

# SWEET TALK

The newsletter of the Greene County Beekeepers Association

## BEE Aware-- Odds and Ends:

*Bill Starrett*

April has arrived and many new beekeepers and some old beekeepers are installing packages of bees. This requires feeding to get them raising brood to increase their population, the first step towards preparing for the coming winter. Current beekeepers may be finding it necessary to feed colonies now for them to survive until new nectar is available, not at all uncommon at this time of the spring. What should the bees be fed? Honey? Of course...since that is their primary staple. NOT. NEVER...NEVER...NEVER. That may appear reasonable for the public generally who are uninformed, but for beekeepers that would be a cardinal beekeeping sin...a major violation of the sacred trust to propagate healthy bees and protect the species.

The biggest disease problem facing beekeepers is American Foulbrood, caused by a spore forming bacteria - *paenibacillus larvae* - for which we have no treatment which will kill the spore. It is AFB that initiated Ohio's 1904 apiary inspection regulations in an effort to control this pernicious disease which infected 60 to 70% of the colonies of bees in the state. AFB spores remain viable indefinitely and in sufficient numbers can spark new outbreaks of AFB when spore contaminated honey or brood food is fed to young larva where the spores germinate in the larval gut. When colonies become weak or die out from AFB robbers carry the contaminated honey back to their hive and

*(Continued on page 5)*

## The Place to Bee on Tuesday, April 19 at 7:00 p.m.

### Agenda

- Meeting Call to Order
- Welcome and New Member Introduction
- Overview
  - Reports
  - Announcements
  - Free Raffle Tickets
  - Sign Up Sheets
  - Show and Tell
  - BEE-Short, Practical Beekeeping
  - Refreshments
  - Main Speaker
- Reports
  - 4-H
  - Projects
  - OSBA
  - Apiary Visit
  - Package Update
- Announcements
- Show and Tell
  - Mite testing equipment
- BEE-Short, Practical Beekeeping
- May Calendar
  - Testing for Mites Hives and Record Keeping
- Questions/Concerns
- Main Speaker : Alex Zomechek
- Topic: Splits for Increase and Queen Management

Raffle and Adjourn

## President's Letter

Welcome! It was great to see the good turnout at our March meeting and to be able to introduce new beekeepers and new members to everyone.

We have a great lineup for our April. Alex Zomchek will be our speaker. He is terrific and you will not want to miss his presentation on splits for increase and queen management.

The Season is beginning!! Last month Bill Starrett showed us a great article on why mites are our major problem that fosters so many other issues. While mites are generally not a problem in the spring, we need to start planning our methods of attack. Control the mites (yes, we all will get them) and you will increase your overall hive health. How many mites do you have in each hive? Ever test for mites? Ever treat for mites without testing to see if they are there? Was your treatment successful? We will be discussing how to test your hives for mites without killing bees.

Just as a reminder for spring, I close up my hives when the farm is being planted. The seeds used have an insecticide on them to prevent insect damage after they are in the ground. This is not a problem for bees except on planting day when the dust from the planter puts a small, but deadly amount of this insecticide in the air. So the night before farmer's plant, I close the hive up until they are done. This keeps my bees from picking up this dust as they fly through the cloud to and from the hive.

During last month's meeting we continued a monthly planning concept of being prepared for what is going to happen in the bee yard. This month we will review and dig a little deeper into our expected bee actions for the last half of April and May. April is a very active month for beekeeping, so I am sure you will want to hear all about it! We plan to give you a heads up at each meeting as to what your bees will be doing the next month in your bee yard.

I want to thank everyone who generously provided refreshments to our March meeting. Thank you for volunteering. It makes a big difference when everyone helps out.

**July 9<sup>th</sup> Honey Harvest:** The Club has several events we sponsor each year to promote beekeeping. The primary event each year is the Honey Harvest activity held at the Narrows Reserve. This is an all

day event where we show our community how honey is harvested, demonstrate what it takes to be a beekeeper, and promote beekeeping as a way to naturally improve our food supply and environment. We are asking for volunteers to donate some time on July 9<sup>th</sup> to help out and showcase your beekeeping talent. Helpers in all areas are needed from set-up to final clean up; currently all time slots are available. We will have a signup sheet starting this April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. See Vice President David Foubert for details.

