



## The Official Newsletter for The Capital City Beekeepers Association

Above is a leaflet from a sketchbook entitled, *The Bee Swarm*, by Edward Wilson, watercolour with ink and pencil on paper, c 1842-1878. I find it very appropriate to the main subject of the body of this month's newsletter. With the precautions of the current "pandemic", many of our events were and have been cancelled, i.e. Dadant's Package Day that we as an association have as long as I have been a member have participated in, The Master Gardener's Plant sale, HAS, as well as our regularly scheduled meetings. Yet, beekeeping in our personal apiaries and the natural life around us goes on unimpeded, including the glorious and wondrous event of honey bees swarming. Whether they are from our own managed colonies or from some hollow tree on yonder forest glade, mankind for millennia has gladly taken to the challenge and prospective profit to capture them as depicted on the artisan's as the traditional method of "tanging" is being employed— *"which is to make a loud clanging or ringing noise (done in the olden times with a pot or pan)"*— in an effort to coax a swarm into settling where you wish and then hive it. At the time of this drawing, that would mean into a straw skep as seen in the background. There is modern proof, however, that this may work still, as written and proven in a [2015 Article from Bee culture magazine, by Tom Davidson](#). It makes for an entertaining and informative read in this season of swarming. ~ *Wes*

### In This Issue:

Swarm Stories, CCBA Members share pics and their stories, pg. [2-5](#)

March Minutes, pg. [6-7](#)

March Treasurer's Report, pg. [8](#)

"What's the Buzz about Honey", Franklin County Co-op FB Live Program, pg. [9](#)

Upcoming Events, pg. [10](#)



## **CORONAVIRUS**

*In cooperation with the precautions set forth, CCBA has again cancelled our regularly meeting at the extension office. However, we will be conducting a FB live program at 6 p.m. and afterwards our business meeting April 28th, via online conference call. Members were sent the sign-on information credentials. If you are a member and did not receive the email please contact Jan Rafert at [jwrafert@gmail.com](mailto:jwrafert@gmail.com). - Wes Henry, CCBA President*

The iconic argument made us laugh as kids and still does as adults and now as beekeepers the play on words, "It's Swarm Season!" , is bittersweet and can make us smile too...unless its yours. However, if you have the opportunity to catch your own you have a kindred-spirit with the skeptists of old who without moveable comb welcomed it. Here's a few stories from CCBA members.



# Swarm Stories

CCBA Members Share

## Eddie's Bee Adventure

By CCBA Member Eddie McNutt

So far this spring I have caught five swarms! I'm pretty sure all came from my hives. I believe a few of them were secondary swarms as they were smaller in size. I have neglected getting into my hives like I should have, *I will do better next year*, as

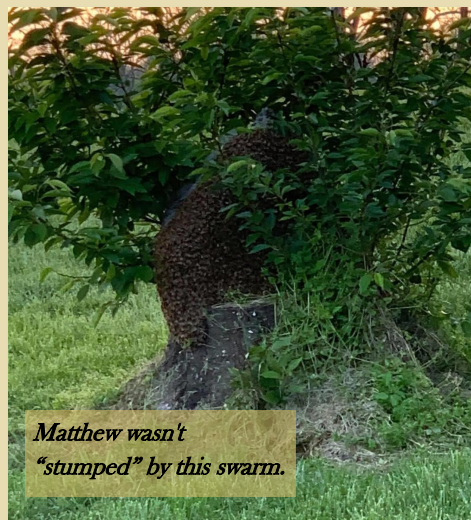
this COVID-19 has taken over. I have seven hives and I opened them last Sunday. Three looked good and were putting some nectar in the supers. One had a superseding cell, two had swarms cell and one was a disaster! I pulled the swarm frames and some brood frames from one hive and put them above a double-screen divider (experiment). The other hive I pulled the swarm frames and one frame of brood and made a NUC.

Apparently I missed some swarm cells because they swarmed! This year three of the swarms landed on fence posts! I used a five gallon bucket to capture them. One was a really small swarm that I had my doubts would made it, beekeepers hopes spring eternal, but I put it in a NUC anyway. This is where the story gets interesting. As I was working on the two swarms in the picture, I noticed a huge swarm on the wooden leg of the hive stand where I put the small swarm. They were on the landing board as well. I checked the other swarms and they all were in their boxes. By now I had run out of equipment. Off to Dadant my wife and I went! By the time I got home the huge swarm on the NUC box stand was gone, or was it? I looked in the NUC box and it was crammed full of bees!



