



# CAPPINGS

## The Official Newsletter of the Kansas Honey Producers Association

[www.kansashoneyproducers.org](http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org)

Promoting Mankind's Most Beneficial Insect - The Honey Bee!

### Special points of interest:

- Legislative Update
- State Fair
- President's Corner
- Regional News
- Value Added Program
- Fall Meeting

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## The Legislative Committee 2022 by Jim Kellie

The legislators are almost done for this year. I believe the last meeting will be around May 28<sup>th</sup>. Our major interest is the food tax. I waited until the last minute before sending this article. Governor Kelly just signed the bill a few hours ago. The plan is to go from our current 6.5% tax to 4% next year, then 2% and finally zero in 2025. Beekeepers will still be expected to collect the food tax on honey being sold to the public or at Farmers markets. This was done so that if the states income, which is running on a small margin of excess, could then hold the percentage or bring it back up in case of a shortage into the State Treasury. This bill will go into effect in January.

One of our goals is to get a clear understanding as to the procedures of how the State Department of Pesticides and

Fertilizer investigates pesticide kills. We would like to arrange a meeting so that we can gather information to pass along to all of you to help your journey through loss or kill of your bees. This is what we know so far. If you have or suspect pesticide kill or damage to your bees, please call the Department of Pesticides and Fertilizer at 785-564-6688. Advise them what you suspect and they will connect you with an investigator. You may also register your complaint at the Department of Agriculture, Pesticide and Fertilizer. Click on the "Sensitive Crops and Drift Watch" side bar. There you will find the "Pesticide complaint" to click on and fill out.

They should contact you with in 48 hours. We also ask that you sign up for Drift Watch as well; which, if you are

not aware, registers your bees on a map that will enable agriculture applicators to see where you are and be able to notify you if they're spraying near your hives. This is a voluntary program for both beekeeper and applicators. When we first started, there was not too much communication. As time has gone by, more and more applicators are using Drift Watch. We urge you to report damage or kills of your bees. With government, if it isn't written down, then it didn't happen. Regardless of what they investigate, a report is made and we can then work with those areas that seem to be affected. If you choose not to do anything and just do an "oh well", then you are not helping to identify an area problem so that we and the State can work toward solving

issues. So please file a complaint. I am very happy to speak at any local club on how to help you with pesticide prevention.

USDA now offers a risk management program called, "Micro Farm Management". This is for small farms under \$100,000.00. It sounds like a good program for sideliners who would have a hefty investment into their business. It could work also for beekeepers to help with loss from weather or marketing situations. For more information, see the USDA Product management bulletin: PM-21-069. Also, Bee Culture, "Catch the Buzz", has a short story on this program for further information.

Last, I have received information on our State Agriculture Summit. It is hoped that this year we can all meet once again. I will be informing our legislative committee and our president to save the dates so that we can make our presence known to the state agricultural world.

Please feel free to contact myself, Brian Withrow, Steve Tipton, or our president, Becky Tipton, if you have any concerns that we may be able to help you with.

## Participate in the Kansas State Fair

This year the fair is from September 9-18. We will need volunteers starting the 7<sup>th</sup>. Participate by volunteering in the honey sales booth by setting up, selling products, or tearing down. Watch for a link to be sent out via email for signup genius to see what times and activities where volunteers are needed. It takes many people coming together before, during, and after to have a successful event. Don't be bashful about volunteering, or think you don't know enough about bees. It can be a great learning experience for you, as well as, the public that we are educating.

This year we have some new state yard bee managers, Julie Cahoj in Atwood, Nikki Bowman in Riley, Jane Kill in Sedgwick, and Melissa Karsten in Columbus. Thank you for your willingness to run a state yard! These yards are, in addition to, our already established bee yards of Steve and Becky Tipton in Meriden, Cecil Sweeney and Joli Winer in Spring Hill, Greg Swob in Hays, Jim Kellie in Larned, Bob Burns in Overland Park, and Mark Mounce and Stephanie Brown in Hutchinson. Thank you to all of our managers for taking care of these hives that provide honey to be sold at the state fair. I'm looking forward to a great honey harvest and having honey from all areas of our state at the fair.

