

SMOKER SIGNALS



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A message from Med

As you know, certain tree species are important sources of pollen and nectar for our honeybees. Sometimes those sources can be disappointing. Some observations – this spring the maple trees were somewhat earlier than normal sources of pollen. Next came the red buds which had good blooms. I suspect that the weather sometimes was a little bit cool for the bees to fully take advantage of those blossoms. The black locust bloom was promising. I have several of those trees around my Hilliard apiary. This year, the rain and cool temperature definitely affected the availability of these flowers to the bees. At their peak bloom, it was very cool. And then the rain came, followed by rapid fading of the

TOPIC 1

ARE YOU ON THE SWARM AND OR CUT OUT LIST? SEE NOTE ON PAGE 3

TOPIC 2

FAIR SEASON IS AROUND THE CORNER. SEE THE UPCOMING DEADLINES ON PAGE 6.

TOPIC 3

UPCOMING COBA EVENT! PAGE 9

Smoker Signals cont.

blossoms. That ended the black locust bloom. My tulip trees had a great bloom until the squirrels nipped the blossoms off to eat as many of them as they could get to.

This time of year, there's one tree source of nectar and pollen for honeybees that was off of my radar. Just a few days ago near my daughter's house, my family noticed two "street" trees with a profuse bloom of flowers very reminiscent of those on a black locust. In fact, I thought the trees might be cultivars of the black locust. The next day, an arborist informed me the trees were American Yellowwood. The American Yellowwood is a unique native flowering tree that is relatively unknown in the landscape trade. "This member of the legume family (Fabaceae) produces one of the most spectacular floral displays of any native tree — massive, drooping clusters of fragrant white flowers that cascade from the branches like natural chandeliers, creating a



breathtaking sight that rivals any exotic ornamental." (see picture) It can take a few years for the tree to actually start blooming, and after that the bloom appearance can vary year to year. The bloom does occur later in the spring than Black Locust. I did read and observe that the blossoms are very attractive to honeybees and other pollinators. This is a perfect urban landscape tree for beekeepers.

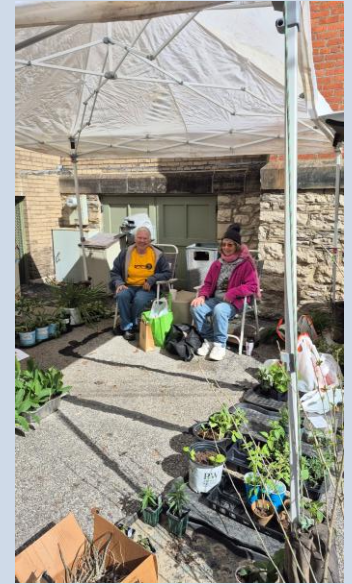
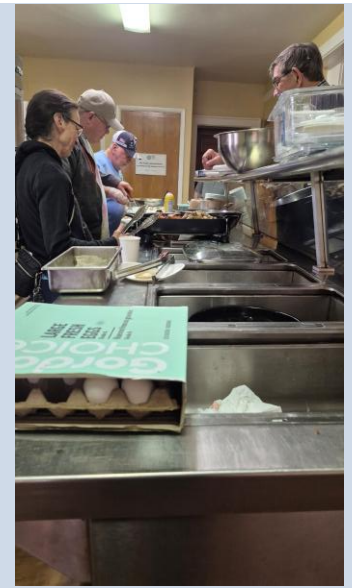
The next to blossom will be the Linden trees followed by the catalpas. They should not be affected by cold weather, but certainly rain could affect the amount of nectar available to the Bees.

It's been quite a busy spring with our outreach programs. Thanks to all who helped with the Ag Days at Georgian Heights and Shady Lane Elementary schools, the Earth Day celebrations at White Castle and Liberty Mutual, We Grow Scientists at Ohio State, and the Worthington Green on the Green. And special thanks to all who helped make this year's Pancake Breakfast and plant swap success, especially Dru, Winnie, and Sarah. GREAT JOB!!

