



# THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

October-November 2012

Volume No. 9

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

## A final note to my friends...

Next month is the fall conference at the Country Cupboard in Lewisburg. This will be held November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and promises to be another great show. We have Cliff Sunflower to entertain us Friday evening and Adam Finkelstien who will talk with us about how he produces his line of stock from Maryland. I always look forward to these events because they are a great way to re-charge and get that strong feeling so you can't wait until spring. I hope you are able to make it and see for yourself what it is like to get 150 beekeepers in the same room. Kind of like herding cats but a lot more fun. As the heading says this will be my final column as the President of the PA State Beekeepers as I have decided to step down and allow some new ideas and new faces to lead us from here on. I first got involved when I volunteered to sit as the PA representative on the Board of the Eastern Apicultural Society. This was also followed by representing the PSBA on the Penn State Ag Council as well as a few years as the Vice President and for the past two years President. When I first became involved as an officer of the Association there were not many folks willing to step up and get involved so I jumped into the ring. I am not sure what to think, but, I understand there are several members looking to run for office this fall and that is the sign of a strong organization. At least I hope there is not a line forming to get me out. It has been a good ride.

We need to carefully and strategically move our group into the future as there are a number of issues that will continue to need attention. There will always be local elected officials trying to set restrictions on beekeeping in their small piece of the world and we need to remain united and take these issues head on to preserve our craft for the good of agriculture and mankind. We will also have to deal with beekeepers that want to flood our Commonwealth with early spring packages and all of the associated problems they will bring with them. New beekeepers will become discouraged and many will think they are not capable of keeping honey bees alive and will give up the craft without a fair chance for success. I have always held the position that our Association should not promote this as the way for a beginner to start, however, others believe our Association should promote them and are trying to prepare a list of where these packages can be purchased each spring.

It is my opinion that this Association should not move in this direction and should promote sustainable beekeeping at a local level. We have a newsletter to advertise packages and each "cowboy" can and should pay for their own advertising and leave the PSBA and functions of the PSBA out of the mix, my opinion. I also have seen where the PSBA has been used at educational events to promote individual sales and it is alarming to me to see how it has been tolerated within our ranks. We have a very important and distinct obligation at these events to teach the public about what we know and how essential what we do is for their health and well-being. Some take this opportunity for self-promotion which is shameful. Again, this is just my opinion.

A standard for our honey is one thing I had hoped to get passed while I was in office. I still believe we as a group will be much further ahead if we adopted a uniform standard for our honey nationwide. This would the FDA to adopt this uniform standard to protect everyone from adulterated honey while protecting the craft that produces this nectar from God. A few lawsuits in California has derailed our efforts in the Keystone State and it will take a lot of work to get this back into committee so a standard may be adopted by our legislators. Yes, just another opinion I wanted to share.

I have had the opportunity to meet many good folks and have made friendships I hope will last many years to come. I have always enjoyed spending a day with the volunteers scooping ice cream and am amazed how many workers do not even keep bees. They know how important it is. We have something good to share with the public and need to keep working toward the goal of educating people about the important work our bees do every day.

Thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to sit as the President of this fine organization. I have had the opportunity to speak at numerous events and meet many of you. I hope you have enjoyed my talks as much as I have enjoyed giving them. Good luck with your bees, keep your hive tool close and your smoker lit.

Warren Miller, PSBA President



Side Notes...

I have been keeping my hands-off my hives, not wanting to interrupt the last honey-flow. Now that the goldenrod is brown, I'll need to hustle with the changing weather. Already, I have peeked into a few. I last took honey off in July. We had spots of rain here in northwest Pa. It was dry, but nothing like the rest of the country. The rain was enough to 'green' up the yard and put moisture in the ground. So, the wet supers went back on. My locations were mostly in buckwheat, knotweed and goldenrod. These all got started in late August. All of which produced some honey, but nothing to brag about. All are below past years experience. This seemed to be consistent among 140 colonies over 12 or more locations. Few hives or locations seemed to be exceptional.

An interesting observation about my scale hive. This is a hive setting on a balance scale. I am part of a volunteer group that does data collection for a NASA study. (see <http://honeybeenet.gsfc.nasa.gov/>) The hive weight is recorded every day. About the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of August the hive began to gain weight after weeks of nothing. On most good days it gained 1-2 pounds each day. At the time it started to gain, the clover was coming in nice in on large surrounding pastures. The abandoned neighboring fields were thick with goldenrod bloom. So I guessed that was the reason for daily gains.

I was doing a mite roll on the scale hive the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September. I pulled a frame from the super to see how they looked. Open cells had honey much darker than clover or goldenrod. I smelled it. Buckwheat! I tasted it...buckwheat! The closest buckwheat was at least 1 1/2 miles away. Those bees ignored the nearby fields of bloom. Why? I can only assume those close blooms were not producing as much nectar as the distant field.

Legislative action has been moving with regards to food safety license and hobby or small honey producers. At the time of this writing, there has been a hearing on HB2565, an amendment to Act 106. This amendment would exempt honey producers that produce 100% on their own 'farm'. The interpretation is still foggy regarding where they may sell. From their property is permitted for sure. Farm markets or stores seem to follow language of the amendment, but we would be more comfortable with some confirmation. At this time the amendment has moved out of 'committee' and will be put on the calendar for vote. Then it must be approved by the Senate. If it passes, it would take effect 60 days from passage.

As a member of Pa Farm Bureau, I will be attending the PFB annual meeting in Hershey November 12-14. Pa. Farm Bureau is the strongest advocate of everything agriculture

in Pennsylvania. Legislators will often refer to PFB policy when considering pending or current laws. A large part of the annual meeting is dedicated to policy development. Every county sends delegates who will vote on each existing policy or newly suggested policy.