You also have another opportunity to participate in the Kansas State Fair by exhibiting your honey in the honey show. The show is sponsored by KHPA in that we pay the premium money to the fair and pay for the ribbons that are given to winning entries. If no placements in a class are exhibited, the premium money is kept by the fair. I encourage everyone to enter as many classes as possible so all the monies are awarded to an exhibitor. All entries must be entered online at [Kansasstatefair.com](http://Kansasstatefair.com) by August 1 to avoid any late fees. Once on the site, click on "competitions", then "competitive exhibits", then "agriculture", then "online entry", and follow the instructions to enter your entries to bring to the fair. The fair is requiring a dollar fee for each entry, so to encourage as many entries as possible, KHPA will reimburse your dollar for entry brought to the fair. Let's show our pride in Kansas honey and fill up the honey show area to overflowing! If your local club would like a presentation on how to prepare entries to exhibit at the fair and go through all of the classes available to enter, we have some willing experienced beekeepers who are willing to come and give a program on this topic. Feel free to contact me and I will help make this happen. If you need help getting your entries to or from the fair, please contact me and I will find a way to get them safely delivered and then returned to you after the fair is over. I may be contacted at 913-768-4961 via text or phone for questions about entering and transporting entries to or from the fair.

Kristi Sanderson. 2nd Vice President

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER by Becky Tipton

How can I help? What do you need? What is your goal? Can I share what I know?

Beekeeping is an art and a science. The science is applied bee biology. The art is being able to observe what is happening inside the hive and maximizing the population/work of the bees to coincide with the floral sources available in your area to produce honey and pollinate crops. I am a good beekeeper. I became a good beekeeper by reading books written by other good beekeepers. I have attended many programs, some taught by extraordinary bee scientists and some by practical beekeepers. I have spent more hours than I can count observing our bees inside the hive and out. All have contributed to my bee knowledge. Notice, at no time did I become a good beekeeper in isolation. I learned from others, their discoveries, and their blunders. Whatever I know is because someone helped me selflessly. Others gave of their time, talent, and skills to share their knowledge and make me a better beekeeper.

There are few things that give me more joy than teaching others about beekeeping or about the associated value-added products. This next month (June 4th) the NEKBA group will hold our annual event called , FunDay. We were unable to have the workshop in either 2020 or 2021—you know why. So, this year's event is extra special for us. This is the epitome of 'let me share what I know' and includes some of the best beekeepers in NE Kansas. We will have great national speakers, excellent local speakers, delicious food, and ample opportunity to socialize and share beekeeping ideas. The NEKBA group is a non-profit organization, focusing on education. This is not a money-making event, but it is rich in what it offers for the price! Look for additional information on our website and here in 'The Cappings'.

But everywhere I look this spring I see people extending a hand and helping others rise above. The Oakland community in Topeka has a new garden on an abandoned school playground. They hoped to add bees to pollinate their strawberries and vegetables. They will share the produce among their neighbors. They missed the deadline for the KHPA grant, so Steve and I placed 2 hives on site so they could begin their beekeeping adventure. They fully intend to apply for the grant for 2023 but just didn't want to wait. We can make it happen. In SE Kansas, Tiny is trying to bring people together to swap equipment, ideas, and encourage involvement. Julie in western Kansas is helping mentor neighbors interested in beekeeping. Jane is going to make honey straws for the nature center in the South Central area. Love the honey; love the bees. EVERYWHERE I look, I see people asking, how can I help?

You want to know how I do something; just ask! There are no "trade secrets" here. We are a tiny industry, and we must all support each other for the health and betterment of mankind's most beneficial insect. So, I challenge you. Bee better! Attend a meeting, zoom a Q & A, mentor a newbie. Bee humble. You stand on the shoulders of all those who taught you.

Becky Tipton, President

## News from Northeast Kansas

Beekeepers in the Northeast Kansas area have been faced with challenging weather conditions since the start of the calendar year. We had a relatively dry winter. This spring had so many rainy days in a row it might have been easier to count the days that were dry. Freeze warnings persisted well past the area's normal frost-free date of April 16. Nectarines, peaches, and plum blossoms were affected by the freezing temperatures. Meteorologists also issued a record number of high wind warnings (winds of 58 MPH or greater). This makes it very difficult for honey bees to fly. Cool, overcast days also made foraging difficult and resulted in a slower colony build up. Despite these challenges honey bees answered the call of nature and swarming season started on time and is in full swing. Some are calling it a "swarmy" year.

The calendar and colony behaviors show that the main spring nectar flow has begun, and beekeepers need to be sure to have their supers on their colonies. As the old beekeepers saying goes, "Bees can't fill supers left in storage." White Dutch Clover has started to bloom and Black Locust trees were blooming for several days before the rain made its way through the area.

The Northeast Kansas Beekeepers Association accepted 6 scholarship students into club's Youth Scholarship Program. This program is headed by Joli Winer. Scholarship recipients are paired with mentors to guide and teach them beekeeping skills. The students and mentors met together, as a group, to assemble woodenware and get to know each other. Packaged bees arrived in mid-April, queens were released, and subsequent inspections have followed to check on the colony's progress.