*Two of Eddie's swarms and his daughter Maggie. IT WAS Her first time in a bee suit!*

WHAT TO DO? I called Wes Henry and he advised me to move them into a regular box, pull some brood frames from another hive and hope for the best. That's what I did. It's raining as I write this so I'm hoping that also helps keep them there too. ~



*Matthew wasn't "stumped" by this swarm.*

I received a call from a friend on Wednesday of

Submitted by:  
CCBA Matthew Greathouse

this week in regards to this swarm on a stump (left), on Iron Works Pike in Georgetown. My son and I went and gathered them up and brought them back to our farm in Stamping Ground. They appear to be doing well as of now. This one will help replace the nine hives I lost over the winter. ~

# Swarm Stories Cont.

CCBA Members Share



Submitted by:  
CCBA Member  
Kathy  
Stephanski

KATHY SUBMITTED THESE TWO PICTURES OF SWARMS SHE HAS CAUGHT. IN HER WORDS,

“I HAVE CAUGHT 2 SWARMS FROM MY OWN HIVES.  
1ST ON 4-19  
2ND ON 4-22.”



Submitted by:  
CCBA Member  
Mike Swatzyna

“April 20th. As I tried to capture and release into a nuc prepared to box. I believed that I had the queen mow, the heavy and left them for a few hours. When I sound of buzzing went to collect caught my atten- them at dusk, tion. Hanging from a White Pine near they decided they my bee yard, was a large, conical would move swarm of bees. They were some 24" in along. I have length or so, just hanging. I grabbed since inspected my swarm rig (painters extension pole my hives and and 5 gallon bucket), a spare hive and don't believe ei- in one shake, collected the entire ther were from swarm. The were dumped into the hive my hives the best and later covered. When I checked on I can tell. Lots of their status, I heard more buzzing fun and added a deeper in the pines. I found a small solid hive to my inventory that takea swarm in a more difficult location and two deeps to hold them all.”



What a strange winter and early spring we have had this year, in so many ways. The mild early weather set up the perfect storm for early swarm season this year from hives with ample honey stores. If you were like me, and your hives came through the winter empty of honey stores, well that's a different story. Without honey, they were slow to start ramping up brood production. While we had ample early nectar flow, the cold and wet weather kept the bees grounded for more days than not. But I digress. I've talked to many of my bee collaborators who have reported multiple swarms from the same hives. One lady told me her two hives have issued six swarms. Well, at that point, catch them if you can, although most people run out of boxes by the time they catch two.

I did arrive to one apiary on Easter Sunday, stepped out the truck only to harvest a swarm a mere four feet away, tucked nicely under a fence \brace post. I went back two days later to finish my apiary inspection, only to collect a similar swarm off the same spot! I never could ascertain which of the four hives they came from.

**A very Busy Bee Swarming Season**  
*Submitted by:*  
 CCBA Member Jack Kuhn

**Tell-tale signs and what you can do**

up, the bees build several queen cell cups, the queen then lay eqqs into the cups, the bees run her around the outside of the hive to get her into flying shape, and as the first queen cell is capped, the first swarm is ready to go and will issue.

Sometimes you can intercede on the swarm inclination. One method is once the drone population builds up and before the hive builds swarm cells, pull a couple of frames of capped brood and a frame of uncapped brood that has egg and larvae, along with a frame of uncapped honey and place into a nuc. Replace the frames in the original hive with a couple of blank foundation and used drawn comb if you have it. I like to put them in the #2 and #8 position leaving the remaining brood in the middle and honey/pollen frames on the outside. At the same time, place two or three supers on top. This works fifty-percent of the time for me to delay swarming until just after the honey flow. I prefer them to swarm after this so they will make a new queen.

As for the NUC we just created, take the frame with the eggs/larvae, find the margin between eggs and 2-3-day old larvae and make a notch with your hive tool just below 2-4 cells, just breaking the bottom of the cell. The new queenless-nuc will make queen cells using this "on-the-spot" or OTS queen rearing method. Or just put the frame in the box and do a walk away split. For faster results, buy a mated queen and install her the next day or two. Make sure you shake a frame or two of young bees in to the NUC. Young bees are on the brood, older forager bees are on the outside. If you use older bees and house the new NUC in the existing apiary, they will go back to the original hive come nightfall.

