



# THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

January 2013

Volume No. 1

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

## News and Views...

It's late December as I put some thoughts together. The snow has finally arrived. We had snow in northwest Pa for the opening day of deer rifle season. I bagged a buck on opening day, so that allowed me to get back to business. Not just checking on colonies for winter, but the holiday sales were well underway.

I left hives on different locations, rather than retrieve them all home as in past years. I made a point to get a final check on them in early December. Good thing. The majority of colonies seemed well packed, but some were very light.

With just a gentle lift of the back of the hive, one can judge quickly if it's heavier than just a stack of boxes. A look in the top will tell if the bees are high or low in hive. Bees should be low and out of sight from the top. On a moderately warm day, there will be bees in the top. But most should be low.

All the 'light' hives got a block of sugar candy. It's a simple recipe of sugar and corn syrup found from many beekeeper sources. I use a 9x9 cake pan for a mold. The blocks are placed on the top bars. A 1 1/2" spacer is added and wrinkled newspaper packed on top to cut down too much space. I modified the recipe last year by adding some pollen substitute. An idea borrowed from Fisher Honey Farms. You may recall last winter was rather mild. The warmer weather loosened up the clusters. Some were making brood most of the winter. Brood puts a huge demand on the food supply. If they ran out of food, they starved. I recall one location in February last winter. They had consumed all but a small corner. If I hadn't caught it, they would have starved.

Simple granulated sugar can save a light hive. There are different ways to accomplish the same thing. I find newspaper to be a handy, cheap tool. Lay a couple sheets of newspaper on the top bars. Tear a small hole in the middle or above the cluster. Pour sugar on the newspaper, right up to the hole. Add a spacer or empty shallow super. I like to put more newspaper over the sugar. It helps create a pocket for the bees. Some suggest wetting the sugar enough to make it clump together.

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By the time you read this, the 2013 Pa Farm Show will probably be history. Since our November meeting, in Lewisburg,

preparations have been well underway. If I wasn't busy before, the added event of the American Beekeeping Federation in Hershey during Farm Show week has notched me up a bit.

I want to thank all the association members that have put in many hours and many emails to make everything fall into place. I have been in the middle of many email conversations and always impressed with the level of cooperation and 'get it done' attitude.

We expect to publish a "special edition" newsletter to cover highlights of both the Pa Farm Show and ABF convention.

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A couple of issues will take lead in 2013. All aspects of life require us to continuously learn and re-learn. Some of what I thought I knew about bees 10 years ago no longer applies. I have always maintained subscriptions to the two major bee publications in order to help stay current with information as well as attend state and regional beekeeper meetings and workshops that bring research to us first hand.

One issue will be looking at Section 18 approval for Apivar in Pennsylvania as a miticide. Section 18 is a limited approval to make available a product until it has completed all the testing required by EPA. Apivar is an amitraz product. Many commercial beekeepers have rotated an amitraz treatment with other mite controls. They find, when used properly, it is a good mite control. Amitraz breaks down relatively quickly. However research has shown amitraz breaks down into other metabolites that frequently show up in wax and pollen samples. The concern is the toxicity of those metabolites. EPA seeks to maintain very low tolerance of those metabolite residues in foods.

The world of hobby beekeeping is not as demanding as that of commercial. Food production on large scale is simply not possible without commercial beekeepers. Hobbyists can struggle along, loose bees, pick and choose labor-intensive methods without risk to their livelihood. Often commercial operations don't have the luxury of waiting for research to fix problems. They must react quickly and do what it takes to keep their bees as healthy as they can. Synthetic miticides are not their first option, but sometimes it bridges time.

(Continued on Page 3)

News and Views (Continued from Page 1)

The other issue we need to be diligent with, is finding some way to aid beekeepers across the state wishing to keep bees in more populated areas. Local governments normally have no idea about beekeeping. It would be in our best interest to have a means of guiding zoning and ordinance decisions. I don't know what that is. The Best Management Practices (BMP) for beekeeping in Pa was written together with Penn State and the Pa Dept. of Agriculture a few years ago. It was intended as a voluntary aid. It was also written with the idea that some day we will see more Africanized Honey Bees (AHB) show up. The practices work for European honeybees just as well. It's just a good common sense guide for anyone. Sometimes beekeepers are their own worse enemy with careless hive setups. Even the gentlest bees can have stress at times in the season and become defensive. With the majority of our replacement bees coming from southern states that have AHB, we will see aggressive bees. Reasonable precautions can prevent future problems. It would be good if we could voluntarily agree to those precautions and sell that idea to legislators.

