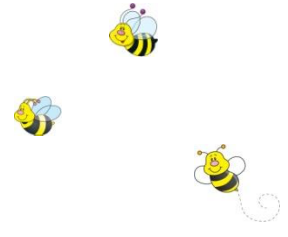


The Skep



President's Corner

Hello Fellow Beekeepers!

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope Santa Bee brought you all the bee stuff you couldn't afford last year. The first meeting of the new year will be held on January 17 at the Experimental Farm in Canfield. We'll have a covered dish lunch at 1:00 and the business meeting will begin at 2:00.

Be sure to check on your bees throughout the winter. Knocking on the side of the hive will cause a quiet buzz that lets you know the colony is alive. I overheard someone say you can listen to them without knocking if you have access to a stethoscope so I may try that this winter. I guess it's like listening to the heartbeat of the hive.

On sunnier afternoons you can put candy boards or dry sugar above the cluster to see the bees through. If you come across a dead hive, clean it out as soon as the weather allows so that you are ready for new bees in the spring

Your dues for 2016 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 meeting. Please make checks payable to the Columbiana & Mahoning County Beekeepers' Association.

I look forward to seeing you at the January meeting!

Bruce Zimmer

January Meeting Details

Sunday, January 17, 2016

Potluck Lunch 1:00 p.m.

(Bring your own plates, cups and silverware please.)

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 following article is a [United States Department of Agriculture News Release](#)

USDA Begins Surveys to Assess Honey Bee Colony Health, Impact on Agriculture

New Data Collection Supports the White House National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators

WASHINGTON, Dec 23, 2015 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is reaching out to beekeepers and farmers across the nation in December 2015 and January 2016 to gather information on the number and health of honey bee colonies, honey production and stocks, and the cost to farmers of pollination services.

The surveys will be used to develop baseline data and additional goal metrics for winter, summer, and total annual colony loss in support of the . Among its goals, the Strategy aims to reduce honey bee colony losses during winter to no more than 15% within 10 years.

“These new data will be crucial to measuring and understanding the current state of the pollinator industry in the United States,” said NASS Administrator Joseph Reilly. “Honey beekeepers are encouraged to participate in the surveys so that policy makers have a robust data source to make informed decisions and protect our struggling pollinators.”

Pollinators are critical to the nation's economy, food security, and environmental health. Honey bee pollination alone adds more than \$15 billion in value to agricultural crops each year, and helps ensure that our diets include ample fruits, nuts, and vegetables. This tremendously valuable service is provided to society by honey bees, native bees and other insect pollinators, birds, and

bats. But pollinators are struggling. Last year, beekeepers reported losing about 40% of honey bee colonies, threatening the viability of their livelihoods and the essential pollination services their bees provide to agriculture.

Beekeepers should expect to receive two surveys from NASS. They will receive the existing Bee and Honey Inquiry, which surveys beekeepers about honey production, price, and stocks, but not colony health. NASS will continue to conduct that survey, the results of which are slated for release in March 2016, and which are archived at www.nass.usda.gov. Beekeepers will also receive a new survey from NASS, which the agency will use to publish state-level estimates on key topics, including number of colonies, colonies lost, colonies added, and colonies affected by certain stressors. The first results of these surveys will be published in May 2016.

In addition to surveys being sent to beekeepers, NASS will survey farmers about crops pollinated, number of colonies needed for pollination, and the cost for those colonies. NASS plans to publish results of those surveys in December 2016.

These surveys and corresponding data are part of the National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators, prepared by the Pollinator Health Task Force, which USDA co-chairs. The Strategy is a comprehensive plan to work across the Federal government and with partners to address the research, education and management challenges we must overcome to sustain healthy pollinator populations. One of the three overarching goals of the National Strategy is to reduce honey bee colony loss and to develop additional baseline data using the NASS data.

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As is the case with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law.

The NASS surveys are one part of a larger effort USDA is undertaking to promote the health of pollinators, including honeybees. Last week, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) authored a blog titled "[High Five for Pollinators: Busy Bees, Bats and Butterflies](#)," outlining five projects that agency has undertaken in 2015 to improve pollinator forage and habitat.

