

# The Skep

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

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## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

- **Meeting: March 16, 2025**, CMCBA potluck at 1:00 and 2:00 meeting. We will be sharing information contributed by our own beekeepers and an opportunity to discuss the problems in our bee hives.

During the March meeting, anyone who attended the Wooster Conference can speak about what they learned and receive a token of money for sharing at our March meeting.

- **Next meeting Sunday April 27**, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday is Easter. Our speaker will be Don on Swarms, as we moved the February content to March, and we will have opportunities to hear from members who attended Wooster as well as an open mic. To discuss bee yard issues.

## FACEBOOK PAGE ISSUES

Many of our members visit the Facebook page for CMCBA. We announced at our February meeting that we would appreciate it if our members do not post on this page and block it altogether.

After investigating, we found that the administrators are people that we do not know and may not even be real people. They are using pictures of our club from events to advertise tee shirts, and we do not wish any of you to fall for this fraud. We would encourage you not to share anything and to block these pages entirely.

## Advice from a Honey Bee

"Kind words are like honey, sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.

-Proverbs 16:24



## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT: AJ REHLINGER

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Greetings! It always comes with immense pleasure to share this message with you. Our last meeting was a wealth of knowledge as Bruce presented on winter to spring maintenance. He has many years of experience in taking care of bees and how to clean his frames for the next bee season. The weather was cold, and the snow was starting to accumulate, so we appreciated the beekeepers which came. Our members have a common interest in understanding the interactions necessary between bees and nature, including parasites. It is this one time each month that we can share our unique experiences of our individual bee yards. Personally, it is a highlight of my month and hopefully yours. I wish to thank the board for meeting and working to meet deadlines. I appreciate Laurie Coy for planning the meeting topics while we wait for a Vice President. Soon, we will be meeting with other presidents of bee clubs to discuss the push to promote pollination as a state project. If you want to go to Cincinnati, call me for the details. I am more apt to answer your text.

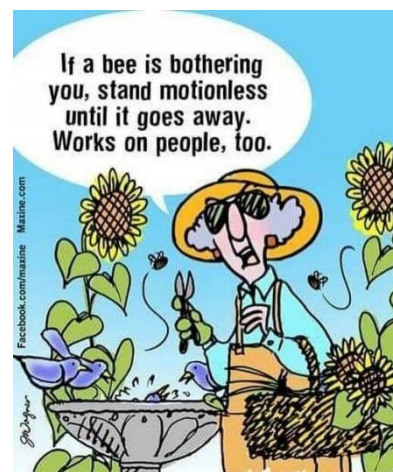
Don included information in our February Skep on where to order bees. We do not order them for you so please order your bee packages on your own. See the February Skep, last page for where you could order your bee packages and queens. Thank you!

April meeting date is the last Sunday, April 27, at 1:00 potluck and 2:00 meeting.

Special thanks go to AJ, Don, Dorothy, Laurie, Tom, Julie, Chuck, and CiCi for their contributions to this Skep edition.

We will have a special presentation at the March meeting as a representative from the Fraternal Order of the Eagle's comes to our meeting.

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# HIGHLIGHTS FOR EDUCATION



Julie Bartolone has been a beekeeper and an active member of the CMCBA for 9 years now. She has served as a former board member and is a current educator for the club. Julie is also a naturalist, and in 2018, she founded **Wild You**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working in Mahoning County to ignite a passion for and inspire people to reconnect with nature through exploration, education, and recreation.

They offer all kinds of programming to the public year-round, with their 'children's programs being the most popular. Wild You offers a special day of honey bee programs for kids each year. The club has sponsored this program for the past two years through a railroad derailment grant, making it free for kids to attend.

We offer three educational programs that day. The programs consist of two Nature Preschool sessions and one Nature School session. Due to our great turnout in the past years, we opened another class for the younger kids. Nature preschool is designed for children ages 3 to 6 and will require a guardian to accompany the child. Nature school is tailored for kids ages 7 to 10 and also requires a guardian to accompany the child.

Each program typically lasts one hour and includes a story, craft, fun outdoor activities, and an observation hive. For the younger kids, we dress them up as honey bees to learn about bee anatomy. They also have an opportunity to pretend to be foraging honey bees by finding and collecting pollen from flowers to bring back to the hive. The older group will dress up as the bees in a colony, showcasing their essential jobs and demonstrating how they work together as a super-organism. They will also take a closer look at honeycomb and beeswax and have a chance to make a beeswax candle.

Both age groups will also have the opportunity to taste local honey. We use local parks as our classroom and will be outside 100% of the time. The location and date are yet to be determined for 2025.

