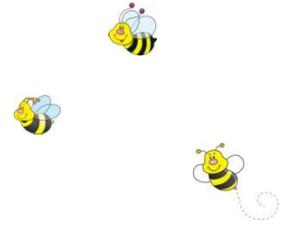


The Skep



President's Corner

Hello Beekeepers!

Thank you to everyone that attended the Annual Meeting and Banquet in October. It was a great time. Thank you Steve Repasky for your interesting and informational talk! Thank you Don Kovach for organizing a successful event! Thank you Sandy Hays, Andrea Deafenbaugh and Anna Detoro for the beautiful table decorations and favors! Great work everybody!

Boris Vuksanovich shared that he spoke to 60 sixth grade students recently about honey bees and beekeeping. Chris Blair used the Ulster observation hive in her classroom also last month. Keep up the great job educating others and be sure to let us know what educational activities you are involved in.

Your dues for 2015 are due. If there are any changes in your address, email address, phone

number or name, please make them at this time for our new membership roster. You can bring the form and payment to the January meeting. Please make checks payable to the Columbiana Mahoning County Beekeepers Association.

Make sure your bees have enough honey to survive the winter. It will "bee" here before we know it. Healthy bees are happy bees.

Bruce Deafenbaugh

*Happy Holidays
Beekeepers!*

The Skep will be resume after the first of the year.

January Meeting Details

Sunday, January 18, 2015
Potluck Lunch 1:00 p.m.
Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Mahoning County Experimental Farm
7574 Columbiana-Canfield Rd
Canfield, Oh 44406

From Rt 11 North take the Ohio 46 exit toward OH-14. Turn left onto OH-46 North for approximately 6.2 miles. The Farm is on the left across the street from the Canfield Fairgrounds.

From Rt 11 South take exit 34 for US-224 toward Poland/Canfield. Continue on Fairground Blvd. for about 1.7 miles until you reach OH-46 South. Turn left onto OH-46 South. The Farm will be on the right across the street from the Canfield Fairgrounds.



The Essentials of Winter Preparation



Stephen Repasky, 2nd generation beekeeper, certified Master Beekeeper, and author of

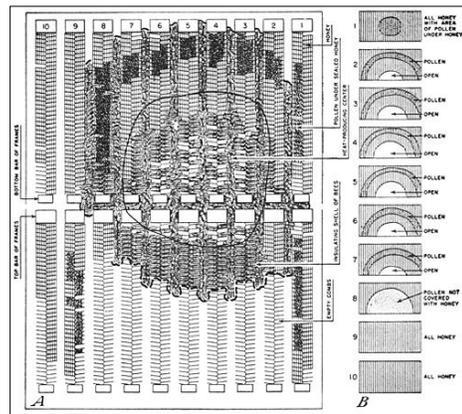
the book [*Swarm Essentials*](#), provided the association with an informative talk about Fall Prep and Wintering Hives at our Annual Meeting and Banquet in October. Lee Miller was scheduled to speak but was unable to attend and helped arrange for Stephen to join us.

Stephen began by sharing a little about winter biology of honey bees. He noted that winter bees are fatter, fuzzier and are slow brood rearing. Citing [*The Hive and the Honey Bee*](#), he then went on to say that winter losses can be avoided or reduced if a beekeeper follows four fundamental principles in beekeeping.

The first principle is ensuring that each colony has a young queen of superior genetic stock. Clarifying this further, Stephen said that queens should be local, possibly as local as from your own apiary because they are accustomed to the area's climate. Mr. Repasky suggested checking your hives every two weeks throughout the season to ensure that your queens are laying properly and the hives are healthy. Combining colonies in the fall help ensure that there are good queens in the apiary to begin the winter.

Combining a weak colony with a strong colony will create a stronger colony while combining two weak colonies will only create another weak colony because the weak queen will more than likely not improve. His advice was to take your losses in the fall.

The second principle is ensuring that every colony has an adequate supply of honey and pollen. Stephen stressed that not only must the colonies have adequate stores, those stores must be properly organized and the honey must be above the cluster. Going on, he discussed various feeding options in the event that you discover that your colonies are in need of additional stores. He explained using winter patties, the Mountain Camp Method, sugar bricks and using reserve supers.



The third principle is each colony must be maintained in a disease free condition. Mr. Repasky discussed parasite and disease control and monitoring throughout the beekeeping season. Noting that high mite counts lead to late summer and fall colony losses, he shared that various methods are available to treat for varroa mites and the weather conditions each is suited for.

