



# St. Clair Beekeepers Association

## *Bee Buzz*

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2020

### SCBA HOLDS FIRST VIRTUAL MEETING

On Sunday, November 29, the SCBA held its first virtual membership meeting this year. The last time we were able to get together outdoors was early this Fall.

The online meeting was held using ZOOM. The normal business was conducted and several new officers were sworn in. Tom Simpson made an informative presentation titled - "How to prepare your bees for Winter". He covered topics including- placement of frames, mouse guards, hive ventilation, windbreaks, feeding methods, hive insulation and wraps. See the SCBA webpage Resources for Beekeepers/Recipes for feeding recipes.

[Check out these sites for more tips on overwintering.](#)

[Click here for January 2016 of \*Bee-Buzz\*](#) or

["The ultimate guide to overwintering success - Honey Bee Suite](#)



**Bethel Refuge Apiary  
Tom & Gay Simpson**

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### PROGRAM DIRECTOR NEEDED

The club is still in need of a Program Director. In order to have educational meetings we need a Program Director to arrange the speakers and topics. The position is a three year term and entails the following duties:

- ◆ Develop a committee of interested members
- ◆ Set up an annual plan of programs with the committee for club meetings which will serve to educate our membership
- ◆ Serve as the contact for outside speakers
- ◆ Provide membership with information about the program for monthly meetings

If you are interested in filling this position please contact President Julie McKinney.



*As a beekeeper  
you think you  
work hard....*

## Good and Faithful Servant

*Author Unknown*

Consider the bee. She has five eyes: three simple ones on top of her head, two compound ones with thousands of lenses. And she has 5,000 nostrils –nose enough to smell an apple tree two miles away. She has two sets of wings, which can be hooked together in flight so they flap as one, 16,000 times a minute. And no matter how she zigzags her dizzy dance of the flowers, she always beelines it back to her home and her job there. She may be a street cleaner, a water carrier, a nurse, a sentry, a mason, an engineer, or an air conditioner. If she is the last, she may fan 12 hours at a stretch in the hive, on top of 12 hours spent gathering nectar outside. Busy as a bee is no overstatement; she literally works herself to death, all for the single teaspoon of honey spread upon your breakfast toast, the entire quota of her few short weeks of life. A one pound jar of honey on your table represents 50,000 miles as the bee flies, or a girdling of our globe twice around.

Let us not take the bee for granted again. All her dipping into dandelions and daisies and snapdragons is no joyous game but an instinctual obedience to an ordinance of nature that command “while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest shall not cease”. There are 100,000 species of plants which could never properly form seeds without the bee. Without her, our bread would not be sweet; indeed there would be no bread or wine either. And so, in many churches, beeswax candles are used at the traditional service of bread-breaking and wine-drinking; it is a way of paying tribute to our good and faithful servant, the bee.

## Club Librarian Needed

The club has a small library of books and magazines that are available to the membership. The club is in need of a volunteer to act as Librarian to keep track of these resources. The Librarian is responsible to bringing the resources to the meeting and keeping track of who has checked out the material. If you are interested contact Julie McKinney.



# Officers for 2021

The following members were sworn in as officers for the year of 2021		
President -	Julie McKinney	Program Director— open
Vice President -	Tom Simpson	Librarian— open
Secretary -	Beth Keller	Public Information Officer—Dennis Hessel
Treasurer -	Kay Good	
Directors -	Jeff Keller, Tom Cairns & Tim Schartung	

# 2020 Beekeeper of the Year

Vickie grew up in Rosewood Heights, IL, one of 10 children. Along with her 44 years of teaching grade school, high school and college students she earned graduate degrees in American Studies. Vickie began keeping bees around 2012 and has attended multiple classes and conferences to further her beekeeping knowledge. She has been a dedicated member of SCBA for 8 years, assisting in multiple ways in addition to serving for 3 1/2 years as Treasurer. Vickie organized 2 Beginning Beekeeping classes for the club, has quietly mentored numerous new beekeepers, educated both children and adults about honey bees through lively presentations, and generally served as a goodwill ambassador for the club.



