



Est: 1918

## January 2021

It's time for  
**Membership  
Renewals**

Online or mail in  
check

\$20 for individuals

\$30 for families

BCBA

P.O. Box 10371  
Green Bay, WI  
54307-0371

[www.browncountybeekeepers.com](http://www.browncountybeekeepers.com)

Facebook

**Northeast WI**

**Beekeepers**

Join Today



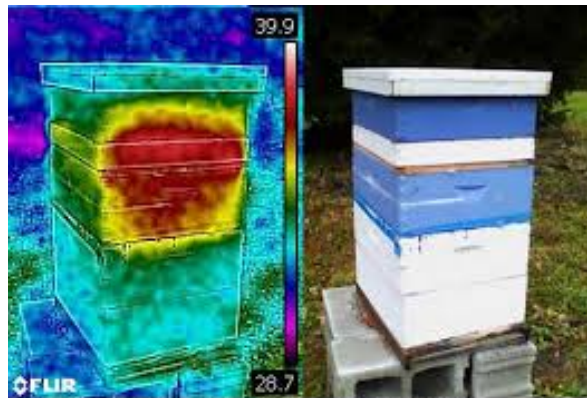
Wednesday evening  
1/6/2020  
7PM  
Via ZOOM

# Brown County Beekeepers Association Newsletter

BCBA Mission Statement: We are dedicated to promoting sustainable, responsible, and healthy beekeeping practices in Northeast Wisconsin for both experienced and first-time beekeepers. We strive to create a fun environment where learning opportunities exist for association members and the general public.

**The club will hold our first meeting of 2021 on  
January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting via ZOOM**

## January in the Hives



### Interesting Fact:

Honey bees are among the very few insects that produce body heat. They regulate their body heat individually and collectively, by flexing, pulsing and shivering their wing muscles. This heat is dispersed through the colony cluster by rotating waves of bees moving over, into and out of the surface of the cluster.

Optimal temp center of the cluster is 95°F – Average temp is 81°F

### Infrared Imaging

The club has an infrared camera that you can rent to locate your bees in cluster during the winter months. The picture on the right shows a nice size cluster in **RED**. They appear to be up close to the top indicating they need some emergency food added.

## President Message

Welcome to the new year! This is the time of year when beekeeping activity at the hive is minimal and we can focus on education and preparation for the upcoming year. The Club's Leadership Team spent time laying out goals and plans for 2021 and is excited to share them with you at the Wednesday January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Last year one of our goals was to increase club membership by increasing awareness of BCBA and how we can help with successful beekeeping, which with your help we were able to achieve.

This year's goals and activities revolve around providing learning opportunities for members and the public and having some fun in the process. Here are the goals that our year will focus on achieving:

1. Develop better beekeepers by providing a variety of educational opportunities to our members
2. Build a better member community (Networking / Social/Fun)
3. Increase public awareness of beekeeping and pollinators

We are trying something new this year by cosponsoring several educational speakers with other beekeeping clubs. These will be offered in addition to the monthly meeting education and free to our members. Take a look in the Newsletter for the Kirsten Traynor event on Jan 19th. We will offer more of these types of educational opportunities throughout the year.

I hope each of you renews your membership and lets the Brown County Beekeepers be a part of your beekeeping journey in 2021. It should be a fun year.

Thanks  
Dave Elsen

### **Don't forget Intro to Beekeeping Class – January 9, 2021**

The club is once again conducting an Intro Beekeeping class. It consists of two virtual classes and one hands-on at the hive class. The cost is \$40 for all three sessions. More details can be found at the Event Brite site where tickets can also be purchased. <https://beekeeping-green-bay.eventbrite.com>. Please let your family and friends that might be interested in beekeeping know about the class and forward the link to them. For any questions contact Carl Fisher at [info@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:info@browncountybeekeepers.com)

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### **January Meeting Links**

#### **Topic: Brews and Bees**

Time: Jan 6, 2021 07:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89834490188?pwd=S2hSamJXQ0VEMXRJSzJOeitQc3Y0QT09>

Meeting ID: 898 3449 0188

Passcode: 140859

#### **Topic: BCBA January Meeting**

Time: Jan 20, 2021 06:30 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82922696486?pwd=TSsrZEdsQmFBY2lyNIBJdnFLWFppQT09>

Meeting ID: 829 2269 6486

Passcode: 530924

**BCBA Leadership**

**President: Dave Elsen**  
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**Vice President:**  
**Julie Mazzoleni**  
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**Secretary:**  
**Bob Michiels**  
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**Treasurer:**  
**Tom Cashman**  
[Tcash99930@aol.com](mailto:Tcash99930@aol.com)

**Social Media Chair:**  
**Carl Fisher**  
[info@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:info@browncountybeekeepers.com)

**Membership Chair:**  
**OPEN**

**Education Chair:**  
**OPEN**

**FREE WEBINAR**

**January 19**  
**7PM**

Join us for an evening with **Dr. Kirsten Traynor**.

Dr. Traynor will discuss the honey bee versus native bee debate. Dr. Traynor works full-time as a honey bee researcher, edits the quarterly magazine, 2 Million Blossoms, and guest co-hosts the Beekeeping Today podcast.

**Club Secretary will send out the The Zoom link 1/16/2021.**

No registration required.

