



THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

**March 2012
Volume No. 3**

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

A Note to my Friends...

Will spring come early to Pennsylvania and the rest of the northeast? Many southern states are getting started several weeks early this year and the southern bees are working the early flowers. If I were a betting man I would bet we will also see an early season and everyone needs to get ready. It looks as though the winter slumber is over and it is time to get ready to manage your colonies. I have fed a few of my colonies fondant that were light of stores while others were managing well without my help. I will be adding a pollen substitute into the colonies through April so they will get a head start on the season. Early pollen feeding is a good technique to use, but be careful; they will grow rapidly and swarm earlier than a colony left to build up without a supplement. I hope to expand my colony numbers this season and I will also need to ensure I keep enough colonies strong to make a honey crop so my customers are not disappointed.

We were recently asked by the Department of Agriculture to comment on the need for an EPA section 18 approval for a new product on the market selling under the trade name of Hopguard. The PDA is charged with advising on the need for this approval. This product is made of salt extracts from the hops plant and is placed in the colony to reduce varroa mite populations. Europe and Canada have reported success with the use of this product during broodless periods, however, initial results from testing in the United States has had other results. There is a proven initial knockdown of mites but the efficacy quickly diminishes. The EPA allows states to circumvent the typical approval process with a section 18 approval on the state level for quicker use of different products to serve the agricultural community. However, for a section 18 approval there needs to be one of two conditions met. First, the product must be a last resort remedy for the particular problem with no other alternative product approved for use. This is clearly not the case for mite control in America. There are many "solutions" someone will sell you to treat your mites. Our society has become almost dependent on pharmaceutical remedies for every ailment. The second condition is that the EPA will ultimately approve the product as is advertised in the very near future. This is also not the case. There is no evidence that this product will be approved

as currently labeled. With that being said, the position of the PSBA has been documented as not supporting the initiation of a section 18 approval for Hopguard in Pennsylvania. I would suggest to all beekeepers, especially hobbyists with less than 100 colonies, to fight mites with genetic selection and not additives that you buy to make you feel like you are helping your bees.

We are planning on having a conference call on March 21 to discuss current business. The call in number is 814-863-2330 and we have a 30-port line so there are plenty of openings. We have many issues to discuss. The honey standard is on the list as is the possibility of following the lead of West Virginia and moving in the direction to have the PA legislators pass an immunity law for beekeepers. This would protect beekeepers from frivolous lawsuits for stinging incidents as well as for the sale of honey. We have also talked about the possibility of changing the current laws that require hobby beekeepers to have approved facilities to extract and sell honey. Other states set minimum levels of production that exempt the small producer. There are other issues and we would welcome hearing what is on your mind. Please plan to represent your local club and call in to discuss OUR association.

I just returned from speaking at the Indiana State Beekeepers - Bee School X, in Indianapolis the last weekend of February. This was an amazing conference with over 750 in attendance for a one-day event. It is by far the largest gathering of beekeepers I have ever witnessed. The day went very well as I was asked to speak on sustainable chemical free beekeeping which is something I am very passionate about. It was a real honor for me to be on the same slate of speakers such as Clarence Collison and Marion Ellis both of whom are well known and respected for their knowledge of honey bees and beekeeping and friends of mine. It takes a lot of effort from a lot of people to make these meetings successful so why not pitch in and ask what you can do to help the PSBA.

Get ready and take care of your bees.

Warren Miller,
PSBA President

Quick Bits

Although this winter has been extremely mild, stories of bee losses are not much different than past winters. Last fall did not produce a very good honey crop. In our northwest corner of Pa, September only had 10 days that it did not rain. And part of that rain came just as the goldenrod was showing signs of a good nectar flow. I went through every hive in early November. I culled out 35 of 105 colonies. Either not enough bees or not enough honey. I tried to load good frames of honey into each of the other colonies. And just for good measure, I put candy boards (1.5x9x9) on everybody in December. The jury is still out as I write this the last week of February. I split my wintering between indoor and outdoor. The indoor colonies have used maybe 30% of the candy blocks. So I was a bit shocked to find some outdoor colonies in mid February that had completely consumed the blocks, had huge clusters and would have surely starved if I had checked them any later. The warm winter, since October, has allowed the bees to keep rearing brood and consume much more food than otherwise. The chances of starvation and high losses are very real. I have already heard of some high losses.