**April 23<sup>th</sup>: Green(e) Fest at Glen Helen:** Thank you to those who are going to man the club table during this event. It will be a great time to educate the energetic crowd about beekeeping and saving our pollinators. The times are 9:30 to 5:00.

The bees are making comb! I see drone larvae! Some of the hives are heavy with pollen and brood already. We still have some cold days ahead, so use caution before you start working your hives aggressively. Soon we need to change from sugar bricks and fondant to 1:1 sugar water. This stimulates the hive to more action. A suggested rule of thumb is to start sugar water 45 days before you want your hive to be fully functioning for the peak honey flow in your area. I plan to start 1:1 when the current cold snap is over.

Timing is very important this next month. When to reverse, when to add honey supers and when to checkerboard for new comb are all issues that need to be addressed soon. We discussed reversing techniques last month. I caution you not to reverse too early, as you can damage the brood by placing them in the cool area (the bottom of the hive). Remember, bees like heat.

Looking forward to seeing you at our April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Dave Allen

## Sensitive Crop Registry

For those of you who entered beekeeping late in 2016, it is important for you to register your bees with both the state (is it required by law), and with the Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry.

If you did not register your hives in 2015, here is the link to the form:

[www.agri.ohio.gov/public\\_docs/forms/Plant/2013%20Apiary%20Application%20.pdf](http://www.agri.ohio.gov/public_docs/forms/Plant/2013%20Apiary%20Application%20.pdf)

From their website ([www.agri.ohio.gov/scr/](http://www.agri.ohio.gov/scr/)): *The Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry (OSCR) is a voluntary informational tool designed to allow stakeholders an effective way to communicate and protect pesticide-sensitive crops and apiaries.* This website contains information about apiaries, aquaculture, certified organic fields, and other “crops” that are sensitive to pesticide spraying. Remember to update your information as you change apiary locations.



## National Colony Loss and Management 2015-2016 Survey

The 2015 – 2016 National Colony Loss and National Management Survey is accepting submissions starting April until April 30th. The results from this survey provide invaluable information that helps us obtain a clear picture of honey bee health throughout the country. Without the aid of the many beekeepers who participate in this survey we would never be able to obtain the results that we have received in the past and hope to continue to receive in the future.

Click here if you're ready to take the survey now:

[Take the Survey Now!](#)

## Apiary Visits

The visits have been scheduled! If you want to participate, bring your protective gear and if you bring a tool, please make sure that you sanitize it with alcohol. The weather will be a big factor in all of these visits. If the weather is "iffy" we will try to make it a visit or cancel at the last minute. Here are the places and times for the 2016 apiary visits!!

April 16, Tom & Fran Davidson 10131 National Rd. New Carlisle 45344  
Time 12:30 (Saturday)

April 23 Marianne Bishop 4981 Arabian Dr. Fairborn 45324  
Time 1:00 (Saturday)

April 30 2380 Kemp Rd (Russ Reserve) Bill Starrett  
Time 10:00

April 30 Amy Learned 2793 Kemp Rd  
Time 12:30

April 30 Dave Foubert 1525 President Dr. Yellow Springs  
Time 1:30



**If you want to include your apiary, please contact Fran at call 937-609-0956.**

## What's Bloomin'



**Nectar:** Mustards

**Pollen:** Poplars, Willows, Maples, Oak, Cedar, Junipers, Dandelions

**Pollen and Nectar:** Apple Trees, Chickweed, Hackberry Trees, Dandelion, Redbud Trees

The real feast begins next month!

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Report 3 April 2016

Checking	\$4576.73
Cash	\$92.01
Balance	\$4668.74
Outstanding Check for Raffle Items	<u>\$78.00</u>
Balance:	\$4590.74

### 10 Frame Kelley Telescoping Lids for Sale

3 Brand new, never been used telescoping lids for sale. Kelley Item number 49-M. Catalog price: \$22.95. Available for \$20.00

Contact Bill Starrett at: [REDACTED]

## Basic Buzz in the Beeyard

### April

- Monitor colony stores, esp. if weather is cold & wet.
- Inspect brood nest for laying queen, disease, etc
- Introduce package bees on drawn combs.
- Requeen colonies with failing queens.
- Reverse brood chambers when weather moderates.
- Add supers to strong colonies at maple or dandelion bloom.
- Unite weak colonies.
- ◆ Equalize strength of all colonies.

