



The Pennsylvania Beekeeper

February 2016
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The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

The 100th Pennsylvania Farm Show will be covered in a Special Edition newsletter. For the moment, I would like to compliment the many, many volunteer members that contributed many miles and hours to make the PA State Beekeeper's portions of the Farm Show a great success.

Preparations for the Farm Show included new PSBA brochures. These are a slightly different layout with updated information. An interesting change is the number of registered beekeepers and colonies. Since the last update in 2013, the number of beekeepers has grown from about 2,000 to 4,000. The number of managed colonies from 40,000 to 63,000. In 2002, the number of colonies had dropped below 30,000. More groups have formed. Previously, about 24 clubs were listed. Today there are 31. The dramatic increase is a positive reflection on the many beekeeping clubs that offer classes, mentoring and public interest. Hundreds of beginner class brochures and cards are handed out at the Farm Show. Classes are sold out every season.

The increase also has an economic impact that has been hard to calculate. Much of the increase comes in packages and nucs. Averaging in the ballpark of \$120 each, over the last few years, an additional 23,000 colonies is about \$2.7 million. Consider replacing 50% losses of the 40,000, that's another \$2.4 million. It may be safe to say Pennsylvania beekeepers have spent over one million dollars each year bringing replacement bees into the state. It should be noted that these expenses are not subsidized or insured. 95% of registered beekeepers are small scale with 25 or fewer colonies, just keeping bees for personal use and enjoyment.

Thank you to Kristie (Miller) Lang for the layout and fresh look. As well as getting them printed just in time.

Winter returned after summer temperatures in December. People reported trees blooming in the southeast counties and pollen coming in along the north shore of Erie County. One of my two observation hives raised a nice patch of brood in December. I observed the queen laying again on Christmas. However, the workers cannibalized the eggs and didn't allow the queen to lay more. They have been very conservative with their honey supply, hardly using any. I'll check later to see if that's the case in the field. For now, the temperatures

are holding 10-20 degrees.

It took two days to get my tractor started so I could plow my driveway when I returned from the Farm Show. The last 40 miles home was with four-wheel drive.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has called a meeting on January 25th at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture building. The purpose of the meeting is to begin to develop a statewide, voluntary pollinator protection plan. The plan will improve and promote pollinator health, while responding to the President's directive that all federal agencies develop Managed **Pollinator Protection Plans** (MP3s) to mitigate risks to honey bees and other managed pollinators. The directive encourages all states to work with growers, beekeepers and others to develop state plans to protect pollinators. The Apiary Advisory Board has been included in the meeting, along with a number of stakeholders from agencies and industries involved that may impact pollinators.

The Center for Pollinator Research at **Penn State University** will be hosting the **third International Conference on Pollinator Biology, Health and Policy** from July 18-20, 2016. The conference will be held at Penn State's campus in University Park, PA.

The conference plans to feature three world-renowned keynote speakers: Rachael Winfree (Rutgers University) who will discuss the evaluation and development of land management strategies to improve pollinator populations and ecosystem services, Gene Robinson (University of Illinois), who will share insights from the application of genomics

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to pollinator behavior and health, and Sonny Ramaswamy (Director, USDA-NIFA) who will discuss highlights and successes of the US federal strategy to promote pollinator health.

The Center for Pollinator Research has formed a Stakeholder Advisory Board. Steve Repasky will represent the PA State Beekeepers' Association.

The Stakeholder Advisory Board consists of representatives of local, national, and international stakeholder groups that are committed to the conservation and expansion of pollinator populations.

Other organizations on the Board are the American Beekeeping Federation (Zac Browning), American Honey Producers Association (Chris Hiatt), Pennsylvania Farm Bureau (Charlie Vorisek), Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture (Karen Roccasecca), Ernst Conservation Seed (Mark Fiely), Wyman's of Maine (Ed Flanagan), American Hort (Craig Regelbrugge), Monarch Joint Venture (Holly Holt), Pollinator Partnership (Vicki Wojcik) and Xerces Society (Mace Vaughan).

The Center for Pollinator Research is seeking stakeholder sponsorship for this July's International conference. PSBA will be considering what level it can sponsor. The conference agenda, online registration, and online abstract submission will be available in early February 2016. To receive an email announcement once registration is open, please send a message to

csc@psu.edu

All counties and associations: Please forward updated 2016 information, such as officers, contact information, PSBA Secretary-Treasurer, beginner classes and meeting schedules to Yvonne Crimbring, webmaster@pastatebeekeepers.org and Ken Hoover for the PSBA website www.pastatebeekeepers.org

Charlie Vorisek,

President PSBA
president@pastatebeekeepers.org

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 pabeel@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.