The Farm Show has been described as the “Super Bowl” for our Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association. This is our opportunity to meet, greet and educate thousands of visitors about honey and beekeeping. The volunteers are tremendous and eager to be there.

There are 5 spaces open for County/Association exhibits. Each exhibit is guaranteed a premium from \$150 to \$275. We always have a space or two that does not get used. The American Beekeeping Federation trade show and convention is coming to Hershey the same week as Farm Show, in Jan 2013. As host state, it is our opportunity to shine again. Farm Show chairpersons, Maryann Frazier and Lee Miller must consider abandoning some of the county/association exhibits for lack of participation. This is not the year to do that. It would be a great help if any of the 27 state associations would commit and fill the 5 spots. Some decisions must be made before mid-April.

I know it takes a bit of work and time to put an exhibit together, get it to the Farm Show and break it down at the end of the week. It doesn't need to be complicated. It doesn't need to “Wow” the crowd. Even 5th place is \$150 to your club.

Be thinking now, about entering honey and wax products. En tries were a bit weak this year. With our new location in the main hall, there is lots of space to fill. There was about \$1,000 of premium money left for the Apiary department this year. This is your Super Bowl.

The honey standard (HB 956) is still in the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. In speaking with a committee

member, it would seem they don't fully understand this enough to discuss it. Along with that, a class action lawsuit has been filed in California that has twisted California's honey standard language. We will be closely watching this case. Its outcome will influence our decision how to move forward.

Information is being gathered regarding honey house inspection to present to Pa Dept of Agriculture. Each of our bordering states does not require honey house inspection below a certain amount of production. With the new food safety laws in Pa anyone that sells any amount of honey, to anybody, is subject to inspection and license requirement. This has a negative effect on small scale beekeepers that rarely recover beekeeping expenses. It's simply not feasible to invest thousands more into a hobby. 72% of registered beekeepers in Pa have 25 or fewer colonies, yet they contribute enormously to local pollination. Collectively, small scale producers fill a niche desired by local consumers to ‘buy local’. It seems we need to re-educate ‘food safety’ that honey is uniquely a ‘safe’ food. And your local sales will shut you down quicker than any law, if you put out a bad product.

Charlie Vorisek
PSBA 1st Vice-President

Mail vs. Email

The Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association is sending out the newsletter via email instead of through the USPS to those members who are interested. If you would like to receive “The Pennsylvania Beekeeper” by email, please contact Yvonne Crimbring at pabee1@frontier.com and include your name, mailing address, phone number along with current email address stating that you'd like to receive the PSBA newsletter via email.

Attention Counties: Please submit your 2012 list of officers and meeting dates to Yvonne as soon as possible. Her mailing address and email are listed on Page 8.

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A View from Honesdale

Hi Fellow Beekeepers,

A funny thing happened on the way to the bees last week. Of the 148 colonies, they are all alive. I put pollen patties on and those that I thought were a little light, fondant. This is the first year, in many, that going into March my survival rate is phenomenal. I have spoken to several beekeepers and they tell me they have losses.

After racking my brain, here is what I have come up with:

Of course we have had a mild winter. That's a big plus. I treated with Formic from Mite-Away™. Dusted with Teramycin, negated to put Fumigillin on after hearing from our Penn State scientist that spoke at our November meeting that it pretty much doesn't work.

And here is a biggie that I still after 27 years can't figure, why bloody why would you not give the girls all the help they can use. We have 4 Bee clubs in my area. There are presidents of these clubs that don't know what it's about. They have white hives. Paint the hives a dark color. We are in the Northeast. White repels heat; dark colors absorb heat and transmit it to the ladies. All my colors are dark green, dark blue, and dark brown.

In a windy apiary give them a little help. Get some slip over covers (David VanderDussen has them Mite-Away™ Kingston Ontario). I have an apiary that produces beaucoup honey in an extremely windy area. With the wrap, they all survive. Without the wrap, none do.

Now till the first pollen and nectar, is when 68% of our yearly losses occur. Please keep an eye and feed, feed, feed if you have to. Pollen patties work; use them. And don't forget my catechism: use dark bees from Northern overwintered stock. Do yourself a favor; keep away from the packages from the South.

