



# The Pennsylvania Beekeeper

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

## PA Farm Show Special Edition



Photo to the right: PA Honey Queen, Sarah McTish, places the First Place ribbon on Capital Area Beekeepers County Collective Exhibit. The \$500 First Place Award is sponsored by Dutch Gold Honey.



Suzanne Matlock grabs the audience attention while explaining mysteries of the hive.



The Photo Board was a popular stop where kids and adults can be a beekeeper for a moment. This little boy has some growing to do.

Photo to the left: Nate Weber assists judge, Mike Embrey, with a row of Frames of Capped Honey waiting to be judged.



Photos by  
Charlie Vorisek

### Farm Show Reviews...

The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association once again stepped up to the challenge for the 2016 and 100th Pennsylvania Farm Show. The weather was perfect and roads dry around most of the state.

Although I have been helping at the Farm Show for over 10 years, this year's Apiary Exhibit was without chairman Lee Miller. Lee has chaired the Apiary Exhibit for some 25 years and some things simply got done that I was not aware of. So, it was my ambition, as co-chair, to follow his lead with a professional and well respected honey show. I am sure Lee would agree, it's the team of helpers that get the job done. I can't say enough good things about the Apiary committee that simply stepped up and got things done. Sure, there were plenty of bumps along the way, but everything stayed on track and on time.

Judged entries arrive on Thursday before the show. Before entries can be checked in, the tables need to be exactly where they need to be, just like a foundation. Then tables for dropping off entries and people assigned to specific products and check-in tasks. Check and re-check tags to paperwork. Sorting

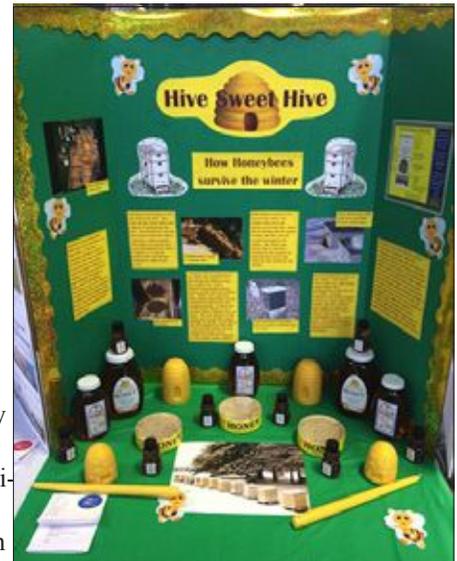


From top, Perry Arlia, brings more entries to judging table. Danica Fine records moisture content while judge, Bart Smith, scores for flavor, cleanliness, debris, fill and clarity.

colors of honey is probably still the toughest part. We did better with using a digital pfund scale. But drawing 20 degree honey out of a container with a syringe to get a test sample has its challenges. So much gets done in the first few hours that I was shocked it was only lunch time, because it felt like a whole day's work. To add more chaos,

the butter sculpture becomes the center of a media blitz with reporters and cameras spilling into our exhibit area for the unveiling. Each county brings a truck-load of parts and people for their county's exhibit and pretty soon it gets crazy. Honestly, it's like 'old home days', because the air is full of camaraderie and cooperation. Somehow, this is sounding like the inside of a hive. And somehow the chaos is orchestrated into order so that by 6:00 PM the day's work is settled and done.

On Friday, exhibits are judged. Work begins by 9:00AM. In order to get so many different exhibits judged and judged fairly requires people able to discern the qualities of what they are evaluating. We had two judges specifically for honey and waxes. Two judges for baked goods. Two top quality winery owners judged Mead. The County and Individual Collective exhibits are first 'fact-checked' by the honey judges who are in the science of beekeeping. Then a team of the PA State FFA advisor and two officers individually score



First place individual exhibit illustrates products and theme of how bees winter in the hive.

the collective exhibits. The FFA is disciplined in following specific criteria in many contests in which they compete. This team brings the public perspective of an older generation, a young man and a young woman. They look for what draws their attention, how quickly the exhibit explains itself, balance, organization and educational value within the rules of the premium book. They bring their individual scores together, justify their reasons and settle on award placement. Each year, I ask the advisor how he feels about the outcome. Each year he can justify points that helped decide. The scores are often close, which reflects the quality on display.

This year, the Ziegler Award became the Ziegler-Keeney Award. The Ziegler Award was previously awarded at the PSBA annual meeting's honey show. As the honey show lacked participation and available space, it was decided to bring this prestigious award to the Farm Show. Awarding it to the best of the 'best of show' in the classes of extracted honey, beeswax and comb honey. In April, the Farm Show agreed to provide or build a display case. After size considerations, I sent a pencil sketch with some basic dimensions. For those that don't know, Dennis Keeney operated Ziegler honey by day and worked at the Farm Show by night. He passed away unexpectedly last year. His co-workers built this case and it shows the love and respect they had for Dennis. Absolutely beautiful. There was a lot of time, talk, wrangling and logistics at play. The engraved silver plate arrived only a week before the show. As fate would have it, a good friend

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**Farm Show Reviews** (Continued from Page 2)

of Dennis won the Ziegler-Keeney Award at the 100<sup>th</sup> Farm Show. It was a good day.

For this 100<sup>th</sup> Farm Show, Blue Ribbon Event, we ordered blue ribbons with “PA State Beekeepers Association”, keystone-bee logo and “100<sup>th</sup> Pa FARM SHOW” in gold lettering for all PSBA volunteers to attach to their name tags. Both a way to easily identify our group and a souvenir to take home. It also served to give us some idea how many volunteers help between the Learning Center, Honey Market and Food Court Honey Ice Cream. All 150 ribbons were used.