Pennsylvania agriculture laws already protect beekeeping practices in all areas not zoned or zoned for agriculture. Beekeeping is a hobby for most. Of the 2,808 registered beekeepers in Pa, 93% manage 25 or fewer colonies. There isn't much leverage for hobbies in legislation. This 'hobby' happens to fill a huge void in the world of pollination. The general public and agriculture benefit from hobbyists. We need to continue to unite our message. The 7% of sideline and commercial beekeepers need the voices of support from hobbyists and general public. (That would be *your* honey customers.)

Public education about honeybees is an ongoing need. It has occurred to me that there could be value in some sort of on-going public advertisement. Maybe instead of "Got Milk" we should have "Got Bees" or "Put Bees in My Backyard". "No Bees -No Food"

*Charlie Vorisek*  
President PSBA

**February Special Edition**

We will be publishing an additional newsletter in February. This Special Edition will include articles and photos on the Farm Show and the ABF Convention. If you have an article or photos to share, please send them to Yvonne (see Page 8). Also included in February's edition will be a form to complete if you are interested in having our 2013 PSBA Honey Queen, Elena Hoffman or Honey Princess, Jessica Aurand, to your beekeeping meeting or event. Watch for this special edition!

**Introduction to Beekeeping**

An "Introduction to Beekeeping" Course is being presented by the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association.

Classes will be held February 6, 20, and March 6, 20. Class times are 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville, PA. An informational meeting will be held Saturday, January 19, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center (Next to Dorney Park in Allentown).

Registration is \$60 per person. Book, course materials and refreshments are included in the cost of the class. Participants who register and pay at the Jan 19<sup>th</sup> informational meeting will receive a \$5 discount off the registration fee.

The class will be taught by members of the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association, some of whom are Certified Master Beekeepers! Field trip dates to visit the club hives located at L.C.C.C., for hands on experience, will be announced at one of the classes!

For more information and to register please visit the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association website: <http://www.lehighvalleybeekeepers.org> or contact: Lee Fleischman, Class Coordinator at [bees@fleischmanfamily.org](mailto:bees@fleischmanfamily.org) or (610) 360-7508.

**Do you know?**

We had two people that attended our Annual Conference in Lewisburg who paid their PSBA dues along with the registration fee and we are unable to find them in our membership list. Does any one know Beverly Ross or Wally Blohm? If so, please have them contact Yvonne so she can record their information and receive our newsletter. Thank you for your help.

**In This Issue**

Apimondia 2012	5
PA Honey Princess	5
Jeremy's Corner	7
September Identificaton Reader	7
Officers and Membership Information	8
Upcoming Dates	9
What Would Bill Do	11
Honey Queen Program	13
Nature Notes	15
December Identification Reader	17
Western PA Beekeeping Seminar	19
Recipes	21

## Apimondia 2012

Last November, my wife Ellen and I attended the Apimondia Symposium entitled “Queen Breeding, Selection and Honey Bee Health” which was held in the beautiful old section of Quebec City. This three-day symposium brought together world leaders in honey bee health. There were over 20 presenters plus numerous research posters. Due to space limitations, I will discuss only two presentations.

Dr. Marla Spivak and Susan Cobey, well known for their efforts breeding Minnesota Hygienic bees and New World Carniolan bees, respectively use different approaches to select for better honey bees. Dr. Spivak is well known for her use of freeze killed brood as a measure of a colony’s hygienic behavior. Importantly, she has demonstrated that the ability of a colony to rapidly and thoroughly remove dead brood correlates with its ability to resist American Foul Brood and Chalkbrood infections. Minnesota Hygienic bees may also be somewhat resistant to Varroa destructor infestations. Dr. Spivak indicated that essential to her success in producing a commercially useful strain of honey bees is was starting with colonies that already performed well, in that they exhibited good honey production, over wintered well in Minnesota and were gentle. She selected only from colonies that exhibited these desirable characteristics. Now that Dr. Spivak is no longer developing the Minnesota Hygienic line, she has started a Tech Transfer program called the ‘Bee Team’ to assist commercial queen breeders to select for hygienic behavior in their own breeding stock. Her Tech Transfer crew started working with the California Bee Breeders Association and has had impressive success aiding them in improving the hygienic behavior of their own bees. Dr. Spivak’s goal is to help queen breeders in other parts of the country to increase the hygienic behavior of their breeder queens.