Good Beekeeping,

Charlie Kinbar,

2nd Vice President PSBA; President, NEPA Beekeepers

IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 2/13 and receives the newsletter at 1000 Pennsburg Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA will send his/her name and an account of his/her beekeeping operation to the editor at 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724 by March 20, he/she will receive a years free subscription to either *Gleaning in Bee Culture*, *American Bee Journal*, *The Speedy Bee* or *The Small Beekeepers Journal*. When you respond, please specify your choice of magazine.

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James N. Griesemer

Owner



Jeremy's Corner

I am blessed with a beautiful and inquisitive granddaughter, as no doubt are many of you, and fortunately she lives only 45 minutes away so we often get to spend time with her. Shortly before Christmas I was babysitting her in the play area, watching her draw on the chalkboard (her grandmother has been determined to introduce Nora to art from the very outset) when she drew my attention to a gap between the board and the easel and explained that that is where she swipes her credit card, which she duly demonstrated using a sheet of paper.

Two weeks later I watched in amazement as, with supreme confidence, she manipulated the photographs on her father's cell phone.

When I or my children were 3 years old neither cell phones nor credit cards existed (and we know now that the latter were the brain child of big business so that workers, who had foregone raises in wages, could have a way to spend money they did not have in the face of a barrage of advertising which was designed to make them feel needy and thus greedy for consumer goods.)

And now credit cards are integrated into the play of a pre-schooler.

Grand-parenting does not make me feel old. It does make me feel special. I feel responsible for introducing Nora and her younger brother to a love of and respect for the environment and cannot wait to introduce her to the honey bees. Is a fourth birthday too early to gift a bee suit?

Joel Salatin, in his book "Folks, This Ain't Normal," argues that no civilization has been in our current state of environmental ignorance. In previous eras survival meant that one had to be intimately aware of one's surroundings and viscerally involved in the rearing and preparing of food for the table.

But in recent decades putting food on the table does not require any knowledge of involvement except how to scan a credit card, open a plastic bag and nuke it in the microwave.

No previous civilization has been able to be this disconnected from its ecological umbilical cord and survive.

Today we can live a life time without thinking about air, soil, water, lumber and energy. If we do think about them we do so in the abstract – we don't have a visceral relationship with these essential resources.

Most indigenous cultures believed that the landscape was alive, that it was holy. The Irish writer, the late John O'Donohue, suggests first, that when you bring your body into the natural world you are bringing it home, where it belongs. Secondly, he says, the outer landscape is a metaphor for the unknown inner landscape. By implication, as we loose contact with the outer world so too does the inner world feel empty and deserted, a hole we vainly try to fill with 'things,' which may include alcohol, drugs and sex which become addictive as we find the more we imbibe the greater the hole expands.

For most of my life I have been an educator, which has been both immensely rewarding and deeply frustrating. Teaching is a huge exercise in trust in that one never really knows what is happening in the minds of one's students. Perhaps only in prayer is there less direct connection between input and output than in teaching! One has to trust that if one is truly present, with passion and integrity, the right things will happen for each student, and any wisdom in the lesson will be available to the student when he or she needs it later in their life time.

And sadly teachers seldom get to experience the tangible, long term outcomes of their commitment.

By comparison, after spending time with the bees, I feel that something has changed because of my work – I can witness it, even measure it - and it is deeply satisfying. I am not in control – we are dealing with insects after all – but I have been working in rhythm and harmony with the natural world, and what I have done has hopefully improved not only their world but mine as well.

Jeremy Barnes

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(These are for PSBA members ONLY!)

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2 years 37.00	2 years 38.00
3 years 52.15	

The Small Beekeeper's Journal	The Speedy Bee
\$12.95	1 year \$17.25
(Regular Rate)	Quarterly Issues

Please send 6 weeks before subscription runs out as we send them in once a month.

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In order to reflect the interests of all facets of Pennsylvania beekeeping, articles submitted for publication may on occasion express ideas contrary to the philosophy of the P.S.B.A. or a majority of its members.

----- Clip here -----

**Application for New and Renewal Membership
 Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association**

- \$1.00 Junior Membership (under 17) annual dues
 - \$20.00 annual dues
 - \$25.00 family dues
 - \$200.00 Lifetime Membership
- I understand the dues entitle me to the Newsletter and all other benefits of membership.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

Email _____ County _____

- New
- Renew

Make checks payable to: PA State Beekeepers Association
Send to: Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724

Upcoming Dates To Remember

Deadline for the April issue of The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is **March 27th**.



