



Minnesota Honey Producers Association

www.minnesotahoneyproducers.org

Volume No 83 June 2021



President's Message:

This will be a short one for I am late on getting this done. When I tell my employees that I am BEE busy, they all tend to know what that means (I am out in the bee yards, and I love getting stung.) I want to first thank each one of you for being members of The Minnesota Honey Producers Association. Our organization could not exist if was not for all of those in the past and for all our current members who have dedicated their time and hard-earned dollars in supporting in this organization from the very beginning. We also need to honor those who took leadership positions and volunteered their time in keeping this organization going in the right direction.

I look forward to meeting up next month down in Mankato for our 2021 Minnesota Honey Producers Association summer convention. All the details to the convention can be found in this newsletter, online, etc. Our informal Thursday night gathering will be focused on honey bee habitat this year. I encourage everyone to join us on that conversation. I am looking forward to seeing all our convention speakers along with Dr. Marla Spivak and Dr. Katie Lee from the U of M on the latest on the research being done at their facility.

I am told that we are still looking for nominations for **Beekeeper of The Year Award**, one **MHPA Director** position on our board (one turns over every year), a replacement for our MHBA Web Master position along with a chairperson for the **Queen** committee as well.

I want to personally thank both **Joseph Coffey** (our retired Web Master) and **Emily Campbell** (Queen Chair) for their dedicated service to the Minnesota Honey Producers Association. Your acts of kindness and leadership will be missed by all. Thank you to Jerome Rossi for stepping in as interim Web Master, you are very appreciated.

The 2021 **Minnesota State Fair** is a go this year. Thus, the MHPA state fair committee has been meeting and we have hired a new State Fair Manager for that position. We have selected **Cristie Maki** as our new MHPA State Fair Manager. She will coordinate our operation this year from everything from sales, hiring, firing, product purchasing & marketing, staffing and everything required to operate a smooth operation at the fair. We also are adding some cameras and other updated means to sell more product and make the operation as efficient as possible. For those of you who wish to volunteer your time or willing to work at the fair, you will be directed to Cristie Maki to make that happen. Also, if you already provide products to the fair, she will be contacting you on the procedure for this year.

Other than that, good luck with your bees and see you at the convention.

Dave Schroeder

President

Minnesota Honey Producers Association



OFFICERS

PRESIDENT:	Dave Schroeder 11133 Louisiana Ct W, Champlin, MN 55316	(763) 227-9580
VICE PRESIDENT:	Mark Sundberg 19047 345th St. Erhard, MN 56534	(218) 731-5942
SECRETARY:	Bridget Mendel 1980 Folwell Ave. Ste 219, St. Paul, MN 55108	(413) 429-7718
TREASURER:	Sara Keskey-Rufer P.O. Box 336, Cokato, MN 55321	(763) 746-6199

DIRECTORS

Becky Masterman (2022) 72 St Albans St N, St Paul, MN 55104	(612) 624-8989
Ike Strohmayer (2021) 19909 State Hwy 1, Togo, MN 55723	(218) 376-4464
Greg Renstrom (2023) 26856 St. Croix Trail, Shafer, MN 55074	(651) 248-2105

DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Jeff Hull P.O. Box 371, Battle Lake, MN 56515	(218) 864-5256
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EDITOR

Bridget Mendel - University of Minnesota Dept. of Entomology 1980 Folwell Ave. Ste 219, St. Paul, MN 55108 mende173@umn.edu	(413) 429-7718
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PUBLISHER

Mann Lake Ltd - Danielle Schermerhorn 501 1st St., Hackensack, MN 56452-2589 danielle.schermerhorn@mannlakeltd.com	(218) 675-7455
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WEBSITE

Interim Webmaster: Jerome Rossi Joseph Coffey 2420 O'Meara Ct, Burnsville, MN 55306 Burnsville, MN 55306 jcoffey@ccapiaries.com	(952)-239-6687
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ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

		(Term Expires)
REGION 1 NE	Samuel Stuart, Carlton, MN	(2022)
REGION 2 NW	Gaylord Monda, E Grand Forks, ND	(2021)
REGION 3 Lake	Bob Morlock, Fargo, ND	(2021)
REGION 4 W. Cent.	Jorden Eiden, Holdingford, MN	(2022)
REGION 5 E. Cent.	Jon Holte, Harris, MN	(2023)
REGION 6 Metro	Needed	(2023)
REGION 7 S. Cent.	Bert Honl, Gaylord, MN	(2022)
REGION 8 SW	Gary Honl, Gaylord, MN	(2021)
REGION 9 SE	Ted Sennes, Houston, MN	(2023)
EDUCATION ADV.	Dr. Marla Spivak, St. Paul	





THE MINNESOTA HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION INC.

