



THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

The weather has been it's usual self here in northwest Pa. Rain, late frosts, cool high winds... all those things that dampen the honey bees ability to get out of the hive. At the end of May, I was looking for the black locust bloom. It got started, but some varieties and locations are bare of blossoms again. I was traveling to Harrisburg, via Pittsburgh and was a bit jealous of the continuous black locust bloom south on I-79, across the turnpike and back home along I-80. It may bloom a bit yet, but will be compromised with brambles and multiflorarose. My pollen traps were collecting a lot of wild cherry (pale yellow), some clover (brown) and then the multiflorarose (orange). The locust (gray) was very sparse where I had my traps.

The torrential rains finally stopped in mid June. My hive that sets on the platform scale, for the NASA study, (<http://honeybeenet.gsfc.nasa.gov>) was hard pressed to gain any weight up to this point. In 10 days of excellent weather, it gained 72 pounds. As I write, the forecast is scattered showers. Sumac seems to be the major source. Basswood is getting started. So, I've been busy cutting queen cells to prevent swarming and am adding supers. I'm crossing my fingers that we don't get a gully-gusher, this could continue for a bit longer.

My late May trip to Harrisburg was to join in a meeting at the Dept. of Agriculture. Along with the Pa State Beekeepers Association's Honey Bee Advisory Committee, Penn State, State Apiarist and other PDA officials, we covered a variety of issues.

At the top of the list of tasks was to finalize what was formerly known as the Pa Dept. of Ag's Beekeeper Compliance Agreement. This is a voluntary document that establishes some common sense guidelines for keeping honeybees. It was created a few years ago in anticipation of Africanized Honey Bees (AHB) coming into our state. This document has been a model for some townships and zoning regulations. Sometimes it is used as the starting point for writing new regulations. The problem being that the guideline begins more restrictive than needed, because it addresses AHB.

After months of email discussion among the PSBA Legislative Committee, it was time to move this to the meeting mentioned with PDA. The advisory board combed through and made more changes. As revised, the concerns of AHB continue to be addressed under the condition of the presence of AHB. Otherwise, common sense guidelines have been established that should meet keeping honeybees in urban, suburban and rural locations. It is not an extensive list. As most reading this already know, the perceived threat of honeybees simply is 'perceived'. Honeybees are only defensive when they are threatened. Otherwise, they are up and outta here to the benefit of plants and our food supply.

The final document will be released soon. It remains a voluntary document. Its purpose is largely to give some guide and direction to writing local zoning and ordinances. As soon as possible, it will be posted on the PSBA website.

Another topic with PDA was Apiary Inspectors. Currently, this year's budget has seven inspectors, one for each agricultural region of the state. With the growing number of beginner beekeepers, this is still not enough to inspect bi-annually, as prescribed in the Pa Bee Law. An idea has been 'Mentor Inspections'. This is would be a voluntary inspection

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group. This would not replace the state inspectors, but simply supplement and aid small beekeepers and collect data. Because of privacy laws, only the data might be forwarded to the state. In the case of American Foulbrood or Africanized Honey Bees, the mentor inspector would request a state certified inspector follow up. The volunteers would need to be trained and certified by PDA and could be consulted by the State Apiarist, but no personal information would be on file with PDA. This project has state support and there is movement to begin pilot programs with local associations.

I want to make a plug for supporting and participating in the local fairs. These events showcase beekeeping and our local organizations. We encourage everyone to enter some honey or beeswax in your fairs. I know it seems to be a lot of work... I will agree. You won't get rich from the premium. But, I see the fairs as much more. It's a message to the visiting public that beekeepers are here and engaged. From a chairman perspective, we need the variety of entries for judging. It's great that I can get a bunch of blue ribbons. But it doesn't mean much if it's by default. It is satisfying to see a variety of first place winners and a lot of product to fill the exhibit.

Set aside some honey now, and you will be ready.