Making Splits



Bill and Jennifer Kopar of Kopar Honey Farm in Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania joined us for the Annual Meeting and provided an interesting and informative presentation about making splits.

Bill started by outlining why it is a good beekeeping practice to make splits. His reasons include replacing your winter losses, making increases, selling bees for profit, decreasing swarming, culling out old frames, creating queen banks, and providing bees to refresh observation hives.

Continuing on, Bill explained that making splits in late April or early May then again the week of the Fourth of July is key to having young queens and strong bees going into winter. July queens will be producing a higher number of August bees than the April queens. The August bees are the beginning of the overwintering force. He stressed the importance of having a young queen and well

stored frames in August and September to create strong overwintering hives.

Bill explained the nectar flow pattern in our area as 6 weeks of nectar flow, 6 weeks of dearth (generally in July and early August) and 6 weeks of flow. This is important to note because the queens will shut down in July if there is not food available to the colony. Bill suggested feeding through this period of dearth to ensure strong numbers of field force bees going into the fall flow and as the bees prepare for winter.

Making splits requires planning and preparation long before the hives are opened. Bill suggested that planning begins in January. He said beekeepers need to be anticipating the number of splits that they hope to make and deciding on equipment requirements. In February beekeepers should be starting to feed sugar and pollen substitutes as needed. During March all dead outs should be cleaned up and prepared for new colonies. As April arrives the beekeeper will be ready to split when the new queens are available.



Bill offered an abundance of helpful tips for making splits. He said to split your parent hive with a queen excluder four days before doing the split to limit where the queen is. Then load your equipment the day before and have a plan for the order that you are going to open the hives in the yard. He stressed the importance of only doing splits from strong hives and keeping the queens warm as you work. Bill offered that he leaves the queen bank someplace warm and only carries the queens that he is working with in his pocket. Bill makes his hives from exterior plywood and he does not do mite treatments instead relying on other integrated pest management practices. He stressed that each nuc should contain one frame of pollen and honey and four frames should contain mostly capped brood.

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Bill Kopar and his wife Jennifer provided an abundance of information during their visit with our group in October. We are very fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from them.

Winter & Spring Beekeeping Events

The winter and early spring seasons bring a opportunity for beekeepers to get together to discuss bees and learn the latest trends and techniques. If you haven't had the chance to attend one of these main events, I encourage you do to so. There is always so much to see, do and learn at the expos and seminars! The best part is spending the day with fellow beekeepers.

14th Annual Honeybee EXPO



The Mid Ohio Valley Beekeepers' Association will sponsor their 2016 Honeybee EXPO at the

West Virginia University at Parkersburg on January 30. Registration is \$20 for adults if paid before January 12 or \$25 at the door. Children under 12 years of age are \$8. This year the EXPO offers several workshops to choose from. For additional information including the schedule of classes, registration information and directions, please visit the event's webpage at the following link.

[Honeybee EXPO](#)

Western Pennsylvania Beekeeping Seminar



This two day seminar will be held on February 19&20, 2016 at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel,

Monroeville, Pa. *Please note the location change for this year!* Registration is \$60 for participants and \$45 for their guests as well as children under 18. The deadline is February 14. This year's main speakers include Dr. Jeff Harris, Dr. Diana Sammataro and Dr. Christine Grosinger. There will be many major beekeeping suppliers on-hand in the Vendor Area also. Please call 412-855-0710 or watch for additional information at the following links:

[PSBA Events](#)

[Western PA Seminar Facebook Page](#)

37th Annual Spring Beekeepers Workshop

Mark your calendars for Tri-County Beekeepers' Association's Spring Workshop on March 4-5, 2016 at the Fisher/Shisler Center in Wooster, Ohio. Registration will open on January 8 according to their website. The cost of registration has not been announced yet. Speakers include Dan O'Hanlon, Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda, Buddy C. May Jr., Dr. Reed Johnson, Donald Downs, Doug Sponsler and more.

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For more information about the classes, speakers, directions and registration as it becomes available visit the following link.