Contact Dave Elsen [president@browncountybeekeepers.com](mailto:president@browncountybeekeepers.com) with any questions.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Open Positions  
 Education Chair AND Membership Chair

**Contact Dave Elsen**

**Free Education Opportunity****Capitol Bee Supply**

Check out the link below for some **FREE** e-learning topics by  
<https://www.facebook.com/CapitolBeeSupply/posts/2890729754299781>

**AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL**

**Discount** for club members

**GREAT PUBLICATION**

**GET INFO FROM TOM CASHMAN**

**Club Education Reimbursement Opportunity**

Club members are eligible for up to \$25/ calendar year for continuing education

**Eligibility Guidelines:**

- Must be a **current member** for at least **12 consecutive months**.
- Member must submit their request to the Leadership Team prior to the event including details on how it aligns to the Club's Mission.

**Note:** *BCBA sponsored events, books or magazines not eligible for reimbursements.*

**Club Expectations of Members Receiving Education Reimbursement**

- Overview of the education to the club or an education session.
- Write-up with photos and/or video for club publication.

# C L U B H I S T O R Y

Happy January Beekeepers, As the club secretary 2020, I had the unique opportunity to rifle through all of the old club minutes over the last year. Over the next few months I am going to give you an insight on how the club operated from 1953 to 2020. I mentioned in a previous newsletter that after doing some research with the help of the Brown County Library, I was able to get the date the club originated in 1918. Unfortunately, we had a large gap of information from the early 1920's to 1953. The club information from that time has been lost. One thing I did find was one of our current members, James Arvey's father was an active member in the club back in the 1950's and 1960's.

## 1953- 1959

The meeting sites varied, usually held at the YMCA, Brown County Court House Annex even at members office space periodically They were held one evening every other month – February, April, June, October and November, 8p-10pm. The average attendance was 6-10 members per meeting. In 1953 there were 28 members total from De Pere, Green Bay, Oconto Falls, Shawano, Pulaski, Greenleaf, Wrightstown, Brussels – including several couples, a reverend and a Brother from St Norbert Abby.

Meeting content included movies about beekeeping and members sharing their beekeeping experiences. The State inspector visited annually to provide an overview of the state of hives throughout Wisconsin: 1953 - 2551 colonies inspected and 72 infected with foulbrood and destroyed. Interestingly enough, the club voted to acknowledge club members and spouses and children when ill or in death - \$5 on flowers or a memorial card

Summer picnics were all the rage in the 1950s – most often held at Legion & Pamperin Parks. Other county bee associations were invited to join in for the pot luck themed events. There were prizes donated by bee suppliers and the meeting minutes indicate that good times were had by all. A winter event everyone looked forward to was the annual Christmas party held at the Chatterhouse each December – the Association covered the cost of the dinner for each member.

Clarence and Marie Pfluger were active club members leading and documenting minutes at every meeting. Clarence shared info on Brown County and State fair opportunities and encouraged club member participation – urging members to enter honey and other exhibits.

It was announced in 1955 that the State Association wanted to start having a State Honey Queen (or King) and each county association could elect their own queen and send them to the state fair. The BCBA decided to participate beginning the process in 1956. They accepted donations to help pay the expenses. Judging was based on baking, personality, beauty, ability to give a short talk, prepare a project book. The club selected a judging committee whose members would mentor and work with the local honey queen until the 1957 state fair. The first Brown County Honey Queen **1957 – Miss Elise Verheyen** from Little Rapids. She presented a demo on making a honey sandwich spread. She spoke at the meetings about her experiences in the state competition, as well as her experiences serving as the county honey queen.

The honey crops were very good with the average hive producing well over 100lbs. In 1959 motion made to change the name from Brown County Beekeepers Association to Brown County Honey Producers – obviously that did not happen.

# WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF BEES

## In the hive

The bees are in their winter cluster, except for very warm and sunny days (roughly 50°F and above), when they might leave the hive for a cleansing flight.

Queens may lay a few eggs, in which case the cluster will need to keep the brood warm.

Dead bees may pile up on the bottom board; on warm days, the bees may remove the bodies, and other bees may fly off to die. Dead bees scattered on the snow outside the hive are therefore a good sign.

## Seasonal conditions

In Green Bay Wisconsin, January is the coldest month. The average minimum and maximum temperatures are 15°F and 31°F, with 18" of snowfall and 2" of additional precipitation.

Nothing is in bloom except maybe some varieties of witch hazel (*Hamamelis* spp.).

## Inspection

When inspecting a colony in winter, it is not necessary to open it. Do a quick external inspection, visual and auditory, to check the cluster. Listen for the bees with your ear directly on the upper part of the hive; if you do not hear anything, tap the outside of the hive and the bees should respond.

You can open the hive if it is relatively warm and windless outside, but do not pull frames or break open the cluster if it is below 50F. If you open the hive, check for moisture around the inner or outer covers. If the cluster is far to one side of the food stores, you can carefully move it closer, keeping it together while you do so, or move frames of honey closer to it.

## Nutrition

Check if the colony is light on food stores (you can tell by gently hefting the hive) ... If so, use dry sugar, fondant, or a candy board on a warm day.

## Equipment

Order any replacement bees (packages, nucs, or queens) as soon as possible; producers generally run out fast.

Check any stored equipment for pests such as wax moths.

Take inventory. Fix, clean/sterilize, purchase, assemble, and paint equipment as needed.

## Yard maintenance

Ensure that the hive cover is properly secured. Check for evidence of critters living in the nice, toasty hive.

Remove ice blocking the hive entrance, to give the colonies better ventilation. Don't worry about snow around the entrance or hive body; it allows enough airflow and may help insulate the bees.

A few dead bees or a small amount of fecal matter outside the hive is nothing to worry about, especially after a warm day; this is a sign that they are still alive inside.

## Education and outreach

**Don't forget to renew your membership in your local beekeeping club and get their meetings on your calendar.** Also check their schedule for bee school; many bee schools are held in the late winter.

*Adapted from the Cornell University  
Beekeeping Calendar 2020*