Charlie Vorisek,
President PSBA

2013 PSBA Picnic

The 2013 Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association's annual pot luck picnic is being held at the Morris Arboretum August 10, 2013 from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The Morris Arboretum is the official arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and this is your opportunity to visit free of charge. Don't miss this chance to view one of the most spectacular arboretums in the state. The many attractions provide fun for the whole family.

The Big Bug Exhibit These amazing 'bugs' are the creation of Long Island sculptor, David Rogers. Made mostly from found materials, primarily trees and plants that have fallen and died, each Big Bug is a unique creation with its own whimsical character. This exhibit will only be on view this summer.

The Garden Railway: *Around the World in an Afternoon!* This summer, Morris Arboretum's Garden Railway will transport visitors to the far ends of the earth. Spanning the

globe, visitors will experience magical visits to The Great Wall of China (China), The Leaning Tower of Pisa (Italy), Hagia Sophia (Istanbul), Tikal (Guatemala) Maachu Picchu (Peru), Petra (Jordan), the Giza Pyramid and Alexandria Light House (Egypt), The Eiffel Tower (Paris), Arc de Triomphe (Paris), and Sphinx (Egypt).

The Tree Adventure Get a bird's eye view of the forest from 50 feet up, perched on a canopy walk high above ground level. Or scamper down onto the Squirrel Scramble, a huge hammock-like net where you can look down to the ground far below through the rope netting. Enter a Bird's Nest and sit on giant robin's eggs, just waiting to hatch. It's all part of Morris Arboretum's Tree Adventure exhibit, connecting us to the natural world, and themed to teach us that *we need trees and trees need us*.

The Many Incredible Tree Specimens : One of the most outstanding features of the estate that became the Morris Arboretum in 1933 is the collection of large and stately trees. These sovereigns form the fabric that weaves together the Arboretum. They represent the diversity of our plant collections by showing plants from North America, Europe, the Mediterranean, China, Japan, and Korea. Some of them are among the largest of their kind in North America. Others are exceedingly rare and may be among only a handful grown outside of Asia. Others are unusual horticultural forms. What all these awe-inspiring specimens share is a connection to our past, hope for our future, and a testimony to the beauty and longevity of trees.

The Picnic is being held at Bloomfield Farm located directly across the street from the arboretum. This area is not open to the public but picnic attendees will also be able to view the many attractions located here. They include: A large apiary with the most colorfully painted hives in Pennsylvania, a bee garden enhanced by plantings by the Montgomery County 4-H Beekeeping Club, the official Langstroth Bench with the history of Langstroth carved on the panels and the arboretum's Langstroth library. You will also be able to tour a restored and working mill and the LEED® Platinum Certified Horticulture Center.

Picnic events will include: An urban hive crawl and mead tasting hosted by the Philadelphia Beekeepers, A smoker lighting contest - bring your smoker and fuel, an open hive tour - bring your veil, raffle of bee related items, exclusive bee club T-shirt sales and a report by the Pennsylvania State Honey Queen.

Hot dogs, beverages and tableware will be provided. We ask that you bring a side dish for the potluck. To RSVP and sign up for the urban hive crawl and arboretum tours go to www.montcobeekkeepers.org and click on the big red button. We look forward to seeing you there.

EAS Introduces Two Keynote Speakers

The Planning Committee for the 2013 Conference & Short Course is proud to introduce not one, but two, keynote speakers for our annual event!



Brian Snyder

Dr. Mark Winston, [Simon Fraser University](#) & Mr. Brian Snyder, PA Association of Sustainable Agriculture



Dr. Mark Winston

The keynotes will be delivered on Wednesday, August 7, 2013 . . . but wait, let me take a step back for those of you who haven't been to an EAS Conference

week before.