Montgomery County Beekeepers

Tuesday, March 6, 7:00 p.m. in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery. “Early Spring Splits and Swarm Prevention” – Speaker to be determined. For more information, contact Mark Antunes at 484-955-0768 or email: honeyhillfarm@verizon.net.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Building, Montrose. Speaker: Rochelle Hoadley on “Hive and Frame Preparation”. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for more information.

Burgh Bees Beekeeping 102

Saturday, March 10, 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Penn State Extension of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh. Cost \$90.00 includes lunch and the required text book. Space is limited, please register early. Contact 412-473-2540 for more information or to register.

Bucks County Beekeepers

Tuesday, March 13 at the Plumbsteadville Grange, Plumbsteadville. Program by Pier Guidi, long time bee keeper and BCBA member. Topic: Install a package and queen, and spring feeding requirements. All are invited. Contact Gary Schongalla-Bowman at gschongalla@verizon.net for more information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers

Tuesday, March 13, 6:30 p.m. at The Gathering Place, Mt. Joy. Lancaster County Honey Producer’s Banquet. For additional information, contact Jim Pinkerton at 717-653-5911.

Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 14 @7:00 p.m. at the Monroe Co. Environmental Education Center, Stroudsburg. Contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421, email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, March 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Center, Allentown. Speaker: Prof. Will Towne on “The Honey Bee’s Sun Compass”. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

Capital Area Beekeepers

Friday, March 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Bldg., Harrisburg. All are welcome. For more information, contact Linda Purcell, CABA Secretary, at 717-566-6327, email Linda.sweetbee@gmail.com

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, March 20, 7 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. Email info@thebeeyard.org for more information.

Berks-Schuylkill Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 21st 7:00 p.m. at the Berks Ag. Center. “Producing Comb Honey” by Herman Danenhower. For more information, contact Bill Clements at 610-678-7630.

SABA Beekeeping Seminar

Saturday, March 31, 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Cultural Education Center, Albany. Speakers: Maryann Frazier and Randy Oliver. Contact Anne Frey at 518-895-8744, email: annef@capital.net or visit the website www.adirondackbees.org for more information and registration.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Tuesday, April 5, 7:00 p.m. in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery. Speaker: Herman Danenhower on “Cut Comb Honey”. For more information, contact Mark Antunes at 484-955-0768 or email: honeyhillfarm@verizon.net.

Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, April 11 @7:00 p.m. at the Monroe Co. Environmental Education Center, Stroudsburg. Contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421, email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net for more information.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, April 13, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Building, Montrose. Speaker: Jim Barber on “Hiving a Package” and speaker: Kevin Baker on “Honey Plants”. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for more information.

(Continued on Page 11)



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Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

Chester County Beekeepers

Saturday, April 14, 9:00 a.m. at the Stroud Preserve. Contact Charlie Karat at 610-998-1407, email: ckarat54@gmail.com for more information.

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, April 17, 7 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. Email info@thebeeyard.org for more information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers

Tuesday, April 17, 6:30 p.m. at the North Museum of Natural History and Science, Lancaster. Spring Management. For additional information, contact Jim Pinkerton at 717-653-5911.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, April 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Center, Allentown. Speaker: Ron Bogansky on "Increasing Colony Numbers by Splits/Swarms". Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

Capital Area Beekeepers

Friday, April 20, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Bldg., Harrisburg. All are welcome. For more information, contact Linda Purcell, CABA Secretary, at 717-566-6327, email Linda_sweetbee@gmail.com

Beaver Valley Beekeepers

Monday, April 30, 7:00 p.m. at the Wetlands, Beaver Co. Conservation District Ed. Center, Aliquippa. For more information, contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email pattie.zyroll@elkem.com

25th Annual Short Course

Saturdays May 5 & 12, sponsored by the Capital Area Beekeepers Association. Part I will be held on May 5 starting at 8:00 a.m. at the Dauphin Co. Ag. & Natural Resources Center, Dauphin. Part II will be held May 12 starting at 12:00 noon at Dave Anderson's Apiary, Palmyra. The cost for registration is \$40.00 For additional information, contact Jim Hoover, 717-691-1413, email hooverdron@aol.com

2012 PSBA Summer Picnic

Saturday, July 21st. Hosted by Burgh Bees (new Pittsburgh area association) Location to be announced. Watch for more information in future newsletters.

PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 9 & 10 at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. More information at a later date.

Address Changed?

If you have changed your address (mail, email or temporary) please notify secretary Yvonne Crimbring. We have been receiving newsletters returned by the post office due to "temporarily away" or "incorrect address". This costs the association .50 per returned newsletter. Also please update your email address if you have made a change. These returns prevent you from receiving information pertaining to beekeeping and our association.

Honey Mustard Roasted Potatoes

- 4 large (about 2 lbs.) baking potatoes
- 1/2 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed dried thyme leaves
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Peel potatoes and cut each into 6 to 8 pieces. In large saucepan, cover potatoes with salted water; bring to a boil. Simmer potatoes 12-15 minutes, until barely tender. Drain. Combine mustard, honey and thyme in small bowl. In large bowl, toss potatoes with honey-thyme mustard until coated evenly. Arrange potatoes on foil-lined baking sheet, sprayed with vegetable cooking spray. Bake for 20 minutes at 375 °F, or until potatoes begin to brown around edges. Season to taste with salt and pepper before serving. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition: 296 Calories, 2 g Fat Total, 6 g Protein, 0 mg Cholesterol, 65 g Carbohydrates, 726 mg Sodium, 3 g Dietary Fiber, 5% Calories from Fat

Taken from www.honey.com/nhb/recipes



Spring Bee Packages

Spring bee packages to be picked up
April 15th

- 3 lb. package w/queen - \$80.50**
- 3 lb. package w/marked queen - \$83.50**

Packages can be picked up at
307 Valley Drive, Rochester, PA 15074

**To order packages,
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724-312-7584 (cell) or
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HONEY SALE AND LABELING ACT

Act of Jul. 20, 1974, P.L. 537, No. 184

Cl. 31

AN ACT

Defining honey and regulating its sale and the labeling and sale of imitations of honey; and providing penalties for violation.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The terms "honey," "liquid or extracted honey," "strained honey" or "pure honey" as used in this act, shall mean the nectar of flowers that has been transformed by, and is the natural product of the honey-bee, taken from the honeycomb and marketed in a liquid, candied or granulated condition.

Section 2.

(a) No person shall sell, keep for sale, expose or offer for sale, any article or product in imitation or semblance of honey branded as "honey," "liquid or extracted honey," "strained honey" or "pure honey" which is not pure honey.

(b) No person, firm, association, company or corporation, shall manufacture, sell, expose or offer for sale, any compound or mixture branded or labeled as and for honey which shall be made up of honey mixed with any other substance or ingredient.

(c) Whenever honey is mixed with any other substance or ingredient and the commodity is to be marketed, there shall be printed on the package containing such compound or mixture a statement giving the ingredients of which it is made; if honey is one of such ingredients it shall be so stated in the same size type as are the other ingredients, but it shall not be sold, exposed for sale, or offered for sale as honey; nor shall such compound or mixture be branded or labeled with the word "honey" in any form other than as herein provided; nor shall any product in semblance of honey, whether a mixture or not, be sold, exposed or offered for sale as honey, or branded or labeled with the word "honey," unless such article is pure honey.

Section 3. Any person violating the provisions of this act shall be guilty of a summary offense and on conviction thereof shall be punished as provided by the "Crimes Code".

Section 4. Nothing in this act shall be interpreted as preempting, usurping or replacing the jurisdiction or activities of the Federal Government in connection with the labeling or mislabeling of honey or imitations thereof.

Submitted by Charlie Vorisek

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2012 Honey Queen Jessica Long is pictured above with State Representative Jerry Stern, District 80 serving Blair County, during Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations annual Cornucopia held February 7th at the State Capital Building in Harrisburg.

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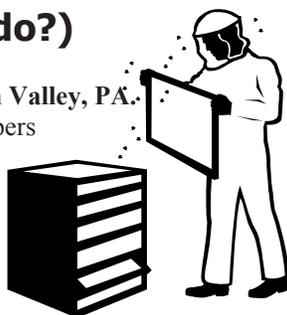


W.W.B.D. (What would Bill do?)