Colony Depopulation

Have any of your colonies disappeared since you inspected them in the fall? Some of us have experienced a phenomenon that I have never seen before at this time of year – the complete depopulation of a colony that had a good population of bees shortly before that. This is not a die off with dead bees on the bottom board or dead bees stuck in the comb with their abdomens protruding out having gleaned the last bit of honey. What has been seen are hives where there are no dead or living honey bees in it at all!

Hives that were known to have a reasonable to good population of bees in September and October were found to be completely depopulated by November and December. This is what absconding looks like but that generally happens during the summer.

On January 21st I spoke to the New Jersey Mid-State Beekeepers Association. I described this to the group and was astonished to find that 48% of those in attendance had experienced the same thing with one or more of their colonies. No one there had an explanation or had seen this before either.

Dr. Vincent Aloyo has been in contact with Dr. Dennis vanEngelsdorp about this and his reaction is that mites may be the causal factor triggering these events. Vince and I are convinced that further examination of this should be undertaken and would like to pass on any data we can to Dr. vanEngelsdorp for his consideration.

Toward that goal we would appreciate it if any of you who have experienced this would let us know about it. Please send Vince and I an e-mail with your contact information, the number of colonies this happened to, when you last knew there were bees in the hives, and when you found the hive to be completely absent of bees. Our e-mail addresses are Vincent.aloyo@gmail.com and honeyhillfarm@verizon.net

We would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Vince Aloyo and Mark Antunes



PSBA Conference 2016

The 2016 PSBA Annual Conference will be held at the Days Inn in State College on November 11 and 12, and we are requesting input on two areas in particular:

1. The possibility of running a 'short course' for newer beekeepers on the morning of Friday, Nov 11. This is in response to those who feel that the conference caters excessively to experienced beekeepers.
2. Topics that you would like to see in a break out session, such as 'Building a Honey House,' or "Talking to Children about Bees."

Please send your ideas and comments, as well as any relevant feedback on the 2015 Conference, to Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com ; mailing address: 1722 Union Church Rd, Seven Valleys, PA 17360, phone: 717-428-1144.

Sunshine Farmers Conference

I'd like to introduce you to Dr. Jonathan Lundgren. Dr. Lundgren is a young scientist that received the Outstanding Young Scientist Award in 2011.

Unfortunately his research has uncovered problems with our agricultural practices that are probably contributors to the loss of honey bees along with butterflies and wildlife. His findings have not settled well with chemical companies, big agriculture as well as the USDA.

Numerous farmers and beekeepers are stepping out and funding Dr. Lundgren as an independent to find natural solutions to the problems as well as find a solution to varroa mites.

For more information on this project and contribute to his research, visit the website www.bluedasher.farm
Dave Hackenberg

Dr. Jonathan Lundgren is one of the scientists looking into the challenges faced by the bees. Receiving the USDA's Herbert L. Rothbart Outstanding Early Career Research Scientist Award in 2011, this man is one of the nation's top scientists. He is committed to improving our agricultural systems and the food supply by using insects to better our farming systems. Dr. Lundgren's research shows that neonicotinoids are harming bees, monarch butterflies, and other wildlife; without providing any economic benefit to soybean farmers. Additional research has shown that RNAi, a new form of genetic pesticide, could potentially harm bees in unpredicted ways. And perhaps worst of all, Dr. Lundgren found that intensification of monoculture is at the root of the problem with our bees.

Based on his research and findings, Dr. Lundgren sounded the alarm that challenged the status quo. He published the discovery of his work without concern for the vested economic or political interest. If Dr. Lundgren had not discussed and published his findings, he would have had a much longer and more comfortable career within the USDA, all he had to do was stay quiet and put in his time. Instead, he told the truth about the obstacles beekeepers and farmers are facing. The truth that high input chemical farming systems are harming the bees and other beneficial insects, as well as harming the soil, and they weren't always helping farmers in the way they were being portrayed. For taking this stand and exposing the truth, the USDA has put up countless roadblocks in an attempt to diminish Dr. Lundgren's research, crush his spirit, and has made the lives of his family and his laboratory group living hell (see links below).