The Apiary Learning Center again featured two observation hives that fed into a common atrium. The atrium is divided inside to prevent drifting. Jim Pinkerton, of Lancaster, provided both observation hives and keeps the atrium in the off-season. The backdrop to the Learning Station is made up of super-size honeybee photos. These high resolution photos were taken by Bill Mondjack, of Lehigh County. The photos are educational and a compliment to the PSBA Learning Station.



The Learning Center is where some volunteers are most comfortable. Teaching, talking and story telling at it's best. It also allows some flexibility with manning the Honey Market and Food Court. Stan Poleshuk took on the task of scheduling volunteers. At least 2 per shift, from 8:00AM to 9:00PM. Often times, more volunteers show up. That's never a problem with so many visitors with so many questions. This is the place where we have the time to answer all those bee questions and give direction for new beekeepers. The thumbprint banner on the isle side of the honey-baked goods had many visitors. Often it was the 'ice-breaker' for a child. It's a place to leave your mark, autograph or bit of bee-graffiti. The banner has become a 'must stop'. Cathy sometimes chases politicians or celebrities for the collection. With no state budget, very few politicians showed this year.

Thank you to all the volunteers that share your talents.

*Charlie Vorisek,*

President PSBA

[president@pastatebeekeepers.org](mailto:president@pastatebeekeepers.org)

**Complimentary ABF Membership**

We are rolling out the 2016 ABF Complimentary Membership for **New Members**. Our Complimentary Membership is free to anyone who has never been a member of American Beekeeping Federation. You will receive electronic access to our educational webinars, discounted conference pricing, the monthly ABF E-Buzz, and much more! All memberships will expire December 31, 2016.

Thank you very much for your support. If you have any questions, you can give me a call at 404-760-2875.

Valerie Lake

Membership Coordinator

American Beekeeping Federation

[abfnet.org](http://abfnet.org)

*ABF: Serving the Industry Since 1943*

**Honey Queen Brochures**

The 2016 PSBA Honey Queen Brochures are now available! Cost is \$10.00 per hundred (plus shipping). Please purchase the brochures to help you increase your honey sales and support the honey queen program. To order, contact Stewart Mathias, 514 Early's Mill Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, phone 717-533-2231.



Queen Sarah places a 2nd place ribbon on this individual exhibit, which shows many Internet and social media sources of information.

Photo by Charlie Vorisek

## HONOR OF A LIFETIME

What turned out to be an attempt to be lucky enough to earn a ribbon signifying a part of history, turned out to be an Honor of a Lifetime.

I dusted off some of our molds, still left lost from a fire a couple years ago, to see if we could be lucky enough to earn a ribbon signifying the historical 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 2016 PA Farm Show. Competition can be very challenging and strong going up against the many talented beekeepers across the state including the respected excellence of Eugene Taylor and his family. After the birth of our son, we hadn't competed for many, many years. Matter of fact the week our son was born, I helped Dennis with extracting that September. Our friendship has spanned over many years.



Photo by Charlie Vorisek

I have numerous fond memories of the many sleepless nights helping Dennis with pollination. Fun sleeping in a truck waiting for your pollination shift to start or grabbing a couple hours before going to your regular job after working on a pollination move. It is truly amazing how many hours straight he used to go at times. It just proved the caliber of strength that Dennis

possessed and for the love of his craft. Sometimes it could be very tiring, but Dennis's fun sense of humor and friendship made hard work easy and fun. We had a lot of amusing ways of keeping each other awake or working through equipment "malfunctions" including brakes, road curves and yes, stings. How many times have we been asked that question??? Our nicknames of Dennis being "Spanky", I being "Alfalfa" and Dan Schwartz being "Buckwheat" had given us a brotherhood of beekeepers practicing our love of beekeeping while helping farmers with their orchards and crops. Elaine, Julie, and Sandy would tease about their husbands spending nights together. Ruth Keeney had fondly become "Mom" and our son refers to her respectfully as "Grandma Ruth". In later years as Brendin became older, there was even a weekend when he helped with pollination. We laughed about the night Brendin had fallen asleep on Dennis's shoulder coming back from a pollination job on the one early morning. We would have many laughs over breakfast at Midway after a long night of moving bees too. Dennis's expertise has taught us so much. We, as also many, had the opportunity of getting to know and listening to the expertise of his uncle, Paul Ziegler; learning how to keep bees and how to do a good job with them especially their magical touch with Queens. I could go on, as many of us could, with the caring, intelligent, knowledgeable and enjoyable ways that Paul Ziegler and Dennis Keeney has touched every one of our lives.

So the Ziegler-Keeney Award comes as a great honor to have received at this year's 2016 PA Farm Show. It TRULY has personal meaning. I thank the Ziegler and Keeney families and the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers for making this award possible. I care to think Paul and Dennis are continuing their work making heaven beautiful and their voices can be heard. Look down on us beekeepers and give us wisdom so we, too, can make our heavenly earth beautiful and help these amazing creatures feed our world. And in closing may I say "Thank you Spanky for touching my life once again. It has truly been a pleasure being a beekeeping brother, friend and "Rascal" with you". 'Till we meet again my friend...

Respectfully submitted,  
Rick, Julie, and Brendin Freeman

**A "Thank You" to Mann Lake bee supply for donating over \$1,500 worth of equipment for the Learning Station and Honey Extraction Demonstrations. Mann Lake employees also helped with setup and showed up several days to help scoop ice cream at the Food Court.**

### Farm Show 2016

For many people, the month of January is an afterthought- a placeholder. Once the excitement of the holiday season has passed and New Years resolutions have been made and maybe even broken, there isn't much to do except hunker down for the bleakness of winter and look forward to small celebrations like Valentine's Day, all the while hoping for an early spring to warm things up.

