



The Pennsylvania Beekeeper

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The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

By the time you read this, the 2015 Pennsylvania Farm Show will be in progress or completed. The Pa Farm Show always takes place in Harrisburg the first full week of January. As the calendar cycles, this year gave a little more 'breathing room' after the New Year. Last year, setup and exhibits came in January 2nd. This year exhibit entries came in January 8th. Earlier setup of the honey ice cream in the Food Court was December 20th, with materials and equipment arriving the 19th. The chairpersons, Stu Mathias, Aaron Fisher and Scott Baxter, spearhead this effort. The effort would not be complete without help from Capital Area Beekeepers Association members showing up to help with the labor. Many thanks go out to these people.

At the same time as Farm Show, representatives of the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association will be traveling to Anaheim California to attend the American Beekeeping Federation's annual conference. Included are Dave Hackenberg, Jim Bobb, Vince Aloyo and Rachel Bryson. This is the event that also crowns the new American Honey Queen and Princess, chosen from the state contestants. Good Luck Kaylee!

Once again, a Farm Show Special Edition newsletter will cover highlights of the Farm Show and ABF convention. If you receive the newsletter by email, the photos are in beautiful full color.

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If you would like to receive the PSBA newsletter by email, send that request to secretary, Yvonne Crimbring paabee1@frontier.com As our membership grows, the email version helps keep costs and labor of assembling newsletters down.

The PSBA Waggle is an occasional email posting from the Pa State Beekeepers Association. Sometimes the staff or committees want to pass along brief information or current events faster. Currently some of that is done on Facebook and Twitter. Some things need to be more focused to only PSBA, not the whole world. An email posting is part of the Communications Plan proposed by Rachel Bryson, as she studied our organization for her Masters Degree in Communication. The PSBA Waggle is a work in progress. I have initially taken this on as president and we'll see how it goes.

Any member that receives our monthly newsletter by email will receive the Waggle. All Waggle postings are made through the newsletter editor's list. The editor has the 'master' list and that will not be shared. The Waggle is not intended to be used for editorials, but rather specific activities or information that may be of interest or value to PSBA membership. This has no cost...just be an email newsletter recipient. I'm open to feedback (be gentle☺) president@pastatebeekeepers.org

Northwest Pa had a couple days of 50-60 degrees days in mid December the week after deer season. That gave a chance to get around to hive locations. As bear have become permanent residences and still on the move, it's important to check those fences. All my locations include solar electric fences. I was pleasantly surprised to see they were functioning properly, even with many days of overcast that didn't help keep the fences charged. Electric fences are effective, but only if they are working.

Lifting a few covers allowed me to see or listen for bees. Some clusters were loose and up to the top. One of the things I wanted to see was clustering behavior. Wintering cluster should be 'quiet' as Vermont beekeeper Mike Palmer would

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say. Bees should easily get into December without much trouble. I found a few that were not as well as I expected. Lost a few. My hive notes showed that some of these were struggling earlier in the year. And some didn't get mite treatments. I try to keep mite treatments minimal. Generally, I like to use a quick treatment of formic or thymol. I try to do a knock-down, but mostly it's up to the bees to take care of themselves. The goal is no treatment, but as research shows... for most, we're not there just yet.

Renewal Applications for Apiary Licenses have arrived in the mail. Although it is not well advertised in the application... renewals can be done on-line using credit card payment. Every registered beekeeper can access their information on the Dept. of Agriculture website. Go to <https://www.paplants.state.pa.us> Then Logon/Register on the menu. Your PaPlants ID and PIN are printed on your renewal form. If you do not have your renewal form, you can contact the department at 717-787-4843 or via email to obtain your PaPlants ID and/or PIN.

Once on your account, you can renew, review and update your Apiary Locations.

Charlie Vorisek,
President PSBA



Photo by Ken Hoover

Bill Mondjack is being presented the "Paul Ziegler Award" from 2014 American Honey Princess, Elena Hoffman. Kaylee Kilgore, 2014 PSBA Honey Queen, is holding Bill's winning "Molded or Designed" Beeswax entry. The presentation was made at the Annual Meeting held November 15th at the Country Cupboard in Lewisburg.