Unfortunately Dr. Lundgren is not alone, other scientists whose research challenges the vested interest or political dynamic are routinely stifled at universities and stifled in federally funded research. Dr. Lundgren has decided to work harder than ever to help the beekeepers, farmers, and ranchers instead of giving up. He is starting an independent research, education, and demonstration initiative to help train the next

generation of scientists and farmers in how to produce crops using ecological principles. This research laboratory and demonstration farm will be Blue Dasher Farm, and he is fundraising to get the facility up and off the ground.

To get the word out about Dr. Lundgren's experiences, Upper Susquehanna Crop Management Associates is holding the Sunshine Farmers Conference at Forman's Grain, LLC on March 9th, 2016. The address is 2837 Whitmoyer Road Watsontown, PA 17777. The event begins with registration at 8:30am and will conclude around 5pm with lunch included. The SSFC is a gathering of growers, bee keepers, agency folks, and interested community members who are exploring the present and future of farming sustainably. Additionally, diverse species of plants growing for as much of the season as possible promotes forage for honeybees and other pollinators increasing the productivity of hives and fields alike.

The speakers for this event are: Dr. Jonathan Lundgren, Dr. Dwayne Beck, Dr. Wendy Taheri, and Dan Forgey. The cost for attendees is \$100 if registered before March 4th and \$125 at the door.

There is also a benefit banquet for Dr. Jonathan Lundgren and Blue Dasher Farm being held the evening of the 9th at the Pine Barn Inn in Danville, Pennsylvania. This event begins with a cash bar at 6pm and dinner being served at 7pm. Dr. Lundgren will be presenting at this event. RSVPs by March 4th are necessary to attend and the suggested donation is \$50/person. Please contact Sarah Troisi at 570-922-1838 or st1244@messiah.edu to register for the Sunshine Farmers Conference and/or Banquet and with any other questions.



PSBA Summer Picnic

Save the date of August 6th for this year's PSBA summer picnic, hosted by Fisher Bee Farm, located at 1 Queen Bee Lane, McVeytown. This is the same location as the picnic held two years ago, but the address has changed. They will be roasting a pig for the main course, guests are asked to bring a side dish, dessert or drinks to share. Also, please bring a lawn chair. Fisher Bee Farm will have plating, cutlery and napkins on hand.

The location is right beside a nice creek that anyone is allowed to play in, if so desired. They also have a small zoo of a farm for anyone wishing to see live animals. The only organized activity is just breaking bread with fellow beekeepers.

The Executive Board will be meeting in the morning, time to be announced.

Watch in future newsletters for the directions to the Fisher Bee Farm.

“Bee Friendly City”

“Bee Friendly City” is a new project to highlight Pennsylvania cities or communities that have been pro-active in support of pollinators. Jo Posti and John Yakim, of the Pittsburgh area, agreed to co-chair and operate this initiative. A project proposal was presented at the Annual Meeting and was approved. With much planning on paper, they are ready to put the plan into action.

We need volunteers with the following interests, experience, expertise or skill sets.

- *Graphic Design*
- *Social Media*
- *Sponsorship development*
- *Marketing*
- *And in the near future we will need,*
- *Municipal Recruitment*
- *Judging*

These people DO NOT need to be beekeepers. Friends, and family of beekeepers who have an interest in our goals are certainly more than welcome.

Most of the work will be done via email and conference call. So we hope to hear from people all over the state!

Thanks, “John G. Yakim” JYakim@aol.com Jo Posti jo.posti@gmail.com

This initiative will recognize municipalities in the commonwealth that are using best practices that encourage beekeeping as well as a hospitable habitat for bees in the community. Town managers will be encouraged to submit applications defining their community’s efforts in the following categories:

- Legislation
- Education
- Pest Management
- Pollinator-friendly Green Space
- Community Support

Towns recognized as a PSBA Honoree and will be given permission to display PSBA’s logo on their web site and print materials. Towns recognized as a Beeloved City, PA be presented a bee flag at a town council meeting by an officer or representative of PSBA and PSBA will partner with them to do additional media outreach as well as outreach to their legislators.



IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP expires 11/16 and receives the newsletter at 231 Lane Hill Road, Tunkhannock, PA will send his/her name and an account of his/her beekeeping operation to the editor at 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724 by March 14th, 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.