That's just not the case in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvanians know that during the first weeks of



January, a magical thing happens, known simply as The Farm Show. While just about every state hosts its state fair during the summer or fall, Pennsylvania waits until the most forgotten and underutilized time of the year to put on its premiere agricultural event, but it's not in vain. The Pennsylvania Farm Show is the largest agricultural

fair under roof in the United States. The 24-acre complex holds over 13,000 exhibits and 300 vendors, and attracts more than half a million visitors during its eight day run. It's one of a kind, for sure! And each and every January, the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expo Center in Harrisburg becomes home base for the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the PSBA's involvement at the Farm Show, allow me to explain. Throughout the complex, there are myriad activities happening at any given time. From commodities and animal judging to cooking demonstrations and sampling to live shows and contests and everything in between. Plus, there are hundreds of vendors and food booths, judged exhibits, animals on display, farming equipment, etc. Sprinkle in 75,000 people and quite literally it's a zoo. But there is a method to the madness and the PSBA is well represented within the functional areas of the complex.

The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association sponsors three booths throughout the Farm Show. The first of these is the Learning Center, prominently located near the famous Butter Sculpture. This area includes a well-staffed booth of

volunteers who stand near the dual observation hives, eagerly answering questions for the groups of children and adults alike who want to learn more about honey bees. These folks answer questions that range from, "Where is the queen?" or "How do they make honey?" to "Are bees still disappearing?" and "How do I become a beekeeper?" There are plenty of educational materials and handouts available to guide people in the right direction. It's not uncommon to see the Pennsylvania Honey Queen spending time at this booth as well. 2016 PA Honey Queen Sarah McTish will spend this year educating the public about honey bees, and the Farm Show is one of her first big events. Of course, this area also includes all of the judged apiary exhibits- comb, extracted, and creamed honey; block and molded wax; candles; frames of honey; baked goods; mead and melomel; plus individual and county educational exhibits. In addition, this is the place where children can find a bee stamp to complete the Farm Show scavenger hunt. However, they don't leave without adding their thumbprints to the annual bee collage. If you look up, you'll see previous years' canvases decorating the space above the exhibit.

The next booth is located in the Marketplace, just around the corner from the PA Preferred Culinary Connection Stage. This is the place to go for honey and beeswax. Each year, our members provide thousands of pounds of wholesale honey and beeswax to stock the booth. As people filter past, they are drawn to the booth, whether it's to stock up on their favorite honey, or simply for a handful of honey sticks. The variety is astounding- black locust, wildflower, clover, goldenrod, Japanese knotweed, buckwheat, creamed, smoked, etc. There's truly something for everyone. Most folks want to find a certain flavor, or they're looking for a variety that's local to them. The volunteers at the booth are knowledgeable and patient, helping each person find exactly what they're looking for. This booth is a buzz of activity right up to the last moment. Of course, it's even busier after the daily honey extraction demonstrations on the stage right around the corner.



A small group of dedicated volunteers gathers every day to host an informative honey extraction demonstration. Over the years, the crowds have grown, as everyone finds

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this demonstration to be exciting. After learning about the PSBA, honey bee biology, hive structure, and tools of the trade, visitors see the uncapping process, spinning, straining, and eventually get to taste the delicious final product. The question and answer session at the end gives visitors the opportunity to learn more about the process. But make sure to stay until the very last moment because you just might win a prize during trivia!

As the day passes, visitors are increasingly in need of refreshment. The PSBA sponsors a honey waffles and ice cream booth in the Food Court section of the Weis Expo Hall, all the way on the other side of the complex. The most common question our volunteers get here is invariably, "Oh, they're all made with honey?" That's right- each variety (Vanilla, Chocolate, Strawberry, Raspberry, Cinnamon, Butter Pecan, and Salted



Caramel Pretzel) is sweetened with Pennsylvania honey to give it a unique flavor and creamy texture. There's something special about handling a big softball-sized scoop of honey ice cream perched atop a cake cone to a wide-eyed visitor. Everybody loves it! Plus, the fresh-made hot waffles are sweetened with

a generous amount of honey as well. Order a waffle with a variety of small scoops and then positively smother it with honey at the condiment bar. Visitors can also purchase a small variety of the honey and beeswax products that are available in the Marketplace, too.

The Pennsylvania Farm Show is an event like none other. This year was the 100th anniversary of the first show, which began in 1917. Much has changed since the beginning, but one thing is for sure. With great volunteers and exhibits like those from the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association, the show will certainly keep visitors coming for a hundred more!

Alyssa Fine  
Photos by Charlie Vorisek

Honey Waffles and Ice Cream

The Honey Waffles and Ice Cream Stand was a busy place during the 2016 Farm Show. The fun began on December 19<sup>th</sup> when a group of volunteers gathered at the Farm Show Complex to unload and set up the stand. On Friday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, we gathered at the stand to unpack and price the honey products we would be selling and started serving honey waffles and ice cream to the public at noon. The busy pace continued on right through to the very last day of the show.



The Milk Shake booth was not the only food stand to unveil a new flavor to honor the 100<sup>th</sup> Farm Show. We added a 7<sup>th</sup> flavor, Salted Caramel Honey Ice Cream. What a huge hit! We sold out by lunch time Wednesday and people never stopped asking for it. Rumor has it that we just might see it return as a regular flavor next year.