Sue Cobey has taken a different approach to improving Carniolan bees. Started in 1981, her program the ‘New World Carniolan Closed Population Breeding Program’ has a goal to produce productive, gentle, winter hardy stock selected for traditional Carniolan characteristics. Ms. Cobey uses performance based selection and does not rely on specific traits. Further, she uses instrumental insemination to ensure purity of crosses. Her program uses a two phase selection method. The first phase evaluates general colony performance, whereas the second phase selects for productivity and tolerance/resistance to diseases and pests. Colonies are evaluated twice during the first phase, once in the fall and again the following spring to determine overwintering ability and spring buildup. Each selection trait is assigned a point value and the sum is used to rank each colony; high ranking colonies are further evaluated for weight gain and resistance to pests and diseases. She uses freeze killed brood to evaluate hygienic behavior and natural mite drop to monitor mite toler-

ance. The queens from the best colonies are used as breeder queens for the next generation. To increase the gene pool, Ms. Cobey has imported semen from German and Slovenian Carnica stocks to improve her New World Carniolans. She is currently working at Washington State University and with the California Bee Breeders Association to disseminate New World Carniolan bees.

In addition to these two presenters, speakers from Canada (Albert Robertson), Germany (Ralph Buchler) and France (Ives Le Conte) discussed their program of examining ‘survivor’ colonies for Varroa resistance. Many groups are using modern molecular biology techniques in an attempt to develop biomarkers for Varroa resistance in order to more readily select for resistant honey bees.

Vince Aloyo

2013 Pennsylvania  
Honey Princess  
Jessica Aurand



## A Note from the Queen Chair

By Rachel Bryson

The Pennsylvania Honey Queen Program is excited to announce that Jessica Aurand was selected as the 2013 Pennsylvania Honey Princess during the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Jessica, 17, is from Middleburg and currently attends Middle West High School. She is active with track and plays the saxophone in several school bands. Outside of school, Jessica is active with 4-H, FFA, enjoys horseback riding and caring for her families hives. Jessica plans on attending college in the hopes of becoming a large animal veterinarian.

Princess Jessica is available to attend various events, include schools, libraries, fairs and farmers markets. We are looking forward to working with both Queen Elena and Princess Jessica this year. To schedule a promotion, contact Rachel Bryson at [brysonrachel@yahoo.com](mailto:brysonrachel@yahoo.com) or 717-643-0010.

## Jeremy's Corner

In the spirit of the season, last month's column was about a gift - the creation of the national parks through the vision, passion and perseverance of a few who thought long term. This piece is also about a gift but of a very different kind; it was given to me inadvertently and to a young man deliberately.

Thirty years ago, in Philadelphia and with time to spare, I joined a group touring the Independence National Historic Park that, I believe, is the only national park within a city. It is famous for the Liberty Bell but what happened that morning involved a different type of liberty.

A large group had assembled in a hall dominated by a painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and after the guide and ranger, Lisa Randolph (the fact that I remember her name is itself telling) had finished her explanation of the events depicted in the painting, a young African American boy, perhaps eight years old, raised his hand and asked how old Benjamin Franklin was when he signed the declaration.

The majority of teachers would have provided the answer immediately, but not Lisa. Instead she told the young man the year in which Franklin was born, explained that he could find the date of the signing at the bottom of the painting, and then said, "When you have worked out the answer, raise your hand and you can tell me how old he was."

The tour continued until we were standing in front of the ropes that section off the original Supreme Court when a hand went up. Without saying a word, Lisa stepped forward, picked up the young man, took him behind the ropes (probably highly illegal,) sat him on one of the historic benches and invited him to tell the answer to the whole group. He did, he got it right and the group applauded loudly.

That young man will probably remember that event and the positive feelings associated with it for the rest of his life.

Notice that Lisa did not check to confirm that the answer was correct before he gave it. She trusted him, and had he got it wrong, undoubtedly she would have helped him work through to the correct response.

Lisa was a mentor for me and after the tour had ended I was able to convey to her the significance of her actions. I have not seen her since but the memory is as fresh as if it happened yesterday. The gift she gave the 8-year-old boy was the privilege to think for himself, the freedom to come to his own decision based on the data, and the joy of immediate feedback and recognition.

Being a mentor for a nu-bee presents similar challenges. How much does one demonstrate oneself and how much does one stand back and observe? How often does one speak and how often does one wait for the lessons to be learned, the connections to be made? How does one persuade others to read and attend those vital meetings, rather than sharing what one has read, what the guest speaker at the latest meeting revealed? There are no definitive rules, and ironically I am one who probably is too quick to interfere, too quick to pull out my hive tool and demonstrate.

Best of course is a mutual, trusting to-and-fro

This is mindful of a conversation with a nephew who spent a semester at Trinity College in Dublin. When asked to describe the critical difference between the school in Ireland and the schools he attended in the United States, he thought for a minute before responding, "At Trinity we were expected to teach ourselves."

There are many gifts that we have to share with those who are new to this ancient craft, including our knowledge and our passion. In Parker Palmer's wonderful definition of education, we too "can create the space in which the community of truth might occur."

Jeremy Barnes

## September Identification Reader

October 12 - My name is Dan Glezen Jr. and I reside in Hallstead, PA. I started 2012 with three hives and captured three swarms in the spring. Two hives died (one of the swarms and one of my originals). Two of the remaining hives are very strong and I hope to harvest some honey. The other two should produce enough honey to make it through the winter. I plan on collecting the honey this weekend.