11133 Louisiana Ct W, Champlin, MN 55316

www.minnesotahoneyproducers.org

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

February 10 – Spring May 10 – Summer October 10 – Fall/Winter

ADVERTISING RATES

BACK COVER	\$49.50	INSIDE FRONT COVER	\$44.00
INSIDE BACK COVER	\$44.00	FULL INSIDE PAGE	\$38.00
½ PAGE	\$28.00	1/3 PAGE	\$22.00
CLASSIFIED ADS (Approximately 1" x 2.25")			\$ 6.00 prepaid

ANNUAL DUES (Runs July to July):

Hobby Membership: \$20.00

Commercial Membership: \$40.00

(Dues should be sent to Sara Keskey-Rufer PO Box 336 Cokato, MN 55321)

COMMITTEES

Promotion/Education/Public Relations *Liz Schroeder, Geri Honl, Roger Olson, Kelley Flanders, Kathy Monda, Linda Newman

Research * Ike Strohmeier, Milton Eiden, Dan Whitney, David Ellingson, Steve Duff, Mark Sundberg, Dr. Marla Spivak

Nomination * Dan Whitney, Liz Schroeder

Resolutions * Mark Sundberg, Conrad Legatt, Gary Reuter, Liz Schroeder

Audit * Conrad Legatt, Vicki Hull, David Ellingson

State Fair * David Ellingson, Sarah Keskey-Rufer

Legislative Executive Board (as needed)

Historical * Mark Sundberg

Queen * Needed

Bee Lines * Bridget Mendel, Liz Schroeder

MN Grown * Ike Strohmeier

Web Page * Needed

***Denotes committee chair**

ABF / FEDERATION DELEGATES

Jeff Hull	(218) 205-6426
Darrel Rufer	(763) 658-4036
David Schroeder	(763) 227-9580

Alternate Delegates

Becky Masterman
Greg Renstrom
Liz Schroeder

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WANTED!!

***HONEY QUEEN/AMBASSADOR PROGRAM CHAIR PERSON**

Contact Dave Schroeder with interest

***WEB MASTER**

Contact Dave Schroeder with interest

***BEEKEEPER OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS**

Contact Liz Schroeder with nominations

***SILENT AUCTION ITEMS**

Contact Liz Schroeder with items

***Advisory Council Member for Region 6 Metro**

Contact Dave Schroeder with interest



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Convention Chair Update:

The convention boat is floating down the river beautifully!!! The schedule is tightening up. Book your sleeping rooms early. Make sure to mention that you are with the Honey Producers when you book the room. Registration: we've got two ways to register.

Register online by clicking or going to this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/minnesota-honey-producers-association-2021-summer-convention-tickets-156096772649>

OR Print off the form (from the [MHPA website](#)) and mail it in.

Registration for mail in/online closes July 1.

After that deadline you will need to register in person. The tentative conference schedule is posted on the web page and will be updated.

Traditionally on Thursday night we have the crop report (or a bunch of liars and braggers) but this year we are going to change it up and the subject will be Habitat.....did you know we have a Habitat committee?? Yes, we do! Becky Masterman and Dan Whitney head that up and we need to be talking about that. NOW!! So we're going to start the summer meeting talking about habitat. So be there Thursday night, get a beer and we'll talk. Dan Mahoney from USDA is working on trying to be there in person.

We're also going to talk about goals for your future as farm/business owners and also planning what happens next. Do you have a plan for the next generation?? Is there a next generation? Also, our keynote is from Sweet Water Science. Have you heard of them? Checked them out. Honey Profiling is one of their specialties. When I was trying to nail down the subject titles for the keynote he said "Title's coming soon (some things are happening this week that may change my talks.)" So that means something must be cooking!

We will also have an update from the U of M, with Marla Spivak and Katie Lee. MN Grown will be speaking and we'll hear from our new State Fair manager as well. We're going to be busy so bring a notebook to take notes, and bring your questions.

We have a quilt that we will raffle off, we'll have our silent auction. And don't forget to send in your beekeeper of the year nominations.

See you in July!

Liz Schroeder

Convention Chair



News From The Ivory Tower

Marla Spivak
spiva001@umn.edu
www.beelab.umn.edu

June 2021

Double-Edged Swords

Beekeepers encountered a double-edged sword in 2006 when the press caught on that honey bee colonies were collapsing due to mysterious causes. On one hand, the public finally woke up to the importance of both honey bees and beekeepers to the pollination of many fruits, vegetables and almonds. On the other hand, colony losses and beekeeping labor expenses became exorbitant while honey prices remained low. Beekeeping, especially in cities, became trendy, which has presented its own set of issues: the spotlight on honey bees is long overdue, but sometimes the reasons people get into backyard beekeeping are not logical.

