



The Skep

February 2022

Columbiana & Mahoning Beekeepers' Association Newsletter

President's Corner

By putting sugar bricks on your hives, you know which hives are alive and which ones did not make it. Clean and cull old foundations to keep disease down. Repaint old boxes if needed order nuc's or package bees or queens to make splits in the spring.

The association will reimburse members who go to Wooster and give a five-minute talk at the March meeting, \$45.00 the club used to pay only \$20.00. This is to promote beekeeping. All the bee suppliers will be there so pre-order what you need for the season to avoid shipping and handling and pick up items at Wooster. Take some extra money for parking lot, and deals. Look up [Tri-County Beekeepers Association Workshop](#).

Bruce D.

February Meeting Information:

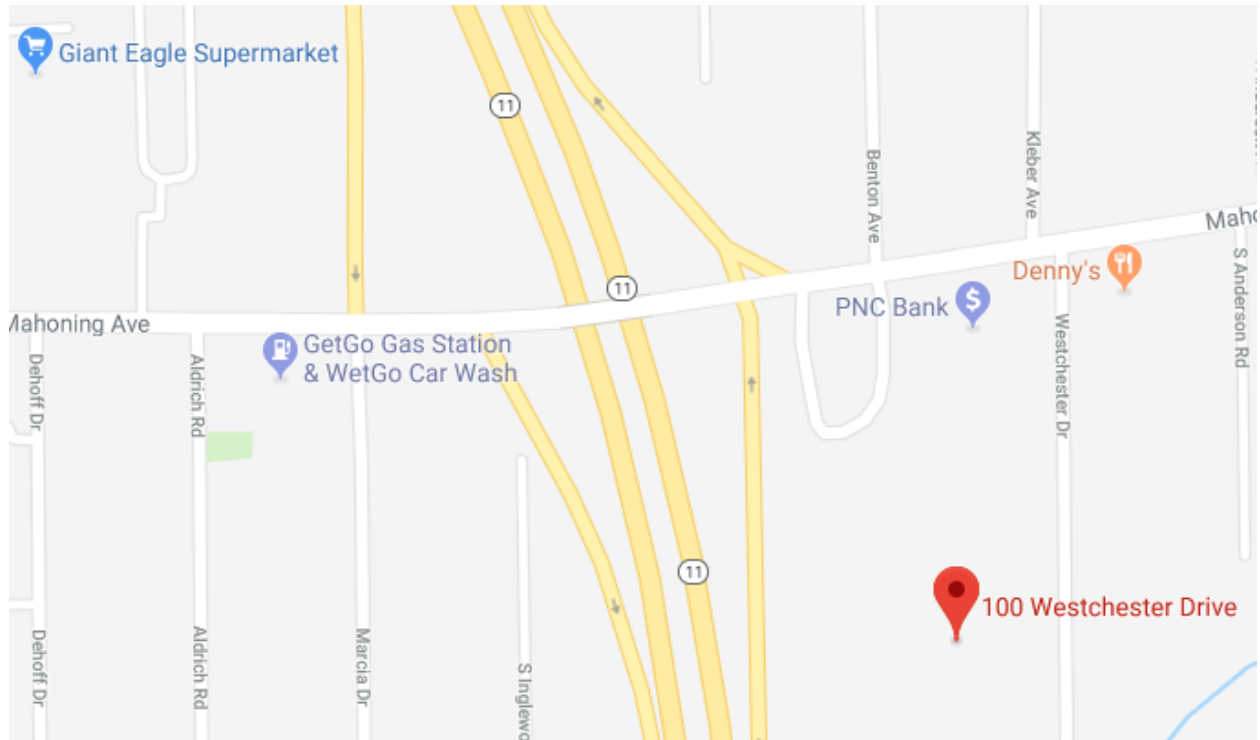
Meeting Date: 2/20/2022,
Monthly Membership Meeting and
Luncheon

Austintown Senior Center
100 Westchester Drive
Suite 110
Austintown, Ohio 44515

Potluck Lunch at 1 pm
Membership meeting at 2 pm

Guest Speaker: None

Next Meeting: 3/20/2022



Meeting Highlights:

January's meeting was canceled due to COVID. Meetings will resume February.