With volunteers coming from all over the state, we had former (and just maybe future) Honey Princesses, parent/child and husband/wife pairs, and the ages ran from 4 to 80. There is no doubt the ice cream scoopers got a serious workout. I'm pretty sure there were some bulging biceps by the end of the week! It seemed like mixing the waffle batter was a never ending job and every mixer had their own signature technique. There was chatter about an electric mixer for next year but I believe the consensus is that hand mixed is best.

The beautiful weather we had during Farm Show week brought plenty of hungry folks to our counter. According to Aaron



Fisher, we sold an average of \$500/day more than last year. Our last day was a busy one right to the very end. Once the Farm Show was declared closed plenty of volunteers jumped into action to clean, tear down and load up the equipment. And now, we wait for another year....

Ronda Fawber

# PA Honey Queen Report

Hello all!

I am excited to introduce myself as your 2016 Pennsylvania Honey Queen! I am a junior at Penn State main campus studying agricultural sciences with minors in entomology, plant pathology and leadership development. My love for honey bees began in my sophomore year of high school when I started my first two hives. These hives did not survive their first winter; however, I decided to try again, so I just started two more hives this past summer on my aunt and uncle's farm in Centre County.

My first two months as Honey Queen were busy with Honey Queen "Boot Camp" and the Pennsylvania Farm Show.



The 100<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Farm Show was January 8 to 16 and I was able to represent the PSBA at many events. On Friday, January 8 I had the opportunity to attend the PA Preferred Reception.

At this reception, I was honored to meet Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf and PA Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding. I then spent the rest of the evening networking with many people involved with agriculture throughout the state. After the banquet, the Ag Advocates from Penn State invited me to meet the mounted unit of the police force. Overall, it was an amazing night.

The following morning, I met up with the other commodity queens to participate in the opening ceremonies, which was followed by a meet and greet with the PA Secretary of Agriculture, Russell Redding. Following this, I had the opportunity to meet four Pennsylvania Congressmen after their discussion on current issues in agriculture. Finally, I ended my day educating the public about beekeeping and the importance of honey bees at the PSBA's learning center.

Sunday was another very busy day at the Farm Show. The day began for me with the first honey extraction demonstration on the Culinary Connection Stage. During the demonstration I introduce myself to the crowd and explained what the Honey Queen does for the PSBA and Pennsylvania's beekeepers. Following the demonstration, I was approached by PCN to conduct

a television interview. During this interview, I spoke about my role and the importance of bees. This interview reached approximately 3 million people in Pennsylvania! After this interview, I was then interviewed by Dave Williams of American Farm Country Radio, reaching approximately 2 million more people!



Photo by Charlie Vorisek

My media interviews did not end there though. Monday morning I participated in an interview with WEEU radio, broadcasting to about 300,000 people in Berks County. During this interview, I spoke about the importance of honey bees and pollination. I then spent the rest of the week between the honey ice cream stand, the learning center and the market place, talking to the public about honey bees, pollination and beekeeping. Thank you to everyone who made Farm Show such a wonderful experience.

I'm very excited to represent the PSBA throughout this year and I hope I am able to attend your event. To schedule an appearance from me, please contact Rachel Bryson at [honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.com](mailto:honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.com) or 717.300.0146.

Sarah McTish



Queen Sarah speaking to the crowd before one of the honey extraction demonstration at the Farm Show.



### Apiary Learning Center

I had the honor and privilege again this year to be part of the hive of worker bees at the Apiary Learning Center. In addition to the work involved in setting up for the various Learning Center exhibits comes the opportunity to work alongside fellow beekeepers and share information with the many visitors who stop by to ask questions and marvel at our wonderful honey bees. Although we missed some folks from past years who unfortunately couldn't join us and there were a few minor bumps in the road, as usual our worker bee volunteers soon had things up and running. Getting tables and stands ready for display of apiary items was a cinch this year due not only to our worker team but also to the organization and planning that took place ahead of time. Thank you to those planners and organizers!

Even before set up was complete, exhibitors began assembling their displays and dropping off entries. What fun



it was to talk with first time exhibitors who were excited, proud and yes somewhat nervous and apprehensive about submitting their entries. The many entries of honey, molded wax, baked goods and other food items, and (my favorite) mead and other apiary products were carefully unpacked, cataloged, graded, and arranged on display tables, ready for the judges the following day.

A main attraction again this year was the observation hive, which as usual generated much interest and many questions.



It is a pleasure watching young children excited to see a "queen", listening to experienced beekeepers tell about their own beekeeping experiences, and answering questions from people curious

about how honey bees live, work, collect pollen, make honey, raise new queens, and deal with things like mites



and pesticides. My favorite questions are always "Is the queen born with a dot on her back?", "How do beekeepers get the honey out?", "Where can I buy honey?", and "Which way is the honey extraction demo?" Quite a number of visitors this year expressed interest in possibly starting their own hives, and the PA

State Beekeepers were ready with various informational materials to help them on their way.

The displays set up by beekeeper clubs and others were wonderful again this year and are a great success in providing visitors with information about every aspect of honeybees and beekeeping. Club members are to be truly commended for their originality, talent and time that went into educating the public and sharing their love of honey bees with others.



I can't end this article without mentioning the enthusiastic and energetic worker bee with the antennae on her hat who each year fills a wall with Bee Thumbs big and small. Who'd have thought learning about bees could be so much fun, even for us older folks who might not have acted like a kid for quite some time?

Diane Nacko  
Photos by Charlie Vorisek

## Jeremy's Corner

This column had three sources of inspiration:

1. A conversation with the State Apiarist, Karen Roccasecca;
2. A circulated e-mail suggesting that county associations might combine to purchase packages from Georgia this spring, taking advantage of a group discount for the financial advantage of each club;
3. The Farm Show in Harrisburg, with its emphasis on local produce and, not least, a prime time TV segment on honey judging featuring Bart Smith.