The format of this annual event follows:

- The "Short Course" normally spans Monday and Tuesday. In 2013, two tracks will be offered and there is an extra day for some of the course topics to overflow into Wednesday.
- On Wednesday, though, the Conference and Workshop Series begins with the keynote addresses and ends with a social gathering at a near-by picnic ground.
- If you're not too tired by quittin' time on Thursday, you should attend the annual Auction Dinner, which is a fundraiser for the research grants that EAS awards each year.
- Throughout most of the week, your favorite vendors of beekeeping supplies, books and gadgets will be on hand with their wares. In the same vendor area will be bee fabric for the quilters, bee art & jewelry and much, much more!
- And, oh yeah - there's a HONEY SHOW with prestige and prizes to be won. Admit it, you're proud of your bees' work! So bring it, enter it and show it off!
- By Friday, you will have met so many new and interesting people, you will want one last chance to get together with them before it's over - the Annual Banquet!

Pennsylvania's own Maryann Frazier is ably organizing the program for Wednesday through Friday. Invited speakers are confirming their intention to be with us and pinning down the titles of their talks and workshops. Check the [EAS website](#) often for confirmed speakers, lodging information and other updates.

There's so much to see and do in and around West Chester, PA that you may want to make it your family vacation! Spend a day or two touring together in Philadelphia, Valley Forge or Dutch Country. By Wednesday, they'll know their

way around on their own and you can get back to the conference! Or stick around an extra day at the end and enjoy the [PA State Beekeepers Association Picnic](#), complete with a "hive crawl" and mead tasting, in a nearby urban area on Saturday August 10.

See you in August!

EAS Workshops & Short Course

On-site beeyards are part of the Conference & Short Course!

From basic lessons to advanced workshops, the apiaries are there for you! With help from able instructors, learn how to "read" a frame, find a queen, spot a great brood pattern, and identify supercedure & swarm cells.

The more experienced may learn about common hive problems and how to solve them (drone-laying workers, drone-laying queens, wax moths, hive beetles, *Varroa*mites, mice, etc.). Find out when and how to combine hives, split hives, how to replace queens, work a top bar hive and much more!

The Short Course has both a Basic and an Advanced Level.

Students may drift between levels and courses within each level, provided attendance does not exceed room capacity.

New this year: the Basic Level has an optional examination for Certification. Students wishing to receive the Basic Beekeeping Certification must pass both the written and field test.

AWESOME! Don't forget your gear! It is a hands-on educational apiary, so you'll be in the hives **Bring what you normally wear in the beeyard.**

Unsolicited Testimonial:

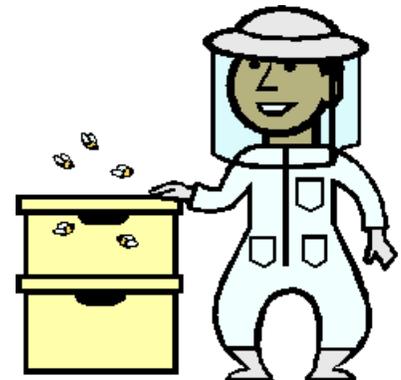
What I found most appealing about EAS is that one can bounce back and forth between the beginner and advanced tracks depending on what one finds interesting. And the time in the apiary and lab - that is really a treat and sets EAS apart from most state meetings. EAS is probably the only bee meeting where one can choose among several lectures, instruction in the apiary or lab -- or even in the kitchen -- at any given time, depending on one's interests. I think the average beekeeper has no idea of the scope of concurrent educational opportunities from which to choose. It's a fabulous program!

-- Pam Fisher, President, Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia

The Eastern Apicultural Society's annual Conference and Short Course are organized by a handful of volunteers in the host state. Numerous members of the **Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association** (PSBA) are hard at work to bring you EAS 2013.

2013 PSBA Picnic Agenda

- 9:00 Registration opens
 - 9:00 Urban Hive Crawl – RSVP to sign up. Watch for details at www.phillybeekeepers.org
Space is limited. First come first served.
 - 10:30 PSBA Board Meeting
 - 11:00 1st Arboretum Tour– RSVP to sign up. First come first served.
 - 12:30 Potluck Picnic – Hot dogs and beverages will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass.
Smoker Lighting Contest – Bring your smoker and fuel.
 - 1:00 Pennsylvania Honey Queen Report
 - 2:00 2nd Arboretum Tour – RSVP to sign up. First come first served.
Open Hive Tour – Bring your veil
 - 3:00 Mead Tasting
 - 3:30 3rd Arboretum Tour– RSVP to sign up. First come first served.
- Open All Day**
 Lead Certified Horticulture Center
 Historic Mill
 Langstroth Library
 Raffle and T-Shirt Sales



RSVP at www.montcobeekeepers.org

click on the big red button

WANTED

**Cut-Comb Honey
In square plastic boxes,
or un-cut in frames.**

**Call me, let's talk!
Cell: 610-751-4483**

If you are within close proximity to me I
will gladly return your frames.

