

# COMB Courier

**“I speak for those who cannot speak for themselves”**

Vol. 3 No. 9

September 2016

Editor: mike ffrench

## One man’s rant . . .

One of my readers suggested I stick to bees and stay out of the political arena—I wish I could, but as the article on Rancid, MI points out, politicians can keep beekeepers outside the city limits, politicians facilitate the encroachment of neonicotoids even though all the evidence points to their destructive nature. Politicians draw up the laws that restrict the sale and distribution of honey by the hobbyist. It has taken years just to attain passage of the cottage law, which should have been a no-brainer from the get-go (please excuse my use of time-worn clichés, but they fit the bill for now).

One man’s rant is another man’s opinion. Politics may be boring for some and an irritant for others, but it may pay us to be more aware that the laws of the land affect everyone, everyday of our lives, and can be changed with the stroke of a pen—beekeepers are not exempt from this process!

I will always accept valid criticism and I am always open to advice and suggestions as to ways of improving my apiary, but I will not accept censorship or restrictions on what I write.

“The graves of history are filled with martyrs whose only crime was to tell the truth.”

—A. H. Auden.

## Readers reply

### Oren Best on Michigan tax laws

Commercial Beekeepers are sales tax exempt. Hobbyist would not qualify as they don't sell their product. The items that are eligible have to be used directly in the production of the agricultural product, feed, beehive equipment, Bobcats (vehicles) and such.

## Missing link

One thing I noticed about the fabulous recipes one finds in food magazines: they always contain the one ingredient you haven’t got. Which is why I favor those that advocate honey, since I always have plenty of it.

## En Garde

Recently I harvested my honey (for harvest read: stole from bees) and inadvertently took a super that contained a partial frame of brood. I do not use a queen excluder (honey excluder, claims one beekeeper) which is how the brood came to be so high in the hive. I trucked the honey from my son’s place to my house (a distance of some 17 miles) before I discovered my mistake. I was amazed at the tenacity of the bees in guarding their young. I was able to store all the supers in reasonable time and safety, except for the lone frame with the brood, which was swarming with bees. I had to work amidst a swarm of excited bees, sometimes with and sometimes without my bee-suit, it was terribly warm that day. I expected to get mobbed and stung repeatedly — not so.

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Why did I not get stung?

My observation is that I was not near their hive, and it occurred to me that the only bees that attacked me were loners—the bee police! Bees have their own system of organization very similar to our own. Each bee has its own responsibility, and for most of them it doesn't consist of restoring law and order; if *we* have an emergency we don't call out the vigilantes, we call on the police or National Guard. Equating insect behavior to human behavior may be jarring to some of you, but all life on earth is related in some way or form, so finding similarities is not all that far-fetched.

## Position on Preposition

One of my failings as a writer is ending a sentence with a preposition. Yes, I know it is grammatically incorrect, but writers are judged by their style, verbosity, and ability to capture the reader's attention. If my only shot at fame is poor grammar, then so be it. Like beekeepers, no two writers are the same, each follows a different path, they leave their fingerprints on their work so that it shines a light for those who follow. Like Jane Carhartt's grandma used to say, "Never use a preposition to end a sentence with."

## Now you see them . . . now you don't

In Rancid, MI the town council banned bees inside the city limits. Rancid beekeepers went underground like the Maquis in France during W.W.II. Beekeepers in Rancid work on their hives only in the late evenings with night-vision goggles. The hives are camouflaged in colors to match their surroundings. Their neighbors often find a quart of honey on their doorsteps. The neighbors are mystified, but happy at getting something for nothing. The city council, doing nothing for something, oblivious to the obvious, remain unaware of the presence of the bees—which speaks for itself.

## BEE ITEMS FOR SALE BY MEMBERS

### LOIE CRAFT

New 6 5/8" supers (painted white) with all new frames and foundations. . .Ready to use for \$40 each.

Call: (517) 851-8408 if no answer, please leave a message that says "SUPERS" or send e-mail to: [candyladyme@yahoo.com](mailto:candyladyme@yahoo.com)

### DEAN CROSS

I have the following items for sale.

- 6 Fume Boards \$2.00 each
- 25 Plastic Frames, Deep, Black \$ .25 each, used
- 8 Plastic Frames, Medium, White. \$ .15 each, used

Address: 2162 Grovenburg Rd, Lansing, MI 48911, PH: 517-899-1696, [crossdalj@comcast.net](mailto:crossdalj@comcast.net).

I can bring them to the next COMB meeting also.

C.O.M.B. Monthly meeting.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month 6:30pm.  
MSU Pavilion, Farm Lane, E. Lansing

Deadline for next issue is September 30th