General Meeting

The COBA May 20, 2026 meeting will be at Franklin Park Conservatory, in the Veridian Room. Social hour and potluck are at 6:30, and the meeting starts at 7 p.m. The featured speaker is Ms. Cindy Maravich, the Associate Director of Community Education at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Her talk is Gardening for Pollinators.

Discover how to make your garden a welcoming habitat for pollinators in Central Ohio. This interactive and enjoyable talk explores how to identify common local pollinators, including butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds, and shares practical gardening strategies that support them throughout their entire life cycles. You'll learn how thoughtful plant choices and garden practices can provide food, shelter, and habitat year-round. Along the way, this program offers fresh ideas and insights that will inspire you to think differently about your landscape and the role it plays in supporting local ecosystems.



**THANKS TO ALL
THE VOLUNTEERS
WHO HELPED AT
THE PANCAKE
BREAKFAST/
PLANT SWAP!**



CINDY MARAVICH

Smoker Signals cont.

Reminders about Swarm/Cut-Out/Feral Lists Participation:

- If you are on the list, please answer your phone if someone unknown calls you. If you are too busy to make the run, encourage the caller to find someone else on the list.
- If you are on the list and wish you weren't, (don't we all feel that way sometimes), just tell the caller you are unavailable.
- All changes to the lists are made at the end of the current month for a revised posting at the beginning of the next month. If you want to change your status on any of the lists, please contact Claudia at claudiakhoureybowers@gmail.com by the last week of the current month.
- Thank you for providing this valuable service to the community. Folks really appreciate your willingness to respond to a swarm or cut out call.



The [Heartland Apicultural Society](#) is hosting a conference in East Lansing, MI (MSU campus) - May 30-31, 2026. The early bird registration deadline has been extended to May 15th: \$125 for both days / \$75 for one day

Learn more & REGISTER: <https://www.heartlandbees.org>

CHECK OUT & SHARE information about this conference:

<https://www.facebook.com/HAS.Beekeeping/>

Keynote speakers include:

Dr. Jeff Harris - Mississippi State University

Dr. Robyn Underwood - Penn State University

Dr. Reed Johnson - Ohio State University

Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda - University of Tennessee

Smoker Signals cont.

Create a Buzz: It's Time to Teach What You Know

Volunteer opportunities are open for Pollinator Palooza, at Franklin Park Conservatory, on Saturday June 20. If you are interested in helping out, contact Claudia at claudiakhoureybowers@gmail.com



**“May is the month of expectation,
the month of wishes and the
month of hope.”**

Emily Bronte

**What type of Bee can't
make up it's mind?**

A MayBee.

The next COBA General Meeting will be on August 19, 2026, at Franklin Park Conservatory

Want to visit another COBA/Foundation maintained apiary? The OSU-Marion Apiary, in the Prairie Conservation area on campus, has open inspections every Friday from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., weather permitting. If you plan to attend, please send an email to Eric Bailey at bailey.1768@buckeyemail.osu.edu As at all of our apiaries', proper beekeeping attire is required for participation.

Local fair dates are quickly approaching. Time to start thinking about your honey show entries.

2026 Franklin County Fair (Hilliard) (Edwards Building) July 20-26

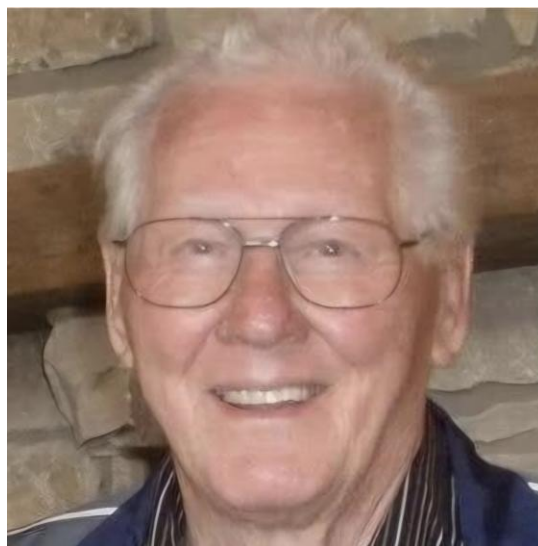
- Be sure to read the General Rules of the fair, especially regarding vehicles and exhibitors' passes
- Online registration is now open and closes July 11th.
- Entries due by 5:00 P.M. July 21st (Judging begins at 6:00 P.M)
- Honey Competition is under Home, Fine Arts and Horticulture (Edwards Building) Section Honey.
- <https://www.fcfair.org/>

2026 Ohio State Fair (Kasich Hall) July 29 - August 9

It is just released information for those who wish to compete in The Ohio State Fair Honey Show.