Nature Notes

Although our days are noticeably **longer at each end** February can be a succession of **dreary days** punctuated by bad weather. We can enjoy **winter aconite** and **snowdrops** between snow and ice storms. **Florida** was probably invented during February. Just an overnight **train ride** away. From New York and Philadelphia everyday, *The Silver Star*, *The Silver Meteor*, *The East Coast Champion*, *The West Coast Champion*, and *The Florida Special* carried lucky people to Florida.

Not able to take off for Florida? How about bringing **forsythia branches** inside, setting them in water, and watching them bloom in the warmth of the house?

Pine siskins are showing up at bird feeders. These visitors from the north hang out with goldfinches and chow down on **sunflower chips** or **sunflower hearts**. Siskins are streaked all over with pointy beaks. They may flash yellow on wings and tail when they fly.



Pine Siskin

Photo by Cephas via Creative Commons

Longer days trigger **hormone changes** in birds and they begin to sing spring songs. **Cardinals** ring out “what cheer, cheer, cheer.” **House finches** sit at the tops of medium-sized trees and sing a long, loud, bubbly jumble of notes. The finches have the song memorized, so it comes out the same every time.

Dead honey bees sprinkled on the snow in front of a winter beehive are **agood sign** of colony health. That colony is alive. When the air temp reaches the mid-40s F., bees leave the hive to forage, to defecate, and to take out the trash. The trash is bees dead of natural causes, carried out by live bees. A hive with no dead bees on the snow is probably dead.

In late evening, **Orion** is higher following the **Pleiades** and **Aldebaran** across the southern sky. **Castor and Pollux**, the Gemini or the Twins, are above one another to the left of Orion. Pollux is the one closer to **Procyon**. Procyon shines by itself below and between the Gemini and Orion. In Greek, “Procyon” means “before the dog”. Procyon rises before Sirius, the Dog Star.

By Tim Sterrett

Upcoming Dates To Remember



Deadline for the February issue of *The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* is February 26th.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 p.m., at the LCCC, Schnecksville. Contact Brett Dyer at 484-553-2967 or visit [LVBA website](#) for more information.

Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers

Thursday, February 11, 6:30 p.m. at the Keystone College, Harris Hall, room 104, LaPlume. For additional information, contact Jared Jaffe at jared.jaffe@keystone.edu

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, February 12, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Contact Jim Perkins, Program Chair at 570-967-2634 or check on www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

North Central PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, February 17, 6:00 p.m. at the Penn State Extension Bldg., Coudersport. For directions or information, contact Joan Bradley at 814-697-7586 or email northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com.

Western PA Beekeeping Seminar

February 19 – 20, 2016 at Doubletree Hotel Pittsburgh/Monroeville Convention Center, Monroeville, PA. Speakers include Dr. Jeff Harris, Dr. Diana Sammataro, and Dr. Christine Grosinger. To download a brochure or to register visit [Penn State Event website](#). To receive a brochure by mail, call Penn State Extension Office, Beaver at 724-774-3003.

Burgh Bees

Wednesday, February 24, 7:00 p.m. at the Penn State Center Pittsburgh, Suite A, Pittsburgh. Pot luck supper and educational discussion on Preparing for the Spring. Visit the website Burghbees.com for additional information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Thursday, February 25, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skip-pack. Topic: Queen Breeding and Genetics. Contact Dan Boylan, dpboylan83@gmail.com or visit the website: www.montcobeekkeepers.org for more information.

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, February 25, 7:00 p.m. at the York County School of Technology, York. Toni Burnham, a Washington D.C. beekeeper will be speaking on The Changing Landscape of Urban Beekeeping. Visit the website www.ycbk.org for more details or contact Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 2, 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Beekeeping Seminar

Saturday, March 5, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Gunzburger Bldg., Coudersport. Speaker: Frank from Mann Lake. (For beekeepers with at least a few years experience) Topics include: Queen Rearing, Apiary Increase, nucs, splits and combining hives; Bringing your apiary into spring; Honey Bee nutrition;

Creating a sustainable apiary. Cost: \$10.00 for club members, \$15.00 non members. Registration and fee paid deadline is February 29th. Please mail checks (made payable to the club) to Joan Bradley at PO Box 635, Shinglehouse, PA 16748. For directions or information, contact Joan Bradley at 814-697-7586 or email northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com.