The fourth principle is providing every properly established colony with a well constructed hive and protect it from extreme climate conditions. To this end a beekeeper should winterize their hives based on conditions in their area. Sharing photos of his winter hives and noting that beekeeping can be as local as your own apiary, Stephen said that beekeepers each develop their individual ways of preparation. Some beekeepers wrap their hives, some add moisture quilts, others add shims or tilt hives to create airflow and provide a way for moisture to flow away from the cluster of honey bees.

Concluding Stephen stressed that successful beekeeping requires science and art. He said science is the knowledge of beekeeping. He emphasized that while growing your beekeeping knowledge be sure to use a variety of reliable sources such as books, websites, periodicals and mentors. The art of beekeeping, he explained, is the application of the knowledge. Mr. Repasky encouraged our group to practice what we learn and foster a passion for honeybees and beekeeping, then pass that passion on.

Resources:

Photo of Stephen Repasky courtesy of www.meadowsweetbees.com

Diagram of Winter Cluster from [The Hive and the Honey Bee](#)

2014 Scholarship Winners

Our 2014 Scholarship Awards were presented at the Annual Meeting & Banquet. The following recipients were each awarded \$500.

Nick Deemer
Anna Detoro
Melanie Penella

Telling the Bees



Telling the Bees is an old tradition among beekeepers to tell the honey bees of changes in their keepers' lives or families. Mostly they were told of deaths in the family.

Association Member Diana Bunetta passed away on October 2, 2014, after a lengthy battle with cancer. Diana leaves behind two sons, her mother and several siblings and friends. Diana was most recognized for her role as the "Roving Reporter" for the association's newsletter, The Skep. Diana persistently interviewed and gathered information about various association members and wrote a monthly article highlighting them. It was Diana's hope that through her articles we could get to know one another a little bit better.

For additional information on the Telling the Bees tradition Google the term or take a look at some older beekeeping books or articles.

Preparing For Winter



Preparing for winter is a task that beekeepers discuss at great lengths.

Just as is true in other aspects of keeping bees, if you ask multiple beekeepers how they prepare their hives for winter, each one will have their own methods and be able to justify them. The bottom line of winter preparation is that regardless of which methods you decide to use, taking care of your bees year round and making sure they have ample supplies and a proper hive will help increase the chances that your honey bees will survive the winter and be ready to thrive as the spring season unfolds.

The initial step in preparing for winter is making sure that your bees can survive. Assuming that you have been monitoring the queens' laying habits and the health of each hive throughout the summer, this will be generally be the case and you can begin other winter preparation tasks.

First, consider the stores that your bees have. This begins when you are harvesting honey. A beekeeper should be mindful of leaving ample supply for the bees. If the bees have not had a good nectar flow or a hive seems light, feeding may be required. During the warmer weeks of fall, use a 2:1 ratio of sugar syrup. For each cup of water, mix two cups of sugar. Once cold weather sets in completely, remove the sugar syrup and begin feeding with dry

sugar, winter patties or candy boards. Along with feeding, organize the food stores within the hive. Make sure that there are honey frames above and on both sides of the cluster in a Langstroth hive. In a top bar hive put the cluster at one end with the honey next to it so that the cluster can move in one direction to find food.



Next, close the entrances down and install mouse guards. Along with this, trim high grass around the

base of the hives. As cooler weather moves in, so do little creatures. Mice and chipmunks find bee hives to be cozy spots but they can wreck havoc on frames and create quite a mess in the hive.

Proper ventilation is important during the winter months. Not only does it prevent suffocation and provide a means of egress for cleansing flights, it carries away excess moisture in the hive. Moisture is produced as bees consume honey. Although the honey bees use some of this moisture to thin the honey, too much of a good thing is never good. As moisture condensates and collects on the underside of the inner cover it can rain down on the cluster with catastrophic results.

Other means of preventing moisture condensation on the underside of the inner cover include installing insulate board insulation or

adding a [quilt box](#). Both are easily added in the fall and removed for storage in the spring.

Finally, if you are considering wrapping your hives make sure you maintain an opening for the bees to come and go as well as allowing for proper airflow. Wrapping with 15 pound black tar paper can raise the internal temperature of the hive a few degrees during the daylight hours through solar gain. This can provide the bees with an opportunity that they may not have had otherwise to move away from the tight cluster to get food.

With all of the options available for winter preparation in the apiary, beekeepers are sure to find something that works in their conditions. Consider the choices for feeding and other winter preparations, decide which might work for you and give them a try.

Resources:

Graham, Joe (editor). (Extensive revision 1992). [The Hive and the Honey Bee](#). Hamilton, Illinois: Dadant & Sons, Inc.