NEKBA's Funday is scheduled for June 4, 2022. After 2 years of restrictions, this year the event will be in person at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, Lawrence, KS. Special events coordinator for Funday, Jay Francis, has been working hard and organizing a full day of fun for beekeepers of all skill levels. Guest speakers include Jay Evans, USDA Beltsville Bee Lab Research Entomologist and Bee Culture Magazine monthly contributor; Krispin Givens, Purdue University, Apiculture Specialist and developer of the Indiana Mite Biters; and Dr. Judy Wu-Smart, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I like the name, "The Indiana Mite Biters". I think it should be the new school mascot for Purdue! Speaker information, topics, registration, and more can be found at [www.nekba.org](http://www.nekba.org). In addition to the great line-up of speakers, the schedule includes a swarm demonstration, hands-on activities at the hives, lunch, vendors, silent auction, and homemade honey ice cream. There will also be an optional dinner, at the close of Funday, for those that would like an opportunity to get to know our speakers on a more personal level.

Jo Patrick, Northeast Region Representative

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## North Central Region News

Hello Bee Friends!

I write this after spending the afternoon with the North Central group at Rolling Hills Zoo in Salina.

It was great to do a Spring inspection on the zoo hives together, and as always, we drew the interest of zoo guests who got the opportunity to look at frames of bees up close.

In addition to checking the health of the queen and looking for swarm cells, we reviewed the need to check the food supply inside the hive even as flowers begin to bloom. For most of us, we thought we were done feeding supplemental syrup to established hives. However, the recent heat spell caused some colonies to use up a lot of their stores of honey and nectar, resulting in "dry" food frames.

Many will survive until the next nectar source blooms, but some may need a week of supplemental ,

syrup to keep the brood production going strong. It's been another lesson in "don't assume what the hive needs based on the calendar"- get in there in and look.

We were able to split a hive with a mated queen we had available; another opportunity to discuss the nuances of beekeeping in different situations and the many options available for completing a task. Having the hives to work on together is invaluable to the beekeepers, and a great outreach to the public.

Our next meeting will again be at Rolling Hills Zoo on Sunday, July 10th, at 2 pm. In addition to the hive inspection, we'll talk about honey harvest and how to use a refractometer. We'll also demonstrate how to test for varroa mite with a sugar roll or alcohol wash, and review mite treatment options.

Come and join us, and bring a friend!

Nikki Bowman, North Central Region Representative

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## News from Western Kansas

I started my beekeeping journey this year. I continue to learn about bees from my friend and mentor. The dandelions have finished their first bloom and I'm enjoying the smell of the sweet clover. The poppies are bright and the mulberries survived the hail. The Golden Rain Tree is blooming and long needle pines are full of pollen.

DeeDee Gebhart, West Region Representative

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## South Central Region News

We went through the Great Plains Nature Center hives yesterday, they had swarmed. There were several queen cells and two hatched while we went through the hive. We were able to put them into queen cages. Both the hives were backfilled; we split one, made sure there were queen cells in both and added queen excluders and honey supers.

South Central Kansas meetings are the second Saturday of the month at the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita at 1:30 pm. I was invited to speak at the North West/Central Oklahoma Beekeepers Association where I shared information on value-added products. I demonstrated how to make honey bees wax soap and lotion bars.

The KHPA hives are building like gangbusters. Both of the hives have built out wax on at least 7-8 frames. The second deep was added. I pulled a couple frames up so they'll move into the second box. I've been using frame feeders in those hives.

Willow and ash trees are shedding pollen. Blackberries are in bloom and all fruiting trees are finished. White Dutch clover is blooming as well and my heirloom roses. We've had hit and miss storms but my area in Harvey County has been dry. The rains keep missing us either to the north or to the south.

Jane Kill, South Central Region Representative

## News from Southeast Kansas

A swap meet/farmers market is being planned for August 6, in Burlington, starting at noon at the fairgrounds. We are working on having a speaker to give a presentation at 10 am. I am meeting with the Burlington city council on Wednesday to get approval to use Kelley Park at the county fairgrounds for this event. Our three clubs in Southeast Kansas that have regular monthly meetings are in Columbus, Independence, and Pittsburg.

I've been working with 4 new beekeepers installing packages, setting up swarm traps, and loaning out bee suits. In Coffey County, where I live, the weather has been unusually cool except for a few days of 90-degree temperatures and wind. Much of the county has been rather wet from rains.