Julie McKinney and Charity Davis-Woodard present Vickie York with 2020 Beekeeper of the Year award



Beekeeper of the Year  
Vickie York

# The Kentucky's Beekeeper's Calendar

Kentucky State University –Cooperative Extension Program

## What's Happening Inside the Hive?

The bees have changed to their wintertime mode. A large colony may have a small amount of brood in early November, but that will soon disappear. By now the queen has completely stopped laying eggs. Five or ten days in November will be warm enough for the bees to fly, but they will find nothing blooming.

As the weather gets cold, the bees form a tight cluster to keep warm. This ball of bees overlaps several frames of honey. The bees gradually consume their stored honey and generate heat. The colder it gets, the tighter the bee cluster. Week by week, the ball of bees gradually moves through the hive to find more honey. When the first snowfall covers the hives, consider that the honey bee is the only insect in Kentucky that keeps warm all winter.

In early winter, mice may move into the hive and make a nest. This can occur even if the hive is alive and well overwinter. The bees are tightly clustered and the mouse finds a spot in the corner away from the bees.

## Beekeeper Chores

The year is effectively over. There is now little to be done for the bees. They will not feed on syrup and it is too late to apply treatments for mites and diseases.

If you haven't removed your mite treatments and queen excluder, do so on the first warm day in November. Otherwise, there is no reason to open your hives.

Attach the entrance reducer to the front of the hive. This serves two purposes: cold wind is kept out of the hive; and, mice are prevented from nesting in the hive. Entrance reducers may be purchased from beekeeping supply companies. Or, you can simply nail a strip of wood to reduce the opening of the hive. Be sure your entrance reducer is thick enough to be mouse-proof. Some have metal strips to deter mice.

## Observations and ideas

Late November and December are the best times to plant trees. Black Locust and tulip poplar seedlings can be planted where they will provide



shade, windbreak, and nectar for the bees. These two trees are known for their rapid growth and copious nectar. As honey plants, trees are a long term investment. They will not provide significant bloom for several years.

This is a good time to do some reading. Some fine books and videos are available from beekeeping supply companies. Books on beginning beekeeping, advanced topics such as queen rearing, and general interest are sold.

Beeswax candles are fun and easy to make. They can be rolled from sheets of foundation in minutes. Beeswax foundation comes in dozens of colors, available from beekeeping supply companies.

### Public Information Officer

My name is Dennis Hessel, and I am the newly installed Public Information Officer, I am retired (another word for very busy) and live in Edwardsville with my wife. We have two grown children, 8 grandchildren and grandtwins on the way.



I started working with bees in the Spring of 2018, after attending the St. Clair Beekeepers class that February. I have three hives and find the science and biology behind bees very interesting and challenging.

If there is anything you would like covered in the Bee Buzz or you have an article you would like to submit let me know.

stclairbees@gmail.com

## A Little Bee Humor

Q: Why did the bee get married?

A: Because he found his honey

Q: What do you call a bears without ears?

A: B's

Q: What do you call a wasp?

A: A wanna-bee!

Q: What's a bees favorite novel?

A: The Great Gats-bee!

Q: What do you get if you cross a bee with a door bell?

A: A hum dinger!

source: <http://jokes4us.com/animaljokes/beejokes.html>





## **St. Clair Beekeepers Association**

Email: [stclairbees@gmail.com](mailto:stclairbees@gmail.com)

**Promoting interest in bees and  
beekeeping in Southern Illinois.**

**The purpose and function of the St. Clair Beekeepers Association is the promotion of interest in bees and beekeeping by such means as encouraging...**

- **Good beekeeping practices**
- **The utilization of bees for pollination of agricultural crops**
- **The dissemination of information about bees and beekeeping**

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Our next club membership meeting will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2021 at 7 p.m. At this time we are planning on holding the meeting online via ZOOM . You may join this meeting from your smart phone, tablet or computer. We will send an email with a link to join the meeting around January 25th so be watching for it. The topic of the meeting has not been determined and will be announced at a later date.

Watch for more info on our webpage [www.stclairbees.com](http://www.stclairbees.com) or St. Clair Bees Association Facebook