



# The Pennsylvania Beekeeper

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## News and Views...

The summer season has been busy trying to accomplish those projects that I planned since last season. I look at the calendar and know what needs to be done and when. But even the best plans are dependent on weather. Rain is important to keep things growing, so that's important. In my area of Northwest PA, we had just 7 days of June that it did not rain. The locust bloom escaped with about 5-6 days of good blossoms. After that was continuous rain that washed out brambles, service berries, tulip and even sumac. The month ended with hungry bees that either swarmed or made the most of clovers and sporadic basswood blooms. So much for the well laid plans. The rain translated into some troublesome queen rearing as well. Picking times to graft between rains, trying to keep the cell builders peaked with young bees and queens that simply didn't get out to mate. I found a little comfort that I wasn't alone. Farmers couldn't get crops planted or get hay off the fields. I always need to remind myself that managing agriculture is not easy, not 100% and very weather dependent. If it were easy, everybody would be doing it.

Don't miss **Ag Progress Days** at Penn State Aug 18,19 & 20<sup>th</sup>. Along with all the technology and methods on display in agriculture, it's your chance to **help scoop honey ice cream with the PA State Beekeepers**. If they have enough helpers, you can always support simply by purchasing some delicious ice cream. If you can help, contact J Aaron Fisher @ 717-363-0974: Call, text or message.

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Penn State News - UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- The benefits of creating pollinator-friendly landscapes will be the focus of the Yard and Garden area at Penn State's **Ag Progress Days**, Aug. 12-14 at Rock Springs. Honey bee demonstrations also will be conducted. Located adjacent to the new raised garden beds will be an observation beehive. Experts from the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association and Penn State Extension will be on hand to provide guidance and answer questions.

Make plans to attend the PSBA annual conference Friday and Saturday, November 13 & 14. This is open to all membership. A tremendous lineup of speakers is on the schedule at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. Speakers: Marla Spivak, Clare Densley (Buckfast Abbey), Dewey Caron, Maryann Frazier, Erin Forbes and James Nieh. Watch for more information and get registered.

Friday morning of the conference will be the Executive Board meeting. All local associations, with at least 10 P SBA members, are entitled and encouraged to send a representative to attend this meeting.

The USA is bidding to bring Apimondia 2019 to Minnesota. This is like the world Olympics of beekeeping. It's very likely this will be your only opportunity of a lifetime to see this in the United States. Please follow information as it available. Follow on the Internet or donate at [www.apimondiausabidfor2019.org/support-us](http://www.apimondiausabidfor2019.org/support-us) Or send a check to:

Apimondia USA Bid For 2019, LLC  
Attn: Michael North  
40 South 7th Street  
Suite 212 #211  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Representative Rob Matzie of Beaver County has introduced House Bill 1266, An Act amending the act of July 20, 1974 (P.L.537, No.184), referred to as the Honey Sale and Labeling Act, further providing for a standard of identity for manufactured honey.

This Bill would amend as follows: **“The Secretary of Agriculture shall, within one year of the effective date of**  
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this section, promulgate regulations to establish a standard of identity for honey which standard shall apply to the honey manufactured, sold, kept for sale or exposed or offered for sale in this Commonwealth. In establishing the standard, the secretary shall commence with the Codex Alimentarius Commission and shall explain the reason for any modification of the Codex Standard for Honey prior to finalizing the regulations.”

This Bill is still in Committee. No further details and no discussion have taken place.

The 100th Farm Show will be January 2016. We are still looking for old Farm Show photos that can be used in a video loop near the Learning Station. We don't want your originals...copies are perfect. Frank Licata, of Mann Lake-Wilkes-Barre, has offered their services to produce the video. Please send any old pictures to Frank (frankl@mannlakeldt.com) or myself (President@pastatebeekeepers.org)

If your club/association would like to do a County Exhibit, we are making a list ahead of on-line registration. This allows more time to plan and build. Presently, the list is Washington County Beekeepers, Montgomery County Beekeepers and Capitol Area Beekeepers. We have 5 spaces to fill. Every entry receives a premium.

As we squeeze the newsletter deadline, we are fresh back from the PSBA summer picnic. Great location. Great food. Great weather. And most of all GREAT host association with Burgh Bees. Summer Saturdays are a multiple choice of events to attend and it takes a day to drive across Pennsylvania, so we understand not more can attend.