### May —"Spring is Busting out All Over"

- Monitor colonies for queen cells.
- Control swarming.
- Add more supers as needed (oversuper).
- Place queen excluder below shallow super on colonies for comb honey.
- Install packages on foundation.
- Split strong colonies.
- Capture swarms.
- Cull and replace defective combs with full sheets of foundation.
- Begin implementing an IPM program for the control of mites.
- Add room for bees, either by honey supers, or deeps - remember the 7/10 rule - when they have filled 7 of the 10 frames, its time to add space!

**Bee Aware** (Continued from page 1)

the cycle repeats itself.

Yes, we have antibiotics which are used to treat and prevent the disease but they only keep the spore from germinating and causing fresh outbreaks of the disease. When the spore is kept dormant by the use of antibiotics no new disease manifests itself and the bees clean up the visible evidences of the disease. If the adult bees consume ALL the spore contaminated honey they will void the spores naturally in their feces and the colony will be cured. If all the contaminated honey is not consumed then the remaining spores can eventually make their way into the gut of bee larvae and the disease breaks out again. The best and most effective treatment for colonies infected with AFB is to burn them.

When feeding is necessary it should be sugar syrup and not honey because AFB spores can survive in honey for decades. If honey is ever fed to bees it should come from ones own hives that are known to not have AFB and even that may not be fool proof. It has been confirmed that AFB spores are contained in 100% of the honey purchased in the store.



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

## Webinars

All webinars are from 9:00AM to 10:00AM EASTERN.

**April 20**, Alex Zomchek, Regional Director, Ohio State Beekeepers Association: **Monitoring 2.0 to Reduce Colony Losses**

**May 18**, Reed Johnson, The Ohio State University: **Pesticides and Poisons in the Hive: An Overview of Bee Toxicology**

**June 15**, Kim Flottum, Author and Editor, Bee Culture Magazine: **Common Sense Natural Beekeeping**

**July 27**, Jim Tew, Alabama Cooperative Extension Service: **Some Thoughts on Keeping Your Bees Alive**

**August 17**: Rick Johnstone, Integrated Vegetation Management Partners: **Creating Pollinator Habitat on Utility and Highway Rights-of-Way**

**September 21**, Karen Rennich, The Bee Informed Partnership: **What the Bee Informed Partnership Means to You!**

**October 19**, Greg Hunt, Purdue University: **Varroa Mite Resistance in Honey Bees**

Webinars are typically the third Wednesday of the month. All webinars are free, and no registration is required. To Join a webinar, follow the link below and LOG IN AS A GUEST at about 8:55 the day of the event: <http://go.osu.edu/theOSUbuzz>

## Staying Ahead in the Hive



### APRIL

19 Tue GCBA Meeting– Guest Speaker: Alex Zomchek

### MAY

17 Tues GCBA Meeting– Guest Speaker: Nina Bagley

### Remember to register your hives:

[http://www.agri.ohio.gov/public\\_docs/forms/plant/Plnt\\_4201-002.pdf](http://www.agri.ohio.gov/public_docs/forms/plant/Plnt_4201-002.pdf)

### Made at Home—The Recipe Corner :

#### *Honey Buttermilk Loaf Cake*

3 c. flour  
1 t. baking powder  
1/2 baking soda  
1 1/2 c. sugar  
3/4 c. butter

1/2 c. honey  
1 t. vanilla extract  
2 t. fresh lemon juice  
3 eggs  
1 1/3 c. buttermilk



- Preheat oven to 350. Spray 2 8x4 loaf pans with Pam.
- Whisk together flour, baking powder, and baking soda.
- In another bowl beat sugar, butter, honey and extract, until light and fluffy
- Add eggs and lemon juice and beat well to incorporate.
- Add flour and buttermilk alternately, in two portions each. Mix well.
- Pour into prepared pans.
- Bake for 40 minutes or til cake tested comes out clean.
- Cool for 10 minutes and then place on cooling racks.

### GCBA 2016 Board Members:

President:	Dave Allen
Vice-President:	Dave Foubert
Secretary:	
Treasurer:	Tom Davidson
Communications:	Terry Lieberman-Smith
Webmaster:	Dan O'Callaghan
At-Large:	Sam Bernard– Jeannie Doe-Fran Davidson-Joe Valentour
Past President	Dan O'Callaghan