This Month/Next Month in Beekeeping:

February:

- Feed your bees on warm days. Sugar brick examples are available at the library.
- Order your bees. Some places to get your bees, [Tractor Supply](#), Hilltop Honey Farm, [Mann Lake](#). It is advised to order bees before March 1st.
- Order T-Shirts at the meeting for the upcoming season.
- Repair, clean, and paint hives and frames for upcoming season.
- Prepare sugar syrup for spring feeding

March

- Feed on warm days
- Unite queenless colonies
- Clean out bottom boards and entrances
- Place hives for packaged bees

Educational Opportunities:

- Beekeeping Basics at the Mahoning County Career and Technical Center
Class starts February 17th Ends March 24th Thursday's 6:00 PM- 8:00 PM
Instructed by Mike Klem. Registration has started. Cost is \$99.00
Contact the career center adult division 330-729-4100
- [Tri-County Beekeepers Association Workshop.](#)
Single Event March 4th-5th
Location: Fisher Auditorium 1680 Madison Ave, Wooster, OH 44691
Register online ASAP <https://www.tricountybeekeepers.org/register> or call 330-801-1309
- Carroll County Beekeepers Association Introductory Beekeeping School
Single event February 26th 9:00AM-3:00PM Registration deadline February 25th
Location: Carrollton Masonic Temple, 75 3rd St NE, Carrollton, OH 44615
Contact Jeff Rainsberger 330-323-5918

Bees in the News:

[Franklin County apiary inspector just one of many making sure bee colonies keep buzzing](#)

[Summit County beekeepers donate 100 pounds of honey to food bank, offer beginner bee classes](#)

[Sowing pollinator habitat seeds that grow where they're planted](#)

[Perry beekeepers stung by new zoning rules](#)

[Retired professor sounds alarm over honey bee migration](#)

Comb Honey Basics:

As we continue our journey into comb honey production Spear recommends getting preparations in the early spring. Three to four weeks prior dandelion bloom is what one considers such. He identifies preparation by:

1. Using drawn comb to start hives from a package or
2. Identifying over-wintered hives that may be split or can used to make splits or
3. Purchasing a strong five-frame nuc with a queen produced in the current year.

Utilizing a combination of all three methods will produce results. If starting with nucs it is recommended to start very early in the season. By using over wintered hives to produce comb honey in the summer it is good to know bees may be more inclined to swarm as their focus can lean to reproduction. Swarmed hives are less likely to produce a surplus of honey.

How do we know if an overwintered hive is strong? On a day above 50 with mild wind using as little smoke as possible open the hive. A strong hive will have bees covering seven or more frames. A good hive will have five or more. Either one may be managed to produce comb honey. If bees only cover three frames it is not recommended to be used for this process. The weak hives should be left to expand assuming it is queenright. Feeding is necessary if the hives are less than 30-50 lbs.

Feeding may be achieved by simply placing a newspaper over the top and pouring a bag of sugar over the top of the newspaper. Or making sugar bricks and placing them on top the choice is yours. Either way a spacer will be used. The spacer is just 1.5-inch box place on top to allow room for the sugar.

The hives classified as good and above should be revisited at least twice prior to the dandelion bloom. Hopefully during those inspections, the temperatures are above 60 so the bees have begun collecting pollen from maple. During these inspections search for the queen. We are also looking for queen cells. It is more likely to find them after the dandelion bloom. If cells are discovered action must be taken. The goal is to suppress the swarming. If two boxes were used for overwintering switching the top and bottom box is a good strategy for this and is recommended a week prior to the bloom.

At the start of the bloom any remaining sugar may be removed. This is the ideal time to have the bees draw new comb to replace black comb, frames that have been damaged, or have excessive drone comb. Two or three frames of foundation per super will be readily accepted by bees and drawn out.

Producing comb honey, it is important to use queens that were produced in the current year. Overwintered queens are likely to swarm. If using the overwintered queen prepare to have her replaced at some point.

Reff:

Producing comb honey. Ross Rounds; Sundance Pollen Traps. (n.d.). Retrieved February 16, 2022, from <https://rossrounds.com/producing-comb-honey>

Spear, L. (n.d.). Equipment. In Comb Honey Basics. essay.

Monthly Honey Recipe:

Sugar Bricks

Two Five Pound bricks



Ingredients

Wax Paper

Flexible mold, (cardboard, paper plate bowl)

Oven Mitts

Water ½ cup

Vinegar Dash

Sugar

Organic essential oil of spearmint (6+ drops)

Organic essential oil of lemongrass (6+ drops)

Directions

Image Place Holder 1

Line mold with wax paper and set aside.

Boil water, vinegar in stainless pot.

Slowly add sugar and do not scorch it will kill bees if over cooked. 242 F

Shut off heat when thick and stir in oils.

Pour in molds

Let cool harden and dry.

2022 Officers

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Click on the company name to visit their web site.