bloetscher
Retired State Apiarist and Entomologist, Ohio Department of Agriculture
Kim Sklym
Originally published in the AIA Newsletter

1. Introduction and Background
Barb Bloetscher was the State Entomologist for the Ohio Department of Agriculture since 2001, after her tenure of 23 years at The Ohio State University Extension Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic. As State Apiarist, she oversees the Apiary Program and supported techniques for addressing questions and issues related to the Inspection Program, honey bees and other pollinators. She also identified insects and other arthropods submitted from Ohio Nursery inspectors and

retired beekeepers. Barb started beekeeping in 1983 and for the past 20 years she has been an active member and mentor in the Ohio beekeeping community through her efforts in areas such as beekeeping clinics as well as the Ohio Apiarists and other related organizations. Barb has been a member of the American Beekeeping Association since 1983 and has been a member of the American Beekeeping Association since 1983. Barb has been a member of the American Beekeeping Association since 1983 and has been a member of the American Beekeeping Association since 1983.

2. How do you start?
I like the regular straight line, but the 2 inch and other heavy ones are helpful all times and I like having a 2 inch on hand, but my first stick as always the standard line and I have a 2 inch on hand as a backup just in case I'm stuck. I use anything I can find - old pens, newspaper tubes without the ink, there are needles, core bits, sticks, etc. to keep in mind for later.

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Ingredients:

Irish Soda Bread

- 1 3/4 cups buttermilk
- 1 large egg
- 4 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 5 Tbsp unsalted butter, cold
- Optional: 1 cup raisins

Honey Butter

- 1/4 (half stick) unsalted butter, softened to room temp.
- 1 Tbsp honey (or more to taste)
- 1/8 tsp. salt (or more to taste)

Irish Soda Bread with Honey Butter

Recipe by Chef Charles Heaton, Peaberry Culinary

For the Bread

- Preheat oven to 400°F.
- There are options for the baking pan: Use a regular baking sheet and line with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat (bread spreads a bit more on a baking sheet); OR a seasoned 10-12 inch cast iron skillet (no need to preheat the cast iron); OR grease a 9-10 inch cake pan or pie dish; OR a 5 quart (or higher) dutch oven, greased or lined with parchment paper. If using a dutch oven, bake the bread with the lid off.
- Whisk the buttermilk and egg together. Set aside.
- Whisk the flour, granulated sugar, baking soda, and salt together in a large bowl.
- Cut the cold butter into small cubes. Then, cut-in the butter into the flour mixture using a pastry blender, a fork, or your fingers. The mixture is very heavy on the flour, but do your best to cut-in the butter until the butter is pea-sized crumbs.
- Stir in the raisins, if using.

Recipe Continued on next page

Irish Soda Bread with Honey Butter, *continued*

Bread procedure continued:

- Pour in the buttermilk/egg mixture. Gently fold the dough together until it is too stiff to stir.
- Pour crumbly dough onto a lightly floured work surface. With floured hands, work the dough into a ball as best you can, then knead for about 30 seconds or until all the flour is moistened. If the dough is too sticky, add a little more flour.
- Transfer the dough to the prepared pan of choice.
- Using a very sharp knife, score the dough with a slash or X about 1/2 inch deep. (“Score” = shallow cut.)
- Bake until the bread is golden brown and center is cooked through, about 45-55 minutes. Loosely tent the bread with aluminum foil if you notice heavy browning on top. For a more accurate test, the bread is done when a digital thermometer reads the center of the loaf as 195°F.
- Remove from the oven and allow bread to cool for 10 minutes, and then transfer to a wire rack. Serve warm, at room temperature, or toasted with desired toppings/spreads.
- Wrap any leftover room temperature bread tightly in aluminum foil and store at room temperature for up to 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

For the Honey Butter:

- Combine honey, butter, and salt
- Whip, until completely combined and smooth





**3 LB. PACKAGE
BEES W/ QUEEN**

**Order at
QRC!**

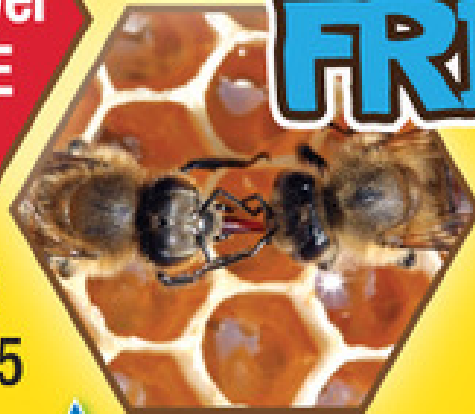


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March 2024

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Our Goal:

The Greater Cleveland Beekeepers Association supports, educates, and connects both beekeepers and aspiring beekeepers alike through classes and monthly meetings.