



# THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

June-July 2012

Volume No. 6

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

## A Note To My Friends...

Fast and furious is how I would have to describe my spring this year in the bee yards. There was a good crop to be made and the bees wanted to take it with them when they swarmed. I can say I lost more swarms this year than I have in recent memory. Life just seems to get in the way sometimes. I do not know how you commercial guys can keep doing it. I don't know how but I hope you can keep doing it for all of our sake. Meals would look much different without you.

I read a great article this May in the Bee Culture magazine I get each month. Stephen Repasky wrote about Burgh Bees and how they got started. He also describes our Nation's first Urban Community Apiary. Thanks Burgh Bees, it is great to read about a PA success story in beekeeping. I am looking forward to attending the summer picnic this year and seeing this first hand. I also plan to visit the Pittsburgh Zoo when I am in the neighborhood. Look for more details about the summer picnic and plan to join us for a day of beekeeping talk and some great food.

If you are wondering where to take that summer vacation this year why not think about beautiful Burlington, VT and attend the EAS summer conference. They have a great list of speakers and this will be a wonderful chance for everyone, new and old, to get some advice from some of the best in the business. The conference is in August so it should be warm up there by then. Mike Palmer and his gang assure us this will be a great week for everyone. This will also give you a chance to see how it is done so you are not a rookie next year when this conference is held in West Chester, PA.

I hope you are having a great year with your bees. It is also time to make a few of those summer splits to take through the winter this year. These smaller units are great to winter over. Some will build into very large productive colonies for the 2013 flow. The ones that do not are great to use to make your 2013 splits for the 2014 flow. Plan ahead, things will go much better for you and for your bees. See you in Pittsburgh!

Warren

## May Identification Reader

I had always been fascinated with honey bees as a child. My father had 50 to 75 colonies and when I was five years old my dad hived a swarm and gave it to me. From then on I had honey bees. We did mostly comb honey. My father was a good mentor. Beekeeping has changed in the 60 plus years that I have been doing this. It is a lot harder nowadays. At that time all supplies – foundation, frames, section boxes for comb honey – etc. were bought at Sears Roebuck Company.

For many years I kept about 75 colonies here at my farm and at other farms where they used it for pollination. Two years ago I was diagnosed with a very serious heart disease so I had to get rid of most of my bees, as I was unable to do any lifting. Today I only have about 10 colonies.

I was the founder of the Sawmill 4-H Bee Club, which I also had to give up because of the illness. I still volunteer my time for schools, girl and boy scouts, state parks and different clubs who would like bee demonstrations done.

Monroe C. Cressley, Lehighon, PA

## "Just for Fun" Contest

A "Just for Fun" contest will be held at the PSBA summer picnic, this year. This is a food and beverage contest with only one rule; the food and beverages must include honey as one of the ingredients. Ribbons will be given as prizes.

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## Inspection Program

Pa. Department of Agriculture is seeking input from the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association regarding inspections. Budget cuts have affected every segment of agriculture funding. As of this writing, the Senate version of the budget has restored all the agriculture money that the governor's budget had deleted. The House version is still in process. If the agriculture money remains in the budget, the apriary section may be able to maintain a few more inspectors, than the season started with. This would be good, but leaves a lot of work for inspectors with just a few short months in the season.

The importance of the program cannot be questioned. The inspection program began in the 1920's due to uncontrolled American Foul Brood, a contagious disease. Pennsylvania beekeepers recognized this deadly epidemic, but had no authority to control it. They petitioned the state government to implement the inspection and control, primarily for AFB. Today's inspections look for several hive diseases and more conditions. The data collected is very useful in answering an array of questions and observing trends. Many beekeepers in Pennsylvania are somewhat remote and picking up AFB from a neighbor's bees might not be seem likely. Considering honey bees will easily travel 2-3 miles, most beekeepers are likely within flight travel to other hives. When nectar and food is scarce, bees will find whatever is available. If it's your neighbor's dead hive, there's potential for disease. We use the same equipment year after year and used equipment is often available. As one of our former state inspectors would say, "you don't get foul brood, you buy it." That's not to say it's a sin to have used equipment. But appropriate precautions and treatments would be wise.

Within about a five county area of Philadelphia, there are hundreds of new beekeepers in the past few years. One case of AFB has the potential to infect everyone else due to overlapping flight area of honey bees. This could happen during a lapse of inspection. The infection would not stop at county or state lines, it could infect across the state. Pick any concentration of beekeepers at any corner of the state. This is why a state inspection program is critically important. With some education and simple inexpensive treatment, AFB is preventable. But it must be an ongoing process, which includes inspections.

Some side discussion and email among the inspection advisory committee has brought up other state models and ideas for Pennsylvania's honey bee inspection program. The biggest stumbling block is how it might be funded.

Talking with inspectors from 20 years ago, I would say our state inspection system has improved from its early years. However, even with a full budget and highest compliment of inspectors (about 15) it can be difficult to completely implement inspections as the laws were intended. Time and distance traveling from location to location eat up a tremendous amount of time. And with many new beekeepers each year,

the task of inspection under the current system becomes more difficult.

We are at a point in time where we have an opportunity to make positive changes to improve the means by which inspections happen in Pennsylvania. Beekeepers are a diverse breed, coming from all walks of life. I am certain there are some good ideas out there. The Department of Agriculture has told us they would be willing to try a pilot program. This could be a county or association. It would be easier to work the bugs out of a pilot program before implementing it state-wide. And why not 3 or 4 pilot programs in addition to the current system.

If you or your club has an idea, let Warren Miller or myself know.