In all, there were 100 that joined the picnic. The business meeting helped exchange ideas and trends we need to pay attention to. It helps that we are all on the same page when addressing issues with the public. Social media has helped to 'flash' information and news around to beekeepers and those that support beekeepers. However, the same applies, as the early days of the Internet, be careful of your sources before you share information. Some things are blatantly misguided.

I am tossing out a thought and looking for ideas. There should be a way to recognize 'bee friendly' cities and townships. Perhaps a top 20 list. A couple top municipalities ought to be awarded annually. We need a chairperson.

Jeff Berta and Mark Gingrich of the PA Queen Project gave a report. It is a daunting challenge in terms of timing, logistics, travel, technology, money and volunteers. Never the less, the project is moving forward with focus on survivor stock and Purdue 'leg-biters'. The objective it to share these genetic traits by local queen producers raising and distributing queen cells, virgins or mated queens free or at minimal cost. Jeff and Mark are uniquely located at either side of the state.

Both have artificially inseminated queens from which larvae can be grafted or supply AI breeder queens.

My only disappointment at the picnic... I thought for sure Steve Repasky would have a 'Flow Hive' to show off. That's a joke, Steve!

Charlie Vorisek,

President PSBA

president@pastatebeekeepers.org

PSBA Conference Speaker

Marla Spavik, Clare Densley, Dewey Caron and Maryann Frazier will be joined as presenters by Dr. James Nieh from UCSD and Erin MacGregor-Forbes from Maine, while Dr. Beth Capaldi will join the PA Secretary for Agriculture as our guests at the banquet.

Dr. Nieh received his BA from Harvard in 1991 and his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1997. He completed a NSF-NATO postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Würzburg, Germany and was a Harvard Junior Fellow from 1998-2000.

Research in the Nieh lab focuses on the evolution of foraging communication and behavior in the social bees and on honey bee health. There are five different topic areas: the evolution of communication, honey bee health, superorganism inhibitory communication, olfactory eavesdropping and competition, and the neuroethology of bee learning and memory. There is a fascinating write up about each at http://labs.biology.ucsd.edu/nieh/index.html Erin and Beth will be featured in the September issue of the newsletter.

Nominations are requested for the 2015 Beekeeper of the Year Award. This award is presented annually to a beekeeper that the committee feels meets the guidelines listed on Page 17. If you would like to nominate a fellow beekeeper, please write a letter of recommendation and send to Stewart Mathias, 514 Earlys Mill Rd., Hummelstown, PA 17036.



Good food, good fellowship and a good time at the PSBA Picnic held August 1st in Sewickley.

Photo by Ken Hoover

## PA Honey Queen Report

Hello all,

### June:

I can officially say happy summer! June started off with a bang with lots of events that were spread out all over the state. I began the month in my hometown of Somerset by presenting to 150 first graders at Eagle View Elementary. The kids were so excited to receive a visit from the queen because they had just spent the previous weeks learning about all different kinds of insects. They were so receptive to my presentation and asked so many intelligent questions. Luckily, I was able to procure an observation hive so that they were able to see the bees in action. It was awesome to be able to present the students with the opportunity to locate eggs, larvae, pollen, honey and the queen. After the presentation, I received handfuls of thank you letters from the students explaining how happy they were that I was able to come and visit.

Next I headed to the Somerset Lake Fest to be among the vendors who were spreading awareness for the conservation of local wildlife. Festival attendees were able to enjoy a sweet treat of honey butter spread over a vanilla wafer while I spoke to them about the importance of honeybees. I had many individuals stop by and inquire on how to get started in beekeeping and was so glad to provide them with helpful hints on how to become a beginner beekeeper.

During National Pollinator Week, I had the opportunity to visit the Tom Ridge Environmental Center in Erie for their first annual celebration of foods created by pollinators. Guests were able to sample a myriad of delicacies including wine, almonds, chocolate, cheese and fruit. The PSBA offered several different varieties of honey for tasting so that guests could experience the different colors and flavors of local PA honey. Fresh honey comb was also available for tasting. The night was highlighted by a fascinating presentation by a Penn State graduate student who is doing research on honeybees and honeybee health. At the end of the event, I was interviewed by the local news station and my segment aired during the 11 o'clock slot. It was so great to be able to reach out to over 30,000 people via television, especially during National Pollinator Week.