A Note from the 2nd VP:

January 2015

Hello Everyone,

I am Steve Finke, your newly elected 2nd Vice President of the PSBA and I wanted to introduce myself.

I am a beekeeper in Kutztown, PA, just west of the Lehigh Valley. I started keeping bees 7 years ago after my children went off to college and things quickly got out of hand. I caught the "bug" and enjoyed it so much that I went from 2 hives to 14, to 26...and now manage between 60 and 70 colonies all around the Lehigh Valley. I've only been in this for 7 years but in terms of "hive years", I'm getting there and I continue to be amazed by what we all see going on within these colonies. It's great fun, for sure.

A few years ago, this hobby got big enough to warrant some structure so I founded Meadow View Beekeeping, LLC. (www.meadowviewbees.com). I serve pollination customers, sell honey and other hive products, do colony extractions from area buildings, sell package bees with Bill Mondjack in the spring, and graft and sell queens from my strong over-wintered colonies all summer. Two years ago I became a Brushy Mountain Bee Farm equipment dealer so I put up a 1300 sq. ft. "shop" on my property in Kutztown to give new and experienced beekeepers in my area a place to get equipment and supplies.

As for association activities, I joined the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association 7 years ago when I started beekeeping and the first club member I met was Bill Mondjack. He's been a big help getting me up the beekeeping learning curve. Within a year or two, I was elected as the LVBA treasurer and then I became the President 3 years ago and I'm starting my 4th year as I write this. Our club has doubled in size in the last 6 years, as many clubs have, and we have a great group of leaders, including Bill, and members who help with a busy club schedule throughout the year. We see our mission as the education of our community on the importance of honey bees and pollinators in our ecosystem and new beekeepers in the practice of keeping bees. All the club activities just add to the "fun" of this hobby for me and, I hope, our members.

So this is the background that I bring to the PSBA 2nd VP position. I want to help the PSBA in any way I can and represent PA beekeepers in activities and discussions of the PSBA and beyond. Please let me know if you have any thoughts or suggestions that I can help with. You can reach me by email at steve@meadowviewbees.com or on my cell phone at 610-737-7676. Thanks for the opportunity.

Jeremy's Corner

A few miscellaneous thoughts.

I have wondered often how to place a value on a one-pound jar of honey. Consider the following.

Worker bees are foragers for the last two weeks of their lives, and let's presume that half of that is collecting nectar, the other half pollen. So working 8 hours a day for 7 days is a 56-hour week.

If we had to pay each bee minimum wage, a week's work would cost $\$7.25 \times 56 = \392.00

We know it takes 12 bees to collect sufficient nectar to make one teaspoon of honey. So $\$392 \times 12$ means that, using minimum wage as a measure, a teaspoon of honey costs \$4704.

It takes 50 teaspoons to fill a one pound jar (yes, I counted) so the cost of a jar of honey is \$235 200 ... and that is for the nectar collection only.

I have no idea how to calculate the amount of time spent on reducing the moisture content of the stored nectar, nor for producing the wax and capping each cell. Yet it is safe to say that, at these rates, we would be paying the bees in excess of \$500 000 for each one pound jar of honey.

\$10.00 a pound is a bargain!

A different calculation. If a worker bee spends two weeks as a forager and averages 30 flights a day averaging one mile from the hive, the total distance she will fly is 840 miles, which is a little further than the distance from Pittsburgh to Wichita, KS, or from Philadelphia to Tallahassee, FL. And the and result of all that flying, besides the pollination that she does, is enough nectar to make one twelfth of a teaspoon of honey.

So IF one honey bee could collect enough nectar to make the teaspoon of honey that I put in my tea every morning, she would have to fly 5040 miles, which if she went east would take her to Madrid, Spain, and if she went west, almost to Hawaii.