*Charlie Vorisek*

## Queen Committee Meeting

A meeting will be held for the Pennsylvania Honey Queen Program Committee during the PSBA summer picnic, Saturday, July 21 beginning at 10 a.m. in Eddy Theater. Any members of the committee should contact program chair, Rachel Bryson, at [brysonrachel@yahoo.com](mailto:brysonrachel@yahoo.com) or 717-300-0146 prior to the meeting to have any items placed on the agenda.

## Honey Queen Brochures



The 2012 PSBA Honey Queen Brochures have arrived! They feature PSBA Honey Queen Jessica Long along with honey recipes, tips and facts. 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. The brochures are available for pick-up at the picnic in Pittsburgh; Glenn & Yvonne Crimbring's home, Canton, (570) 673-8201; or Stu Mathias's home. To order, contact Stewart Mathias, 514 Early's Mill Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036, phone 717-533-2231.

### FOR SALE:

- 300 shallow honey supers with 9 frames drawn wax  
\$12- \$16 each
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110v heater - \$400
  - 1 Maxant Stainless Steel bottling tank 20" diameter x 26"  
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diameter x 32" height, flat bottom approx 85 gallon - \$80
- Lancaster County  
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## New Law Impacts You and Your Beekeeping

Are you aware of the fact that under a Pennsylvania law passed and signed in 2010 that your beekeeping operation, including honey sales, is now subject to strict new regulation under a penalty of a \$5,000 fine for non-compliance, a \$35 assessment, and a four page application controlling your home and your beekeeping activities? If you have not been contacted by the Dept. of Agriculture, you will be. You would be amazed at the stipulations in the application form. Whoever crafted it must not have consulted a beekeeper. Under the law, we are honey processors. We need to establish the fact that our bees are honey processors. We extract and pack. Some among us, who have passed honey house inspections for many years, have refused to comply and have been forced to cease selling honey until the law is repealed or amended.

Please take the time to visit the website of the Susquehanna Beekeepers Association at [www.susquehannabeekeeping.com](http://www.susquehannabeekeeping.com), for a more detailed explanation. We suddenly woke up and now have a grassroots movement in several parts of the state seeking to exempt part-time beekeepers from the law. The state government has the authority to control food safety, but it was a mistake to include honey extracting and packing in the regulations for the processing of perishable foods. As of this writing, we have at least six legislators, both house and senate, who are ready to help. Representative Sandra Major, Republican Caucus Chairman & Member of the Policy Committee, plans to initiate action. Our PSBA President Warren Miller, and Vice President Charlie Vorisek, are in support of this effort. If you will join us in contacting your representatives, we will be successful. And our committee will keep you informed. We understand that part-time maple syrup producers are seeking a similar goal. If you would like to be on the list for posts by email, send your address to the email listed below.

Beekeepers all over the commonwealth have been involved for years in educating the public about honey bees, their importance in our lives, and the need for more beekeepers.

Our association alone reaches over a thousand children each year. Other associations do the same, and our honey queen program has the same purpose. If this law is allowed to stand as is, it will have a negative impact on our efforts and on the enlisting of new beekeepers. As one of our correspondents wrote, it's time for common sense!

Richard Chapin, [oldbeekeeper@epix.net](mailto:oldbeekeeper@epix.net)

Jim Barber

John Brunner



April 26<sup>th</sup> PA Honey Queen Jessica Long spoke to the Gettysburg Garden Club. Some of the 50 women that attended the meeting were interested in putting hives in their gardens after hearing the benefits of keeping bees.

**IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 3/13** and receives the newsletter at 4521 Zieglers Church Road, Spring Grove, 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 July 20<sup>th</sup>, he/she will receive a years free subscription to either *Gleaning in Bee Culture*, *American Bee Journal*, *The Speedy Bee* or *The Small Beekeepers Journal*. When you respond, please specify your choice of magazine.

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Owner



**Nature Notes:**

**Dame’s rocket** is blooming, blue, pink, and white, along sunny woods edges. Dame’s rocket is a mustard; the flowers have four petals. This mustard is an **invasive alien** and will take over flower gardens. At the **house wren box** in the garden, we can see efficient and free pest control as the parents fly to the box every few minutes with a bug to feed their noisy nestlings. **Catbirds** sing their loud “chay” note from bushy edges. **Robins** sing “Kill ‘em; cure ‘em; kill ‘em; cure ‘em” monotonously in the afternoon.

Along the edges of a pond, **damsel flies** (a type of dragonfly) float with slow wing beats and perch with wings held closed together vertically along their backs. Harmless **June bugs** gather on screen doors, attracted by indoor lights. In the evening, we might hear a **wood thrush** singing “ee-o-lay” with a rattle or buzz at the end of each song.

After midnight, a **mockingbird** may tune up and sing for hours while perched on a house chimney. Mockingbirds are the American nightingales. Nighttime mockingbird song is one of Nature’s wonders for the first hour or so.

Why do trees grow **up** and then **spread** their crowns? They are competing for **sunlight**. (One of the few things plants “know” is up and down.) Solitary trees in a meadow spread out just above the ground, many large limbs and not much tree trunk. Trees in the woods shoot upward making **long straight trunks** before spreading. Sunlight is the **energy** that drives

**photosynthesis**, rearranging water and carbon dioxide to make **glucose**. **Oxygen** is a waste product of photosynthesis.

