

# Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association



July 2020

srvba.ohiostatebeekeepers.org



## Upcoming Events

### **Monthly Meeting — Monday, July 6th 7:00 pm**

Cancelled due to meeting limitations associated with the State of Ohio Covid-19 response plan.

## Message from the President

Hello fellow SRVBA Club members and welcome to July, the 7th level of Jumanji!

It seems like I always have to start by saying that we aren't having an in-person meeting for July. I spoke with the church personnel (Nancy Greenslade) on Tuesday June 23rd and it appears that we might not get back into the church until after the September meeting, or possibly not for the rest of 2020. The church is not slated to open until the middle of July and do not have the personnel to clean the church and hall.

Again, government regulation is saying that the six foot rule still applies as social distancing. The tables in the church are five-foot in diameter so there would only be two people at each table, and we normally have as many as 70 people attend, so the social distancing will be a problem. The cleaning is another issue, as we are a very active club with walking around hanging out in the kitchen, and breaking into little groups after the meeting.

## Message from the President (continued)

However, we were offered the church parking lot if we wanted to meet, but we would need to bring our own chairs and we would not have a bathroom to use. Naturally if we did use the parking lot we would need to keep six foot from each other and it would depend on the weather. I'm really stumped as to what we can do or should do. Do we scrub the meeting until we can use the church again, or should we try the parking lot? **I would love to hear of any ideas the club members have for meetings.**

Other issues that are on the cancellation block are the Ohio State Fair and the in-person Ohio State Beekeepers Association Fall Conference which was always the first weekend in November. I'm the Vice President for OSBA and I'm on the planning committee for the OSBA Fall Conference. We are having is an online webinar conference with the President, Peggy Garnes and Treasurer, Rod Pitchford giving a short meeting and financials, then a vote for new officers, and then finish up with a couple keynote speakers, maybe a 4 hour presentation. The cost for the webinar will be very little if not free to all members. (this is still being discussed)

The SRVBA Executive Officers have talked and we feel that it would be in the best interest for the Club members not to participate in the five County fairs this year. Covid-19 is still an issue and here it is the middle of June when I'm writing this and it appears that Covid is making a slight incline in cases across the States. I know we are missing great possibilities by not participating but I think it's the best choice. I for one would really feel bad if someone in our club would contract Covid-19 from a bee sanctioned presentation activity.

The SRVBA will be having a ZOOM meeting in August with OSBA Director Jamie Walters. The topic: "Successful Over-Wintering." Mr. Walters is the President of Black Swamp Bee Club and also a Director with OSBA. The OSBA traveling speaker program is not doing in-person presentations this year, but they are doing it by Zoom (Again, because of Covid-19). So keep an eye open on your email for the date and time and sign in information for the ZOOM meeting.

As we all know, the club had to cancel the Beginners Bee Class in April because of the Covid-19 virus. We all felt bad for doing so, but we had to follow the mandated rules given by the Ohio Governor. The Executive Officers worked hard to complete a new training PowerPoint, which is now the property of the club for future Bee classes to have and use.

# Message from the President (continued)

After we cancelled the class, I received some calls from individuals who had registered for the class that now had bees not knowing what to do with them. I was asked questions and concerns of what was normal and abnormal behavior with them. I had a lady call and state one of her queens in her queen cage had died, (thinking that all the bees in her queen cage were queens). Another guy called and asked, “ why are the bees building 6 inches of comb on top of the frames” he had an empty deep hive body box on his bottom hive body, he did it because a YouTube video suggested it.

So what I did was I called each individual that had registered for the class and asked if they had purchased bees, out of the 40 or so individuals 9 had bee packages or Nucs coming. I then scheduled a small field day at my yard, and set up 5 hives, some in good shape and others I created problems (removed the queen 5 days prior for emergency Queen cells, removed a frame from a box to show what will happen with too much bee space.). Others were strong queenright colonies, which we found and marked a Queen, showed the different stages of brood, showed them eggs, capped honey and capped brood. We then talked about the importance of checking for mites, a alcohol wash and sugar roll were demonstrated and then different treatments were explained.

The class had some great questions and they were answered by club members, Gary and Tami Wylie and Linda Miller. A mentor list of club members who volunteered to help the new members was also given to the class.