For my fourth event I visited the Somerset Rotary Club and presented on the chemical properties of honey and how that lends to honeys eternal shelf life. Clubs always seem to enjoy this presentation and this one was no different. I entertained lots of questions and was then presented with a lovely bottle of local maple syrup. Maybe in the future I can convince them to give out local honey instead? I think it's a good idea!

My final event for the month of June took place in Beaver County. I attended Senator Vogel's Kids Extravaganza and enjoyed handing out honey sticks and I "heart" honey stickers to the multitude of children in attendance. All of the kids enjoyed viewing the observation hive on display courtesy

of the Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers Association and then stopping by and tasting the labors of the bees' hard work! By the end of the day Senator Vogel himself even stopped by to check out the bees and discuss the importance of local beekeepers.

### July:

What a month! July had me buzzing with a wide array of events. I started out by attending Cub Scout day camp in Berlin, PA. I spoke to 6 groups of Cub Scouts / Webelos about the three different types of bees in the hive, beekeeping equipment and how bees make honey. The boys loved getting a chance to try on the bee suits as well as getting their hands on a smoker. At the end of my presentation we played a water relay that helped to illustrate how forager bees bring nectar back to the hive, and then pass that nectar from bee to bee until it reaches its final resting place, a beeswax cell. After the game everyone was able to enjoy the "labors" of their work by snacking on a honey stick.

For my second event I hopped on the back of my dad's convertible and cruised through the streets of Somerset in the annual Somerfest parade. This is Somerset's biggest parade with well over 1,000 people in attendance. I was able to chat with State Senator Pat Stefano of Pennsylvania's 32<sup>nd</sup> District before the parade got rolling. It was so great to hear the shouts of both children and adults alike that recognized me from visiting their schools and civic groups. I even ran into a girl who heard me speak in Waynesburg. Talk about a small world!

Later in the week I visited the Mary S. Biesecker library to participate in their summer reading program. I myself am a huge reader, so I was extremely happy to not only get the chance to teach local children about honeybees through reading but also advocate literacy. I was so excited to read them a book from one of my favorite series, The Magic School Bus. The kids really enjoyed the adventures of Ms. Frizzle and her class as they went "Inside a Beehive."

Reading to children at the Mary S. Biesecker library.



**Honey Queen Report** (Continued from Page 5)

For my fourth event I travelled to Hershey, PA to visit the beautiful Hershey Gardens and participate in their Butterflies and Beyond event. The event revolved around the four B's that are important to gardens: butterflies, bees, birds and bugs. The kids in attendance really enjoyed my "Dress Like a Beekeeper" activity as well as observing the honeybee specimens that the Hershey Gardens lent me to display at my table. The highlight of the event was when the group of 30+ students from China stopped by to learn about honeybees. They really enjoyed my facts as well as tasting some fresh American honey.

For my final event I attended the Somerset County Extension Office's centennial celebration. I participated in the Bugs, Bugs, Bugs! event held at the Somerset County library where I put on an educational presentation about bees and honey. I then set up a display where people could examine photos of honey bees, get their hands on some beekeeping equipment, taste honey and ask questions. Towards the end of the evening I even got to meet up with some other Somerset County royalty, the 2014-2015 Somerset Fair Queen and the 2015 Meyersdale Maple Queen.

As always thank you all for your continued support. If you would like for me to visit your upcoming event please contact Rachel Bryson at [honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org](mailto:honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org) or 717-300-0146. Hope to see you all soon!

Best Wishes,

Queen Jessica Onstead



**IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP expires 11/15** and receives the newsletter at 5613 Aiken Rd., McKees Rocks, 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 September 24<sup>th</sup>, he/she will receive a years free subscription to either *Gleaning in Bee Culture*, *American Bee Journal*, or *The Small Beekeepers Journal*. When you respond, please specify your choice of magazine.



Jeff Berta marks queen cages as Mark Gingrich looks over the many queens that came for the queen exchange at the Summer Picnic. Steve Repasky is being interviewed by a Pittsburgh radio host that will air a program later. Photo by Charlie Vorisek

**PA Honey Princess Report**

By Blair Hetherington

Hello Beekeepers!

**June:**

I had a splendid month traveling and doing my duties. I would love to thank the York County Beekeepers for inviting me to their summer picnic. It was such a wonderful event! The food was fantastic and the people were even better. I got the chance to mingle and speak to some of the local beekeepers and hear how the year has been going. We also had a smoker demonstration to help some new beekeepers understand the device better and how to keep it lit longer!