All of the cells in our bodies “burn” **glucose**, using oxygen to take a glucose molecule apart to release water, carbon dioxide, and a bit of energy. **Green plants**, and their glucose, power the living world. Food we eat is broken down into glucose, which our cells “burn.” An exception to this system is bacteria around **hot vents** on the floor of the deep ocean. These bacteria release energy for themselves by breaking down compounds gushing into the cold, dark, deep ocean. They are **not** dependent on sunlight.

As evening falls, **Arcturus** is high in the sky. The **Big Dipper** is stretched out high in the north with its curving handle leading to Arcturus. Rising in the east is bright **Vega** (“Veega”), which will be overhead by mid-summer. **Venus** will cross between the Sun and us in early June. Measuring a Transit of Venus, a relatively rare phenomenon, helped early astronomers compute the size of the Solar System.

**Saturn** and **Spica** are in the South. Though they are about the same apparent brightness, Spica is immensely farther away and far brighter. Spica twinkles. To the right is **Mars**, the Red Planet. Dry, dusty Mars appears red to us. Earth is the **blue planet**; we have water and life!

By Tim Sterrett



PA Honey Queen Jessica Long is pictured above talking to a few students about the importance of the honey bee. These children are just a handful of students that Jessica spoke to in May.

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**Contact:**

**Steve Repasky, Master Beekeeper**  
Email: [meadowsweetbees@gmail.com](mailto:meadowsweetbees@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 412-445-7872

**Joe Zgurzynski, Master Beekeeper**  
Email: [Joe@CountryBarnFarm.com](mailto:Joe@CountryBarnFarm.com)  
Mobile: 412-225-0930

**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](mailto: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.

**Subscription Rates**  
(These are for PSBA members ONLY!)

<b>American Bee Journal</b>		<b>Bee Culture</b>	
1 year	\$20.25	1 year	\$21.00
2 years	38.25	2 years	38.00
3 years	54.00		
<b>The Small Beekeeper's Journal</b>		<b>The Speedy Bee</b>	
\$12.95		1 year \$17.25	
(Regular Rate)		Quarterly Issues	

**Please send 6 weeks before subscription runs out as we send them in once a month.**

**PSBA Advertising Rates**


<b>1 Month</b>		<b>3 Months</b>	
Full Page	\$23.00	Full Page	\$ 40.00
1/2 Page	12.00	1/2 Page	25.00
1/4 Page	9.00	1/4 Page	15.00
1/8 Page	5.00	1/8 Page	9.00
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Full Page	\$75.00	Full Page	\$ 150.00
1/2 Page	40.00	1/2 Page	75.00
1/4 Page	23.00	1/4 Page	50.00
1/8 Page	12.00	1/8 Page	26.00

**2012 PSBA Officers**

President: N. Warren Miller  
P.O.Box 64, Mongoville, PA 16856  
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Sec.-Treas.: Yvonne Crimbring  
2565 Southside Rd., Canton, PA 17724  
(570) 673-8201 [pabee1@frontier.com](mailto:pabee1@frontier.com)



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.

----- ✂ ----- Clip here ----- ✂ -----

**Application for New and Renewal Membership  
Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association**

\$1.00 Junior Membership (under 17) annual dues  
 \$20.00 annual dues       \$25.00 family dues       \$200.00 Lifetime Membership  
 I understand the dues entitle me to the Newsletter and all other benefits of membership.

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New

Renew

**Make checks payable to: PA State Beekeepers Association  
Send to: Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724**

## Upcoming Dates To Remember



**Deadline for the August issue of  
*The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* is July 26<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Lehigh Valley Beekeepers - Symposium**

Saturday, June 23, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus, Center Valley. Topic: Natural Beekeeping. Speakers: Ross Conrad, Diana Cox-Foster, Warren Miller and Chris Filipos. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### **Beaver Valley Beekeepers**

Monday, June 25, 7:00 p.m. at the Wetlands, Beaver Co. Conservation District Ed. Center, Aliquippa. For more information, contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email [pattie.zyroll@elkem.com](mailto:pattie.zyroll@elkem.com)

### **York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, June 28, 7:00 p.m. at the Penn State York Campus in the meeting room of the John and Judy Ruhl Student Community Center Bldg. Speakers: Maryann Frazier and Elliud Mull. Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911, email [snewgeese@yahoo.com](mailto:snewgeese@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **2012 PSBA Summer Picnic**

Saturday, July 21. Hosted by Burgh Bees (new Pittsburgh area association) Picnic will be held at the Chatham University, Pittsburgh. Additional information throughout this newsletter.

### **Montgomery County Beekeepers**

Saturday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, starting at 11:00 a.m. At the Ft. Washington State Park, Militia Hill. Summer Picnic. For more information, contact Mark Antunes at 484-955-0768 or email: [honeyhillfarm@verizon.net](mailto:honeyhillfarm@verizon.net).

### **York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, July 26, 7:00 p.m. at the Penn State York Campus in the meeting room of the John and Judy Ruhl Student Community Center Bldg. Speakers for the evening will be Queen Breeders Adam Finkelstein and Kelly Rausch. Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911, email [snewgeese@yahoo.com](mailto:snewgeese@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **Monroe County Beekeepers**

Wednesday, August 8 @7:00 p.m. at the Monroe Co. Environmental Education Center, Stroudsburg. Contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421, email [RJArmstrong1@verizon.net](mailto:RJArmstrong1@verizon.net) for more information.