March 2012

By: **Bill Mondjack, Master Beekeeper, Lehigh Valley, PA.**

As one of our EAS Certified Master Beekeepers in Pennsylvania, I was approached by President Warren Miller to write a column in the P.S.B.A. monthly newsletter with the topic being a timely issue of concern or any question that may arise in beekeeping. The idea being to help fellow beekeepers become more proficient in our craft.



First let me say, I am NOT a scientist; I am a beekeeper just like you. As all of us know, if you ask 3 beekeepers the same question you will most probably get 5 different answers, so I would like to approach this matter as a Q & A posting as I do with many of our members in the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Assn., unless I decide to write about a timely issue.

If you have a question you would like to send in, please email it to me at: billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com with the subject line being WWBD, and I will respond with my opinion as 'what I would do' if the problem or situation was mine.

Bill Mondjack, Master Beekeeper

Here's a question I received & answered, Feb. 24, 2012:

Q: Bill,

I have a quick question for you if you don't mind. I had two of my hives not make it through the winter and I have two medium boxes of honey left over. The other hives that did make it have plenty of honey. Can you give me some advice as to what I should do with the two extra honey boxes? I have two packages coming from you shortly and I know I could feed it to them to get them started. I am not sure how to keep it until they arrive without it getting ruined by bugs, moths, mice etc.

Also, should I not save it for them and just harvest it for me? The last time I did that, it was not nice honey; it separated in a weird way and was very dark. Does winter temp. mess it up?

I would appreciate your advice.

Thanks!!

Deb

A: Hi Deb,

If you have room in a deep freezer you could store it there. Honey will not freeze and the temperature in your freezer will kill any wax moth eggs that may be present. I would bag it in plastic first. IF you know the hives did not die from American Foulbrood disease you can place those supers of honey on the hives that are alive and they will care for them until you get your packages then you can give it to the package hives if you wish. IF the honey is still liquid and not crystallized you can extract it and use it for yourself like you mentioned.

I don't know why your honey 'was not nice honey' the last time you did that. Winter or cold weather does not change the honey, except for crystallization. I'm 'just thinking'...was the honey fully cured when you harvested it? Meaning...were the frames of honeycomb fully capped? If not, the honey may have been too wet. If the moisture level was too high (over 18.6%) it may have started to ferment. You mentioned, your honey was very dark. The color of honey usually varies from nectar source to nectar source. Different flowers produce different flavors and colors of honey. Overheating and old age will also darken honey.

Hope this answers your questions Deb,
Bill Mondjack

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All correspondence should be addressed to:
Mrs. Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Rd.,
Canton, PA 17724. Phone: 570-673-8201.
Email: pabee1@frontier.com

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Local Fall Honey

**Glenn Crimbring
570-673-8201**

pabee1@frontier.com

2012 PA Honey Queen Report

By Jessica Long

Hello everyone! This February with the warm weather and extra day, the month just seemed to “leap” right by. My days were spent preparing items for the next promotion by counting out honey sticks and coloring books, preparing my display board, and looking after my own bees by making fondant.

On February 4, I traveled to Soergals Orchard in Wexford, where Burgh Bees sponsored a Beginning Beekeeping Workshop. There were about 65 people in attendance that were all interested in starting their own hives. Workshops like this one are important for new beekeepers because it shows that other beekeepers are there to support anyone starting beekeeping. After the workshop was over, I assisted with answering questions about the parts of the hive.

February 7th, I traveled to the State Capital Building, in Harrisburg, for the Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations annual Cornucopia, where I had the opportunity to meet nearly 150 different state senators and representatives. Events such as this are important because it reminds our state representatives and state senators how important beekeeping is to the ecosystem and agriculture industry. During this event I also met Gabrielle Elizabeth Murphy, 2012 PA State Dairy Princess, and Drew An Brubaker, 2012 PA Fair Queen, who, like me, also promote different aspects of agriculture to the public.

I traveled to the Four Points hotel in Mars, for the Western PA Beekeeping Seminar on February 18. I gave a presentation to 325 people about the PA Honey Queen Program. I also talked about my goals for the year, which are to complete promotions in 30 different counties, increase our Facebook fans to more than 100 by the end of the year, and to find two young ladies to compete for the 2013 Honey Queen title.