I also had the pleasure of going to the Bucks County 4-H meeting to give a presentation on beekeeping! This was one of the first groups I've had this year that spent more time asking me questions than I did doing the actual presentation!!! I loved it because the students were extremely engaged. I was vastly impressed by the amount of knowledge they knew about beekeeping based on the advanced material they were asking questions on. I hope to see more of the state 4-H programs have as much interest and as good of behavior as this group!

**July:**

Besides getting to see a lot more of the Northern parts of PA, I've gotten better at getting lost and finding my way back to where I'm supposed to be this summer! This month I spent a lot of time in parts of Pennsylvania that I never really knew existed. The views were fabulous and the presentations were a blast. I feel as though I'm getting better every time at handling those off the wall questions from kids and doing an impromptu speech.

This month I spent lots of times in libraries (not complaining because all had air conditioning) focusing on pollination and what would happen to the food supply if the bees didn't exist. Sometimes saying, "without those bees, you couldn't have your cheese burger or any of the extra stuff that comes on it" really gets to the students at a new level.

I also got to spend some time at the Lehigh Valley Zoo at Farm Fest. Being my first time at the zoo, I was astounded at how beautiful the place looked. I got the chance to meet with many children and even educate their parents on what flowers to plant to help pollinators. I'd like to thank Cathy Vorisek for the great bee thumb print craft she did at Farm Show because that was an easy and portable craft to use with all my visitors!

That's all for this month, I can't wait to see what I have in store for the rest of the summer!!! If you would like to invite me or Queen Jessica to your event, contact Rachel Bryson at [honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org](mailto:honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org) or 717-300-0146.





## Upcoming Dates To Remember



**Deadline for the September issue of  
The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is August 25th.**  
**Monroe County Beekeepers**

Wednesday, August 12, 7:00 p.m. at the Monroe County Conservation District, Stroudsburg. Visit the website: [www.monroecountybeekeepers.org](http://www.monroecountybeekeepers.org) for more information.

**Central Counties Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 13, 12:00 p.m. at the Penn State Extension Office, Huntingdon. Annual Picnic. For additional information visit their website: [centralcountiesbeekeepers.org](http://centralcountiesbeekeepers.org)

**Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 13, 6:30 p.m. at the Keystone College, Harris Hall, room 104, LaPlume. For additional information, contact Jared Jaffe at [jared.jaffe@keystone.edu](mailto:jared.jaffe@keystone.edu)

**Ag Progress Days**

Tuesday, August 18, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 19, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 20, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This event is held at the Penn State University, State College. If you are willing to volunteer at this event, please contact Aaron Fisher at [aaron@fisherbeefarm.com](mailto:aaron@fisherbeefarm.com)

**Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley**

Tuesday, August 18, 6:00 p.m. location TBD. In the bee yard. For additional information, contact Jim Aucker at 570-458-6027, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit the website: [www.thebeeyard.org](http://www.thebeeyard.org)

**Lancaster County Beekeepers**

Tuesday, August 18, 6:00 p.m. at the Seldomridge's, Leola. For additional information, contact Jim Pinkerton at [jim@gatheringplacemj.com](mailto:jim@gatheringplacemj.com) or visit the website [www.lancasterbeekeepers.org](http://www.lancasterbeekeepers.org)

**National Honey Bee Awareness Day**

**August 22** – Check with your local association.

**2 Cs & A Bee Association**

Saturday, August 22, 10:00 a.m. at the Canoe Creek State Park, Hollidaysburg. Annual Auction and Picnic. Contact [secretary@ccbee.org](mailto:secretary@ccbee.org) or phone 814-472-7637 for additional information.

**Centre County Beekeepers**

Saturday, August 22, 2:00 p.m. at the O'Donnell Apiary, Bellefonte. Email [centrecountybeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:centrecountybeekeepers@gmail.com) for more information.

**Montgomery County Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 27, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Mark Antunes "Overwintering Your Bees and Getting Ready for 2016". Contact Dan Boylan, [dpboylan83@gmail.com](mailto:dpboylan83@gmail.com) or visit the website: [www.montcobekeepers.org](http://www.montcobekeepers.org) for more information.

**York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 27, 7:00 p.m. at the York County School

of Technology, York. Presenter: Bonnie Raindrop on Pesticide Use and Control. Visit the website [www.ycbk.org](http://www.ycbk.org) for more details.