### **EAS Conference and Short Course**

**Monday-Friday, August 13-17** at the University of Vermont, Burlington VT. Instructional activities take place on the first 2 days (Monday and Tuesday), whereas the actual conference takes place on Wednesday through Friday. For more information visit [EAS website](#)

### **Lehigh Valley Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag. Center, Allentown. "Mead, From Hive to Bottle?" Speakers: Marc Johnson, Sheree Krasley. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### **York County Beekeepers**

Thursday, August 23, 7:00 p.m. at the Penn State York Campus in the meeting room of the John and Judy Ruhl Student Community Center Bldg. Contact Gail Leasure at 717-968-0911, email [snewgeese@yahoo.com](mailto:snewgeese@yahoo.com) for more information.

### **PSBA Annual Conference**

Friday and Saturday, November 9 & 10 at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. More information at a later date.

### **Pennsylvania Farm Show**

January 5-12, 2013, at the Farm Show Complex and Expo Center, Harrisburg. More information on volunteering your time and sharing your knowledge will be in future newsletters.

### **2013 North American Beekeeping**

#### **Conference & Tradeshow**

January 8-12, 2013, at the Hershey Lodge, Hershey, Pennsylvania. [Read the announcement](#), then watch for upcoming details on the [ABF website](#)

### **2013 EAS Conference and Short Course**

Monday-Friday, August 5-9, 2013, at the West Chester University, West Chester, Pa. (Currently in planning - visit [EAS website](#))



### **Bedillion Honey Farm**

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### PSBA Annual Meeting

Hosted by Burgh Bees, Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers, and Chatham University School of Sustainability and the Environment

**Date**

July 21, 2012

**Location**

Chatham University, Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, PA  
Eddy Theater: Meeting  
Quad: Picnic



**Preliminary Program**

- 10:00 AM - Arrival/coffee in lobby of the Eddy Theater
- 11:00 AM - PSBA meeting. Welcome/remarks by Chatham representative
- 12 :00 PM - Picnic lunch. Hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, drinks.  
Additional side dishes and desserts provided by Burgh Bees, Beaver Valley members.
- 1:00 PM - Honey products and "Just for Fun" food judging results
- 2:00 PM - Visit to the Burgh Bees Community Apiary /shuttle bus

**Directions to Chatham University**

Map to follow for inclusion in newsletter. Chatham entrances and campus roads will be marked to direct attendees to the parking lots. Parking will be in the library lot and picnic area is between Eddy Theater and Woodland Hall. There is handicap access to the theater, if needed.

From PA Turnpike – east or west

- Take Exit 57 and follow I-376 (the Parkway) West toward Pittsburgh. The campus is 12 miles from Exit 57. After passing through Squirrel Hill Tunnel, exit immediately at Squirrel Hill, Exit 74. Merge to extreme left and follow exit ramp to left toward Squirrel Hill.
- Proceed to multi-way intersection (Forward & Murray Avenues) and bear left onto Murray Avenue. Follow Murray Avenue through business district to the end where it meets Wilkins Avenue
- Turn right onto Wilkins and within ½ block, turn left onto Woodland Road which leads directly to campus.

From North

- Take I-79 to I-376. After passing through Ft. Pitt Tunnel, stay in right lane and continue on I-376 toward Monroeville.
- Take Exit 74, Squirrel Hill. Merge to extreme left follow exit ramp to Squirrel Hill.
- Proceed as in second section above.

From South

- Take I-79 to I-279 After passing through Ft. Pitt Tunnel, stay in right lane and continue toward Monroeville.
- Take Exit 74, Squirrel Hill and proceed as above.

**Hotel Information**

The following three hotels are possibilities of places to stay that are listed less than \$100.00 per night. You may also visit the web site <http://chatham.universityhotelnetwork.com> for additional hotels in the area.

Off 376W (Parkway West) approximately ½ mile before going through Ft. Pitt Tunnels. Good location coming from north or south.

- Best Western Parkway Center, 875 Greentree Road., Pittsburgh, PA 15220. 412-922-7070
- Clarion Hotel & Conference Center, 401 Holiday Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15220. 412-922-8100

Off 376E (Parkway East) after exiting Turnpike; approximately 8 miles from Squirrel Hill exit. Good location coming from east or west.

- Comfort Inn Conference Center, 699 Rodi Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235. 412-244-1600

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](mailto:pabeel@frontier.com)