When potential beekeepers ask how much it would cost to start a hive, the response includes the cost of the woodenware, protective gear, smoker and the bees themselves. It is not unusual to qualify this by suggesting that after getting the first colony one should never have to buy bees again. What this suggests is that capturing swarms and making splits from strong colonies is a matter of basic management strategy. For the new beekeeper, however, terms like *nucs*, *splits* and *queen rearing* have a mystique that can be scary. Add to that the advertisements for packages of bees brought in from the south, the promotion of imported nucs over-wintered in Florida, and the full-page color pages in the journals for all kinds of patties and supplements, and the impression is readily created that someone else knows best and that buying bees from commercial sources is the right and easy way to go.

An argument can be made, first, that it is not necessarily the right way to go, nor, in the long run, the least expensive, and secondly, where patties and supplements are involved, commercial suppliers may have their own agenda which may not be relevant or appropriate to locally-based beekeeping.

Packages have their place. Their advantages are that one gets three pounds of bees and a queen, they are easy to insert into a hive box, and they are normally available early in the season. However, there are downsides: there is an assumption that the queen and the workers have 'gotten acquainted' during the journey north, the bees need to be fed heavily once they are colonized, the queen may not be adapted to winter survival, and the cost of packages continues to increase. In addition, there is no history of the bees or their queen, so the beekeeper does not know if packaged bees have been treated nor if there were disease problems in the colonies.

Buying an imported nuc is also expensive, but one does get bees on the frame usually with some pollen and nectar, and they are easy to hive. Again, the beekeeper often has no knowledge of the history of the bees or the heritage of the queen, and it is recommended that every nuc (and package) be tested as soon as possible for diseases and pathogens.

Another aspect, seldom mentioned, is described by Tom Steely in *Honeybee Ecology*. The annual cycle of brood rearing is partly determined by genetics and partly by the local environment. In a French experiment, colonies that were moved north and south kept their distinctive brood rearing cycles in their new environment. (i.e. Those moved south started raising brood relatively late in the winter, and those moved north relatively early.) And in an experiment in New York, new colonies had a lower probability of surviving the winter.

It seems logical, therefore, that bees imported from the south are likely to have a brood rearing cycle more adapted to Georgia than Pennsylvania, at least for the first year, and that the probability that a locally raised, or second year, colony will survive the winter is higher than that of a new colony which is in its first year in the north.

At the 2015 PSBA conference held in Lewisburg last November, every speaker, without exception and to various degrees of emphasis, referred to the value of locally adapted bees bred from survivor stock, with the occasional importation of new queens to diversify the gene pool. The assumption is that every beekeeper can be his or her own breeder of bees.

Some will graft and raise queens from strong, over-wintered, local larvae, selling queen cells, virgin or mated queens. Grafting might not be for everyone (I don't suggest we go as far as Denmark where apparently the first class for new beekeepers involves grafting the larvae that will become the queen for his or her first colony!) but making a split and raising a nuc is certainly within the skill range of all beekeepers.

When it comes to the choice of grafting or making splits, there is a remarkable paper published in *Naturwissenschaften* (2005) by Robin F. A. Moritz et al, titled **Rare royal families in honeybees, *Apis mellifera***. The author's genotyped worker brood

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**Jeremy's Corner** (Continued from Page 10)

and determined the number of patriline in the colony (i.e. the number of drones represented in the queen's spermatheca). They then removed the queens to stimulate queen cell construction and genotyped the resulting queen pupae. One would predict that the number of patriline would be the same between the two groups, but it wasn't. Some patriline were over-represented in the queens and very rare in the workers. Thus, it seems that these rare "royal" patriline are simply preferred by nurse bees.

Even though this is evidence that workers express choice in rearing queens, it does not answer whether those queens perform better. Do worker-selected queens (vs. beekeeper-selected via grafting) head colonies that are more fit?

Joe Lewis, in an article entitled "2.5 Beekeeping" (ABJ, Dec 2013) argues for a five-frame nuc for every two hives - what he calls 2.5 Beekeeping. The pros, besides the unbeatable price, include multiple data points for comparative purposes in an apiary, a source of brood when needed, especially to make emergency queens for queen-less hives, back-up queens to replace failing queens in the apiary, and the fact that the beekeeper has some control over the qualities of bees in his or her apiary. The cons include the extra time required compared to buying a package, and that nucs may not build up fast enough in the spring to meet the demands of pollinator contracts.

There are many ways to make nucs and at our November conference, Erin Forbes-MacGregor, she of 'denial is not a management strategy' fame, spoke engagingly about making spring nucs as an essential part of one's management strategy. In the spring one can split the strongest over-wintering hives and thereby reduce the likelihood of swarms as well as encourage traits, which are significant for our Pennsylvanian climate and environment.

To avoid excessive in-breeding it is important occasionally to introduce new genetics into an apiary, which involves either buying or exchanging queens with fellow beekeepers whose management policies one respects. This has become even easier in Pennsylvania with the Queen Improvement Project run in conjunction with an eight state group known as HHBBC, the goal of which is to develop/breed honey bees that are resistant to varroa mites and brood disease requiring little or no treatment, hardy with at least an 80% overwintering survival rate, gentle, and good honey producers. A number of beekeepers and queen-producers, with the help of PSU and USDA Sustainable Agriculture grants, are evaluating different genetic stocks for their ability to survive Pennsylvania winters and other environmental stressors. The resulting queens are available to local associations for breeding purposes or to county queen breeders from which to develop stock for local distribution.