## IN THE HIVE

Some of you might be lucky enough to harvest some liquid gold (Honey) in the month of July. But remember it's really important not to get greedy by taking all of the honey. The bees need honey as a food source so please make sure to leave the girls some. But if you are going to harvest remember to use a refractometer to test your honey water content. Honey needs to be between 17 and 18 percent. Anything over 18% you're going to run into a problem with the honey starting to ferment. So an important tool for your honey harvesting is a refractometer. Below is a YouTube link to watch on how to use a refractometer.

<https://youtu.be/jQfsmHMcdHc>

Thanks and stay safe,

Tom Rathbun

President SRVBA

# Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association Field Day

On 5/30/20, the SRVBA (Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association) held a small field day at Southridge Apiary for this years beginner Beekeepers. Because of this Covid-19 pandemic the beginning Beekeepers class in April was cancelled. But some of the class had ordered bee packages or Nucs and not knowing how to care for them.

We held a small class of (9) new Beeks who purchased bees from other vendors to answer any questions, concerns, or problems they might have. We set up a few hives in the yard and showed them the different stages of development of eggs, larva, capped brood, Nectar, and capped honey, Queens, Drones and worker bees. One hive was set up with a missing frame to show what the bees will do with too much bee space. A Queen was removed from another hive about four days prior to show emergency queen cell being constructed. And other hives were to show what a strong healthy hive looks like. A sugar roll and a alcohol wash was demonstrated on how to test for mites to monitor your mite count and the different choices that are available for treatment. A lot of great questions was asked by the class and answered by four members of the SRVBA.

A special thank you to SRVBA members Tami and Gary Wylie, Linda Miller and Tom Rathbun for their help. The new beeks were also given handouts and a sheet with SRVBA members that had signed up to act as mentors for the new Beekeepers.



# Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association Field Day (continued)



# US honeybees are doing better after bad year, survey shows

By SETH BORENSTEIN—June 22, 2020 <https://apnews.com/893582c59a1191537f2594f635395b6f>



American honeybee colonies have bounced back after a bad year, the annual beekeeping survey finds.

Beekeepers only lost 22.2% of their colonies this past winter, from Oct. 1 to March 31, which is lower than the average of 28.6%, according to the [Bee Informed Partnership's](#) annual survey of thousands of beekeepers. It was the second smallest winter loss in the 14 years of surveying done by several different U.S. universities.

Last winter's loss was considerably less than the previous winter of 2018-2019 when a record 37.7% of colonies died off, the scientists found. After that bad winter, the losses continued through the summer of 2019, when beekeepers reported a 32% loss rate. That's much higher than the average of 21.6% for summer losses. Those summer losses were driven more by hives of commercial beekeepers than backyard hobbyists, said bee partnership scientific coordinator Nathalie Steinhauer.

While the summer losses are bad, winter deaths are "really the test of colony health," so the results overall are good news, Steinhauer said. "It turned out to be a very good year."

Populations tend to be cyclical with good years following bad ones, she said. The scientists surveyed 3,377 commercial beekeepers and backyard enthusiasts in the United States.

"One would hope that a lower winter loss means a better 2020 assuming that the weather cooperates and beekeepers don't end up skimping on colony management," said University of Montana bee expert Jerry Bromenshenk, who wasn't part of the study.

Beekeepers in the U.S. also may be taking more of their colonies indoors in the winter, helping them survive, said University of Georgia entomologist Keith Delaplane. New U.S. Department of Agriculture [research suggests](#) putting bees in "cold storage" helps them survive the winter.

For decades scientists have been watching the population of pollinators — crucial to the world's food supply — shrink. Honeybees, the most easily tracked, are threatened by mites, diseases, pesticides and loss of food.

Loss rates now being seen "are part of the new normal," Steinhauer said.

# Classifieds

## **Cherry City Honey Woodenware – Tami & Gary Wylie**

Cherry City Honey stocks and sells new bee hive equipment from our barn. Due to our location in the Clyde-Bellevue area, it's approximately a one hour drive to the nearest bee equipment supply store. This drive is inconvenient, time consuming and expensive. Also, online orders from distant suppliers often require purchase of larger quantities to obtain fair pricing and shipping/freight rates for new equipment are expensive.

We stock bee equipment you'll most likely need. Our bee hive boxes and equipment is of the highest quality and comes already assembled and ready for you to paint before use. The equipment is available for pick-up only. We don't ship because the high shipping rates makes new bee equipment unreasonably costly. We can arrange for local delivery in the Bellevue-Clyde area. We accept cash or credit cards for payment.

**Please compare our prices and consider us for your bee hive equipment needs.**

Click on Link for Price List [Cherry City Farms 2020 Equipment Price List](#) (also attached to this newsletter email)