One of my favorite parts of this promotion was having an opportunity to assist Mary Alice Gettings during the seminar “The Goodness of Honey,” where she talked about different uses of honey, benefits of honey, and made some delicious dishes, all using honey. Between seminar sessions, I spent time at the queen program booth to help answer any questions, such as how I can be scheduled to attend events.

During the lunch break the Beaver Valley Beekeepers Association held a 50/50 drawing for the Honey Queen Program, raising just over \$270. Thank you to the Beaver Valley Beekeepers for their support of the program.

The next day, I attended an Introduction to Beekeeping class in Phillipsburg, hosted by the 2 C’s and a Bee Association. I had the opportunity to speak about the different resources that

beekeepers can use and my role as the Honey Queen. Thank you Ken Hoover, 2C’s and a Bee president, for donating some promotional items for me to use throughout the year.

Finishing out my February promotions, on the 23rd, I spent the day at Bedford Elementary School where I gave five presentations to 641 students in first through fifth grade. All the students were very excited to learn about honey bees and enjoyed quizzing me on different bee facts by asking questions. The great questions and attentiveness of these students made for a successful first school promotion.

As we start another month full of promotions, be sure to contact Rachel Bryson, 717-643-0010 or brysonrachel@yahoo.com, to book your date. I am really enjoying my opportunity to be your Honey Queen and I look forward to traveling to your next event.



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Nature Notes

March 2012

Winter is over. **Wood frogs** are **quacking** in shallow ponds; from a distance they do sound like noisy ducks. **Chickadees** are singing “fee-bee, fee-bay” and inspecting nest boxes. **Crows** are carrying sticks for nests. **Tree swallows** skim over ponds and fields. **Painted turtles** are sunning on logs in the water. **Daffodils** nod in warm breezes. **Maple flowers** open, covered with a fuzz of yellow stamens. The first **comma butterflies** appear (fifty-cent piece size, orange with brown edges). (What happened to fifty-cent pieces?)

Winter **weather** is not over. Don’t tempt fate by putting the snow shovels away! A March **snowstorm** would not be a surprise. Fortunately, longer days with the Sun higher in the sky melt the snow.

All of the animal and flower appearances in the first paragraph could be entries in **almanac**, recording the progress of spring each year.

Robins are spread across the lawn; no more feeding together in tight groups. Males (the ones with black heads contrasting with gray backs) will not tolerate another male close to their patch of turf. The males appear to be posturing, standing at right angles to each other to show off their robinly strength and good health.

An early spring can cause trouble in **predator/prey** relationships. Maybe an **insect hatch** happens early because of locally warm weather. The birds that depend on the insects as food for their young arrive when **day length** drives them north, not necessarily when we have a spell of warm weather. Baby birds may starve.

We are fortunate to have **birds** to scour leaves one by one, collecting insects that munch on leaves, sometimes the leaves of human food plants. Birds usually arrive on time, work every day dawn to dusk, require no maintenance, and replicate themselves. They work for us, so we should protect them. Pesticides might kill enough of the insect pests to starve the birds that feed on them. Once the birds are gone, they probably are gone for good, leaving us with the task of controlling creepy crawlies all the time.

Venus and **Jupiter** appear to be close together (closest on March 14) high in the west at dusk. **Mars**, the **Red Planet**, rises a bit later. **Orion** is standing up now when he appears in the south. The two pointer stars at the end of the Big Dipper farthest from the handle point toward **Polaris**, the **North Star**, a bright star by itself in the north. Use the pointers to trace a line the other way to **Regulus**, the dot at the bottom of a backwards question mark. The question mark is the head of **Leo the Lion**.

By Tim Sterrett

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PA Honey Queen Jessica Long is shown assisting Mary Alice Gettings during the seminar “The Goodness of Honey” preparing of few dishes, all using honey. This presentation was part of the Western PA Beekeeping Seminar held on February 18th in Mars, PA.



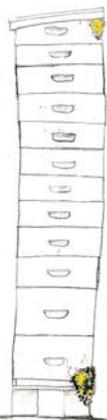
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(* Actual date depends on weather.)

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The instructor is committed to present a knowledgeable and enjoyable, interactive, and intensively hands-on workshop. We are friendly and encourage you to contact us throughout the course for advice, help, or a sympathetic ear.

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