Contact:

Bill Mondjack: 610-751-4483
2236 N. 1st Ave., Whitehall, Pa. 18052
(Near Allentown, Lehigh County)
Email:
billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com

History of Pittsburgh Wanted

Honey bees have been kept in the Pittsburgh area for hundreds of years, but there is little or no public information available.

Please email pictures, written accounts, and documents related to beekeeping in Pittsburgh and its suburbs before 1970 to:
Info@burghbees.com.

Burgh Bees would like to post some historical information on the Burgh Bees website:
www.BurghBees.com.

Upcoming Dates To Remember

Deadline for the August issue of
The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is July 24th.



North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, July 3, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepahoney@gmail.com for more information.

Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, July 10, at the Monroe County Environmental Center. For more information, contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421 or email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net

Chester County Beekeepers

Saturday, July 13, 9:00 a.m. at the Kennett Township Bldg., Chadds Ford. Visit the CCBA website at www.chescobees.org for more information.

2 Cs and a Bee Beekeepers

Sunday, July 14, 2:00 p.m. at the 3rd Ward Firehall, Clearfield. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.ccbee.org/meetings.html> or contact Helen Evans at 814-472-7637, email secretary@ccbee.org

Lancaster County Beekeepers

Tuesday, July 16, 6:30 p.m. at the Southeast Ag Research & Ext. Center, Manheim. Hive Opening (no official meeting). Contact Jim Pinkerton at 717-653-5911 or email jim@gatheringplacemj.com for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, July 18, 6:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Gap Nature Center, Slatington. Annual Picnic. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

Capital Area Beekeepers

Friday, July 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Building, Harrisburg. Contact Jim Hoover at 717-691-1413, email hooverdrone@aol.com for more information.

Beaver Valley and Burgh Bees

Saturday, July 20, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Gary Sekinger's Barn, Sewickley. Summer Picnic. For more information, contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email pattie.zyroll@elkem.com or info@burghbees.com

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, July 25, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Morrell Sipe – Beekeeping Around the World. Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911 or email Gail@geezbeez.biz for more information.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Saturday, July 27, 10:00 a.m. at the Harford Fairgrounds. Work day on honey house and nomination meeting. Picnic following, bring a dish to share. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166, email jimnginw@epix.net, for more information.

2013 EAS Conference and Short Course

Monday-Friday, August 5-9, 2013, at the West Chester University, West Chester, Pa. For more information, see articles and ad throughout this edition or visit the [EAS website](#).

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, August 7, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepahoney@gmail.com 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. See page 3 for additional information.

Central Western PA Beekeepers

Monday, August 12, 6:00 p.m. at Apple Castle, Steven and Ashley Johnston, New Wilmington. For more information, Robert McMillin, email rmcmill@zoominternet.net.

Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, August 14, at the Monroe County Environmental Center. For more information, contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421 or email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Saturday, August 17, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Pool Wildlife Sanctuary, Emmaus. National Honey Bee Awareness Event. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers

Tuesday, August 20, at the home of Gerry Ebersole. Summer Picnic. Contact Jim Pinkerton at 717-653-5911 or email jim@gatheringplacemj.com for more information.

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, August 22, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Open Question and Answer Session. Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911 or email Gail@geezbeez.biz for more 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.org> as it becomes available.