**North East PA Beekeepers**

Wednesday, September 2, 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: [purepahoney@gmail.com](mailto:purepahoney@gmail.com) for more information.

**North Central PA Beekeepers**

Tuesday, September 8, 7:00 p.m. at the Penn State Extension Bldg., Coudersport. For more information contact [northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com](mailto:northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com).

**Monroe County Beekeepers**

Wednesday, September 9, 7:00 p.m. at the Monroe County Conservation District, Stroudsburg. Visit the website: [www.monroecountybeekeepers.org](http://www.monroecountybeekeepers.org) for more information.

**Central Counties Beekeepers**

Thursday, September 10, 7:30 p.m. at the Penn State Extension Office, Huntingdon. Annual Picnic. For additional information visit the website: [centralcountiesbeekeepers.org](http://centralcountiesbeekeepers.org)

**Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers**

Thursday, September 10, 6:30 p.m. at the Keystone College, Harris Hall, room 104, LaPlume. For additional information, contact Jared Jaffe at [jared.jaffe@keystone.edu](mailto:jared.jaffe@keystone.edu)

**Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA**

Friday, September 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Winterizing your bees. How to get ready for the cold months ahead. Contact Jim Perkins, Program Chair at 570-967-2634 or check on [www.susquehannabeekeeping.com](http://www.susquehannabeekeeping.com) for updates.

**Chester Co Annual Conference**

Saturday, September 12, 9:00 a.m. at ChesLen Preserve, Coatesville. Visit the website: [www.ChescoBees.org](http://www.ChescoBees.org) for more information.

**Wayne County Beekeepers**

Monday, September 14, 7:30 p.m. at The Park Street Complex, Honesdale. For more information, contact the Agricultural Extension Office at 570-253-5970 – EXT 4110.

**Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley**

Tuesday, September 15, 6:00 p.m. at Bucknell University, Lewisburg. For additional information, contact Jim Aucker at 570-458-6027, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit the website: [www.thebeeyard.org](http://www.thebeeyard.org)

**Lancaster County Beekeepers**

Tuesday, September 15, 6:00 p.m. at the Southeast Ag Research & Extension Center, Manheim. Discussion on wintering and feeding techniques. For additional information, contact Jim Pinkerton at [jim@gatheringplacemj.com](mailto:jim@gatheringplacemj.com) or visit the website [www.lancasterbeekeepers.org](http://www.lancasterbeekeepers.org)

**Lehigh Valley Beekeepers**

Thursday, September 17, 7:00 p.m., at the Kutztown University. Beekeeping Movie. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email [sjfinke@msn.com](mailto:sjfinke@msn.com) for more information.

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## Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

**Montgomery County Beekeepers**

Thursday, September 24, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Jeremy Barnes; Topic: Toxic House Syndrome. Contact Dan Boylan, [dpboylan83@gmail.com](mailto:dpboylan83@gmail.com) or visit the website: [www.montcobeekkeepers.org](http://www.montcobeekkeepers.org) for more information.

**York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, September 24, time TBA, at the York County School of Technology, York. Visiting David Hackenburg's Apiary. Visit the website [www.ycbk.org](http://www.ycbk.org) for more details.

**Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers**

Monday, September 28, 7:00 p.m. at the Beaver County Conservation District Education Center (Wetlands), Aliquippa. Contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506; email [pattie.zyroll@elkem.com](mailto:pattie.zyroll@elkem.com) for more information.

**Wayne County Beekeepers**

Monday, October 5, 7:30 p.m. at The Park Street Complex, Honesdale. For more information, contact the Agricultural Extension Office at 570-253-5970 – EXT 4110.

**North East PA Beekeepers**

Wednesday, October 7, 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: [purepa-honey@gmail.com](mailto:purepa-honey@gmail.com) for more information.

**Backyard Beekeepers**

Thursday, October 8, 6:30 p.m. at the Keystone College, Harris Hall, room 104, LaPlume. For additional information, contact Jared Jaffe at [jared.jaffe@keystone.edu](mailto:jared.jaffe@keystone.edu)

**Central Counties Beekeepers**

Thursday, October 8, 7:30 p.m. at the Penn State Extension Office, Huntingdon. Baked Goods & Show-and-Tell Event. For additional information visit the website: [centralcounties-beekeepers.org](http://centralcounties-beekeepers.org)

**New Beekeeping Classes**

Saturday, October 17 (1<sup>st</sup> of 4 classes) held at the Penn State Extension in Coudersport. The remaining three classes will be held in the spring of 2016. These classes will cover the very basics in beekeeping. More information will be available after Sept. 1 Pre-registration is required before Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

For more information contact [northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com](mailto:northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com).