I own a small hardware store, which is my profession. My second love is farming. I have thirteen beefers, three horses, fifty chickens, two hogs and, of course, bees. I have a wonderful wife and three fantastic children. I don't think life can get much better!!

### Classified

**FOR SALE:** 36 Frame Extractor.

For more information, please contact Alice Black at 724-783-2173.



## Upcoming Dates To Remember



Deadline for the February issue of

*The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* is **January 25<sup>th</sup>**.

**The Farm Show/ABF Special Edition deadline is February 1<sup>st</sup>.**

### **Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley**

Tuesday, January 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. For more information, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit <http://www.thebeeyard.org>

### **Lehigh Valley Beekeepers**

Thursday, January 17, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Bldg, Allentown. Speaker: Frank Licata, Vice President of the Monroe Co. Beekeepers Assoc. Topic: Lotions, Balms & Soaps Supplemental Income for Beekeepers. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### **Introduction to Beekeeping**

February 6 & 20, March 6 & 20, 7:00 – 9:30 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Comm. College, Schecksville. For additional information, see the article on page 3 or contact Lee Fleischman at 610-360-7508 or [bees@fleischmanfamily.org](mailto:bees@fleischmanfamily.org)

### **York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, January 24, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Jeremy Barnes will be presenting “Splitting a Hive: Why, When and How.” Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911 or email [snewgeese@yahoo.com](mailto:snewgeese@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **North East PA Beekeepers**

Wednesday, February 6, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: [purepahoney@gmail.com](mailto:purepahoney@gmail.com)

### **Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA**

Saturday, February 9, 9:00 a.m. at the home of James & Ginny Wood, Montrose. James will be preparing breakfast for those in attendance for the annual board meeting. All members are welcome to attend. Please make call 570-934-1166 to make your reservations.

### **Western PA Beekeeping Seminar**

February 15-16, 2013 at the Four Points by Sheraton, Mars, PA. For more information, contact the Penn State Extension, Beaver County, at 724-774-3003.

### **Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley**

Tuesday, February 16, 2013 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. For more information, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit <http://www.thebeeyard.org>

### **Lehigh Valley Beekeepers**

Thursday, February 21, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Bldg, Allentown. Beekeeping Equipment: Review, Basics & options. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### **York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, February 28, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Bill Sprenkle will be talking about “The Basics of Rearing and Evaluating Queens.” Contact

Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911 or email [snewgeese@yahoo.com](mailto:snewgeese@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **2013 EAS Conference and Short Course**

Monday-Friday, August 5-9, 2013, at the West Chester University, West Chester, Pa. visit the [EAS website](#) for more information.

### **PSBA Summer Picnic**

Saturday, August 10, 2013 at the Morris Arboretum, Philadelphia, PA. The picnic is being hosted by the Montgomery County Beekeepers’ Association. Watch for additional information.

### **PSBA Annual Conference**

Friday and Saturday, November 8 & 9, 2013 at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. Additional information will be posted on our website <http://www.pastatebeekeepers.com>.

## 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](mailto: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.

## Package Honey Bees

**3# Package with a marked Queen**

**\$85.00**

**Available first week of April 4, 2013**

**Lee Miller**

**3180 Ridge Road Extension  
Freedom, PA 15042**

**724-544-2900**

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

January 2013

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

As one of our EAS Certified Master Beekeepers in Pennsylvania, I was asked by PSBA President Charles Vorisek (*at the 2012 meeting*) if I would continue writing this column in the P.S.B.A. monthly newsletter. The idea being to answer questions that may arise from our members and to help fellow beekeepers become more proficient in their craft. I agreed to do so as long as I have questions to answer.

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](mailto: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*

### **Q: Received Oct. 2012**

**Q:** *Bill,*

*Sorry about my ignorance and I hope this inquiry is not a bother, but how many supers high should we be at going into the winter.*

*We have three hives.*

*Two hives have - hive body and one medium and 2 shallows. The top shallows of each hive have frames that are not completely filled with honey but they are working filling them since we have been giving them sugar water since there are no flowers blooming.*

*One hive has - the hive body and one medium and 1 shallow. Same, about half the frames are filled and we have sugar water on top.*

*We thought the sugar water would be useful till it gets too cold then we would take them off.*

*We were told by a guy up here that no longer has bees that we should not have the two up so high because of warmth over the winter yet they do have about half of the frames filled with honey. I know both food and warmth are survival issues.*

*Here's what happened:*

*When we took honey we wanted to be generous so we only took a little thinking they should have the most to get through the winter. After extracting we put the supers back on thinking they could easily re-build the cells and re-fill them with honey.*