On a different note two inexplicable things happened to me on September 30th. Two weeks earlier myself and a nu-bee had gone through a hive that had been established in May with a marked queen of local, survivor origin and which we had often seen in the intervening four months. On that day, September 16, the hive seemed weak and dwindling and confined to two medium boxes. We could not find the marked queen but we did find a newly mated, active queen although there were no signs of any recently occupied queen

cells and no drones. The advice was to feed heavily, keep fingers crossed and check again in two weeks.

Fast forward to the morning of September 30, the hive is vibrant, active and growing fast ... and there was our marked queen! No sign this time of the new and mated queen. What happened? We can only assume that we missed the marked queen first time round, that she had dealt with the new queen and that this had somehow spurred her to rapidly increase her egg laying.

But where had that second queen come from in the first place? The absence of queen cells suggests she did not come from this particular hive.

On that same afternoon I received a call from a lady who said, with some distress, that there was a swarm of bees on her clothes line. Yes, she assured me, they are honey bees, they had been there for at least 24 hours and the swarm was bigger than her fist. Because she was close by and because I wanted to be a knight in shining armor, I rode my white steed to her property.

There was the smallest swarm I have every seen - literally it would have fit within an egg cup. I counted the number of bees - 52. And with the swarm was an unmated, immature queen.

Clearly the bees had no chances of surviving and the lady asked me to at least remove them, which I did using a cupped hand.

My question is why, on the last day of September, did such a small number of bees cluster on a clothes line, out in the open, with an immature queen? We talk of primary and secondary swarms but this must have been some kind of 'sextenary' (is there such a word?) swarm.

The trouble is that nu-bees or damsels in distress want short, clear explanations, and I had none to give. I still don't. Hopefully someone can set me straight.

Jeremy Barnes

Previous copies of Jeremy's Corner can be found at honeybeewhisperer.simplesite.com



IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 2/15 and receives the newsletter at 210 Limberline Drive, Greensburg, 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 10he/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.

2014 PSBA RESOLUTIONS

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. PSBA asks the secretary to write letters of special thanks to Maryann Frazier and Jeremy Barnes for organizing our 2014 meeting.
2. We thank Linda and Dave Hackenberg (Site Committee) for all their work in arranging our meeting at the Country Cupboard.
3. Also a letter of special thanks should be sent to the Country Cupboard/Best Western for working with us to make this year's meeting a success.
4. The PSBA secretary is asked to write a letter to all speakers, thanking them for their presentations.
5. PSBA thanks all PSBA Officers and Committees for helping to make our State Beekeepers Organization a continuing success.
6. PSBA thanks Vincent Aloyo, Lori Stahl and Ellen Codd for representing PSBA at Cornucopia.
7. Thanks to Lori Stahl for heading the Legislative Committee and the members, Jim Bobb, Steve Repasky, Vince Aloyo, Adam Schreiber, Charles Breinig, Matt Libhart, Ken Hoover.
8. Special thanks Ken Hoover for maintaining the PSBA website.
9. We thank Rachel Bryson for all her work on the Queen Committee and for continuing to promote PSBA through social medias.
10. PSBA thanks the current and former honey queens for the educational entertainment at the banquet.
11. PSBA thanks the 2014 Pennsylvania Honey Queen, Kaylee Kilgore for her efforts in promoting honey bees and beekeeping.
12. PSBA thanks Debbie Morse arranging the newsletter layout and for her help at the registration desk.
13. We thank Karen Roccasecca, PA State Apiarist, for overseeing a very successful Apiary Inspection Program.
14. The PSBA thanks all of the vendors attending this meeting including: Beads & Bobbins, Brushy Mountain, Dadant, Hive Products and Crafts, Honey Queen Program, Package Bees: Craig Cella, Mann Lake Ltd
15. We thank Mark Antunes for his service as auctioneer
16. We thanks the members of the PDA Honeybee Advisory Board: Dave Hackenberg, Jim Bobb, Lori Stahl, Vincent Aloyo, Matt Libhart, Eric Smith, Charlie Vorisek and Maryann Frasier.
17. We thank the members of the Beekeeper of the Year committee, Stu Mathias, Dave Hackenberg, and Jim Hoover
18. PSBA thanks Stu Mathias, Aaron Fisher, and all the others who have made our participation in the Farm Show a success and Aaron Fisher and Stu Baxter for their efforts at the Ag Progress Days.
19. PSBA thanks Pennsylvania Apiculture Inc. (PennApic)

for providing publicity for honey bees and beekeeping by maintaining hives at the Governor's residence.

