

FCBA NEWS



Franklin County Beekeepers Association

franklincountybeekeeperspa@gmail.com <http://fcbapa.com> FB: Franklin County (PA) Beekeepers Assn
January 2020 Volume 3 - Issue 1

Upcoming Events

Winter meeting: Feb 13, 2020 -6:30-9
PM, Ag Heritage Bldg., 185 Franklin Farm Ln.,
Chambersburg, Room 7-8

FCBA Beginner Beekeeping Basics Class
March 5, 12, 19, 26 Snow date April 2
6:30 PM- 9:00 PM Ag Heritage Bldg., 185
Franklin Farm Ln., Chambersburg, Room 7-8

FCBA Officers

President: Steve Hill
shill2148@gmail.com – 717-469-7728

Vice President: Tim Weller
tim17225@yahoo.com – 717-809-1868

Board: Steve Campbell
stevecampbell@comcast.net – 717-369-4247

Board: Mike Poe
brazilbuzz@gmail.com - 717-462-6281

Board: Jon Deardorff
deardorffJK@gmail.com - 717-642-9083

Treasurer: Georgia Townsend
townsend.georgia@gmail.com - 717-352-3310

Secretary: Diane Small
dsmall2029@gmail.com – 717-360-2288

Webmaster: Matt Allen
Mathew.john.allen@gmail.com

Membership Drive

It's time to pay your club dues. Dues are \$10 yearly or \$100 for the lifetime membership. Yearly dues should be paid by January 31, 2020

Dues can be mailed to: FCBA, PO Box 341, Chambersburg, PA 17201. Make checks payable to: FCBA. Please include your name and an email address to receive the newsletter. Membership dues help pay for club materials & supplies, as everything is put back into the club.

Winter Beekeeping Tasks for Every Beekeeper

Winter in the bee yard is **mostly a time of observation by the beekeeper**. We all struggle to keep bees alive over Winter and have strong Spring colonies.

Observe the hive entrances on warmer days, don't be alarmed by short bursts of activity (potty breaks). Do you see a few bees bringing in pollen?

That's a good sign. If one colony has no activity while the others are busy, you may need to do a quick check.

Pick up any dead colonies that you find. Perhaps you can save some of the comb for next Spring. I know it makes us feel bad - it sure does for me - but don't feel like a failure if you lose hives over

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Winter. Everyone does. **There are too many factors out of our control to save every hive - every year.**

Winter Hive Inspections

If your bees were prepared for Winter, the best plan is to **leave them mostly alone**. Unless you are professional with thousands of hives, don't open your colonies when the temperatures are cold. You risk killing bees and any brood by chilling.

A quick peak in the top of the hive tells if your bees need more food. If you see lots of bees at the top of the box and no honey in the frames, it's time for some emergency winter feeding.

This can be accomplished with fondant, winter patties (pollen), or dry cane sugar. **Winter is not the time to be feeding sugar water.**

A walk through the bee yard to **check entrance reducers or mouse guards** is a good idea. These were hopefully put into place before cold weather arrived. Check the opening to ensure it is clear.

Daily bee deaths are normal in the Winter beehive. The older bees begin to die and cold temps may prevent workers from clearing out the dead. You don't want the bodies to block your reduced entrances.

Has your region experienced snow or ice? If so, check the hive opening for snow or ice. When the temperatures warm, we want the bees to be able to leave the hive for a brief spell and not be locked up inside.

Winter is normally a time of less brood (baby bees) being raised. This makes it a good time to do a mite treatment with **Oxalic Acid Vaporization**.

This is only one method of mite control. Oxalic Acid is especially effective in Winter.

For those of you who use OA, treating during a brood less time is most efficient. I would not use the dribble (water) method during cold times. The last thing cold bees need is to be wet.

Winter Beekeeping Chores Mean Preparation

During this time beekeeper chores are fewer. **Use the Winter months to prepare yourself and your bee yard** for Spring.

It is a good time to **read new books** or beekeeping magazines. Perhaps you can travel to beekeeper meetings and get new ideas for ways to help your colonies.

Repairing and painting beekeeping equipment should be done during this time. It will come in handy when the bee

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colonies start to grow. Equipment preparation is always time well spent and best done before hive inspections begin.

2020 Beginner Beekeeping Basics

Don't forget to let your friends and families know about the upcoming opportunity to learn to be a beekeeper. Or your enemies for that fact, cause you know they will get stung, some sweet revenge.

For more information see club info at top of page

OR contact Penn State Extension Office, 717/263-9226, email at FranklinExt@psu.edu

WHEN AND WHERE: Thursday evening classroom sessions will be on March 5, 12, 19, 26, snow date April 2 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Franklin County Ag Heritage Building, located at 185 Franklin Farm Lane, Chambersburg 17202. (Entrance is on lower level facing the stream.) There will also be a Saturday field day, Saturday April 11 for hands on in the hive experience.

Outreach Opportunities

The outreach department is looking for volunteers. Kay Deardorff has graciously agreed to head this team.

Kay will need help, contact her at: deardorffJK@gmail.com.
Or 717-642-9083

We are all knowledgeable enough and enjoy our hobby enough to spread the word, answer a few questions and invite members of the community to join our club/classes.

The kind of help Kay will need is:
-Set up and tear down of the booth
-Man the booth (even if you can help one time would be great), talking to folks about bees, handing out flyers/honey straws
-possibly helping in a classroom setting among other things.

Events that may include:
Franklin County Fair (July 5-11)
Shippensburg Fair (last week in July)
Franklin Fall Fun Farm Fest (late Sept)
Renfrew festival (Earth day, late Apr)
And others

Please reach out to Kay for more information and to lend a helping hand deardorffJK@gmail.com.
Or 717-642-9083

A Message from your president

Your board continues to work very hard to make this organization the best it can be.

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A while back the statement was made that "only the president can call a board meeting". This statement was not true, but it frustrated me because every member, be it board or regular member, should have the ability to express their concerns and offer input for change/improvement. I want nothing about this organization to be "closed"; if a member wishes to attend our board meetings, I have no problem with that (it is a business meeting so keep that in mind, but you are welcome).

Another issue that has come to our attention is alcohol, or fermented spirits, in the organization. Currently the by-laws specifically prohibit any alcohol at any of the meetings. Well, we have a gentleman who has been so kind as to host meetings on making mead, which is a fermented (alcohol) product made from honey. As you can see, there is a conflict there. I personally do not drink alcohol, and I certainly am not going to encourage serving alcohol at our meetings, but we cannot have our by-laws prohibiting the organization from demonstrating the viable use of product of beekeeping, then just ignoring that section and doing it anyway. These are just a couple of issues behind us needing to make some revisions to our bylaws. We will be putting out a proposed revision to the by-laws, at the next general meeting, so please read over those and feel free to discuss the proposed changes because we want to do the smart thing when we make a change.