*----> Should we remove that top super even though many of the frames are filled with honey?????*

*Again, I apologize if this is a bother. Thanks.*

*Robert Csandl*

**A:** Hi Bob,

Always good to hear from you and it's not a bother at all, I've been getting several questions this past week (*Oct. 2012*). For years the general belief was (and still is in our area) an average hive needs at least 60 lbs. of honey to survive our winters. That would equal 1 deep or approximately two shallows/mediums above the bottom brood chamber. I used to winter my hives in two deeps. The top one full of honey. Over the years I've been leaving the top deep full and 1 extra super, either a shallow or medium also full of honey. I tend to leave one of my oldest supers on and keep all of the rest of my honey supers in storage for the winter months. It USED to be standard practice years ago to pull honey at the end of summer then the bees could fill the top deep with the fall flow, pushing the queen with brood down into the bottom deep below. Now since I have been pulling our honey in late June/early July, (mid-summer) and treating for mites, the hives are down-sized earlier in the year leaving just 2 deeps and 1 super, unless I see the nectar flow continuing, then I will leave empty supers on the hive for the bees to fill.

From what you described your hives aren't too high with only one deep and a few supers. If they were mine I would keep them the way they are. Since you can't leave queen excluders on during winter you will find the queen and brood in the uppermost part of the hive in spring. This is why I keep one of my oldest supers with old comb on the hive all year long. I'll find the queen and brood in the top come spring but when the spring nectar starts they will deposit it in the empty cells in the top super as the brood hatches, pushing the queen down lower. Once my top super is full of fresh nectar and the queen is down into the top brood chamber I will add my honey supers on top. The super they just filled with nectar will act as a natural queen excluder. USUALLY the queen will not pass over frames of honey to lay.

The sugar syrup you've been feeding during this past month (*Oct. 2012*) should have been heavy syrup (2 sugar/1 water). Feeding thin syrup usually stimulates brood rearing but when you feed heavy syrup they will store this for winter.

If you check your hives during the winter months and think they are low on stores I usually suggest feeding

(Continued on Page 13)

W.W.B.D. (Continued from Page 11)

fondant. I am a believer in feeding fondant patties if a hive is near starvation. I usually check on my hives sometime in January or February. If I find the bees in the top super I put a fondant patty on the top bars, right underneath the inner cover. It is moist and easy for them to use. I have found them storing it in cells below where they are clustering. Feeding fondant is an inexpensive way to save a colony in danger of starvation.

Take care Bob. I hope I've helped you,

Bill Mondjack

### PA Honey Queen Program Report

Happy New Year!!! The start of another year brings many new opportunities for each of us and the Honey Queen Program is looking forward to making the most of them. As of this writing, we are excitedly preparing for the Pennsylvania Farm Show and the American Beekeeping Federation convention. Look for details on both these events in February's newsletter.

December is traditionally a quiet month for the Honey Queen Program, but the Queens are still working for the PSBA membership during this time. Queen Jessica has used this month to prepare for the ABF convention. Jessica's activities at the convention will include participating in a Quiz Bowl, presenting her Marketing Presentation, participating in a one-on-one interview, working with the Kids 'n Bees event, and meeting the membership of the ABF. All of that in just five days!

Queen Elena is well on her way to having a successful 2013-promotion year. She participated in the annual Honey Queen Training weekend just before Christmas. This training covers the many details the Honey Queen will need throughout her year, include how evaluations of events should be completed, the scheduling process, the dress code, travel requirements, how to give a school presentation, how to conduct a cooking demonstration and giving media interviews. Queen Elena is well prepared to begin her work for the PSBA.

Promotion request are already flowing in for 2013. If you would like Queen Elena to visit with your local club, school, homemakers group, etc. please contact me ([brysonrachel@yahoo.com](mailto:brysonrachel@yahoo.com) or 717-300-0146) to have your event placed on the calendar.

Have a blessed 2013!

Rachel Bryson  
PA Honey Queen Program Chair

### ATTENTION BEEKEEPERS

DON'T LET DIESEASE IN USED EQUIPMENT OR DEAD OUT HIVES KILL YOUR NEW BEES NEXT SPRING. Sterilize old and dead out equipment by taking part in the next hive irradiation sterilization event. Wooden ware, frames, and honey comb can all be safely treated to kill American Foul Brood, Nosema, and all other pathogens, virus, and disease eliminating them from your equipment at the low cost of \$142.00 per pallet. Contact Mark Antunes at [honeyhillfarm@verizon.net](mailto:honeyhillfarm@verizon.net) or call him at 484-955-0768 to sign up for the late winter equipment run to treat contaminated hives. All instructions and procedures will be e-mailed back to you upon request.