Chatham and Surrounding Area



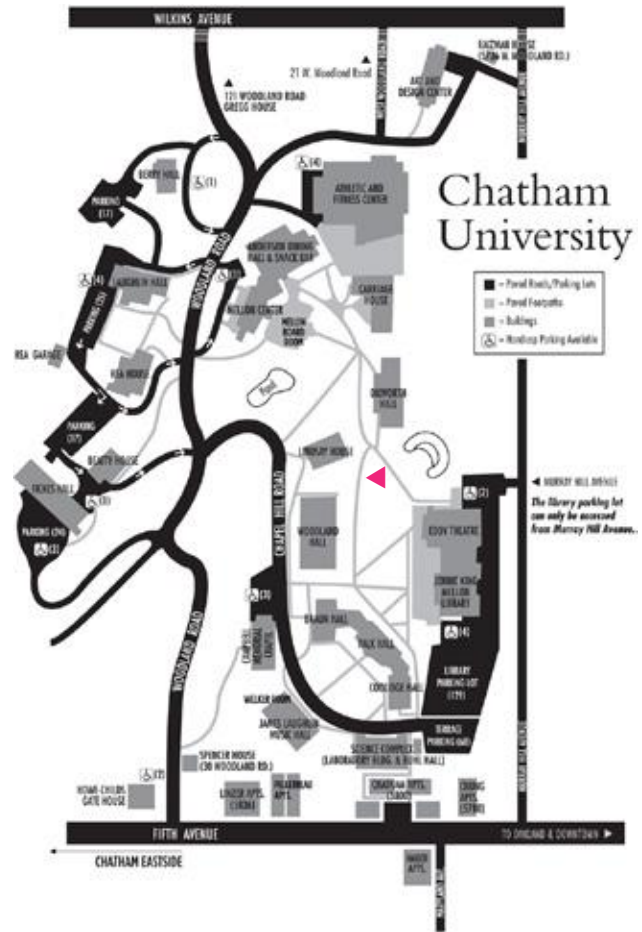
PSBA Apiary Products Show Rules

These rules follow the general format of the Apiary Products Show at the statewide Farm Show in Harrisburg, EXCEPT entries should not be labeled with exhibitor's name and address. This is to eliminate any possible bias in judging if names were to be identified, since our judge is likely to know some of our exhibitors. Instead of labels, exhibitors will be provided numbered tags to identify their entries. If you wish, you may bring labels and apply them after entries have been judged.

- 1) Entries will be accepted at the PSBA Annual Picnic on Saturday, July 21 from approximately 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- 2) All apiary products exhibited must have been produced in Pennsylvania and must have been produced by the exhibitor during 2011 or 2012.
- 3) Exhibitors may submit only one entry per class, but they may enter as many classes as they wish.
- 4) An entry must fulfill all of the requirements of the class in which it is exhibited. (see class descriptions, below).
- 5) All entries will be handled and placed on the show table by the honey show committee.
- 6) The judges may open and sample any exhibit. Moisture readings will be taken for all extracted honey and these will be recorded on your scorecard. Honey with a moisture content above 18.6% will be disqualified.
- 7) The show committee will provide a score card for each entry, which contains a record of the judge's scores. Ribbons will be awarded to the top three places in each class.

- COMB HONEY CLASSES**
- Class 1. Comb Honey** (3 sections, either 3 square sections or 3 Cobana rounds, no labels).
- Class 2. Cut Comb Honey** (3 12-ounce sections, no labels).
- Best Exhibit of Comb Honey**
- EXTRACTED HONEY CLASSES**

The color divisions for classes 3, 4, and 5 are approximate. The show committee and/or judge may shift an extracted entry to another class to provide more consistent color ranges in



◀ Location of PSBA Picnic

- each class.
- Class 3. Light Extracted** (Extra White to White, 3 one-pound jars, no labels).
- Class 4. Medium Extracted** (Extra Light Amber to Light Amber, 3 one-pound jars, no labels).
- Class 5. Dark Extracted** (Amber to Dark Amber, 3 one-pound jars, no labels).
- Class 6. Creamed or Finely Crystallized** (in glass, 3 jars, each 1 pound or less, no labels).
- Best Exhibit of Extracted Honey**
- BEESWAX CLASSES**
- Class 7. Commercial Block** (single piece of pure beeswax not less than 3 pounds).
- Class 8. Molded or Designed** (not less than one pound of pure beeswax, i.e. ornaments, fancy candles, bar cakes, sculptures, etc.).
- Class 9. Dipped Candles** (one pair made from pure beeswax).
- Class 10. Molded Candles** (one pair made from pure beeswax).
- HONEY IN A FRAME CLASS**
- Class 11. Medium Frame of Capped Honey** (enclosed in a case)



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

June 2012

**By: Bill Mondjack, Master Beekeeper, Lehigh Valley, PA.**

As one of our EAS Certified Master Beekeepers in Pennsylvania, I was approached by President Warren Miller to write a column in the P.S.B.A. monthly newsletter with the topic being a timely issue of concern or any question that may arise in beekeeping. The idea being to help fellow beekeepers become more proficient in our craft.

First let me say, I am NOT a scientist; I am a beekeeper just like you. As all of us know, if you ask 3 beekeepers the same question you will most probably get 5 different answers, so I would like to approach this matter as a Q & A posting as I do with many of our members in the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Assn., unless I decide to write about a timely issue.

If you have a question you would like to send in, please email it to me at: [billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com](mailto:billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com) with the subject line being WWBD, and I will respond with my opinion as 'what I would do' if the problem or situation was mine.

Bill

Mondjack, Master Beekeeper

**Received: May 20, 2012 Answered by email.****Q: Hey Bill-**

*I hope all is well with you. My wife and I made a split on April 30th and left the new colony alone until yesterday May 19th. We moved 5 frames total, 3 brood, 1 honey, and 1 with a queen cell on it. And a bunch of nurse bees. They have been very busy coming and going which I thought was a good sign but when we were in there I didn't see any brood yet so I am getting concerned. Should I be or do they still need more time? Is it still an option to mail order a queen or is it too late?*

*Thanks for your help,  
Eric Grove*

**Answer: Hi Eric,**

If it was a ripe, undamaged queen cell that you moved on April 30th I would think you should see something by the 19th day but many things can take place when making a split. If there was not enough bees in the split to keep the queen cell warm it may have gotten chilled on the cool evenings. SOMETIME it's better to keep the split at the parent location and move the parent colony, this assures the split will have plenty of bees. There's also the possibility the queen never returned from her mating flight. If there is no sign of brood production the population in the split may be decreasing and if you still wish to start another colony I would boost its population by adding frames of bees and brood from a strong colony. When doing this make sure you pick frames of open brood with nurse bees. The nurse bees will not fly back to the parent colony, as they have not

memorized their home location. In the past when I've done splits in early spring I've done them on top of the parent colony with a double screen so the warmth of the parent colony would help keep the queen cell warm, then when the queen hatches, mates and starts to lay I move them away to another bee yard. As long as you don't see evidence of a laying worker you always have the option of giving them a caged queen.