Learn more at [WILDYOU.ORG](http://WILDYOU.ORG)



## 2025 NORTH AMERICAN HONEY BEE EXPO

### Benefits of attending the 2025 North American Honey Bee Expo trade show.

“I enjoyed meeting some of the YouTubers that I follow at the show. I was also able to see new and innovative items that will make our hobby safer and easier. The best benefit for me was being able to get new equipment for my hobby for a great price savings. I would strongly encourage my fellow beekeepers to put this show on their bucket list. It was definitely worth the drive and my time.” Fellow Beekeeper, **Chuck Laird**



Lecture Hall and Honey Show both packed, but there is always room for more (top image by author, bottom by Gavonna Fore)

### CiCi's Bees: A Journey to the North America Honey Bee Expo

For Ohio beekeepers, January and February are mostly hands-off months in the bee yard. These quieter times are reserved for reflecting on the past season, studying varied techniques/methods, and planning for the new season. Many beekeepers attend beekeeping conferences for learning and networking, with an opportunity to buy equipment or hardware from the vendors. Personally, I always make it a point to attend the Western PA Beekeepers Conference in Monroeville and the Tri-County Ohio Conference in Wooster, both within a two hour drive. Over the last couple of years, however, I've expanded the distance I travel in search of beekeeping knowledge, camaraderie, and shopping. This January, for the second year in a row, I journeyed six hours to Louisville, Kentucky, to attend the three-day North America Honey Bee Expo (NAHBE).

## North America Honey Bee Expo (cont.)

### Why NAHBE Stands Out

Averaging around 3,000 attendees over the last two years at the Kentucky Expo Center, NAHBE is rapidly becoming *the* event to attend in the beekeeping world. Vendor spaces were filled as early as mid-November, with 160 booths spanning 128,000 square feet. The event offered spacious aisles for strolling, roomy vendor booths, and thousands of excited beekeepers eager to explore and make purchases. More than twenty speakers, a mix of academic researchers, industry experts, and YouTube influencers, presented in huge auditoriums that were often packed with standing-room-only crowds. Because there were three speakers at the same time, each presentation was professionally recorded and will be made available online for attendees to view later. Both world and US maps were pinned by attendees, showing a high density of travelers within eight hour's drive, with a smattering from most of the states including Alaska and Hawaii. World travelers from Egypt, Australia, much of Europe, South Africa, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Chile and Brazil also pinned their home countries.

### The Build-Up to the Big Event

The excitement surrounding NAHBE started months before the event, largely through its active Facebook page. Vendors began posting their specials in the fall, sparking conversations among attendees who asked questions or placed orders in advance. As January approached, the posts grew more animated, with palpable enthusiasm building for the Expo.

Groups of beekeepers coordinated carpools, booked Airbnbs, and filled nearby hotels. Some brought trailers, determined to maximize their haul of equipment and hardware. The sense of community and shared anticipation was infectious.

### The Honey Show

The NAHBE Honey Show was the largest I've ever seen, featuring over 1,000 exhibits and nearly 300 exhibitors. A team of 70 judges, some trained earlier that week by the American Honey Show Training Council, evaluated the entries. Meanwhile, exhibitors appreciated the opportunity to ask judges for tips to improve their displays for future competitions, such as burnishing wax edges with a thumbnail to enhance presentation and avoiding overworking wax to maintain its vibrant shiny finish and vivid golden color.

### The Next Gen Program and Silent Auction

One of the most inspiring aspects of NAHBE is its commitment to fostering the next generation of beekeepers through the Next Gen program. This initiative supports youth aged 11 to 22 who are passionate about beekeeping. Last year's silent auction and donations funded attendance and hotel expenses for 43 youth and their chaperones at this year's Expo. These young beekeepers were treated like VIPs, receiving special sessions with industry superstars and vendor goodie bags.

The silent auction itself was a major highlight, with over 200 feet of table space and 188 bid sheets. Donations ranged from practical equipment to unique handmade items, such as bee-themed greeting cards, a custom 'Honeycaster' bee guitar, and a stunning wood table with bee insets. YouTube influencer Bob Binnie kindly offered to transport the table to Georgia for the winning bidder, who had flown to the Expo and couldn't take it home on the plane. The 2025 silent auction raised over \$17,000 for next year's Next Gen program.

## North America Honey Bee Expo (cont.)

### Experiencing NAHBE: Vendors, Speakers, and Activities

While many attendees packed auditoriums to listen to the elite roster of speakers, I focused on exploring what the vendors had to offer. The expansive vendor area provided a fantastic opportunity to ask questions, discover new products, and connect with industry experts.