[2016 Spring Workshop Registration](#)

2015 Scholarship Winners

Our 2015 Scholarship Award winners were announced at the Annual Meeting & Banquet. The following recipients were each awarded \$500.

Donald Duda III
Adam Wehr

Apiary Registration

According to the [Ohio Department of Agriculture](#), 4,838 beekeepers registered in accordance with Ohio Revised Code section 909.02 in 2015. This represents 6,571 apiaries, and approximately 36,235 colonies. The 52 county apiary inspectors inspected a total of 19,607 colonies in 4,579 apiaries. The table below describes their findings.

Number of Colonies with	
American Foulbrood	20
European Foulbrood	40
Chalkbrood	41
Nosema Symptoms	118
Varroa Mites	7,739
Small Hive Beetle	1,451

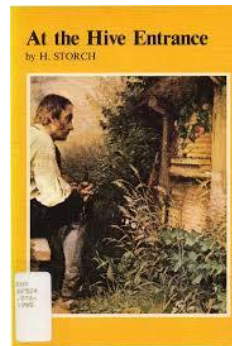
Registration costs \$5 per apiary location and must be completed by June 1 each year. You can find the Registration Form and No Consent Form at the following links.

[Application for Apiary Registration](#)

[No Consent Form](#)

The Observer Effect

The term the observer effect refers to changes that the act of observation will have on the phenomenon being observed. In beekeeping this relates to the impact the beekeeper will have on a colony while manipulating the hive during an inspection.



This is not to say that manipulating your hives is a bad idea. On the contrary, it is a necessary part of beekeeping. But there are observations that can be done without opening the hive that will indicate the health of the colony. Learning to understand these observations will help a beekeeper know when it is necessary to open the hive and when all is well with the inhabitants, reducing the disturbance to the brood nest.

Originally published in German in 1985 [At The Hive Entrance](#), by H. Storch, offers a guide to understanding and interpreting the observations made from outside a honey bee hive. The aim of the work is to help beekeepers preserve the bee's peace so they can perform their roles. Storch's book is out of print but available in PDF form at the link provided. For those members unable to download the electronic version, a paper copy has been placed in the Association's library.



Honey Oat Quick Bread

- 2 tablespoons plus 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats, or quick-cooking (not instant) oats, divided
- 1 1/3 cups whole-wheat flour, or white whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 8 ounces (scant 1 cup) nonfat or low-fat plain yogurt
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/4 cup clover honey, or other mild honey
- 3/4 cup milk

Position rack in middle of oven; preheat to 375°F. Generously coat a 9-by-5-inch (or similar size) loaf pan with cooking spray. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon oats in the pan. Tip the pan back and forth to coat the sides and bottom with oats.

Thoroughly stir together whole-wheat flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. Using a fork, beat the remaining 1 cup oats, yogurt, egg, oil and honey in a medium bowl until well blended. Stir in milk. Gently stir the yogurt mixture into the flour mixture just until thoroughly incorporated but not over mixed (excess mixing can cause toughening). Immediately scrape the batter into the pan, spreading evenly to the edges. Sprinkle the remaining 1 tablespoon oats over the top.

Bake the loaf until well browned on top and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 40 to 50 minutes. (It's normal for the top to crack.) Let stand in the pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Run a table knife around and under the loaf to loosen it and turn it out onto the rack. Let cool until barely warm, about 45 minutes.

Recipe & photo courtesy of Eating Well

2016 Officers

President	Bruce Zimmer	330-547-2273
V.President	Tom Pittman	330-503-3131
Secretary	Heidi Schmidbauer	330-386-7763
Treasurer	Sandra Hays	330-921-5805
Board:	George Stacy (2016)	330-360-8717
	Joe Schmidbauer (2017)	330-386-7763
	Chuck Hatch (2018)	330-807-0848

Special thanks to our generous suppliers who have provided us with catalogs, donations 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:

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Click on the company name to visit their web site.



Check out our website for additional resources and information.



www.columbianamahoningbeekeepers.org

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

Heidi Schmidbauer
870 Center Road
East Liverpool, Ohio 43920
(330)386-7763
jhs494@comcast.net