For example, some invest in a hive or two thinking they are helping the honey bee population from going extinct, which is not true. Honey bee populations are not going extinct; the health of honey bees is in severe decline but the number of honey bee colonies in the U.S. is relatively stable due to the diligence of good (but difficult!) beekeeping practices. Some invest in a hive or two and think that by not treating them for mites or diseases they can help honey bees become more resistant to these problems. Not treating bee colonies actually contributes to their health problem, but it does drive the sale of package bees and queens - another double-edged sword.

At the UMN Bee Lab, we educate beekeepers in best management practices that include treatments, and we strive to educate people that the best way to help honey bees is to plant flowers for them-- acres of flowers, everywhere. Give bees good nutrition and in turn, they will pollinate our nutritious foods.

Another thing happened around 2007 that might have gone unnoticed by many beekeepers. A publication entitled "Committee on the Status of Pollinators in North America" was released by the National Resource Council (The National Academies Press, Wash D.C. <https://doi.org/10.17226/11761>). This comprehensive review brought to light the peril of our native bee populations in North America, which is as serious as the honey bee situation. There are an estimated 4,000 species of bees in North America, and some of them are truly on the brink of extinction. One of those bees is the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, *Bombus affinis*. The range of this beautiful bee has shrunk so much, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gave it a federal listing as an endangered species. The Twin Cities is one of the few places where this bee can still be found, although not in great numbers. And in 2019, the MN Legislature made the Rusty Patched Bumblebee our State Bee as a way of increasing awareness and conservation efforts to boost its populations. The status of many other bee species is entirely unknown, mostly because they are solitary species that nest in the ground or in stems and go unnoticed by all except the most attentive.

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Ivory Tower: Double-Edged Swords

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There is a newfound awareness about the importance of all bees and pollinators in general, which is great. This attention presents another double-edged sword that is causing lots of consternation and misunderstandings among researchers, bee enthusiasts and beekeepers. The problem goes like this: honey bees live in huge colonies, relative to, say, bumble bees, which have maybe 500 bees per colony, tops. To support colony growth and survival, honey bees need to collect large amounts of floral pollen and nectar. There is concern, and some research to support, that honey bees can out-compete native bees for food, to the point where some bees may not be able to find enough pollen and nectar to feed their small brood they leave in the soil or in a stem. Another growing concern, perhaps more insidious, is that honey bees may be spreading viruses and other pathogens like Nosema to other species of bees when they forage on the same flowers. This spread is called pathogen spillover and is a hot research topic these days. There is evidence that honey bees leave some pathogens on flowers as they forage, and that some native bees pick up these pathogens if they visit the same flower. There is little to no evidence to date that the pathogens are causing the native bees to become sick. There is also a little evidence that pathogen spillover can happen in reverse; native bees can transfer some of their pathogens to honey bees via flowers. It's complicated.

There is no final word on the topics of competition and pathogen spillover between honey bees and native bees. The jury is out. However, some government agencies, like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Resource Conservation Service, are prioritizing native bee conservation, and native plant restoration on public lands. Protection for native bees is long overdue. I think every beekeeper in the world would like to protect all bees, native and non-native. The problem arises when people take sides, when they want to promote and pit one bee over another. This polarity gets us nowhere and ultimately hurts everyone and every bee (my opinion).

How do we, as beekeepers, see our way through these issues? I see several ways forward:

1. As beekeepers let's rise above the petty feud about bee species and show the world we are the ultimate bee conservationists and enthusiasts. We want ALL BEES to thrive.
2. Let's educate the world that the way to avoid competition and pathogen spillover is to increase the amount of forage for all bees. Native bees thrive on diverse, native flowers mixes, like those used to restore prairies. Honey bees thrive on dense stands of native and non-native flowers where they can forage efficiently and quickly. Let's promote the restoration of more prairies for native bees and also promote planting acres of densely growing flowers that honey bees prefer.
3. Where can we plant more flowers for honey bees? The lowest hanging fruit right now is flowering cover crops. There is a huge national resurgence in planting cover crops on farms as a way to remediate soil. Let's let our state legislators know that we whole-heartedly support the planting of clover, alfalfa, canola, and other flowering cover crops. Let's talk to the landowners where we keep bees about the benefit of cover crops for soil and bee health, and give them extra honey (and seeds?) if they plant an acre or more of a good flowering cover.