Connecting with old friends and networking with new is just as important at a conference like this. A large selfie backdrop featuring the conference name and key sponsors is always a popular spot for attendees to take pictures, with many associations and states posting their group images online. After the Expo closed for the night, several vendors had planned gatherings, like a Mead-Tasting Event, a Blue Grass Concert fundraising dinner, and a vendor-only pizza party. There were also house parties at rented AirBnBs, where beekeeping friends gathered to reconnect. Others found themselves dining at restaurants with other Expo-goers, kindling new friendships. Adding a social element to the experience makes it that much more memorable.

You would think that a world class trade show, over 20 elite speakers, and socialization-galore would be enough to fill three days, but there were even more activities going on that the volunteers kept running smoothly in the background.



### The Honey Swap

This year's Honey Swap, courtesy of Honeybee Tennessee, involved over 5,500 honey bottles. Each participant brought either 25 two-ounce mini-bears or 12 eight-ounce bottles, with glass containers were prohibited for safety reasons. The swap was a massive logistical feat, with volunteers redistributing bottles so each box contained a diverse selection of honey. The excitement continued well after the event, with participants posting photos of their swapped honey bottles in a pyramid, and the honey producers 'claiming' their bottles to share stories about their regions' unique honey varieties.

## North America Honey Bee Expo (cont.)

### Workshops: A Beta Test for the Future

This year, NAHBE introduced last-minute workshops as a trial, offering classes to about 40 participants per session for an additional fee. Topics included Cut Comb Honey with Gus Mitchell, Beeswax Candle and Encaustic Painting with Michael Young, and Bee Yard Microscopy Basics with Etienne Tardif and Cara Ching. These workshops sold out within hours, highlighting the demand for more hands-on learning opportunities. When the audience size is limited, the learning experience is most certainly enriched. Moving forward, organizers plan to expand workshop offerings and improve communication to ensure more attendees can participate.

### Conclusion

The North America Honey Bee Expo is more than just a conference—it's a vibrant celebration of the beekeeping community. Whether you're exploring innovative products, learning from experts, or simply connecting with fellow enthusiasts, events like this remind us why we are passionate about beekeeping. They energize us for the year ahead, inspire us to keep learning, and build bonds that make the beekeeping world feel a little smaller and a lot more supportive. I look forward to returning next year with honey to swap and seeing how NAHBE continues to grow.

*"I only regret not bringing a bigger truck." - Expo attendee, Bryan Hendrix, IN*

CiCi Sweeny runs around 40 colonies in Grove City, Pennsylvania, specializing in selling Northern Survivor VSH Queens and nucs. CiCi is a Master Beekeeper certified with the Eastern Apicultural Society and is President of the Northwestern PA Beekeepers Association. CiCi teaches in-depth basic and advanced beekeeping classes, and enjoys speaking in the community about bees to clubs, schools, and groups. She is an active member of DUDE and an alum of EPIQ, both in-depth research-focused educational programs led by Dr. Robyn Underwood focused on superior queen and drone production, and is currently deep-diving into microscopy to detect pathogens and parasites within honey bees. CiCi is passionate about explaining complex beekeeping topics in ways that empowers current/future beekeepers to find their own confidence and path in a world of choices.

# RECIPE OF THE MONTH



## SPRING QUINOA SALAD WITH HONEY LEMON VINAIGRETTE

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### INGREDIENTS

#### For the salad

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 2-3 cups frozen peas
- 1/2 cup feta cheese
- 6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/2 cup freshly chopped basil and cilantro
- 1/2 cup almonds, pulsed in a food processor until crushed

#### For the dressing

- 1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (1-2 large juicy lemons)
- 1/3 cup of olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (more to taste)
- a few tablespoons honey (I did 3, but adjust to taste)



### INSTRUCTIONS

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1. Cook the quinoa according to package directions. I make this the night before and let it chill in the fridge, so it separates better for the salad.
2. Bring a pot of water to boil and then turn off the heat. Add the peas and cover until it is bright green. I do this instead of regular boiling, so they don't get wrinkly! Toss the quinoa with the peas, feta, bacon, herbs, and almonds.
3. Puree all the dressing ingredients in the food processor. Toss the dressing with the salad ingredients. Season generously with salt and pepper. Serve tossed with fresh baby spinach, on crackers, or just by itself!

Resourced from online: <https://pinchofyum.com/spring-quinoa-salad-honey-lemon-vinaigrette> Submitted by CMCBA The Beehive Kitchen, club member Dorothy Sabol. 3/25.