20. PSBA thanks the Fisher Bee Farm for hosting the summer picnic.

21. PSBA thanks all the concerned citizens who continue to ask, "how are the bees doing?"

For PSBA, Vince Aloyo



Photo by Bill Mondjack

Harold Jenkins Named 2014 PSBA "Beekeeper of the Year"

The Beekeeper of the Year Committee on October 5, 2014 looked at the nominations for this year. After careful consideration, the committee selection this year was Harold Jenkins. This award was presented at the PSBA Annual Meeting, November 14th, held at the Country Cupboard in Lewisburg, PA.

Harold has been a member of the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association since 1972. He is also a member of the Montgomery County Beekeepers' Association. He shares his knowledge and assists beekeeping classes when possible.

Harold has been very helpful in setting up and taking down the display for the Farm Show for many years.

Congratulations Harold.

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

Upcoming Dates To Remember



Deadline for the February issue of

The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is **January 2nd**. We will also be publishing a Special Edition in February that will include 2015 Farm Show and highlights from the North American Beekeeping Conference.

2015 Pennsylvania Farm Show

January 10-17 at the Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg. If interested in volunteering, contact Aaron Fisher at 717-242-4373 or Stu Mathias at 717-533-2231 for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, January 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Bldg., Allentown. Steve Finke will present Colony Extraction. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email www.meadowviewbees.com for more information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Thursday, January 22, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Mark Hannings from Farm Family Insurance Co. will discuss the benefits of tailored protection for your apiary and assets including liability protection. This information is beneficial for beekeepers with 1 hive to 50+ hives and everything in between. Contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 JimBobb@Verizon.net or visit their website: www.montcobeekopers.org for more information.

Introduction to Beekeeping Classes

Wednesday, February 4, 18, March 4, 18 + field trip day, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville. The classes will be taught by members of the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association, some of whom are Certified Master Beekeepers. Contact Blaine Holden at 610-767-0306 or email blaineholden@hotmail.com for more information.

Beginning Beekeeping Workshop

Saturday, February 7 at the Westmoreland Co. Coop. Extension, Greensburg. Hosted by Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers Association. For additional information, call 724-774-3003 or visit the extension website: <http://extension.psu.edu/beaver>

Beginning Beekeeping Workshop

Saturday, February 7, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at The Gathering Place, Mount Joy, PA. Contact Jim Pinkerton at 717-653-5911 or visit the website: www.lancasterbeekeepers.org

5th Natural Beekeeping Symposium

Sunday, February 8, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Temple University, Broad St., Philadelphia. For additional information, visit the website: www.phillybeekeepers.org

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, February 13, Officers/Directors planning meeting PTBA. Contact Dave Taylor at 570-378-3728 or check on www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

30th Annual Western PA Beekeeping Seminar

Friday & Saturday, February 13-14 at the Four Points Sheraton, Pittsburgh North, Mars, PA. Speakers include Jerry Hayes

and Dr. Diana Sammataro. Call 724-774-3003 or visit the extension website: <http://extension.psu.edu/beaver> to register or for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, February 19, at the Lehigh County Ag Bldg., Allentown. Dr. Robyn Underwood will review her work at The Rodale Institute. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email www.meadowviewbees.com for more information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Thursday, February 26, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Mark Antunes – “Coming Out of Winter Strong”. Mark will present tips and strategies for making the transition in your apiary from winter to spring. Contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 JimBobb@Verizon.net or visit their website: www.montcobeekopers.org for more information.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, March 13, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Speaker, Dr. Dewey Caron, University of Delaware. Contact Jim Perkins, Program Chair at 570-967-2634 or check on www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

Chester Co Annual Conference

Saturday, March 14 at the Merion Science Center at West Chester University, West Chester. Speakers: Dr. Thomas D Seeley, Michael Palmer and Dr. Dewey M Caron. Visit the website: www.ChescoBees.org for more information.