Wayne County Beekeepers

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

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m., at the LCCC, Schnecksville. 2nd & 3rd year beekeepers. Presenter: Brett Dyer. Visit [LVBA website](#) or contact Brett Dyer at 484-553-2967 for more information.

Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m. at the Monroe County Conservation District, Stroudsburg. Visit the website: www.monroecountybeekeepers.org for more information.

Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers

Thursday, March 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

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, March 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Contact Jim Perkins, Program Chair at 570-967-2634 or check on www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Thursday, March 24, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skip-pack. Topic: Evolutionary Biology. Contact Dan Boylan, dpboylan83@gmail.com or visit the website: www.montcobeekkeepers.org for more information.

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, March 24, 7:00 p.m. at the York County School of Technology, York. Ben McKean, a West Virginia beekeeper from Honey River Meadery will be the guest speaker. Visit the website www.ycbk.org for more details or contact Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com

Backyard Beekeeping Classes

Wednesdays, April 6, 13, 20 and 27, and May 18 and 25 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Six introductory classes for those with an interest in honey bees but with no prior knowledge. Participants will be provided with the information and skills needed to establish and maintain their own backyard hives. Meeting in an apiary in Seven Valleys, the classes will combine the theoretical (structure of a hive, honey bee biology, colony dynamics, nectar and pollen sources, common diseases and treatments, etc.) with the practical (inspecting and evaluating the growth of the bees and diagnosing the health of a colony). Handouts and suggested reading materials will be provided. Cost: \$75. Pre-registration is required as class size is limited. For further information contact Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com or call 717 428 1144.

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Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

EAS 2016

July 27-29, at the Richard Stockton University, Galloway, NJ. Short course to be held July 25-27, 2016. For additional information, visit easternapiculture.org

PSBA Summer Picnic

Saturday, August 6 hosted by Fisher Bee Farm, McVeytown. See page 5 for additional information.

2016 PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 11 & 12, at the Days Inn, State College. The theme is Audacious Ideas for the Future of Beekeeping and the keynote speakers will be Mark Winston and Keith Delaplaine.

The Impact of Landscapes on Bee Health and Survivorship

Marla Spivak

A summary of a presentation at the State Conference last November.

One of the strands of the web of problems facing honey bees is environmental (insecticides, herbicides/fungicides, and flowerless landscapes) which affects honey bee nutrition, which in turn impacts the ability of the bee to combat viruses and pathogens.

Pollen contains vitogellin and lipids, which favorably impact gland development, which is passed on to the larvae via bees' brood food, impacting the immunity, health and survivorship of bees. And when combined with nectar in the form of honey, pollen can not only up-regulate the detoxification and immunity genes in *Apis mellifera* but also turn on genes to make P450 enzymes, which metabolize pesticides.

Honey bees digest pollen, with some ability to detoxify pesticides it contains, before passing it on to larvae as brood food. The larvae of wild bees, by contrast, feed directly on the pollen balls provisioned by the mother bee.

We need foraging areas for bees to detox!

Instead of good, clean bee food we have acres of lawns and monocultures ((bee deserts) which are treated with a variety of chemicals. Honey bees, wild bees and other pollinators are reduced to feeding on scraps. Marla suggested selecting flowers on which one sees bees to plant in our gardens, interplanting lawns with low growing flowering plants than can be mowed (e.g. creeping thyme) and planting flowering cover crops in fields in winter, e.g. borage, calendula, echium and cuphea.) It is not only the quantity of pollen this is important, but also a diversity of sources of pollen.

A flowering bee lawn not only supports pollinator health but also reduces the intensive use of water, fertilizer and mowing. Marla showed a slide of the root systems of native

plants compared to lawn grass: the depth and complexity of the former by comparison was dramatic.

Marla made reference to herd immunity in humans (i.e. comparing the extensive spread of a virus when some people get vaccinated v the limited spread when most getting vaccinated) and herd immunity for bees. i.e. if only some colonies are treated for varroa, the mite and the viruses spread, v treating most colonies and containing the spread of mites.

Marla concluded with a description of the UMN Bee Squad, which is a group of UMN students who mentor backyard beekeepers, educate the public on wild bees, promote bee-friendly pollinator plantings, and offer a beekeeper service for homeowners and businesses. In this last service, in return for the woodenware and an annual fee of \$1000, the Bee Squad will provide, setup and maintain the colony, and share the honey with the owner. She showed an impressive list of companies who participate in what is called there Hive-to-Bottle program, arguing that it was not only good exposure for businesses with a green platform, but also led to a discussion as to what kind of forage the bees needed to be healthy and in some cases, a change in the plantings made within the vicinity of those customers.