If you inspect your hive and you see they have begun building queen cells and the queen has already laid eggs in the cells, she is leaving, nothing you do will stop her. Being careful not to damage the queen cells (I use an extra box to transfer the frames), go on a quest and find the queen. She will often be on the frames having eggs, or if the queen cells are nearly capped, on the outside frames getting exercised. Remove her to a NUC along with a frame of capped brood, a frame of drawn comb and a frame of honey/pollen. Make sure to shake some young bees in too. And Walla, you have a NUC, the original hive will make a new queen, and you have avoided losing lots of bees and honey to a swarm. Don't forget to feed the NUC.

If you have not already done so, get those supers on all your hives now!~

**Swarm Stories**  
 Cont.

It's natural for the bees to swarm in the spring, right before a large honey flow. After all, that's how they repopulate their species. The usual process is that nectar and pollen start flowing in, drone production ramps



*A double swarm found and caught by CCBA member David Miller*

# Swarm Stories

Cont.

## A First Swarm Story

*Submitted by:*  
CCBA Member Ralph Davison

but was aware if the swarm was on a branch to just cut the branch and shake them into the box and you're good to go. "Ralph continued, " However, as



stated, this swarm was on a fencepost so wasn't sure how to capture it. I did have a nuc box, so I thought I would just spray some frames with a mix of sugar water and Honey B Healthy and leave the top open and slide box up close to the swarm and hopefully they would crawl into the box. I guess they hadn't read the play book as they didn't move off the post. I had some burr comb from my regular hive that had some honey in it so I spread some of this on top of the frames and some bees started to crawl over into the nuc (see picture left). Hurray – I'll go eat lunch and come back and they will all be in nuc."



Returning from lunch Ralph discovered not a single bee on the post except for a few on the tops of the frames and hoped that the swarm was in the nuc box and between the frames. "No such luck!!!" wrote Ralph, "The swarm had moved off the post and farther back in the blackberries on a couple of old canes and a huge pile on the ground."

"At least I had something I could cut and shake over the nuc", he thought.

"After whacking a swath through the blackberries to get to where they were", Ralph then "cut the canes and shook them in the nuc box hoping the queen was in this bunch. Within about two minutes all the bees on the ground started moving and crawling up the side and into the nuc (see picture right). Success, first swarm captured."

Ralph also mentioned that he thinks the swarm could have come from his hive that was near the post on which he first saw the swarm. As of the writing of the newsletter he hasn't had the opportunity to check.



# Capital City Beekeepers Association

## Meeting Minutes of 24 March 2020

NOTE: Due to the Coronid-19 outbreak, the meeting was conducted by means of teleconferencing with twelve members in attendance. An additional member tried to join but was unable to do so.

### Program:

Jack Kuhn reported that he went into the winter with 30 hives and lost only one over winter. Of the 29-remaining hives, one was queenless. He combined two sets of two hives with a total after winter of 27 hives.

Jack also added what he was now seeing in the hives and what we should as beekeepers be looking for and appropriate action.

Questions were also discussed and answered from “the floor”.

### Business Meeting:

President Wes Henry called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. He called for the approval of the February minutes and financial report as printed in the February newsletter. There was no opposition to either and both were approved.

### Activity Reports:

#### Swarm Report:

So far there has been one reported swarm. Wes reminded members to report their swarm experiences to the secretary via [jwrafert@gmail.com](mailto:jwrafert@gmail.com).

#### Library Report:

Librarian George Fowler gave a brief report and Wes Henry mentioned that he was able to contact the member with the overdue books and that due to medical issues the member was unable to return them, but will do so in the future.

#### Certified Kentucky Honey Program:

Sarah Preston reported that the program continues to progress well.

### Old Business:

#### Dues:

Wes reminded those members who have yet to pay their CCBA 2020 dues to send them to the secretary at 1662 Talmage Mayo Rd., Harrodsburg, KY 40330. Ky State Beekeepers Assoc. dues must be paid separately and can be paid online at [kybees.org](http://kybees.org).

#### Volunteer Door Prize Program:

There will be two prize drawings, June and October, for members who volunteer for CCBA events. Each time a member volunteers to participate they can enter a chance to win. Events include Dadant Package Day, Educational Opportunities, Farmers Market (if not selling honey), etc.

#### Bluegrass Beekeeping School:

Due to recent conditions, the wrap-up meeting has been postponed. Results of the survey taken at the school looked good, including no complaints about lunch! We wish to extend our appreciation for all who assisted.