Hope this helps and I didn't confuse the hell out of you. Good luck with your bees.

Bill

**Received: May 22, 2012 Answered by email 5/23****Q: Hi Bill,**

*Should we continue to keep sugar water available in the feeders? They seem to be eating it. Hopefully that's not a dumb question.*

*I have 2 hives that now consist of 2 mediums and my son has the same thing a few miles away. Both of our colonies started building more in the top box and there was enough comb in each to switch them to the bottom this past weekend. Is it OK to swap frames between the top and bottom boxes to get them completely filled or should we only move frames around in the box they started in?*

*I added beeswax to the frames I have in my hives before we installed the bees but he did not add the extra coating to his. It seems as though his bees are not too thrilled building comb on the frames in his hives. Maybe it is my imagination but mine are more even and filling more methodically than his seem to be. I read on the container of Bee Healthy that spraying sugar water on the frames can also make the bees more at ease with building on them. Is that just so they can sell more Bee Healthy or do you think it might be a good thing to try?*

*One last question, since 3 mediums equal 2 full size boxes, should we plan to go through the winter with 3 mediums in place? And is that what we would leave after we harvest honey?*

*A friend sent me a message about a swarm that attached to their house in Fountain Hill a week or so ago and I was going to call you but someone else made contact and a beekeeper came for them. That sounds cool and I wonder if I should have some equipment handy in case that opportunity ever arises. If so, maybe you could let me know what the minimum requirement would be for capture store and raising them.*

*I will visit you some day and buy you lunch. We are really enjoying this hobby so far and I haven't been stung yet. I am amazed how focused the bees are at their job and not on us.*

*Thanks for your help,  
Ken Field*

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

A: Hi Ken,

Sorry for the delay in answering you. I've been really busy and just found your email tonight. The standard recommendation is to feed until all foundation is drawn into comb. Not a dumb question at all. Even though there is a nectar flow on the sugar syrup you are supplying will help during rainy days when they cannot get out to obtain nectar. Sounds like you are doing good so far. I agree with your choice of moving all of the drawn comb into one box, I would have done the same, just remember to keep all of the brood together. Now keep feeding until all of your foundation is fully drawn. Usually we give them one box at a time. When they draw out almost all of the frames in the first box we add the second and so on. If you give the bees too much room (more than one box) they tend to chimney right up the middle.

If you used plastic foundation, (as I've been doing for years) then you did well by adding a beeswax coating. It seems to help in my opinion but it is time consuming. I have also heard the suggestion of spraying the plastic foundation with a thin sugar syrup mixed with Honey-B-Healthy®. I give my plastic foundation a spray when I have the time but I have no absolute proof of its benefit, if any.

Yes, the consensus is that 3 mediums equal 2 deeps and I would suggest you winter your hives with that configuration at a minimum. We usually leave at least 60 lbs. of honey on each hive. Usually one deep holds approximately 60 lbs. For many years now my hive configuration for winter has been two deeps and a medium. My thought is to leave plenty of honey for the bees, they only use what they need and I would hate to cheat them and have them starve.

Capturing a swarm is very easy Ken, if they are within reach. All you need to catch them is a cardboard box to bring them home in then dump the bees into a hive body with frames of foundation. If you get the opportunity to catch a swarm and need some help just give me a call and I'd love to grab a lunch and talk bees over a cold Guinness.

I hope I've answered your questions. Good Luck with your bees.

Bill Mondjack

## Jeremy's Corner

In his book Last Child in the Woods Richard Louv uses the term 'nature deficit disorder' to describe how children today are increasingly disconnected from the natural world. Beekeeping seems to be an interest which most of us discover in our latter years, and the question becomes are we yearning for something that we know intuitively we have lost or are we using the bees to re-connect with a childhood memory of the natural world. Certainly the concept of nature can be romanticized and perhaps many new beekeepers discontinue their interest when those idyllic impressions are disturbed by reality.

In my case, as a white boy growing up in a British colony at the height of the imperial experience, I had immense freedom together with race-based privileges which I took for granted. There were no restrictions as to where I could go, where I could walk or climb or ride. And many weekends were spent clambering over the rocks and slopes of Murahwa's Hill. I had no fear of the troops of vervet monkeys and chacma baboons which roamed the hill named after Chief Murahwa of the Manyika people, nor of the leopard which my father would hear at night with its characteristic cough.

"Did you hear the leopard last night?" he would ask occasionally. I never did.

I remember only getting a rush of adrenalin as the rufus colored nightjars, which lay superbly camouflaged in the granite outcrops until the last possible moment, would fly up from under my feet in a flurry of feathers.

One day I climbed down a short fissure below the summit to a small, precarious ledge and found a faint but definite Bushman rock painting. I sat in wonderment, gazing over the valley in which the town nestled, awe struck at the thought of perhaps being the first person for more than a thousand years to see this beautiful example of Khoisan stone age art. On later visits I would stand on the summit, waving to the houses below trying to attract my parents' attention, or, sitting on the ledge, I would use a mirror to reflect the sunlight on to our house in the hope that someone would notice, much as we did in class when we used the glass on our watches to flash onto the ceiling, or more daringly, into the teacher's eyes, wondering whether he would notice (and we were taught almost exclusively by men.)

It became a ritual to sit on that ledge at noon, eating the sandwiches my mother had prepared, looking over the town.