The Bee Squad also provides a site at which backyard beekeepers can join a national effort to other data about varroa and gain access to a varroa test kit: beesquad@umn.edu

Jeremy Barnes

An Overview of the 2016 American Beekeeping Federation Conference

It seems like just yesterday I was amidst the hustle and bustle of the 2016 American Beekeeping Conference and Trade show held at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort and Spa, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. The theme this year was Palm Trees and Healthy Bees. Though the weather certainly didn't cooperate (it stayed in the upper 50's and low 60s with clouds and rain much of the time), the conference did not fail to impress.

Although Wednesday was the official start to the conference, as a Board member representing the Small-scale/Sideliners Special Interest Group (SIG), Tuesday was spent in the numerous meetings of the board and any committees that had agendas to be discussed.

Wednesday opened with remarks from ABF president Tim Tucker followed by a keynote presentation by Marla Spivak on "The Remarkable Natural Defenses of Honey Bees". Marla Spivak is always a fascinating speaker to listen to! Throughout Wednesday were various presentations on the EPA's Pollinator Protection Plan, Project Apis M.'s programs and many more. The vendor area was popular as

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ABF Conference (Continued from Page 11)

usual and was buzzing with backyard beekeepers and commercial beekeepers looking at what’s new in the industry. A highlight was the mobile extracting unit that was essentially a large horse trailer outfitted to have all the necessary extracting equipment inside so that you can pull the trailer from yard to yard and extract! Quite the “toy” to have!

Thursday and Friday were filled with many, many good speakers such as Dr. Geraldine Wright from the U.K, Ivana Tlak Gajger of Zagreb Croatia, Blake Shook, Greg Hannford, Bob Danka, Mark Carroll of the Tucson Bee Lab, Dr. Jay Evans of the Beltsville Bee Lab and many more. It was difficult at times to pick one speaker over another. Thursday night was a social event at the Jacksonville Zoo where we enjoyed a fabulous buffet meal and live entertainment.

As usual, the Kids and Bees event was a HUGE success. Sarah Red-Laird a.k.a The Bee Girl put together a fabulous three hour program of different stations for kids to rotate through where they can experience all things bee! Making wax candles, face painting, observation hives, wearing bee suits, discussing pollination, how do bees see and others kept over 500 kids fascinated for hours.

Saturday was devoted to workshops where everything from using oxalic acid to sustainable beekeeping to candle making was discussed. The conference concluded Saturday

evening with a very well attended banquet where Kim Kester of Wisconsin was crowned the 2016 American Honey Queen and Tabitha Mansker was crowned the 2016 American Honey Princess. Though our own PA Honey Queen Jessica Onstead was not chosen, she represented Pennsylvania well! Thanks for promoting the industry in PA Jessica!

The American Beekeeping Federation holds its conference every year in a different location. Next year it will be in Galveston, TX and will also be a combined conference with the American Honey Producers Association, so its looking to be a good conference again! If you have never attended an ABF conference, I encourage you to take the time, bring the family and partake in this fabulous conference. The best part of these conferences are not just in the speakers presentations, but in the conversations you have with beekeepers from all over in the hall between sessions, at the vendor tradeshow or in the pubs and restaurants in the evenings.

If you are not an ABF member, be sure to check out who they are and what they do for us on a national level. Recordings of the majority of the presentations are available on the ABF website under Education and Events, then 2016 conference then Session Recordings. You MUST be an ABF to access these recordings, but they are worth it! See you next year in Galveston Texas!

Stephen Repasky
PSBA 1st Vice-president

MEADOW SWEET APIARIES

www.meadowsweetbees.com

Pittsburgh, PA

EAS Certified Master Beekeeper

Author of Swarm Essentials

2016 Nucs – AVAILABLE EARLY-MID APRIL

5 Frame Deep Nucleus colonies - \$155.00

LOCAL SUMMER NUCS AVAILABLE LATE JUNE (VERY LIMITED QUANTITY)

There will be NO FRAME EXCHANGE.

Nucs will be in waxed cardboard nuc boxes – Pick up will be in Sewickley, PA

Local queens available beginning early May!

Beekeeping equipment in stock!



Please contact Steve at 412.445.7872 or meadowsweetbees@gmail.com with questions.