**PSBA Annual Conference**

Friday and Saturday, November 13 & 14, at the Country Cupboard/Best Western Inn, Lewisburg. Speakers: Marla Spivak, Clare Densley (Buckfast Abbey), Dewey Caron, Maryann Frazier, Erin Forbes and James Nieh. Watch for additional information as it becomes available.

**2016 PA Farm Show (100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)**

January 9-16 at the Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg. Watch for information when closer to the event. If interested in volunteering, contact Aaron Fisher at 717-242-4373 or Stu Mathias at 717-533-2231 for more information.

## Nature Notes

Let's celebrate some August American originals. **Corn, tomatoes, goldenrod** (mostly), and **ragweed** (!) all originated in the Americas along with potatoes. The heat of summer sweetens corn and tomatoes. Beekeepers know that goldenrod has **sticky pollen**; goldenrod flower heads with tiny blossoms are worked over by a host of flying insects and the spiders that prey on them. Ragweed flowers entice no insects; the plant spreads it **pollen on the wind** and into our noses.

Speaking of noses, the **old sneaker** perfume that wafts from healthy August beehives is probably caused by nectar from asters not from goldenrod.

**Katydids** have tuned up, singing in the early part of the night. Sounds produced by rubbing body parts together are called stridulations. Crickets and katydids are famous stridulators. People who think insects can predict the future should be preparing for a frost six weeks after the first katydids sing.

The second half of summer is a traditional time for **state, county, and fire company fairs**. These fairs have two missions: education and entertainment. Beekeepers should be supporting the **agricultural displays** at fairs by entering wax and honey in contests and by decorating the booths with club-owned pictures of bees. The honey booth can always be/ will be replaced by some money-making venture if nobody exhibits bee products. Deep-fat-fried comb honey?

**Monarch butterflies** are drifting through yards and gardens, laying eggs and heading generally south. Dust suspended in the air turns **sunsets** orange.

In August, a **big cold front** usually sweeps across our commonwealth from the northwest, breaking the heat of summer and teasing us with a suggestion of the cool crisp days and nights of autumn.

**Cassiopeia**, the Big W, rises in the northeast in late evening. The **Summer Triangle** is overhead early in the night.

By Tim Sterrett

The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association represents the interests of the members of Pennsylvania. State dues of \$20.00 per year entitle members to the newsletter published ten times per year at Canton, PA, plus other benefits. Anyone 17 and under may become a junior member @ \$1.00 per year state dues.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724. Phone: 570-673-8201 Email: [pabee1@frontier.com](mailto:pabee1@frontier.com)

## A Win for Erie Beekeepers

As I write for the newsletter deadline, an urban beekeeping issue just completed in Millcreek Township, Erie County. Millcreek Township includes a significant portion of the city of Erie as well as Presque Isle State Park. We first learned of this issue while attending the PSATS (Pa State Association of Township Supervisors) convention at Hershey, in April. Our initial supervisor contact established a working relationship. However others got involved and a citation was written. The appeal (at a cost of \$1,000) was heard July 29th. Steve Repasky and myself (Charlie Vorisek) were asked to testify as 'expert' witnesses.

If I can keep this brief... A local urban beekeeper located hives on a residential lot of almost an acre. The homeowners specifically asked the zoning officer if beekeeping was allowed. The reply was an assuring 'yes'. There is nothing specifically written in zoning regarding honey bees. The hives were located to comply with Best Management Practices. About 6 weeks later a citation was written that they were in violation because of 'agriculture in a residential zone'. It seemed someone had leaned on the zoning officer. Over the course of 2 months petitions went in both directions and news media got involved. Some of what was reported was not accurate. (Surprise?) Since the beginning, I had contacted the supervisors and county council. Karen, at PDA, was also in touch with our initial supervisor contact. Steve Repasky was contacted, with his experience dealing with Pittsburgh codes and zoning. Although the citation was focused on an agriculture violation, which was very shaky since all sorts of gardens and fruit and berry bushes are allowed, the opposition could only produce perceived nuisance issues. Some of the testimony was ... bizarre. 'The bees are bothering my flowers', 'we found 5 bees in the pool skimmer', 'the smoker is a clean-air violation' and the only stinging incident was a photo of a granddaughter stung in Boston. The final nail was an attorney that specifically questioned the zoning officer regarding his flip-flop. Zoning law allows the \$1,000 to be returned if they win the appeal.