For Sale:

Electric uncapping knife \$75.00

Stainless Steel Liquefying Tank
(holds 3-5 gallon buckets) \$150.00

Call (814) 383-4714

Nature Notes

Sweet corn may have been ready by July 4. (Here we go again, talking about **a grass!**) Corn has come a long way since Civil War soldiers munched on raw ears as they marched through the countryside. The Iroquois gave sweet corn to European settlers in 1779; the sweet ears resulted from a **mutation**, an accidental change in corn DNA that survived in a new, slightly-different form. In this case, the accident was good for us and we have bred corn to cater to our desires ever since.

Silver Queen was the revolutionary white corn variety that could be kept, not 30 minutes before cooking, but 24 hours. Then came **Incredible**, a tasty yellow that could be kept 48 hours. This corn could travel to friends who had no sweet corn farm near them.

Next came **Mirai**, a sugar-enhanced and super-sweet corn with a 12-day shelf life.

These sweet corn seed varieties are made possible by carefully controlling the parents of the corn plant. Some farms start sweet corn in greenhouses, move the plants outside, and then **irrigate** the rows of corn to have a better chance of putting an ear of local corn into our hands around the Fourth of July. (Wikipedia and Pete's Produce Farm were sources about corn.)

The glowing red heart of Scorpius, **Antares**, is low in the south after dark. To the right of Antares are three stars in a vertical line: the back and shoulders of the scorpion. Dribbling down from Antares toward the horizon are the body and tail of Scorpius. Antares is 700 times larger than our Sun. The Earth's orbit around the Sun would fit **inside** Antares - and so would the orbit of Mars, which orbits roughly 60 million miles farther out from the Sun than the Earth.

How hot is our Sun? The few square feet of parking lot we stand on receives a tiny, tiny ray of light from the Sun ninety-three million miles away. Almost all of the light from the Sun misses the Earth and flies off into space. That itty-bitty ray of light is further dimmed as it speeds through a one hundred mile thick layer of air, dust, and water vapor. That little bit of light strikes the dark pavement, is absorbed, and changes to heat. The pavement becomes hot. Some of the heat radiates back up at us. Hot! The Sun delivers enough energy to every square foot of pavement, if we could capture it all, to run a medium-sized air conditioner when the Sun is shining. Unfortunately, solar power panels are not 100% efficient. The best solar panels capture less than 10% of the energy in sunlight though they are improving.

When bee colonies warm up in sunlight, some of the bees move air through the hive to **cool** the brood nest and **evaporate** water from nectar. When the bees are **ventilating** a hive, we can put the back of a hand slowly down in front of one side of the entrance and feel the warm, moist air being fanned out.

by Tim Sterrett

Address Changed?

If you have changed your address (mail, email or temporarily away) 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 .55 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.



IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 8/14 and receives the newsletter at 1691 Lower Rhiney Creek Road, Hallstead, 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 August 20th, 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.

Beeline Apiaries & Woodenware Dealer

Package bees for Spring 2013
\$75.00

Tentative dates: April 13 & April 20

Nucs: \$100.00



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

Jeremy's Corner

Ten miles outside of the town in which I grew up in the Eastern Highlands of what was then Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, was an excavated earthen dam called Fern Valley. Occasionally, when I wasn't involved with some kind of sports (we were a sports-fanatic community, some would say because of the absence of cultural distractions,) my mother would pack a lunch and a fishing pole and drop me off at the dam, where I would spend the day trying to catch bream and bass, seldom with much success. (I'm still not much of an angler - my ego cannot stand being outwitted by a fish.)

One afternoon when I was probably ten years old, of a large and typical tropical storm appeared on the horizon. Abandoning the fishing tackle and not thinking for a minute that someone might take it, I walked into the surrounding bush, following paths in the grasslands which led to a native village - round mud huts under thatch (called rondavels) enclosed by a wattle and daub fence. I was taken in, kept dry in front of an open fire, given something warm to drink, and when the storm had passed, shown the path that led back to the lake. And at the appointed time in the afternoon my mother was there to take me home.

But what was 'home'? In retrospect it is amazing that I was so confident that I would be warmly received and looked after. I had accepted without question the African belief that no one is a stranger, that "I am because you are," that no one is refused hospitality.