Palmer, Mike. (2013). That's a Wrap. Vermont Beekeepers Association Website. Retrieved October 23, 2014, from <http://www.vermontbeekeepers.org/resources/blogs-commentary/questions-with-mike-palmer?start=2>

Rusty. (September 14, 2011). How to Prepare Your Hives For Winter: A Checklist. Honey Bee Suite Website. Retrieved October 23, 2014, from <http://www.honeybeesuite.com/how-to-prepare-your-hives-for-winter/>

✓ Check It Out

The Association Library has over 27 books and 14 DVDs.

This is a fantastic resource for anyone wanting to learn more about honey bees and beekeeping.

If you are interested in borrowing a book or DVD contact our librarian.

Nick Deemer (330)501-7894

Candy Board Recipe



Ingredients:

- 10 pounds granulated sugar
- 1 quart water
- 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice

Prepare molds in advance. You can use paper plates or pie tins sprayed with canola oil or your candy board.

Pour the water and vinegar or lemon juice into a large pot and bring to a slow simmer.

Add the sugar, stirring until it is completely dissolved. If the sugar does not dissolve, add additional water, a little at a time, until all the crystals disappear.

Once the sugar is completely dissolved, turn the heat up to medium high and stop stirring. Insert the candy thermometer.

Boil the mixture until the thermometer is 250°F. Then remove from heat. If you wish, you can test the candy by placing a drop of syrup in an glass of cold water. Reach in and get the drop. It should hold its shape but be flattened between your fingers.

Carefully pour the mixture into 8 to 10 paper plates or your candy board.

Once cooled completely you can remove the cakes from the paper plates or tins.

Store away from insects, mice and moisture.

If you have chose to use a moisture quilt, the candy board goes under it on the hive.

Photo and Information Courtesy of <http://www.honeybeesuite.com/tag/candy-boards/>



Vanilla Honey Salted Caramel Popcorn

- 2 sticks butter (1 cup) unsalted
 - 2 cups brown sugar
 - ½ c honey
 - 1 tbsp vanilla extract
 - ½ tsp baking soda
 - 6 quarts freshly popped popcorn (unsalted and no butter, preferably air popped)
 - 1½ tsp large sea salt flakes
- Preheat oven to 250° F. Set out two large cookie sheets with edges lined with parchment paper. Place half the popcorn in a large bowl.
 - Heat butter, honey and brown sugar over medium heat stirring until melted, raise heat and let boil for 4 minutes. Removed from heat and immediately add the vanilla, baking soda and salt. The mixture will bubble up rapidly so stir quickly.
 - Pour half the mixture over half the popcorn in the bowl, stirring well to coat, add the other half of the popcorn in the bowl and pour the remaining caramel sauce over the popcorn stirring again.
 - Spread the popcorn mixture evenly in the two cookie sheets. Don't worry if all the popcorn didn't get covered. The sauce will melt again while baking and stirring will help get it all coated.
 - Place pans in oven and bake for one hour. Every 15 minutes exactly stir well to help get all the popcorn coated.
 - Removed after an hour and stir again, as it cools the popcorn will stick together so continue to stir and break up the larger pieces in to smaller ones. Store the caramel corn in an airtight container or resealable baggie. This will keep at room temperature up to 2 week – unless you eat it all first!

Photo and recipe courtesy of:

www.pineappleandcoconut.com

2015 Officers

President	Bruce Deafenbaugh	330-457-0326
V.President	Chuck Hatch	330-807-0848
Secretary	Heidi Schmidbauer	330-386-7763
Treasurer	Sandra Hays	330-921-5805
Board:	Don Hays (2015)	330-921-1012
	George Stacy (2016)	330-360-8717
	Joe Schmidbauer (2017)	330-386-7763

Special thanks to our generous suppliers who have provided us with catalogs and door prizes. It means a lot to these folks to hear back from you, so be sure to mention our association when doing business with them:

American Bee Journal	Dadant
A.I. Root - Bee Culture	Drapers
B&B Honey Farm	Glory Bee
Beeline Apiaries	Mann Lake
Betterbee	Miller Bee Supply
Blue Sky	Mother Load Products
Brushy Mountain Bee Farm	Pigeon Mtn. Trading Co.
C.F. Koehnen & Sons	Sailor Plastics
Cowen	



Article or recipe suggestions and submissions are accepted and appreciated. Please provide them by the second of each month.

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Columbiana Mahoning County Beekeepers Association is online.

<http://www.columbianamahoningbeekeepers.webs.com/>