The issues surrounding packages, nucs and raising bees from local survivor stock is one that can be addressed by each of our local associations. Whereas none of us can dictate what other beekeepers should do, it is important to include making splits and nucs in beginning beekeeping classes, and offer workshops for local beekeepers, which help to remove the mystery and nervousness that often surrounds this process, provide local beekeepers with more options for the long term survival of his or her colonies, and contribute towards the overall quality of honey bees state-wide.

Jeremy Barnes



Crystallized honey and comb honey exhibits waiting to be judged by Mike Embrey, assisted by Nate Weber.

Montgomery County's Brian Marcy, Joe Duffy and Dan Boyland setting up their County Collective Exhibit.

Photos by Charlie Vorisek



### 2016 PA Farm Show Commodities

The PSBA Farm Show Marketplace team survived the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Farm Show! In preparation, Justin and I work setting up the learning center and commodity booth. On Thursday, shortly after the unveiling of the butter sculpture, we had the opportunity to speak with PA Agriculture Secretary, Russell Redding. We spoke about anticipating mild weather (instead of traditional crushing snow storms and freezing temperatures) and agreed that the Farm Show occupies so much planning that we don't celebrate the New Year until the close of the show, which by then we're 2 weeks in. I'm certain you all can relate by preparing commodities for sale and preparing entries for judging.

The PSBA Marketplace begins with planning product and setup in the Main Hall. With additional product requested for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we needed ample retail space. Setup from start to finish takes about 5 hours on Friday before the show opens to prepare the Marketplace for the flooding crowds. The setup process involves moving and placing tables, risers, transporting, pricing, and handling a thousand (maybe more) pounds of bottled honey and other hive products. This year's setup crew included: Stu Mathias and Tom Jones the master coordinators of product, Andy and Ashley Miller brought along Phil Mathias, Bob and Joan Miller, and Justin and I.

Andy and Justin are always looking for ways to improve and draw attention to the booth. This year's addition included signs that hung high above the crowds in the windowpanes of the complex. They also built a stand for a honey feather sign that reached to the ceiling.

Special limited edition honeys for this show, were Black Locust and Japanese Knotweed (bamboo). Our regular farm show customers look forward to purchasing and tasting these honey rarities and getting their traditional gift packs with a variety of nectar sources. In addition to those products we had, comb, chunk, buckwheat, lip balms, soaps, candies, cleanser, salves and body butter.



Typically by the end of the show, we are pleasantly exhausted and have limited remaining product, which grants us the chance to eliminate empty tables helping us with the tear down process on Saturday. However, thanks to your generosity and assistance, we were forced to leave the original arrangement and were able to sell more products since it was available to us. So, thanks to all of you!



A heartfelt thank-you to those who volunteered at the commodities booth throughout the week. It's not always an easy task, but the Association is grateful for your efforts. We are looking forward to the show in 2017.

Tom Jones assures Alex that 'we can sell it all'.

Great packaging, workmanship and presentation go into making the Honey Market successful.

Bottom photos by Charlie Vorisek

Carleen Dobrowolsky



## Farm Show Education Station

Well- the 100<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Farm Show is now in the history books with record attendance. Many people visited the Farm Show Complex, with many also visiting the Honey/Apiary display. Starting out with a blank eight- foot banner, with a blue sky background, my goal was to obtain 2016 thumbprints to fill the banner. I started out by speaking to a State police officer who demonstrated the correct way to finger-print persons. [Place firmly and roll both ways for a complete fingerprint.]



After Saturday and Sunday- about 650 thumbprints were collected. I was very persistent in gathering thumbprints throughout the week. Many people of all ages and sizes stepped up to assist me with meeting the goal of filling the banner with thumbprints. Secretary of Agriculture, Russell Redding, and his wife were volunteers, along with the State FFA Officer Team. Some people were also willing to assist in making the thumbprints into honey bees by adding two antenna, 3 body parts, 4 wings and six legs to their prints. We ended up with some pretty snazzy looking honey bees. Good news- and bad news- the banner was looking pretty well-filled, and people began adding prints to the other banners. Grand total of thumbprints was over 1800.

People have asked what we are doing with the banners that we have used in the past. Well, the past banners are displayed over the Apiary/Honey exhibit area. This activity has become a tradition with some Farm Show attendants. Several families were heard saying they have given their prints every year.



Our goal is to involve elementary schools in making banners showing their knowledge of bees/beekeeping for display each year. Kudos to Nate Webber for contacting Mountain View Elementary for this year's banner. Special thanks in advance to Eugene Taylor and Brad Dennis for volunteering to obtain completed banners from local schools for next year.

Also at the Education Station, maps were also being stamped for the Ag Explorer activity. This is an activity sponsored by Turkey Hill. Participants were asked to visit 15 of 34 stations at the Farm Show and get a stamp on the map. Before stamping, participants were asked to name something they knew about honey bees. They were then given an additional bit of information about bees. This station was also a drop-off point for completed maps and we were commended on turning in the largest amount of maps as any station.

Cathy Vorisek



Photos by Charlie Vorisek

### The Bees are Back

Well the bees are back from the Farm Show. Several people, both beekeepers and others asked, "How do you get the bees back in the hive". In past years it not been an issue. But this year the one hive, from the first day of the show, just seemed to not to have all the bees that were in there from the start. There were a few dead in the "bee run" cage and they did not escape, but they were nowhere to be found! Well, when I got them home I found them. They were clustered in the decorative hive front that was in the caged area... probably about a pound of bees. I tried several ways to get them to go into the observation hive... in a cool room blew air on them with a fan, tried a mist of water "hey It's raining go in", left them set over night... nothing made them move, they just clustered



a little tighter. So, I had to get creative.