Let's be constructive in our efforts and make room in our hearts and lands for all our bees.

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Editor's Note:

Now that I've attended a few MHPA board meetings, I can attest that ice cream is *the* hot topic of discussion. I'm personally super happy about this.

Speaking of which, the State Fair is happening, and honey ice cream will be scooped once more.

Huge thank you and welcome to Cristie Maki who is our State Fair Manager this year.

For all of you who are planning on providing honey for the MHPA booth, order your jars of choice now!! Things have been slow in the shipping department, and you don't want to be stuck on a waitlist for your bottling needs come August.



Bridget Mendel,
Editor

MHPA General Meeting: Friday, July 10, 2020

Call to order 2:45

This meeting was hosted on Zoom and attended remotely.

Secretary Report - Jeff Dankey

Motion by Liz to publish meeting notes from 2019 on our website. 2nd by Becky

Treasure Report - Sara Keskey Rufer

Current balance in checking account is \$20,130.20

Balance in queen fund, \$6,785.92

Balance in the state fair fund \$8,000

Collected \$1,510 towards lobbyist fund

Registration renewal form has donation spot for lobbyist fund

Motion by Liz to accept treasure report, 2nd by Becky

Research - Marla Spivak

In March the University of Minnesota essentially shutdown, more recently things have slowly started up again. Lab opened back up. The donations are greatly appreciated by the lab and support salaries, technicians, vehicle expenses, and basic beekeeping needs.

Queen Report - Liz Schroder

Emily - update, she has officially passed her boards and is a veterinarian. Internship in California for the next year. There were two candidates for the queen program. Liz will forward those names to Becky who will be working on the new ambassador program.

Magazine - Currently looking for an editor

Bee Lines - none this year because we have no State Fair.

Promotions/Education/Public Relations - Nothing to report

National Honey Board - no change for any materials and shipping is free

State Fair - Sara Keskey Rufer

2 Interested in new manger position. Will reach out to them and see if they would be interested in next year.

Recommendations going forward for our booth

Credit cards 1/3 of sales last year

Cash counting machine

Cash register

Honey candy still available at cost for members, contact Sara

Greg has three squares and a cash register to use if needed

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Legislative - Dave Schroeder
Hired Judy Erickson as our lobbyist for the 2020 year and she did a good job
MN Government was shutdown because of Covid

Rainy day fund - Fred Holt set this up years ago and big thanks to him
No lobbyist for next year

Rufer - Team up with beef producers because of the high prices of meat. They are also struggling. Stefanie Myers Hoffman.

Dave S. - Attending meetings with other groups is great and its good to work with other groups. Good to also work with lobbyist who can help us connect with other groups.

Dan W - Peterson Office is willing to do a meeting with some commercial beekeepers. Another opportunity to be heard. More help the better.

History Report - Mark Sundberg
Nothing new to report. Continue to take in more info and documents.

Rufer - Update on Pete and Betty Moss, old timers.

Website Report - Joe Coffee

Audit - No report but books are open via Sara

Resolutions - Mark Sundberg
No new resolutions and they will be published on website.

Nominations - Dave S.
Bridget is nominated for Secretary and Editor by Becky and 2nd by Mark S., motion passes
She has a background in writing newsletters, articles and grants.

Motion by Mark S. for unanimous ballot for President - Dave S., Vice president - Mark S. and Treasure - Sara Keskey Rufer. 2nd by Liz
Motion passes

Director Position term for Ike is up this year.
Motion by Mark S. to continue for one more year, 2nd Liz. Motion passes

Advisors
Ellan Coffee term is up and now Ryan Keefer for 3 years
Bob Morlock for 3 years
Marla Spivak for 3 years

Delegates: Dave S., Jeff Hull, Darrell Rufer

Alternates: Becky M., Liz S., Greg

Motion to approve advisors, delegates, and alternates by Jeff H. 2nd by Liz. Motion passed
Roger Olsen would like to be removed from all committees.

Old Business
BillBoard fund has \$1,370

New Business
Katie Lee - extension educator
New editor - Bridget
No lobbyist in 2021
Research money for university of MN \$9,975.

Summer Meeting 2021
Mankato

Summer Meeting 2022
Saint Cloud

Motion to adjourn Meeting by Mark S. 2nd by Liz. Motion Passed
Meeting adjourned at 3:44pm

Minnesota Honey Producers Assn.
Bridget Mendel
1980 Folwell Ave. Ste 219
St. Paul, MN 55108