- Entry deadline is June 21st
- Honey entries are under Creative Arts: Cooking and Baking
- Honey entries are under Division 3106
- You must enter online via the ShoWorks System. Directions are included under the Creative Arts link
- Entries are judged pre-fair, so make sure to follow deadline and delivery instructions
- The State Fair delivery deadline overlaps the Franklin County Fair, so if you wish to enter both fairs you will need to prepare separate entries for each event
- <https://www.ohiostatefair.com/p/get-involved/arts/creative-arts/cooking-baking?spMailingID=13701369&spUserID=MTQ5NDk2Nzk2NDEoSo&spJobID=2460582509&spReportId=MjQ2MDU4MjUwOQS2>

*Dear COBA, Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers you sent for my dad's (Wm Tolliver) services. He so enjoyed many years of tending to his bees & his fellow beekeepers. The one item he specifically requested to display at his services was his 2010 Beekeeper of the year award. COBA meant so much to my dad. Thank you,
Kim Tolliver & the Tolliver Family*



William "Bill" Tolliver

Smoker Signals cont.

Baked Brie with Honey

Servings: 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 15

Ingredients

1 (8-ounce) wheel of brie cheese, rind left on

1/4 cup raw honey, preferably local

1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary

1/2 cup toasted walnuts, roughly chopped

1 baguette, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces

1 tablespoon olive oil

1/4 teaspoon flaky sea salt

Instructions

Step 1: Preheat the oven to a perfect 350°F. While it heats up, line your small baking sheet or oven-safe dish with a piece of parchment paper. Place the 8-ounce wheel of brie cheese in the center of the parchment—leave the rind on, it holds all that creamy goodness together. Now, take your baguette and slice it into 1/2-inch pieces, aiming for about 20 slices. Lightly brush each slice with a touch of olive oil using a pastry brush then sprinkle them with a pinch of flaky sea salt. Arrange the bread slices around the brie on the baking sheet, but don't overcrowd them.

Step 2: While your oven is preheating, toast those walnuts. Spread 1/2 cup of roughly chopped walnuts in a single layer on a dry skillet over medium heat; no oil needed here, allow their natural oils to work their magic. Keep a close eye on them and stir frequently with a wooden spoon for about 3 to 5 minutes; you'll know they're ready when they turn a lovely golden brown. Immediately transfer them to a plate to cool; this stops the cooking process and prevents any burnt bitterness from sneaking in. Once cooled, give them a rough chop.

Step 3: Carefully place your prepared baking sheet into the preheated 350°F oven, making sure it's centered on the middle rack for even heating. Set your timer for 15 minutes for the brie. Around the 10-minute mark, check on your baguette slices; they should be turning a gorgeous golden brown with crispy edges. If they're browning too quickly, you can gently slide them off the sheet onto a plate to avoid burning while the brie finishes up. Once the brie is finished let it rest for 2 to 3 minutes; this brief cooling period helps the cheese set just enough for easy serving while keeping it gloriously warm. Tip: For an extra-decadent touch, score the top of the brie with a knife before baking to help the honey seep in deeper.

Step 4: Using a spoon or a squeeze bottle, artfully drizzle that golden honey all over the top of the warm brie, letting it cascade down the sides in luscious streams—don't be shy, more honey means more happiness! Next, sprinkle on those toasted walnuts you prepared earlier, scattering them evenly so every bite gets a crunchy surprise. Finish it off with 1 tablespoon of chopped fresh rosemary, which adds a fragrant, herby kick that balances the sweetness perfectly. <https://goodhealthrecipes.com/baked-brie-with-honey/>





Habitat



Resources



Getting Along with Honey Bees while Gardening

Honey bee hives should be near, not in the garden. Foraging bees on blossoms are not prone to sting, however, if you are getting stung while gardening, things to explore include: the scents on your body, clothing and protective equipment, honey bee activity patterns, flight paths, and beneficial insects.