William 'Tiny' Jackson, Jr., Southeast Region Representative

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## Buzz in my Bonnet to Buzz in a Box

The plan:

I looked over the old brick outbuilding on the first sunny day following Christmas break. I shoveled out a bucket of dirt, two trash bags of debris, and removed an old tire. I evaluated the windows and the partial frame for the door. It seemed a much larger space with a little work. It's enough for a sink cabinet, shelves, a couple of stacks of hive boxes, and buckets. A place to work.

I decided to invest in a privacy fence for the yard. It's in an open area surrounded by elms but high winds might knock over my hives; it will also keep the nuisance critters out. I think it will be a solid investment in this new venture.

I've been squirreling away flower bulbs for spring blossoms every time I find them. I have a hardy root system of Russian sage, roses, and cherry bushes to transplant to the fence line; herbs and wildflowers may even be a good sideline for me. There is already an established yellow clover patch close by. The winter weather has slowed the process, but it has allowed me time to spend planning the flower garden and learning about bees and what they need to thrive.

On January 12, it was so nice to have helping-hands. The kids cleared the area where I planned to put up the hive yard. I love teaching kids and mentoring. I hope to do this more often in the future.

The welder finished hanging the gates on the yard on January 30. I dropped the flower bulbs in the ground before the Canadian jet stream came to call. Temps dropped to the single digits once more.

On a sunny afternoon in February, I broke out the air nailer and glue and constructed my hive kits. I chose two cedar 8-frame Langstroth hives pre-coated in beeswax. I chose 8 frames, considering the total weight of the super when it is full of comb and honey. I will be ready for the bee packages I ordered that day. The following day, I cut two panes of glass and purchased an antique door with 3 panes of glass for morning light.

March is flying by. The spring meeting was full of helpful topics, seeing friends, and making new ones. Kansas saw its first rainstorm and we are awaiting another snowstorm. Spring break is starting this weekend. The message came that my packages of bees will be here on the 2nd of April, if everything goes as planned.

It's a typical Kansas spring, you take the good with the bad. One day it's 70 degrees and howling, the next it's 28 degrees and calm and then climbing to 58 degrees and howling. The following week began with a blizzard that blew in 8 inches of wet snow but melted off by 4:00 pm that

same day. After checking with the bee masters for a pre-package checklist, I made bee feeders for my two hives, cleaned out the broken glass in the shed's windows, and fixed the door frame.

When I had a rough day, I remembered what my mother said, "Don't get mad, do something constructive", so I got off my bus, put glass in the windows, and hung the door in my bee /she shed. It's only one week until I have my first bees.

Saturday was a beautiful day for yard work, so I got the ground raked and laid the shingles down, so I don't have to weed-eat so close to the hive. Two days until I pick up my bees. I moved all of the hive supplies and tools to the shed and assembled the hives on their concrete wall stands. I am feeling the anticipation as the hours pass.

April Fool's Day! I had to get my pickup from the shop for the bees to ride in. It's time. I got up early on Saturday morning to get my packages, gathered my young compadre, and headed to Hays to meet the bee man. I'm really glad I had the pickup, as there were quite a few hitchhikers on the outside of the packages. I had to drop by Home Depot for fence materials to finish up the yard while the girls chilled a while. It was a beautiful morning to introduce my girls to their new digs. I invited my more knowledgeable friend to walk me through my first install, which was the most amazing experience. A question I never thought to ask was how hard to tap a package of bees to get them to drop. I first watched the expert and then repeated the motions on my second package. All of the whirling bees, the vibration in the air, and the joy of my experience had me smiling from ear to ear. There was no fear, only the feeling of accomplishment. Even my little compadre was enthralled with the process, even though the day before she had sworn to me, "Grandma, I don't like bees!" I think I will love this forever.

The journey to having bees took a lot of work, from deciding to be a beekeeper, to finally putting them in the hives. I have learned a great deal of information. The ideal place for them to create their home needs to be clean and cozy. Varroa is the enemy. Bees love sunshine and flowers but not red. You will invest in this project, but it will give back more with pollination and treats. They are the most fascinating entity that operates as a family, a highly skilled and organized unit. Finally, through this journey, I have never been able to be a lone beekeeper, like the bees we keep, we need each other to accomplish the task of beekeeping well.

DeeDee Gebhart, West Region Representative

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## Western Kansas Hive Dive

During a routine hive inspection, Brenda Mazanec, of Colby, KS noticed this configuration in one of her hives and took this picture. It illustrates just how bees will use burr comb to their advantage. Burr comb is usually related to bee space or when frames aren't properly pushed together. They often attach comb to the nearest frames and create a huge mess. To top it off, they have built what appears to be queen cups and eggs. The business of swarm cells along the bottom and supersedure cells on the face of the frames is a "usually" but by no means definite.