#### Shirts:

There are still a few shirts available at \$15 each.

# Meeting Minutes of 24 March 2020, Cont.

## New Business:

### Bee School Hive Paintings:

The proceeds from the auctioning of the five hives at the bee school averaged out to be about \$84 per participating school. A motion was made to increase each school's share to \$90. The motion was unanimously approved.

### Kentucky State Beekeepers Assoc. Spring Meeting:

The KSBA spring meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> of March in Elizabethtown has been cancelled.

### Master Gardener Plant and Seed Sale:

The sale has also been cancelled but the master gardeners are looking at other options for sale and distribution. If none of those options work, they will look at donation possibilities.

Since this sale was to be our second event on April 25<sup>th</sup>, a second banner would be useful. The secretary found the source of our present banner and was given a quote of about \$55 for another. Lynn Morris made a motion that the association purchase the banner and the motion was approved.

### Dadant Package Day:

Dadant's package day is still a go for April 25<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are need for package distribution beginning at 7 a.m., for answering questions, for working our booth and for giving demonstrations on package installation.

### Heartland Apicultural Society Conference:

The HAS annual conference will be held this year at the Univ. of Southern Indiana in Evansville on July 6<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>. Registration, whether for the full conference or for single days only, is available through the HAS website. Included in the conference are many good speakers and programs, vendors, dinner planned for Sunday and a honey show. There will be special hotel rates and a limited number of dorm rooms available. Wes will be presenting on Wednesday, the 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Adjournment:

With nothing more from the floor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Our next meeting will be April 28<sup>th</sup> with hive inspections beginning at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan W. Rafert  
CCBA Secretary

## CCBA - Treasurer's Report Prepared on April 22 for the April 2020 Meeting

### General

Beginning Balance (March 24, 2020) \$3365.31

### Receipts

Dues – CCBA (9 Individual)	\$90.00	
Dues – CCBA (6 families)	\$90.00	
Donation (one member with dues)	\$40.00	
Interest on Checking Acct.(3/31)	\$0.27	
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>\$220.27</b>

### Expenditures

Purchase of new club banner	\$54.11	
Donations to schools for hive painting	\$450.00	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b>\$504.11</b>

**Currant Available Balance \$3081.47**

**Checking Account: \$3031.47**

**Cash change fund \$50.00**

### Notes:

1. Wilson check for March = \$147.50 for 4 member/participants.
2. The treasurer maintains a \$50.00 cash change fund for use at meetings and events.

### Educational Funds (Saving)

Beginning Balance	\$478.81	
Receipts		
Interest on savings account (3/31)	\$0.06	
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>\$.06</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b>NONE</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>		<b>\$478.87</b>



WHAT'S THE BUZZ ABOUT

Honey



LEARN WITH US

Honey is one of our most ancient food sources, but what do you really know about honey? Join us to learn about Kentucky honey production, its benefits, and ways to use honey in our diets and cooking!

April 30 @ 1:30 p.m. EST

Join us with one of the following options:

Click here to join on FacebookLive: [Franklin County Extension Service](#)

Click here to join from PC, Mac, Linux, or your mobile device:

<https://uky.zoom.us/j/530741421>

Or iPhone one-tap (US Toll): 16468769923,530741421# or 13126266799,530741421#

Or by Telephone, Dial: Meeting ID: 530 741 421

+1 646 876 9923 (US Toll) +1 312 626 6799 (US Toll) +1 669 900 6833 (US Toll)

+1 253 215 8782 (US Toll) +1 301 715 8592 (US Toll) +1 346 248 7799 (US Toll)

International numbers available: <https://uky.zoom.us/j/530741421>

Or Skype for Business (Lync): SIP:530741421@lync.zoom.us



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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

# The Capital Bee

## Opportunities

CCBA Regular Scheduled Meeting- April 28th

[Facebook Live Program on CCBA FB page, 6 p.m.](#)



[Business Meeting via ZOOM, 7 p.m. Members sent sign-on information.](#)

“What’s the Buzz About Honey” presentation-  
April 30th, 1:30 p.m.

[Franklin County Extension Facebook live](#)



KSBA President’s Meeting, May 30th

Via teleconference

[More info at KSBA website](#)



1st 2020 CCBA Honey Booth (Tentative)- June  
13th, 7:30 a.m.-12

[Franklin County Farmers Market, Frankfort, KY](#)



FRESH. LOCAL. LIVELY.