And this was a 'third world country,' so-called. I recognize too, with both humility and shame, that if a black African child had walked into our house in the white suburbs he would not have been received the same way.

It is equally amazing that apparently my mother was not concerned about my well being. She was a London girl, a secretary at the BBC, who, in her mid 20's and at the urgings of her husband, had left England and the comforts of the city for rural Africa with two young children. She seemed to feel confident in the safety of her eldest son that he would be looked after, that there were other mothers out there who would do what needed to be done.

Fast forward almost 60 years when Mary and I were in St Petersburg, FL, for a family wedding. Because of a predicted snow storm we flew out of BWI a day earlier than planned and managed at the last minute to get a room at America's Best Inn on the outskirts of the city. On arrival a young lady who co-owns the Inn came out to greet us, was most warm in her welcome and offered to help us with our bags. The facilities were meager but the welcome was warm and we felt respected and appreciated.

The following day we moved to a large hotel in the city center, which is part of a national well-known chain, a booking we had made several months in advance. I backed into the parking area by the front entrance, opened the trunk and was immediately approached by a young man.

"Are you off-loading or checking in?"

"Checking in" I responded.

"It's valet parking and \$14 a night" was his reply.

Having noticed that parking was available for \$3 per night round the corner, I declined his offer and he walked back to his station at the valet desk without another word.

What might he have said instead?

"Welcome to our hotel. Did you have a good trip? Do you need help with your bags? Would you like to take advantage of our valet parking?"

First impressions are vitally important and this was not a good one. The perception was that this hotel is first and foremost about money; it was neither welcoming nor inviting and certainly there was little evidence of the "irresistible personality, humor, friendly optimism, enthusiasm, commitment and warm smile" promoted on the web-site. Compare this to the Spanish-speaking women who serviced our room who were unfailingly cheerful and helpful.

I wrote to the manager with the story of our experience; to his credit he called me personally, described what was being done to address the problem, invited me to stop by, check it out for myself and let him know if there was a difference, and credited us with the cost of one night's stay at the hotel.

So, what is the first impression created at any of our local beekeeper meetings? Does a relative stranger feel welcomed, despite the paucity or otherwise of the surroundings? Does someone say, "Welcome to our meeting. Did you find us easily? Is there something in particular I can help you with?" Or are the regular members so preoccupied with each other, so busy catching up, so involved with the business of the meeting, as not to notice and reach out to someone new?

Do we open ourselves to feedback and, if it is not positive, do we acknowledge it and respond appropriately or do we find a reason to ignore it?

A bee hive has guards at the entrance to challenge intruders. Our impediments, our sentries, come in other forms, primarily distraction and a lack of awareness. There is a noticeable 'buzz' that comes from a healthy hive and a good meeting, and as with a beekeeper, a visitor can sense it the moment they walk through the door for the first time.

Jeremy Barnes

Copies of previous columns can be found at honeybeewhisperer.simplesite.com

God Bless America



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

July 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 annual 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 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: June 10, 2013

Hi Bill,

My hives are doing well thus far! Queens are laying, colonies are growing, honey production is in progress! I am determined to keep them healthy and strong so pests are less likely to take over and kill them. Last year Varroa mites killed my hives. It has been a few years since my bees successfully overwintered, so I am thinking about approaches I can take to maximize the possibility of hive survival and overwintering.

I am considering using formic acid to treat for Varroa mites this year. It's touted to be easy to use, reportedly doesn't hurt the bees or contaminate the honey. What is your opinion of this approach?

Thanks so much for your advice.

Best regards,

Jane

A: Hi Jane,

Thanks for your question. I do believe our bees are not yet adjusted to this parasite, *Varroa destructor*. I also believe if we want to keep our bees alive and survive our winter months during which time there is little to no brood being raised we should try to apply some kind of mite control. I've been using Mite Away Quick Strips, MAQS® for the past few years. My thoughts are to apply this treatment sooner rather than later. I would suggest you treat in mid to late summer rather than autumn. When the bee population of the hive is at its peak so is the mite population and about that time the mites will increase as the bee population levels off.