Scents on your body

Avoid smelling like sting pheromone: To honey bees, bananas smell like sting pheromone. If you have recently eaten or touched a banana, wash all places that might have banana residue. If you get stung, remove the stinger. To prevent additional stings, mask the sting pheromone with rubbing alcohol. Apply rubbing alcohol to the sting site and to anything that touched the stinger while you removed it. Also, a shirt or jacket or bee gloves that a bee has stung can still have that sting pheromone on it. That area on the clothing should be treated with rubbing alcohol and should be washed as well.

Avoid smelling like a flower. Use unscented hygiene products, including: makeup, hand sanitizer, hand soap, body wash, shampoo, deodorant, laundry detergent, fabric softener, paper towels, toilet paper, wipes, etc. Wash off residues of things that you applied to your skin, including: perfume, cologne, hand lotion, anti-itch cream, bug repellent, sun screen, etc.

Some people, esp. men who smell strongly, can irritate bees. Perhaps avoid working in the garden when you are sweaty or have dried sweat on your skin or cloths.

Clothing and protective equipment

To avoid being mistaken for a big, bad, honey-robbing bear, avoid wearing black or dark colored clothing or protective equipment. Instead, wear light colors. White is ideal.

It can be unnerving to feel a bee touching your skin. Perhaps, try wearing clothing that prevents insects such as bees from getting between your skin and your clothing. For example, my standard attire when working my specialty crop and honey farm is:

- Wide brimmed hat - prevents sunburn, keeps sun out of eyes, protects scalp from thorns of brambles and from being scraped by low tree/bush branches.
- Long sleeved shirt, tucked into pants and gloves.
- Long pants, tucked into white socks.
- White walking shoes.

This also reduces the chance of tick or spider bites.

Bee Activity

Bees exit the hive when all of the following are true:

Daylight AND 40+degrees F AND no precipitation AND little or no wind.

On my farm, I have noticed that bees seem to be attracted to open soil and freshly worked soil (especially in the spring). If your bees might be looking for pollen/protein, try adding pollen substitute or patties on top of the frames of the brood chamber of your hives. If your bees might be looking for water, add a water feature close to your hives. A water feature might be a cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) whose leaf forms a “cup” where it attaches to the stem. Rain water and morning dew collect in this “cup” resulting in a water source that is easily and safely accessible by bees. Alternately, a water feature might be a “bird bath”, a trash can lid, or a bucket filled with water and marbles/stones/rocks that the bees can stand on while accessing the water without drowning.

Bees work flowers when nectar and/or pollen are offered by the flowers. Each species of plant offers nectar and/or pollen on their own time table. For each species of plant, observe what time of day and under what conditions,

Smoker Signals cont.

the bees are working its flowers. If plants of the same species are co-located in clumps, it becomes easier to schedule what day and time is your best opportunity to garden around those plants.

If the bees start pinging on you (invade your personal space and touch you – usually near your head or face), this is your warning that you are in their way. If you do not get out of the bees' way, they will start stinging you to drive you off.

If you must be in an area while bees are working flowers, wear your veil. For example, we grow strawberries. The early varieties produce fruit that must be picked while the later varieties are blooming and being worked by bees. While harvesting strawberries, I wear full protective equipment, including bee veil. If the bees start pinging on me, I take a break to let the bees calm down. Then, I return later to continue harvesting.

Flight Paths

Be aware of the flight paths between your bee hives, your flowers in bloom, and water sources for your bees. Organize your use of your space such that bee flight paths do not cross paths used by humans, pets, or farm animals.

To change the flight path to be higher up than humans, place a 6+ foot tall solid fence or dense bush near enough to the hive entrances such that the bees must fly over the fence or bush to get to/from hives. For example, see the fence surrounding COBA's advanced bee yard on the campus of Franklin Park Conservatory.