Julie Cahoj, 3rd Vice President



### Third Thursday Value-Added Making More Money with your Honey

Next program is Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm Central. These new, free, virtual, Value-Added programs will be presented on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7 pm (CST, United States) via Zoom. It is being sponsored by the Kansas Honey Producers Association as part of our membership drive. These programs are recorded and are on the [www.kansashoneyproducers.org](http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org) website if you would like to see the ones you have missed! You will receive an email before the programs with the link to register. If you registered for a previous program, you will automatically receive the link to view each month via email, but you may be asked to register again.

If you have a question, please call Joli at 913-593-3562 or email [joli@heartlandhoney.com](mailto:joli@heartlandhoney.com).

Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup> Making Beer with Honey, Jason Elder Presents

Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> Making Mead, Jay Francis Presents



Hi! I'm Jason Elder, an award-winning Homebrewer here in Shawnee, KS. I first started my foray into craft beer in the early 2000's while in college at Oregon State and actually started homebrewing in 2010. I have brewed beer and mead at various breweries across the city and as far away as Two Brothers Brewery in Chicago, IL. I love imparting my knowledge on how to homebrew whether it is the basics of getting started or advanced techniques, as well as, branching out into Mead and Wine. I am a part of the Kansas City Bier Meister's homebrew club, which is the second oldest homebrew club in the country. I'm looking forward to speaking to all of you and hope that I can assist you on your journey in becoming a homebrewer!"

These programs will be recorded and will be available on our [www.kansashoneyproducers.org](http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org) website.

## Fall 2022 KHPA Conference

Mark your calendars – Friday & Saturday, November 4 & 5, 2022 are the dates for our next KHPA conference. The location is same as the last two times we met, Courtyard by Marriott, 3020 Riffle Dr., Salina Kansas. We will have a block of rooms available at a reduced rate.

The most important things I can ask is:

**“What do you want to hear at this conference?”**

**“Whom would you like to hear speak?”**

We have a few topics and speakers in the works, but the committee wants to make sure we have your needs in mind. Nikki Bowman, Brian Withrow, Jim Kellie and I are that committee. Please get in touch with any of us or contact through

[www.kansashoneyproducers.org](http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org) website. Contact links for Nikki and I are at the website under the Officers section.

To mention the short list, we have:

- ◆ Katie Lee PHD of University of Minnesota. Katie will deliver three or more talks on various subjects.
- ◆ Randy Oliver of Scientific Beekeeping will speak on the latest in Varroa Mite Treatments.
- ◆ Tara Haslouer, American National Property & Casualty Insurance, will talk about insurance for the hobby and business of beekeeping.
- ◆ Kansas Legislative Committee will talk about what is happening in Topeka of concern for Kansas beekeepers and the latest news from the Department of Agriculture.
- ◆ Beekeeper of the Year: get your nominee(s) to Becky Tipton so the committee can choose a recipient. At the KHPA website, there is a form to accompany nominees with letters of recommendation, etc.
- ◆ We are working with the Kansas State Forestry Department to get a speaker on Tree Species for Wildlife and Pollinators in Kansas.
- ◆ Sessions for some basic beekeeping tips, techniques, etc. and looking for a presenters.
- ◆ The Five Kansas Regions will gather in groups to discuss local issues and concerns, share tips.
- ◆ Business Meeting- it is election time once again.
- ◆ As always, unbeatable camaraderie and excellent food!
- ◆ Vendors – get your necessary tools, treatments, and other bee items with no shipping (order ahead of time and bring your trucks) Jim Raders from Dadant in Sioux City, IA.
- ◆ So much more to come on this event. Keep an eye out at KHPA website as details unfold.

Again, let us know your interests or if you heard or saw an interesting person or topic. We will do our level best to provide your desired topics.

**Kansas Honey Producer's Association**  
**The Cappings**  
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**Shawnee Mission KS 66202**

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**2022 Kansas Honey Producer's Association Membership Application**

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 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_



Membership Kansas Honey Producer's Association per year (Jan.-Dec.) \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional family members wanting voting rights \$1.00 per person \$1.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional family member's names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Youth Membership (18 years of age or under) \$7.50 \_\_\_\_\_  
 American Bee Journal 1 year subscription \$24.65 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bee Culture Magazine 1 year subscription \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Make checks payable to: KHPA or Kansas Honey Producer's Association or pay on line at [www.kansashoneyproducers.org](http://www.kansashoneyproducers.org)**

**Mail to: Robert Burns, 7601 W 54th Terrace, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66202 Phone# 913-481-3504 or email-  
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