### Indoor Overwintering

We do indoor over wintering of our honey bees (similar to the way they do in Canada) in the middle of PA. Anyone interested in seeing and learning about over wintering inside is welcome to come and see our set up at no charge. Please give a call first to make sure that we are available. Contact Craig and Charlene Cella, 867 E. Winter Road, Loganton, PA. The phone number is 570-725-3682.

### Beeline Apiaries & Woodenware Dealer starting February 1, 2013

Package bees for Spring 2013  
**\$75.00**

Tentative dates: April 13 & April 20

**Nucs: \$100.00**

Contact:



178 Milnor Road  
Greencastle, PA 17225  
717-598-8184

## Nature Notes

Days are longer now that we have passed the **Winter Solstice**. Remember where the Sun set and rose in summer? Or where it hung right over the highway on the way to or from work? In winter, the Sun rises to the right and sets to the left of where we saw it in summer. The **arc of the Sun** is lower and shorter in winter. We have a shorter day (the Sun is up for a shorter time) and less intense sunlight. We can stare at the disc of the Sun at sunset because it shines through a lot of atmosphere and dust. If we cut down through the skin of an orange, the knife goes through one orange-skin thickness. If the knife enters the orange skin at a low angle, it cuts through a long slice of skin before getting through. Our winter sunlight slices the atmosphere at a low angle as sunset always does. Take a look near noon and see how low the Sun is in the sky. And we are remembering that Earth's atmosphere is comparable in thickness to the papery skin of an onion, not the thick skin of an orange. We had better be careful with our atmosphere.



deeper into the mud, so that the plant in effect grows downward, not upward. Each year, the plant grows deeper into the earth, so that older plants are practically impossible to dig up. They reproduce by hard, pea-sized seeds which fall in the mud and are carried away by animals or by floods.”

What are all those hairyflies doing on the inside of our windows? These are **cluster flies**. Native to Europe, they winter in bark crevices. Our homes have more crevices and openings to the outside than we know about. Like stink bugs, Asian ladybugs, and red and black box elder beetles, cluster flies are harmless. They can speckle window woodwork with droppings. We could release geckos in our homes, raise the humidity and temperature to keep them happy, and watch them creep across our walls devouring insects.

Pennsylvania has several species of **lizards**. All are small, harmless, and rare. Lucky people may see a six-inch long **eastern fence lizard**, colored like the forest floor.

**Snowstorms** that will blanket southeastern Pennsylvania start as warm, wet low pressure systems over the Pacific Ocean. Westerly winds sweep them across the the Four Corners of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. As the storms near the East Coast, they swing northeast and, if they meet a cold, dry mass of air driven south and east from the Arctic, snow may fall. Southeastern Pennsylvania is on the line between northern and southern weather. As a snowstorm moves northeast, the snow/rain line often falls along I-95: snow north and west of Philadelphia, rain for Wilmington, Delaware, and South Jersey. Snowstorms that track east across western Pennsylvania usually turn northeast and head toward New England before they reach the coast.

By Tim Sterrett

Who else notices longer days? Birds do. **Tufted titmice** start singing their varied songs; the loudest song is “Peter, peter, peter.” **Cardinals** tune-up with a loud “Cheer, cheer, cheer.” By month's end, **house finches** will be singing their long, bubbly song from the tops of middle-sized trees. Queen **honey bees** start laying eggs to build up the colony's population for the nectar flows in spring.

If days are getting longer, why are January and February wintery? The northern part of the earth will continue to cool until the Sun is a good deal higher at mid-day. The longest day of our year comes in late June, but the warmest days are in July and August.

**Skunk cabbage** has poked up green shoots in swamps and along streams. From **Wikipedia**: “Skunk cabbage is notable for its ability to generate temperatures of up to 15-35°C [60 - 95°F] above air temperature by cyanide resistant cellular respiration in order to melt its way through frozen ground, placing it among a small group of plants exhibiting thermogenesis. Even though it flowers while there is still snow and ice on the ground it is successfully pollinated by early insects that also emerge at this time. Some studies suggest that beyond allowing the plant to grow in icy soil, the heat it produces may help to spread its odor in the air. Carrion-feeding insects that are attracted by the scent may be doubly encouraged to enter the spathe because it is warmer than the surrounding air, fueling pollination.

“Eastern Skunk Cabbage has contractile roots which contract after growing into the earth. This pulls the stem of the plant

**IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES** 4/13 and receives the newsletter at 41 Fishers Run Road, Dillsburg, 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 February 20he/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.

