

# SWEET TALK

The newsletter of the Greene County Beekeepers Association

**BEE Aware--  
Odds and Ends:**

*Bill Starrett*

Now that March has arrived the bees will begin serious brood rearing. Without brood the temperature at the center of the cluster may be as low as 70 degrees, but the brood rearing area must be kept at 95 degrees when there is brood being raised. That puts pressure on the honey reserves because the bees must consume more honey to generate the heat to maintain adequate brood rearing temperatures. Normally temperatures are considerably higher than what we have experienced over the last 60 days which is another factor putting pressure on honey reserves because more honey is consumed to maintain survival cluster temperatures even without brood.

Bees can normally survive extreme temperatures like we have been experiencing so long as it is not too prolonged. Unfortunately, we have the combined extreme cold plus a prolonged cold period which together are detrimental to colony survival. Clusters that are too small may not be able to remain in contact with honey during these prolonged cold

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**The Place to Bee on  
Tuesday, March 17th  
7:00 p.m.**

Welcome Back!

Agenda

**Bee-Short:**  
Carol and Dave Locker on  
Package Installation

**Sign-up Lists:**  
Refreshments  
Swarm (for club members only)

**Guest Speaker:**  
Bill Starrett

**Topic**  
Spring Activity

**GCBA 2015 Board Members:**

- President: Dan O'Callaghan
- Vice-President: Chuck Roach
- Secretary: Patti Procnuiar
- Treasurer: Tom Davidson
- Communications Director: Terry Lieberman-Smith
- Webmaster: Dan O'Callaghan
- At-Large: Sam Bernard  
Fran Davidson  
Carol Locker  
Dave Locker

## President's Letter

March greetings!

As I write this, it is snowing and the forecast calls for temperatures to fall below zero yet again—makes it hard to believe that Spring is coming! However, looking at the extended forecast, temperatures will be consistently above bee flying weather in about a week! Hopefully your hives have a good survival rate, but, as I wrote last month, we still need to be vigilant. Late Winter and early Spring are critical times in the hive. Brood-rearing is ramping up and both pollen and honey are sparse in nature and in-hive stores are being consumed rapidly. Check your bees! Feed if they are light! This is the time of year to consider feeding pollen supplement if you really want to ramp up bee population. If you plan to replace/increase your hives using packages, place your orders soon—many sellers are already sold out. .

The next GCBA meeting is March 17, 2014 at 7pm. Hopefully on this St. Patrick's Day we will see signs of green in nature, not just on those trying to avoid pinches! This is the first meeting using our new format, so please let us know what works, what doesn't work, and what you'd like to see done differently. Current plan is to have a 15-minute 'pre-meeting' open discussion/Q&A session from 6:45-7:00 geared to new beekeepers. The "official" meeting will open with a very brief welcome and GCBA business meeting, then Dave and Carol Locker will conduct a "Bee-short" presentation on package installation options before the refreshment break. After the refreshment break, the general session will cover spring tasks and issues in the apiary, including getting ready for swarms, the honey flow, supers, and other timely information.

With Winter ending, most of the major bee conferences, bee schools, and other educational opportunities are either finished or full. Hopefully you had the chance to attend at least one and hear some different perspectives and gather some new ideas for your apiary activities. Locally, the GCBA meeting calendar and schedule of "proposed" topics for the year is posted on the [www.gcbeekkeepers.com](http://www.gcbeekkeepers.com) Web site, and hopefully there are topics planned at meetings geared for everyone's experience level and interest. If we are missing a topic you really want to learn about, please let us know! One of the projects the GCBA initiated last year, the apiary visiting project, was really popular and is being offered again this year. This is a chance for a group of members to visit other GCBA members apiaries, and also to host a group visit. If you are interested in participating, contact Fran Davidson. We also have two events planned with our meeting sponsor, Greene County Parks & Trails, the Spring Clinic (Apr 25<sup>th</sup>) and the Honey Harvest (Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>), both at the Narrows Apiary. As a reminder, Parks & Trails provides the GCBA with our monthly meeting location and the Pavilion for our annual picnic at NO COST to the GCBA. I strongly encourage all members to thank the Parks & Trails Staff and to support them and their activities whenever possible.

A reminder--the GCBA is YOUR local association—please be actively involved, and let us know what we can do to make the GCBA an effective and valuable resource for YOU!

Dan O'Callaghan



## Need Equipment?

Did you miss out on the opportunity to attend the conferences and pick up your equipment without paying shipping costs? Do you just need a few items, or containers, and you don't qualify for the free shipping from the bee supply vendors?

As in past years, the Beekeeping 101 Class is compiling a bulk order with Kelley Beekeeping. We are extending to GCBA members, the ability to add-on to the bulk order. We get discounts on most woodenware and wax. If you need equipment, and your order is less than \$150...Kelley charges you shipping...We Don't! Why not order your containers and glassware for your upcoming honey harvest!!



You will need to send you order to Terry Lieberman-Smith (matasmith@woh.rr.com) by Wednesday, March 11th!