I taped the suction hose of a small shop vac in the feeding hole (it is screened so no bees would be sucked up), taped all holes shut and put a vacuum hose in the entrance. Make shift "bee vac"... the hive becomes the vacuum bag. All are now back in the hive and all is well. The small vac and the air leaks in the hive reduce the suction so no bees are hurt... just another windy day in the hive.

Jim Pinkerton



Some of ya'll might recognize this fine inspector taking his turn at the photo board.

Honey judge, Bart Smith, carefully inspects a honey entry for clarity and cleanliness.



The 100th canvas nearly completed. Perry... this doesn't look good! Wrong place at the right time :-)

Photos by Charlie Vorisek

## 2016 Farm Show Apiary Products Results

### Class 1: Lt. Comb Honey, Square Sections

- 1 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 2 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 3 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

### Class 2: Dk Comb Honey, Square Sections

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville

### Class 3: Lt. Comb Honey, Cobana Sections

- 1 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 2 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 3 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 4 Charles Vorisek Linesville

### Class 4: Dark Comb Honey, Cobana Sections

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 2 James Fitzroy Verona

### Class 5: Lt. Comb Honey, Cut Comb

- 1 Michelle Wright Pittsburgh
- 2 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 3 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 4 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 5 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 6 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

### Class 6: Dark Comb Honey, Cut Comb

- 1 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 2 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 3 Jim Fitzroy Verona
- 4 Charles Vorisek Linesville

### Class 7: Comb Honey, Chunk, Glass Cont.

- 1 Jim Shindler York
- 2 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 3 Jim Fitzroy Verona

### Class 9: Extracted Honey, 1 lb. Jars White

- 1 Linda Purcell Hummelstown
- 2 Ronni Menard North Wales
- 3 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 4 Lee Brown Pittsburgh
- 5 Terry Shanor Butler
- 6 Gary Carns Millersburg
- 7 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 8 Ryan Carns Millersburg
- 9 Lynn Urban Harborcreek
- 10 JoAnne Jerina Jeannette

### Class 10: Extracted Honey, Extra Lt. Amber

- 1 Delores Motichka Honesdale
- 2 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 3 Michelle Wright Pittsburgh
- 4 Keith Snedeker Perkasio
- 5 James Fitzroy Verona
- 6 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 7 Lynn Urban Harborcreek
- 8 Francis Motichka Lake Ariel
- 9 Carleen Vorisek Lewisberry
- 10 James Shindler York



### Class 11: Extracted Honey, Lt. Amber

- 1 Linda Purcell Hummelstown
- 2 Richard Jackson Millersburg
- 3 Nico Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 4 Dolores Motichka Honesdale
- 5 Gary Carns Millersburg
- 6 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 7 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 8 Vicki Kleber Russellton
- 9 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 10 James Shindler York

### Class 12: Extracted Honey, Amber

- 1 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 2 James Motichka Honesdale
- 3 Charles Vorisek Linesville

### Class 13: Extracted Honey, Dark Amber

- 1 Jeff Funk Trafford
- 2 Michelle Wright Pittsburgh
- 3 Gary Carns Millersburg
- 4 John Yakim Monroeville
- 5 Lee Brown Pittsburgh
- 6 James Shindler York
- 7 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 8 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 9 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 10 Charles Vorisek Linesville

### Class 14: Extracted Honey, 5 lb. Jars Lt.

- 1 Dolores Motichka Honesdale
- 2 Joe Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 3 James Shindler York
- 4 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 5 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 6 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 7 Francis Motichka Lake Ariel
- 8 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 9 Ryan Carns Millersburg
- 10 Charles Vorisek Linesville

### Class 15: Extracted Honey, Dark

- 1 Joe Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 2 James Shindler York
- 3 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 4 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 5 James Motichka Honesdale
- 6 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 7 Ed Taylor Schnecksville

### Class 16: Finely Crystal./Creamed

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 2 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 3 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 4 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 5 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 6 Terry Shanor Butler
- 7 Jim Fitzroy Verona
- 8 Kenneth Strittmatter, Ebsenburg

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Farm Show Results (Continued from Page 15)

**Class 17: Commercial, Beeswax**

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 2 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 3 Joe Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 4 Gary Carns Millersburg
- 5 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 6 Jim Fitzroy Verona
- 7 Michelle Wright Pittsburgh
- 8 Terry Shanor Butler
- 9 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 10 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

**Class 18: Molded or Designed**

- 1 Ricky Freeman Auburn
- 2 Annabella Zgurzynski, Glenshaw
- 3 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 4 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 5 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 6 Velda Jones Carlisle
- 7 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 8 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 9 Thomas Jones Carlisle
- 10 Velda Jones Carlisle

**Class 19: Dipped Candles**

- 1 Paul Menard North Wales
- 2 Charles Vorisek Linesville

**Class 20: Molded Candles (tapers)**

- 1 Paul Menard North Wales
- 2 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 3 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 4 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 5 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 6 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 7 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 8 Terry Shanor Butler
- 9 Jim Fitzroy Verona

**Class 21: Mold or Designed Painted Wax**

- 1 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 2 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 3 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 4 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 5 Velda A Jones Carlisle
- 6 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

**Class 22: Yeast Breads**

- 1 Dorothy Martin Conestoga
- 2 Debra M Berkoksi Conestoga
- 3 Linda Reinert Reading
- 4 Sally Reinhoehl Valley View
- 5 Frank Reinhoehl Valley View
- 6 Jeff Snyder Gratz
- 7 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 8 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