### FOR SALE

Light Amber Fall Honey

Glenn Crimbring  
570-673-8201

pabee1@frontier.com

## December Identification Reader

My first contact with beekeeping took place in the 1980's while I was living in Sweden. I was a graduate student, and in the department was a student specializing in entomology. He kept bees, and occasionally we would speak about his hobby. I knew nothing about it, had no particular interest, nor was I ever fond of "creepy-crawlies". But one summer he asked if I could assist him when he was extracting, and although the experience did not make me thoroughly enthused, I became curious and thought that maybe I would give beekeeping a try sometime.

Years later my wife and I moved to the States, and in 1999 we bought a house near Philadelphia. I mentioned that it would be nice to have beehives in the yard, and in the summer of 2000 she bought me a starter kit and a package of bees. All went very well with that hive, and the first year I extracted about eighty pounds of honey. The second year was even better. The third year started just as well, and I began to have plans and get big ideas: more hives, pollen collection, build a solar wax-melter, etc. If it was described in the catalogues or literature, then I was interested.

But one sunny summer eve that year I was sitting near the hive and watching the bees when I noticed a most peculiar thing; it seemed as though the lawn around the hive was in motion. On closer inspection I saw that the illusion was caused by thousands of bees walking across the ground. I observed that their wings were not actual wings, they were merely stubble without membranes. It seemed the bees did not march purposefully, they were wondering and falling and tumbling aimlessly instead. I had heard and read about Varroa infestations, but I had never experienced one, and therefore I had not noticed any indications in my hive. Now I knew immediately that the hive was infested.

Ignorance may be bliss, but I surrendered by innocent joy and began treating at once. However, the hive failed the following winter. In the spring, I renewed my effort, and this time established two hives, getting new equipment and bees from locally raised nucs. They did well for a year or two, but succumbed. Another try with two hives, then three hives, and new treatments and new routines and new regimen. Sometimes new losses. When I got the mites under control, other situations could arise: "what are all of these black beetles doing in here??" and "So that's what a swarm looks like!!"

And so it was, and is. A little chastened but undeterred, at present I keep only a single hive and continue to experiment. Perhaps in the spring I will set up an additional hive. Some years have given superb harvests, some not so memorable. Some years I collect pollen and beeswax, some years I do not. I confess that I often long for the simpler times, those

easy "good ole days". Still, a spoonful of honey from my bees can cure such ills. Certainly I am not the only beekeeper that feels that way.

Bill Callahan, Wyndmoor, PA

## Lyme Disease Information

For those of you who missed the webinar presentation on Lyme Disease at the PSBA state meeting, you can view it at your leisure by visiting:

<http://extension.psu.edu/private-forests/tools-resources/webinars/previous/forestry-series/2010/lyme-disease-in-pennsylvania>.



## Spring Bee Packages

Spring bee packages to be picked up  
April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Italian 3 lb. package w/queen - \$82.00**  
**Additional \$3.00 for marked queen**

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

**To order packages,  
please call Tom Johnson at:  
724-312-7584 (cell) or  
724-728-6826 (home)**

### Western PA Beekeeping Seminar

There will be a Western Pennsylvania Beekeeping Seminar held February 15 & 16, 2013 at the Four Points by Sheraton, Mars, PA. up-to-date information about managing honey bees will be presented by speakers: Dr. Jim Tew, retired Professor and Honey Bee Entomologist, Ohio State University; Jennifer Berry, Coordinator of Apicultural Research, University of Georgia; and Dr. Larry Connor, Author, Owner of Wicwas Press.

A trade show featuring many major beekeeping supply companies will be held on site in conjunction with this seminar. Confirmed list of trade show vendors: Blue Sky Bee Supply, Betterbee, Brushy Mountain Bee Farm, Walter T. Kelley Company, Dadant and Sons – NY Office, Mann Lake, and Simpsons Bee Supply.

The cost of the seminar is \$50 for participants and \$30 for their guests and children under 18. Online registration is available. Deadline to register is February 7, 2013.

For a seminar brochure or to register online, please visit <http://extension.psu.edu/beaver> and click "Events", or call Penn State Extension, Beaver County, at 724-774-3003.

### AN OLDIE BUT GOODIE

David Papke found the original in some old files dating to pre-1990.

It has been up-dated using 2011 data

If our world could be reduced to a village of 1000 people what would it look like?

**There would be**

- 579 Asians
  - 150 Africans
  - 120 Europeans
  - 81 North Americans
  - 61 from South America
  - 6 from Oceania
  
  - 314 Christians
  - 236 Muslims
  - 143 Hindus
  - 71 Buddhists
  - 71 Confucists and Taoists
  - 7 Shintoists
  - 2 Jews
- 150 would be of a minor religion or atheist
- 6% receive half of the village income
  - 16% of adults are illiterate
  - 40% exist on less than \$2 per day
  - 40% are malnourished

And who provides honey for this village?  
*Just one beekeeper.*

### NHB Supply Catalog

The National Honey Board creates and makes available many brochures, informational sheets, cookbooks, posters, etc. These are made available at our cost to members of the Honey Industry for them to use in educating and informing their consumers about honey and its many uses. The items may also be purchased by the general public.