**Bee Proud—**

**Get your “Save The Honey Bee” License Plate Starting March 23rd!**



**Monies from this plate will help OSBA support research, education and outreach.**

## Get Your Gardens Ready for Blooms

**Pollen Sources:** Alder, Elm

**Nectar and Pollen:** Dogwood, Crabapple, Willow, Dandelion



## The Basic Buzz in the Apiary



### March

- Continue emergency feeding, if necessary.
- Feed pollen supplements or substitutes, if needed.
- First quick inspection of brood nest, if weather permits.
- Check for and clean up dead colonies.
- Clean out entrances and bottom boards.
- Attend conferences

### 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.

## Made at Home—The Recipe Corner :

### Curry-Up Honey Chicken Breasts

1/2 stick butter  
1/4 c. honey  
1/4 c. mustard  
1T. curry powder

1/4 t. dried chipotle powder  
2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

Preheat oven to 350.

In an 8x8 baking pan combine the butter, honey, mustard, curry powder and chipotle powder. Place in warming oven for few minutes until butter melts. Remove from oven, stir to blend.

Add chicken and coat thoroughly with sauce.

Bake for about 45 minutes, basting every 10 minutes.

When completely cooked, remove from oven and serve with the sauce poured over the chicken.



**GCBA Minutes  
February 17, 2014  
Patti Procuniar, Secretary**

Dan O'Callaghan opened the meeting at 7 pm and introduced the Executive Board Introduced new members. Attendee count was 51.

Dan reminded members to update their contact information. Agenda for meetings this season: Meetings will be an open doors session at 6:45 for a question & answer period. A very short business meeting will be held at 7 p.m., followed by a "Bee Short" presentation, a refreshment break and then a speaker.

Greene County Parks & Trails supports our organization by lending us the meeting room and supporting our activities. The Honey Harvest on Aug 22 at the Narrows Nature Reserve will coincide with the national Honey Appreciation Day. Sign up for the swarm list and the snack list. Also, If you are interested in being a speaker, please sign up. Dan is the counselor for the 4H club as in previous years. Upcoming conferences are mostly closed.

47 people are enrolled in the new beekeeping class. Please help yourself to magazines in the back of the room

Snacks were provided by: Terry Smith, Sue Donahue, Fran Davidson and Patti Procuniar. Following the snack break, Terry L Smith gave a presentation on winter beekeeping. Each season's success depends on the previous season. Success depends on how healthy bees were coming out of the fall. Winter feeding is emergency feeding .

Bits of Wisdom: Do not give the bees sugar water, instead give them marshmallow fondant. Discourage the skunks to stay away from your hive. Check for patches of brood. If they are in your top box then the queen will be in top box. If you find no brood your queen is probably dead.

Worst case scenario colony dead? Clean out the hive. Check to see why they died. Keep records on each hive. Providing pollen too soon will cause your colony to swarm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45

**Treasurer's Report GCBA Board Meeting  
GCBA February 2015**

Beginning Balance 1 Jan 2015 :	\$3648.48
Raffle tickets	- 5.19
Deposit Dues	+ \$430.00
Deposit Donation	+ \$ 50.00
Balance	25 Jan 2015 \$4123.29

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

periods and will starve as a result or they will be unable to maintain adequate cluster temperatures and die. Without a warm day the cluster is also unable to relocate to remain in contact with honey. Another immediately less obvious problem is the build up of waste material in the intestines of the bees since they have not had an opportunity for cleansing flights, a factor that can also be fatal. On the first warm day in the 40's the bees from colonies which survive this cold will be taking cleansing flights as evidenced by fecal matter sprinkled over everything in the vicinity of the apiary for 30 yards. This is a normal occurrence and is not evidence of nosema even though the amount of fecal matter may be significant.

For those of us who have supplemented honey supplies with sugar bricks or fondant, the bees need water to adequately utilize them. Normally the moisture given off by the bees as they consume food is adequate for their consumption of these sugars. But the extreme temperatures can keep the bees from being able to access the sugar bricks and fondant. That remains a serious concern now that spring buildup time has arrived. Responsible beekeeping demands that colonies be checked on the first warm day to determine food supplies and supplemental feeding begun as needed.

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# Staying Ahead in the Hive



## March

17 Tues GCBA Meeting– Bill Starrett, Guest Speaker  
 28 Sat SWOBA Beekeeper Conference (*Sold-Out*)

## April

18 Saturday Spring Clinic– Russ Nature Center– Noon  
 21 Tues GCBA Meeting

### 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)

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## Greene County Beekeepers Association Membership Form 2015

Membership dues are \$15 per calendar year

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly meetings (exp. For Dec/Jan) with educational speakers
- Monthly e-zine with beekeeping articles and other features
- Discount on American Bee Journal magazine
- and more!***

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks out to: **Greene County Beekeepers Association**  
 and Remit Payment to:

Greene County Beekeepers Association  
 Tom Davidson  
 10131 West National Road  
 New Carlisle, OH 45344