I'm usually pulling some honey by the end of June and about that time or sometime in July I will apply my MAQS

treatment. I like to knock down the mite population at that time so the next two to three honey bee brood cycles are less parasitized and (my thinking) those bees will go into winter healthier.

I hope I've answered your question Jane,
Bill Mondjack

Q: Received: June 10, 2013

Hi Bill,

I identified a drone layer in a to make its own queen.. "not good." Most likely with all the recent rain, the queen who I actually saw hatching out, didn't get fertilized. I didn't want to struggle with the colony, since that often has a poor outcome, so we consolidated the hive into 2 medium boxes, squished most of the capped drone brood, and moved the 2 boxes 10 feet away. Then we moved a strong 2 box queen-right nuc that was running out of space and put the 10 frames into a medium with 10 new frames above it and feed in that same spot.

Will the drone layer queen fly back to location, and cause havoc with the queen right colony? Do I need to do something to prevent this and if so what?

I had minor back surgery May 29th and am trying to do the minimum, but do right by the bees at the same time. I luckily had some friends that are pitching in and that is a blessing.

Margaret

A:

Hi Margaret,

Sounds like you did the best you could with what you had to work with. A drone laying queen will lay unfertilized eggs and only one per cell whereas a laying worker will lay several (un-fertilized) eggs in each cell and usually on the side walls, as her abdomen does not reach all the way down to the bottom of the cell. That's the difference.

No need to worry about the queen flying back as queens rarely leave the hive except to swarm. I'm a bit concerned about the strong hive you put in the same spot. Keep in mind when moving/relocating hives, to move them at least a few miles away from their original location as the field bees will return back to where you moved them from. I think if this were my problem I would have shaken the bees from the frames and merged it with queen-right hive.

Wish you the best of health healing from your back surgery Margaret,

Bill

Margaret's Response:

Bill,

Thanks for the info and well wishes.

My first clue was when I saw a single and laying in different directions and as you said some more on the sides of the cells. It was a sinking feeling

(Continued on Page 17)

W.W.B.D. (Continued from Page 15)

as I never had that problem before. But I have plenty to keep me busy so thought it best to cut my losses.

Next week should I shake the bees off the frames and then freeze them?

What to do now with that drone layer colony?

Margaret

Answer to Margaret's response:

Yeah, what you have Margaret is a laying worker. She can only lay unfertilized eggs. Just merge it with a queen-right colony. You could shake all of the bees off the frames and put those supers on the colony you put in its place. That way you don't have to freeze the frames, just merge all equipment with another. You can do it immediately. Why wait till next week?

Bill

Q: Received: June 9, 2013

Hi Bill,

I was wondering if you could help me with 2 situations I have right now. In the last 1-1/2 week's 3-4 hives at my shop have put out 6 swarms. I have 5 at my shop but one is weak, so I'm sure that one didn't swarm. The common denominator is queen excluders. I put them in 3 weeks ago because the hives were making a lot of honey and just starting to lay drone comb in the honey supers, which I didn't want. I took the excluders off today; don't know what else to do. Any suggestions? Also, I made a split weeks ago, when you came back from Georgia. I installed a new queen but she didn't make it. I then put in 2 frames of capped brood and eggs, but still no queen as of today. There is a lot of bees and I don't want to waste them, so I thought about combining them with another smaller, healthy, queen right hive. I've heard about putting wet newspaper in between the hives when you combine them. My concern is that the queenless hive may attack the smaller hive. Any advice on that situation?

Thanks for your help,

Paul

A: Hi Paul,

Wow! You really had the swarms. Without knowing how many brood chambers and/or supers you had on your hives, I'm thinking they were really over-crowded. You mentioned you used queen excluders. Sometime bees just do not want to pass through excluders and will fill the brood chambers with honey crowding the queen out of space to lay. I'm a bit puzzled by your statement: "starting to lay drone comb in the honey supers." If there was a lot of drone comb in your supers I would have checked to see if I had a good queen or a drone layer. Anyway, this is what I would have done: Keep a constant eye on them and get the honey supers on early, before they pack the brood chamber full of honey. When this

happens they crowd the queen out of space to lay and then they usually start swarm procedures, putting swarm cells at the bottom of the frames. If I find the brood chamber full of honey I remove some of those frames and replace them with empty drawn comb, giving the queen plenty of space to lay eggs. Of course this is all done before you find swarm cells. One of the main causes of swarming is congestion in the brood chambers.