On another visit, and not far from the ledge but on the east side of the summit, facing towards the BaVumba mountains and the Portuguese colony of Mocambique, I stumbled across an old wall of stone between two huge granite boulders that seemed to block the entrance to a cave. Over the next few weeks, enlisting the help of some friends, I tore away some of the rocks, rolling them carelessly down the mountainside, a dangerous and senseless act of destruction for which we were later, and quite correctly, mildly chastised by the local representative of the Historical Monuments Commission

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# HONEYBEE CREATIONS

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Jeremy's Corner (Continued from Page 17)

when a small group of museum authorities inspected the find.

Several weeks of such despoliation uncovered a hole large enough to squirm into, encountering the strong odor of either a leopard and/or of dassie guano. Dassie was the local name for rock rabbit, or hyrax, which lived in the crevices and was the favorite food of a pair of black eagles who nested on the adjacent hill. Dassie droppings were thick and rich in the cave and on one occasion I filled a jute bag and took it back for my father's compost heap, a gift he much appreciated.

Confident that the noise and activity would have long frightened away the leopard (and confident too of the animal's notorious shyness and secretiveness) I wriggled forward. Later came the realization that the leopard did occasionally occupy the cave, gaining access though a small opening in the jumble of collapsed rocks in the roof.

It is difficult today, more than 50 years later, to recall the feelings of a young man entering a dark, dry space; I suspect I was more intent on discovering the main purpose of the vault behind the wall. I had convinced myself that it was a burial site, and that the vague shapes which were semi-lit by the peripheries of the beam of the flashlight were skulls resting on a ledge in the cave wall. Digging away the compacted soil behind the stone wall had exposed small, tunneled smoothen passages that left ridges and curves much like old bones; they were probably the passages of white ants which had long since departed.

I remember too being struck by how smooth the walls were, convinced that this was the result of thousands of pairs of human hands brushing past; it was more likely to have been the result of water erosion over thousands of years.

What I did find were the remnants of old, clay pots, typical of the Bantu, Shona-speaking, Iron-age people indigenous to the area. This was evidence enough that this was a refuge site to which the local Manyika would flee when they were attacked by the stronger Ndebele; the pots were used to store grain for such desperate times of need.

On one occasion, and it is no longer clear exactly which part of the chronology this fits into, I had come down from the hill in the late afternoon. My father confirmed that I had indeed had my lunch on the ledge as usual and asked if I realized that the leopard had, for a short moment, been standing on the summit above me as I ate. Apparently he had noticed the distinctive cat-like silhouette, particularly the long, upward curving tail as it appeared briefly above me, looked out over the valley, and disappeared.

On reflection, that was a monumental moment in my life. Sitting on a rock that had attracted a man from prehistory, marveling at the pictorial dimensions of his spirit and unknowingly sharing the view with one of the wild's most noble, most untamed creatures, I was closer to nature than I had ever been before. It is at such moments that a young man gets his first glimpse of the holy grail that is the natural world and which can later be rekindled in passions such as beekeeping.

Jeremy Barnes  
www.pastatebeekeepers.org

## Pennsylvania Honey Queen Report

By Jessica Long

Hello beekeepers! It has been a busy month full of promotions! I have been on the road two or three times a week promoting our great industry, answering lots of questions, and hopefully inspiring people to start beekeeping.

To finish out the month of April, on the 26<sup>th</sup> I was in Gettysburg to speak to the Gettysburg Garden Club. Some of the 50 women that attended the meeting were interested in putting hives in their gardens after hearing the benefits of keeping bees.

The next day I was in the Aliquippa Area. I started my day at Margaret Ross Elementary School, where I spoke to 28 kindergartners. My next stop was at Hopewell Elementary (Kane Street School). I gave two presentations to 38 kindergartners. To finish out my day, I made one last stop at Independence Elementary School, where I spoke to 46 kindergartners. All of the students were surprised on how many foods that they like are dependent on the pollination of honey bees.

On April 28, I attended the Mifflin Park Elementary Schools Eco-Fest. The students had to stop at 10 of the 14 different booths to gain entrance into the Recycling Carnival. Since I was one of the booths I was able to see over 550 students and parents throughout the day.

April 30, I was invited to Menno Haven Retirement Community, in Franklin County, for an afternoon tea. I spoke to about 60 adults on the importance of honey bees. Then I handed the microphone off to Jeff LaSorsa, a Franklin County Beekeeper, who spoke on the tools beekeepers use. While Jeff was talking, I made Honey Raspberry Tea.

To start out the month of May, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> I spoke to 70 students at the Punxsutawney Head Start. I read the story "The Beeman" then showed the children what they would look like and where they would live if they were honey bees.

The next day I surprised my cousins by visiting their elementary schools. The first school I attended was Kistler Elementary in Mount Union, where I spoke to 38 second graders. My next stop was at Strodes Mill Elementary School where I spoke to 45 third graders. My relatives were so excited that their cousin "the queen" came to visit their classes.

I had a very busy day on May 5<sup>th</sup>. To begin my day I spoke to 15 people at Immanuel Preschool in Shillington. All of the children had a great time trying out the tools that beekeepers use. After the presentation, I attended the Phoenixville Farmers Market. At the farmers market I was able to speak to around 200 people and invite them to a local café for a round table discussion. During the round table, local beekeepers from the area spoke about their experiences of beekeeping while I gave out Apiary Registration forms and more information about PSBA.

On May 8<sup>th</sup> I was in Newville, where I spoke to 60 first graders, 58 kindergartners, and 66 second graders at Mount Rock Elementary. Since the students only had 21 days left, the

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Honey Queen Report (Continued from Page 19)

teachers wanted extra honey bee facts so they could give a new fact of the day every day until summer break.