**Class 23: Quick Breads**

- 1 Christina Robosson Alum Bank

**Class 23: Quick Breads (continued)**

- 2 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 3 Sally Reinhoehl Valley View
- 4 Vicki Kleber Russellton
- 5 Ellen Brubaker Halifax
- 6 Staci Shuck Huntingdon
- 7 Carol Custer Camp Hill
- 8 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 9 Linda Reinert Reading
- 10 Maxine Barrick Carlisle

**Class 24: Cookies**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 2 Christina Robosson Alum Bank
- 3 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 4 Michelle Harner Douglassville
- 5 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 6 Alan Sherry Hegins
- 7 Amy Hurst Carlisle
- 8 Linda Reinert Reading
- 9 Dorothy Martin Conestoga
- 10 Ellen L Brubaker Halifax

**Class 25: Candy**

- 1 Julia Freeman Auburn
- 2 Dorothy Martin Conestoga
- 3 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 4 Linda Reinert Reading
- 5 Ellen L Brubaker Halifax
- 6 Christina Robosson Alum Bank

**Class 26: Cake**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 2 Linda Reinert Reading
- 3 Julia Freeman Auburn
- 4 Sally Reinhoehl Valley View
- 5 Dorothy Martin Conestoga
- 6 Tonya Sherry Hegins
- 7 Christina Robosson Alum Bank
- 8 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 9 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

**Class 27: Fruit Pie**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 2 Julia Freeman Auburn
- 3 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

**Class 28: Other Baked Goods**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 2 Rebecca Brewer Perkasio
- 3 Carol Custer Camp Hill
- 4 Debra M Berkoksi Conestoga
- 5 Staci Shuck Huntingdon
- 6 Linda Reinert Reading
- 7 Christina Robosson Alum Bank
- 8 Maxine Barrick Carlisle
- 9 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 10 Dorothy Martin Conestoga



(Continued on Page 17)

Farm Show Results (Continued from Page 16)

**Class 29: Sauces, Beverage or Dressing**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank
- 2 David Avvisato Honesdale
- 3 Linda Reinert Reading
- 4 Christina Robosson Alum Bank
- 5 Maxine Barrick Carlisle
- 6 Dorothy Martin Conestoga
- 7 Carol Custer Camp Hill
- 8 Ellen Brubaker Halifax
- 9 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

**Class 30: Frame of Honey in the Comb**

- 1 Ben Machamer Williamstown
- 2 Hannah Carns Millersburg
- 3 Ryan Carns Millersburg
- 4 Jeff Funk Trafford
- 5 Leslie Carns Millersburg
- 6 Gary Carns Millersburg
- 7 Linda Purcell Hummelstown
- 8 Charles Vorisek Linesville
- 9 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 10 James Fitzroy Verona

**Class 31: Specialty Pack**

- 1 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 2 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

**Class 32: Individual Exhibit**

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 2 Alyssa Fine Pittsburgh
- 3 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 4 Carleen Vorisek Lewisberry
- 5 Margaret Brice Duncannon

**Class 33: County Exhibits**

- 1 Capital Area Beekeepers Association
- 2 Northwestern PA Beekeepers Association
- 3 Montgomery Co. Beekeepers Association
- 4 Franklin Co. Beekeepers Association

**Class 34: Novelty Frame of Honey**

- 1 Lowell West Elizabethtown

**Class 35: Mead, Dry**

- 1 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 2 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 3 Ed Taylor Schnecksville

**Class 36: Mead, Semi-Dry**

- 1 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 2 Ed Taylor Schnecksville
- 3 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

**Class 37: Mead, Sweet**

- 1 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville
- 2 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 3 Ed Taylor Schnecksville

**Class 38: Mead, Augmented w/Fruit Added**

- 1 Catherine Vorisek Linesville
- 2 Elaine Hintenach Wernersville

**Class 38: Mead, Augmented w/Fruit Added (Continued)**

- 3 Carleen Vorisek Lewisberry
- 4 Eugene Taylor Douglassville
- 5 Justin Dobrowolsky Lewisberry
- 6 Ed Taylor Schnecksville

**Class 43: Youth - Extracted Honey, White**

- 1 Philip Cornell Ligonier

**Class 44: Youth-Extracted Honey, Extra Lt Amber**

- 1 Luca Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 2 Joseph Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 3 Hannah Carns Millersburg

**Class 45: Youth - Extracted Honey, Lt. Amber**

- 1 Annabella Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 2 Hannah Carns Millersburg

**Class 47: Youth - Extracted Honey, Dark Amber**

- 1 Joseph Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 2 Annabella Zgurzynski Glenshaw
- 3 Luca Zgurzynski Glenshaw

**SWEEPSTAKES**

**Class 48: Best Exhibit of Comb Honey**

- 1 Michelle Wright Pittsburgh

**Class 49: Best Exhibit of Extracted Honey**

- 1 Joe Zgurzynski Glenshaw

**Class 50: Best Exhibit of Beeswax**

- 1 Ricky Freeman Auburn

**Class 51: Best Exhibit of Honey Baked Goods**

- 1 Scott Felix Alum Bank

**Class 52: Best Exhibit of Mead**

- 1 Catherine Vorisek Linesville

**Class 53: Best Exhibit of Youth Extracted Honey**

- 1 Luca Zgurzynski Glenshaw

**Class 54: Ziegler-Keeney Award**

- 1 Ricky Freeman Auburn



Photos by Charlie Vorisek



Queen Sarah, PA Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding and PSBA members after one of the extraction demonstrations at the PA Farm Show.  
Photo submitted by Sarah McTish



Two sets of educational hives were donated by Mann Lake. Jim Pinkerton (right) uses the photos to answer some questions.  
Photo by Charlie Vorisek