You mentioned, you made splits weeks ago, maybe a little too late. Usually if a hive is highly populated and crowded, making a split helps relieve congestion. Evidently it didn't help in your case. Pertaining to the queen in the split that didn't make it, I'm not sure what went wrong there. If you pull frames from an over-crowded hive to make a split it's best to remove frames with young nurse bees and along with them give them a frame or two of food in case you get a few days of rain. I usually give them a spray of light sugar syrup with some Honey B Healthy® mixed in. Its essential oils help to mask any pheromones from the original hive, and then I place the queen cage in. If that didn't work and you give them more frames of brood you have to make sure you give them fresh eggs so they can choose very young larvae to produce a new queen.

If you want to merge this with another hive do NOT use WET newspaper. I'm not sure where you read that but I've never heard of using wet newspaper. In fact they recommend using a sheet of newspaper and cut slits in it between the frames so the heat does not build up. The bees will chew through it within a day and merge together. Here again if I were doing this (merging) I would spray all of the frames of bees lightly with syrup w/Honey B Healthy® added and I would just place one on top of the other. The queenless box will be happy they have a queen. They would not attack her because they do not have a queen, unless they have a laying worker, BUT the queen-right colony will protect their queen from any attacks.

It's hard to answer all questions in an email Paul. I hope I've helped you a little.

Bill

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Ask for Aaron

PSBA Communication Survey

Hello PSBA members! As previously announced in the newsletter, I am working on my final project for my masters' degree. This project includes creating a communication plan for the PSBA. Your help is needed with the research side of this project. Included is the survey (which can also be completed online). Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated. To show this appreciation, all those who complete the survey will have an opportunity to be entered in a drawing for a \$50 Visa gift card. If you complete this survey, please mail it to me, Rachel Bryson, at 610 Strite Rd., Chambersburg, PA 17202. I would appreciate it if all surveys were completed by July 27. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Rachel Bryson

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M8M7RGG>

PSBA Members Survey Questions:

1. PSBA does an excellent job at promoting its events
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
2. I primarily learn about PSBA events from
 - a. Newsletter
 - b. PSBA website
 - c. Local beekeeping group meeting
 - d. Word of mouth
 - e. Other
3. I am satisfied with the current number of events offered by the PSBA.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
4. I would like to see the PSBA sponsor more events
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
5. I believe PSBA should be involved with social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
6. If the PSBA had social media platforms, I would follow their online updates.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
7. I believe the PSBA should join the following social media sites (mark all that apply)
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Twitter
 - c. YouTube
 - d. Pinterest
 - e. LinkedIn
 - f. Google+
 - g. Foursquare
 - h. Tumblr
 - i. Instagram
8. PSBA has an excellent website
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never visited the website
9. I find the layout of the PSBA website to be...
 - a. Excellent
 - b. Good
 - c. Confusing
10. What information would you like to see on the PSBA website? Please list.
11. The PSBA website is an effective form of communication.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. What types of information would you want to receive from PSBA? Please list.
13. Have you ever attended the PSBA summer picnic? Why or why not?
14. Have you ever attended the PSBA November convention? Why or why not?
15. I am satisfied with the PSBA convention
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
16. What changes would you like to see with the PSBA convention? Please list
17. What benefits would you like to receive as a PSBA member? Please list.
18. My gender is...
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Prefer not to answer
19. My age range is...
 - a. 18 and younger
 - b. 19 to 25
 - c. 26 to 35
 - d. 36 to 45
 - e. 46 to 55
 - f. 56 to 65
 - g. 66 and older
20. Any other comments?

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