May 10<sup>th</sup>, I spent my whole day at the Laurel Highlands Middle School in Uniontown. I spoke to 1,350 students in 9 presentations! It made for a long day but it was worth it.

The next day I visited R.W. Clark Elementary School in Uniontown. I gave 6 presentations to 182 students from Kindergarten through Second grade.

May 12<sup>th</sup> I traveled to Lebanon, to attend the Jack & Jill Preschool Science Fair. During this beautiful day, I was able to meet the 2000 Pennsylvania Honey Queen/2001 American Honey Queen, Renee (Blatt) Troutman.

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, I was back at Forest Hills Elementary, in Sidman to speak to 156 fifth graders about pollination. The following day I visited the Shamokin Children’s Center, where I talked to 4 and 5 year-olds about honey bees. They taught me their bee dance before I read “The Beeman” book to them.

May 18<sup>th</sup>, I had a chance to visit the Wilson Middle School in Carlisle. I gave two presentations to 150 seventh graders. All of the students were surprised that honey bees need to visit 2 million flowers to make one pound of honey.

I traveled to Philadelphia on May 19<sup>th</sup> for the Fox Chase Farm “Farm to Table Festival.” While I was speaking to a group of people, one of the thirteen hives behind me decided it was a good time to swarm. This was a perfect opportunity to explain what the bees were doing and to show that honey bees are gentle. During the event I showed the swarm and made bees wax candles with nearly 600 people.

On May 23, I spoke to the Cumru Elementary School reading group. The “Bee a Reader” group was celebrating summer and had me present on why honey bees are important for us. There were also some beekeepers in the audience that I had a chance to talk with.

The next day I was in York, to talk to 100 third grade honey bee geniuses at Lincolnway Elementary School. They knew a lot of information because I spoke to their teacher at the Farm Show, and she had a chance to watch the extraction demonstration.

Although I have been busy as a bee, I am still enjoying going to schools and preparing for the fair season. Be sure to contact Rachel Bryson at 717-300-0146 or [brysonrachel@yahoo.com](mailto:brysonrachel@yahoo.com), so I can attend your fair. Don’t forget to go to the “Pennsylvania Honey Queen Program” page on [Facebook](#) and like us to stay up-to-date with my promotions.



**Plenty of Time to Prepare for the EAS Honey Show**

EAS is speeding towards us, with only a few months left to wait! What do you need to do to besides register, reserve lodging, and hire a pet sitter? Well, plan out your Honey Show entries, of course! Check out the new informative **Honey Show Page on the Eastern Apicultural Society website** and you’ll find tips, instruction, photos, videos, webinars, rules and more. This webpage is extremely useful for simply preparing items for market even if you don’t plan to enter a Show. It has been created with learning in mind, and the highest-quality links, articles, and presentations on the Internet have been gathered here for you. Take a look at the recently added Photography segment provided by Zachary Huang. Just search for Eastern Apiculture 2012 using any search engine.

While you work your hives this spring and summer, remember to leave some time to get your Honey Show entries ready. Instead of being bummed out on that rainy or a cold day that’s no good for beekeeping, why not melt some wax and make some candles or a ‘ *Wax Cake, 2lbs. or More* ’? Also, a *Gift Arrangement* takes some thought and attention. It should include a variety of hive products, arranged attractively. What about that weird little thingy you built a few years ago that works just right but will never be found in any catalog? That would be great for the Gadgets classes ( *small or large device* ). Do you have a basement full of mead or honey beer? Check out all those bottles for the best ones. Do you have a computer file or an actual box of prints of bees and beekeeping-themed subjects? Riffle through those and find the best ones. There’s still time to get them mounted according to the Show Rules. This is a good spot to mention that you should consult the EAS Honey Show Rules before preparing any entries. Read the General Rules as well as the rules for the classes you are entering. Heck, read all the rules.

**Honey Show Foibles**

As a novice, I was so excited to enter shows, I tended to skim the Rules and rush to prepare my entries. Early on, I arrived at the County Fair with my submission, a lovely jar of honey with my own label on it. No labels allowed! Another time, at EAS, I proudly showed up at the drop-off table with a single jar for each honey class I was entering. Foolish me – you need to bring 3 jars for each class. I once arrived at EAS and immediately went out to lunch with friends, forgetting my creamed honey entries were still locked in the car. Hot cars also endanger comb, candle and wax entries. Transportation is a serious consideration. If you’re flying, think about passing your entries to a friend who is driving. No glass jars in carry-on bags!

Hm, what else? I’ve never yet entered a photography

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**EAS Honey Show** (Continued from Page 21)

class, but I've heard of people arriving with their photos framed (not allowed), mounted incorrectly, or wanting to enter whole stack (only one entry per class permitted). I've heard of exhibitors getting pretty steamed at the volunteers at the drop-off table. Before the Rules were published they were examined with a fine-tooth comb by the Honey Show Committee, and are very clear. Please read them carefully! EAS volunteers and judges will be using the same Rules you are using and there should be no need for any disputes. Have you ever noticed that the angriest you've ever been was when you were angry at yourself? Please be kind to the volunteers and honest with yourself.

It's fun to enter a Show, and later you'll learn a lot from your score card which will help you improve for future Shows. Let's all bring lots of entries and make the classes as full as possible! It's more fun that way, better than if a class only has a few entries. Check out the [Honey Show page on the EAS website](#), and let's make 2012 a year to remember!

Remember, EAS is 8/13-17. People can come to the Short Course (2 1/2 days of workshops and beeyard instruction), or the Conference (2 1/2 days of presentations both large and small), choose a single day to visit, or stay the whole 5 days! Registration began in May.

Anne Frey

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