One or two promotional items are usually available free of charge to assessment-paying honey industry members, in limited quantities per year. These items are listed in a catalog that is available for viewing at <http://www.honey.com/tools-tips-and-resources/nhb-supply-catalog>

The catalog, in PDF format, may be printed for your use or simply viewed on screen. It contains an order form for you to print, complete and send in (fax or mail). You may also order items from the catalog over the phone by calling (800) 553-7162.

**Attention Counties:** Please submit your 2013 list of officers and meeting dates to Yvonne as soon as possible. Her mailing address and email are listed on Page 8.



### Italian Package Bees and Queens for Sale:

Delivered to the Lehigh Valley

**3 lb. Package w/Queen - \$88**

**Queens - \$21**

**Add \$3.00 for marked queens**

Available for pickup on or about April 14  
(Actual date may change due to weather)

**Contact**

**Bill Mondjack: 610-751-4483**

[billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com](mailto:billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com)

or

**Steve Finke: 610-737-7676**

[sjfinke@msn.com](mailto:sjfinke@msn.com)

### Chicken Fingers with Honey Sauce

1 cup - honey  
1 cup - prepared spicy brown mustard  
1 cup - all-purpose flour  
1 cup - fresh bread crumbs  
1 teaspoon - salt  
1/2 teaspoon - pepper  
1/2 teaspoon - garlic, granulated  
4 lb. - boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in 3x1x1/2-inch strips

Combine honey and mustard; mix well. Combine flour, crumbs, salt, pepper and garlic; mix well. Dredge chicken strips in flour-crumbs mixture; shake off excess. Deep-fry in 375°F oil about 1-1/2 minutes or until completely cooked and golden brown.

Yield: 8 Servings

### Quick New England Baked Beans

1/2 lb. - bacon, diced  
1/2 cup - chopped onions  
3/4 cup - honey  
4 teaspoons - dry mustard  
1 teaspoon - salt  
1/8 teaspoon - cayenne pepper  
4 cups - cooked and drained small white beans\*

In a skillet, sauté bacon and onion until onion is tender; remove from heat. Stir in honey, mustard, salt and cayenne. Layer half of beans in 2-quart covered baking dish; spoon half of honey mixture over beans. Repeat layers. Cover and bake at 325°F for 1 hour or until honey mixture is absorbed.  
\*Three cans (15 oz. each) small white beans can be substituted.  
TIP: Prepare in advance to allow flavors to develop.  
Yield: 8 Servings

### Chewy Honey Oatmeal Cookies

1/2 cup - butter or margarine, softened  
1/2 cup - granulated sugar  
1/2 cup - honey  
1 large - egg  
1 teaspoon - vanilla extract  
1-1/2 cups - quick cooking rolled oats  
1 cup - whole wheat flour  
1/4 teaspoon - salt  
1 teaspoon - ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon - baking soda  
1 cup - raisins, chocolate or butterscotch chips

In medium bowl, beat butter with sugar until thoroughly blended. Blend in honey. Blend in egg and vanilla, mixing until smooth. In separate bowl, mix together oats, flour, salt, cinnamon and baking soda; blend into honey mixture. Blend in raisins or chips. Drop dough by rounded Tablespoonfuls onto greased baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 12 to 14 minutes until cookies are golden brown. Remove from oven and allow cookies to cool 2 to 3 minutes before removing from baking sheet. Cool completely then store in an airtight container.

TIP: High altitude adjustment: Increase oats to 2 cups and decrease whole wheat flour to 3/4 cup.

Yield: 24 cookies

Recipes provided courtesy of the National Honey Board

<http://www.honey.com>

### Renewal Notice

Please note on your mailing label your renewal date in the top right hand corner. It will save us time and postage if you would pay your dues **before** your expiration date.

The information for renewing your dues can be found on page 8. If you receive your newsletter by email, feel free to email Yvonne at [pabeel@frontier.com](mailto:pabeel@frontier.com) to find out your renewal date.

Thank you for your cooperation!

## Hartzell's Honeys and Bee Supplies

We are located in Western Pennsylvania near Brookville.  
Contact us for your bees and beekeeping supplies.

**We are currently taking orders for Three Pound Packages.  
They will be available for pickup April 21<sup>st</sup> weather permitting.  
Price \$89.00, limited supply available.**

Pay by check, or use your Visa/Master card or Discover if you prefer.

**Contact: Jeff or Jackie to place your order today.**

We look forward to supplying your beekeeping needs.

**(814) 849-2760 Website: <http://www.hartzells-honeys.com>**