It seems like a slam-dunk afterwards, but we can never take these lightly. We must go in with science and experience and keep emotion in check. Working models of urban beekeeping, such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh help to sway the day. The day after the appeal was won, I received communications from both the planning commission and supervisor. Some variation of BMP will likely become part of zoning and we've been asked to participate.

It seems like 'Mission Impossible'. However, each victory in a major population center will help set the trend for sensible legislation.

A related note from Hampton Township, north of Pittsburgh, is that after two years of an on-going skirmish between a lone

beekeeper and township officials, zoning was approved to keep bees. The neighbors are happy too.

Pittsburgh just approved new city codes to enhance urban agriculture, including goats.

Charlie Vorisek

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

August 2015

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 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, EAS Master Beekeeper*

### Q: Received: July 31, 2015

*Hi Bill,*

*I had a few hives that swarmed around early July and they now have their new laying Queen. More swarming than I have ever experienced in years past. I usually am starting a mite treatment at this time prior to the fall flow with either MAQS's or Api Li Var. In your opinion, is the break in the brood cycle due to swarming usually sufficient to possibly either hold off till late fall and do a quick round of MAQS's or possibly avoid a mite treatment all together?*

*Just curious what you would consider doing. Thanks*

*Garth Kmiecjak. (friend of Meryl "Rocky" Bixel).  
Marcellus, NY*

**A:** Hi Garth,

First let me say: Thanks for reading our Lehigh Valley newsletter. I understand Rocky mails it to you. Since you do email it is more convenient and less expensive to receive it by email attachment and you also see it in color. Why not

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W.W.B.D. (Continued from Page 13)

join our association and receive a copy by email? I have several members from out of state that joined just to receive our newsletter.

Getting back to your question: As you mentioned, since the hives swarmed and there is a break in honey bee brood production there is also a break in Varroa reproduction. When this happens there are no mites inside capped brood as the brood would all have developed into adults, the remaining mites are phoretic (on bees). This is an excellent time to do a mite treatment; I would not hold off until fall or avoid a mite treatment entirely. I personally prefer MAQS® as it is a 7 day treatment. I also prefer, as you do, to treat this time of year so I have healthier bees going into the winter months. I'm thinking it is a bit cooler where you are located, it is quite warm here (in the 90's) in Pa. and the instructions for MAQS states not to apply if temps are over 85°F so I'm holding off till our temps drop a bit.

Thanks for writing Garth, I wish you good health and your bees a good winter survival,

Bill Mondjack

[www.Lehighvalleybeekeepers.org](http://www.Lehighvalleybeekeepers.org)

## PSBA Annual Conference

Nov 13 - 14, 2015

Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard  
Lewisburg, PA

### Friday, November 13

- 9:30 – 11:30 PSBA Board Meeting
- 12:00 pm Registration opens
- 12:30 pm Vendors Open
- 1:00 pm **Charlie Vorisek:** "Welcome"
- 1:10 pm **Karen Roccasecca:** "State of the Bees"
- 1:40 pm **Maryann Frazier:** "The Pesticide Problem: Talking to the Press and Public"
- 2:20 pm **Dr. Marla Spivak:** "The Benefits of Propolis to Bee Health"
- 3:20 pm Break
- 3:40 pm Business Meeting

### Friday Evening, November 13

- 6:00 pm **Banquet at Country Cupboard**  
Welcome: Charlie Vorisek
- Dinner  
Guest Speakers:  
PA Secretary of Agriculture  
Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi  
Beekeeper of the Year Award  
Honey Queen and Princess Reports  
Crowning of PA Honey Queen for 2016
- Auction



### Saturday, November 14

- 8:00 am Registration and vendors open
- 8:30 am **Dr. James Nieh:** "The Dangerous, Beautiful World of Honey Bee Communication"
- 9:20 am **Dr. Marla Spivak:** "Impact of Landscapes on Bee Health and Survivorship"
- 10:20 am Break
- 10:40 am **Clare Densley:** "Romancing the Honey Bee – Our Complex Relationship with *Apis mellifera* and the Authentic Poetry of the Hive."
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 pm **Erin MacGregor-Forbes:** "Artificial Swarming as a Management Tool and IPM Varroa Control"
- 2:00 pm **Dr. Dewey Caron:** "What Beekeepers are Doing to Improve Colony Survivorship"
- 3:00 pm **Panel Discussion:** Maryann Frazier, Karen Roccasecca, Clare Densley, Erin MacGregor-Forbes and Dewey Caron.