Southern Adirondack Beekeepers (SABA) Seminar

Saturday, March 21 at 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the HVCC TEC-SMART Extension Building, Malta, NY. Guest speakers are Allen Dick of Alberta, Canada, Meghan Milbrath of Munnich, Minnesota and Dr. Wyatt Mangum. For additional information visit the SABA website www.adirondackbees.org

PSBA Summer Picnic

Date and location to be announced in future newsletters or visit the PSBA website.

PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 13 & 14, at the Country Cupboard/Best Western Inn, Lewisburg. Watch for additional information as it becomes available.

Attention Counties: Please submit your 2015 list of officers and meeting dates to Yvonne as soon as possible. Her mailing address and email are listed on Page 8.

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: pabeel@frontier.com

Nature Notes:

Daylight, though still short, is getting longer as the sunrise and sunset points move apart and the **arc of the Sun** is a bit higher. The Sun at mid-day is still low in the sky.

Birds at the feeder brighten our days with their activity. Our winter feeder birds are either species that do not migrate or birds that have moved south to enjoy our relatively balmy weather. They work every day to survive to the next day.



Carolina Chickadee

(By Dan Pancamo (Flickr: Carolina Chickadee) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>), via Wikimedia Commons)

Winter is tough for warm-blooded organisms out in the cold. **Deer** are insulated by a thick coat of hair over a layer of fat. Healthy deer that do not run out in front of a moving automobile will survive. **Elk** in the west and **moose** both east and west stride onto highways and walk into the paths of cars and tractor trailers. They appear to have no idea that tons of metal and glass are moving and might hit them.

Birds are covered in downy garments, thousands of feathers that can be fluffed out to hold in body heat. **Chickadees** burn fat to keep their bodies at about 108 degrees F. But they have a thermostat that lowers their body temperature about ten degrees F. at night. They might run out of fuel if they had to maintain 108 degrees F. all night. The chickadee story is at <<http://www.nwf.org/news-and-magazines/national-wildlife/birds/archives/2008/backyard-birding.aspx>> or Google <How Chickadees Weather Winter>.

Wasps that live in **paper nests** raise queens in late summer. The queens mate with drones and disperse to hide in bark crevices or leaf litter. A wintering queen may come into the house with firewood. Wasp colonies in Pennsylvania do not survive the winter. The workers and drones die. Paper nests out in the weather disintegrate. Queens that survive winter start a new colony in spring, constructing a small nest, laying a few eggs, and feeding the larvae that hatch. When those larvae develop into worker wasps, they take over the building and feeding chores.

Honey bees live on **beeswax combs**, store honey in the

comb, and survive by clustering on the comb. The bees in the center of the cluster eat honey and generate enough heat to keep the cluster from freezing. On warm days, the cluster rearranges itself.

In January, healthy Chester County honey bees will warm the center of the cluster to 93 degrees F. and the queen will start **laying eggs**. Inside the colony, preparations for spring bloom begin in January. Keeping the brood nest at the center of the cluster warmed to 93 degrees F. takes a lot of energy, and beekeepers should check **every week** to be sure that colonies are not running out of food.

The orbit of the planet **Venus** is inside Earth's circle around the Sun. Seen from Earth, Venus is never far from the Sun and sometimes behind or in front of it. Venus has returned as the "evening star," bright in the west.

The **Gemini, Castor** and **Pollux**, are two similar-looking stars that appear in the northeast about 8 pm, one above the other.

Giant planet **Jupiter** and bright star **Sirius** rise into view late in the evening. Jupiter, not-twinkling, is to the left of twinkling Sirius. Sirius is in the constellation Canis Major, the big dog, that follows Orion across the sky.

Tim Sterrett

Mail vs. Email

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

For Sale

Spring and Summer 5-Frame Nucs

Available for pickup in
Lewistown, PA

Call for availability and pricing.

800-736-6205

Ask for Aaron