If you need to move a hive to change a problematic flight path, ask for help. Several COBA members as well as COBA's first year bee yard have a 2-person hive carrier. Your beekeeping friends have the proper protective equipment to help you move your hive.

Beneficial Insects

A healthy, chemical-free, pollinator garden provides habitat for numerous beneficial insects. Disturbing these insects might result in a wound that might be mistaken for a honey bee sting wound. These beneficial insects are merely defending their nest, their babies, and themselves. Nests, babies, and adults will be in the dirt, inside of stems, attached to stems, attached to leaves, etc. Protect yourself with gloves, clothing, and protective equipment. Perhaps sit on a stool instead of on the ground. Gently handle plant debris and place it on a compost pile where babies can survive and mature.

Help is Available

If the above strategies do not solve the problem that you are experiencing, help is available. Just ask.

Please submit suggestions for future articles to sarah@fruitstrengthfarm.com

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COBA Picnic

June 27 at 12pm

Rain or Shine (There is a shelter)

Volunteers needed please email:

Dominiquethebeekeeper2018@yahoo.com

Volunteers need to arrive at 11am

*Join us for
our annual BBQ!
Bring a side*

Shadblow Shelter

Blendon Woods Park 4265 E.

Dublin-Granville Rd. 43081

Smoker Signals cont.

It's the Buzziest Time of the Year



Greener Growth: COBA Cuts Paper

COBA recently switched the membership roster to a new platform called Join It. You should have received an email (or two) with a request to log in and update your membership profile. If you have, thank you. If you haven't, please do so. You will receive a follow-up email to download your digital membership card. Please place this card in your apple or google wallet. You may need to download the wallet app onto your phone or portable device. If you have any issues, please call or email me. Thanks.

Bob Bowers (330) 353-2316 cell bbowers53@att.net

Checking Out for the Good: A Way Shopping Can Help Support COBA

The following screenshots are step by step instructions on how to link your Kroger shopping card to COBA. Each time you shop Kroger will donate pennies towards COBA. Every small amount counts!

<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>

2. Link your Card to an organization.

Selecting the organization that you wish to support is as simple as updating the Kroger Community Rewards selection on your digital account.

1. Sign in to your digital account.
2. Search for your organization [here](#).

3. Enter the name or NPO number of the organization you wish to support.
4. Select the appropriate organization from the list and click "Save".

Your selected organization will also display in the Kroger Community Rewards section of your account. If you need to review or revisit your organization, you can always do so under your Account details.

3. Your organization earns.

Any transactions moving forward using the Shopper's Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you. Kroger donates annually to participating organizations based on your percentage of spending

The screenshot shows the Kroger sign-in interface. At the top is the Kroger logo. Below it are input fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password'. A 'Forgot Password?' link is next to the password field. There is a 'Keep me signed in' checkbox which is checked. Below the checkbox is a note: 'Checking this box will reduce the number of times we'll ask you to sign in. To keep your account secure, use this option only on your personal device.' A blue 'Sign In' button is at the bottom. Below the button are links for 'New to Kroger?' and 'Create an Account'. On the right side, there is a 'Find an Organization' section with a search bar containing 'ATC' ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD ACADEMY' and a dropdown menu set to 'All'. A 'Back' button is at the top left of the right panel. A notification bubble at the top right says 'Earn money for your school or community organization when you use your Plus Card.'

The screenshot shows the 'Find an Organization' search results page. The search bar contains 'NPO BI811'. The filter dropdown is set to 'All'. Under 'Search Results', there is a card for 'Central OH Beekeepers Charitable Fnd' with the address '5672 Payton Way, Columbus, OH 43221' and an 'Enroll' button.

The screenshot shows the 'Donation Summary' page. At the top is a green notification: 'You have successfully changed your organization.' Below is a star icon and the title 'Donation Summary'. The details are: Status: Enrolled; Organization Name: Central OH Beekeepers Charitable Fnd; Enrollment Date: 03/12/2026; Organization Number: BI811. At the bottom are two buttons: 'Change Organization' and 'Cancel Enrollment'.