*To be included: Cooking with Honey Demonstration by the Honey Queen and Princess, for spouses and families.*



## PSBA's Annual Conference November 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>

Plans are well underway for our annual conference at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. The program begins on Friday at 1:00 p.m. and includes our business meeting and election of officers, with our banquet Friday evening. On Saturday, presentations on the latest news and research will be continued. An **Executive Meeting** will be held **Friday at 9:30 a.m.** in the conference room at the Inn. **County representatives are urged to attend.**

There will be a \$45.00 registration fee (includes both days) to help cover the program expenses. The registration fee for Friday only is \$25.00 and Saturday only is \$35.00 (Member guest is \$30.00). There will be no registration fee for Executive Meeting representatives on Friday (one representative per county).

### Banquet

The Annual Banquet will be held in the dining room of the Country Cupboard Friday evening, Nov. 13, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The cost of the Banquet (which includes a buffet dinner) is \$30.00 for adults, \$11.00 for ages 11-12, \$8.00 for ages 6-10, 5 & under, free. These prices include tax and tip. Please make your reservations with Yvonne Crimbring, (570) 673-8201, **before Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>.**

Door prizes are being given out during the banquet and we are looking for donations. Anyone wishing to donate door prizes, please send them to Dave Hackenberg at 1466 Crossroads Dr., Lewisburg, PA 17837 or bring them with you to the meeting.

The Country Cupboard Inn is located on Rt. 15, 3 miles north of Lewisburg. When coming in from the East or West - take I-80 to Rt. 15S exit and travel south approximately 10 miles.

### Need a Place to Stay?

If you are interested in staying overnight, rooms are available at the Country Cupboard Best Western, 524-5500. Be sure to mention you are with PSBA. Make your reservations early!! They will be holding a block of rooms for PSBA until October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Other places to stay include: Country Inn Suites, 570-524-6600; Hampton Inn-Lewisburg, 570-522-8500; Days Inn University, Rt. 15, Lewisburg, 523-1171; Econo-Lodge, Rt. 15 South, Lewisburg, 523-1106; Comfort Inn, New Columbia, (5 mi. N. of Lewisburg, I-80 & Rt. 15) 568-8000; and Holiday Inn Express, New Columbia, (5 mi. N. of Lewisburg, I-80 & Rt. 15) 568-1100. For Bed and Breakfast accommodations: Brookpark Farm Bed and Breakfast Inn, 523-0220 and Pineapple Inn, Market St., Lewisburg, 524-6200. All above phone numbers are in the 570 area code.

## The Elusive Queen

I know she's in here somewhere,  
It's obvious where she's been -  
Lots of eggs and larvae -  
But I still can't find the queen.

I've looked in every corner,  
Searched on every frame;  
And now I'm at that point  
Where all bees look the same.

I look first at the edges  
And move towards the middle;  
I must be 'queen dyslexic' -  
To me it's just a riddle.

Queen cells are everywhere  
In every nook and cranny  
A split is clearly called for -  
not just one but many.  
But 'til I find Her Majesty  
My splits are all on hold;  
I'll curtsy if I have to,  
Threats work too, I'm told.

Put the hive aside, they say,  
And let the bees fly out  
Back to their first site.  
With not so many bees about  
It surely will be easy then  
to find the shy, reclusive, queen...  
*The One Who Can't Be Found.*

I've been through once,  
I've been through twice,  
More patience is required.  
And then it finally dawns  
On me - perhaps she has expired?

And then, the very final frame...  
I carefully turn it over.  
Demurely looking back at me...  
The colony's cute mother.

Eureka, and Euphoria:  
Now I can proceed  
To make the splits I dreamed of  
With everything I need:  
foundation, frames and nucleus box  
And that last essential thing -  
the piece that makes the jig saw whole  
that shy, elusive queen!

*Jeremy Barnes, with apologies to Liz Westcott*