Currently, PFB has policy recommending a honey standard and a minimum number of hive inspectors. New policies have been recommended for this year. One will recommend exemption of small bee operators from honey house inspection. The other will recommend local governments use Best Management Practices from Pa. Dept. of Agriculture when zoning involves honeybees.

A person does not need to be a 'farmer' to join Pa. Farm Bureau. I would urge more beekeepers to join PFB. Every county has a chapter. More voices from more counties will help keep legislation from rolling over us.

Charlie Vorisek



Queen Jessica inspects her hives during a day off from promoting.

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## PSBA's Fall Conference to be held November 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>

Plans are well underway for our Fall Conference at the Country Cupboard Inn, Lewisburg. The program begins on Friday at 1:00 p.m., with our banquet Friday evening. On Saturday, the latest news and breakout sessions will be held along with our PSBA business meeting and election of officers. An **Executive Meeting** will be held **Friday at 9:30 a.m.** in the conference room at the Inn. **County representatives are urged to attend.**

There will be a \$20.00 registration fee (includes both days) to help cover the program expenses. The registration fee for one day is \$15.00.

### Banquet

The Annual Banquet will be held in the dining room of the Country Cupboard Friday evening, Nov. 9, beginning at 6:00 p.m. For our entertainment at the Banquet, Cliff Sunflower will be presenting "Dancin' With the Honey Bees". The cost of the Banquet (which includes a buffet dinner) is \$25.00 for adults, \$11.00 for ages 11-12, \$8.00 for ages 6-10, 5 & under, free. These prices include tax and tip. Please make your reservations with Yvonne Crimbring, (570) 673-8201, **before Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>.**

Door prizes will be drawn and an auction will be held also at the banquet. Anyone wishing to donate door prizes, or an item for the auction, please send them to Dave Hackenberg at 1466 Crossroads Dr., Lewisburg, PA 17837 or bring them with you to the meeting. We request that they are "bee related" items.

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

### PSBA Apiary Products Show

Don't forget about our Apiary Products Show\* where your best honey and beeswax can win a ribbon. This is a friendly show that is great for new-bees and show veterans alike. Look for the show rules and class descriptions on Page 11. We will take entries Friday afternoon, Nov. 9, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. No late entries will be accepted after 5:00 p.m. Friday. Winners will be announced and presented with ribbons on Saturday afternoon. \*There will be no Baked Goods Contest this year.

### Need a Place to Stay?

If you are interested in staying overnight, rooms are available at the Country Cupboard Best Western, 524-5500. Be sure to mention you are with PSBA. Make your reservations early!! They will be holding a block of rooms for PSBA until October 13<sup>th</sup> at the cost of \$110.00 plus tax (per room). Other places to stay include: Country Inn Suites, 570-524-6600;

Hampton Inn-Lewisburg, 570-522-8500; Days Inn University, Rt. 15, Lewisburg, 523-1171; Econo-Lodge, Rt. 15 South, Lewisburg, 523-1106; Comfort Inn, New Columbia, (5 mi. N. of Lewisburg, I-80 & Rt. 15) 568-8000; and Holiday Inn Express, New Columbia, (5 mi. N. of Lewisburg, I80 & Rt. 15) 568-1100. For Bed and Breakfast accommodations: Brookpark Farm Bed and Breakfast Inn, 523-0220 and Pineapple Inn, Market St., Lewisburg, 524-6200. All above phone numbers are in the 570 area code.

## 2013 Farm Show

Two points of interest to apiary exhibitors:

1st) The Farm Show has approved a **new exhibit class** that will include Sauces, Beverages and Dressings made with honey. Dig up your recipes.

2nd) **Dutch Gold Honey will sponsor the 1st place County Exhibit with a \$500 premium.** First place was previously \$275. The remaining 4 place premiums will be increased to \$300, \$250, \$225 and \$200. A huge thanks to Maryann Frazier for spearheading this premium increase.

The Farm Show Committee has given Lee Miller and Charlie Vorisek permission to take early entries for the County and Individual exhibits. Exhibitors will still need to officially enter through the Farm Show as soon as the 2013 web site begins accepting the entries using the on-line entry format. Early entry is encouraged to give more lead-time to the exhibitor. PSBA acceptance is consistent with the Farm Show rule #6, referring to county or association collective exhibits, which reads in part, "Entries will be selected by the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association."

To date, just Montgomery County Beekeepers and Burgh Bees have plans for a county exhibit. We have 3 more exhibit spaces.

**Editor's Note:** More information on volunteering your time and talents for the 2013 Farm Show are found on Page 23.



### IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES

3/14 and receives the newsletter at 700 Mace St., Greensburg, PA will send his/her name and an account of his/her beekeeping operation to the editor at 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724 by November 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.

## House Bill 2565

PRINTER'S NO. 3935

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HOUSE BILL

No. 2565 Session of 2012

INTRODUCED BY MAJOR, MAHER, BOYD, DALEY, EVERETT, FLECK, GIBBONS, GILLEN, GODSHALL, HART, HARPER, HARRIS, HELM, HESS, M. K. KELLER, KULA, MILLARD, MILLER, OBERLANDER, PICKETT, QUINN, ROCK, SCHMOTZER, STERN, SWANGER, TALLMAN AND GINGRICH, AUGUST 9, 2012  
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS, AUGUST 9, 2012

### AN ACT

1 Amending Title 3 (Agriculture) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated

2 Statutes, in food protection, further providing for required 3 licenses and for registration of food establishments. 4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 5 hereby enacts as follows: 6 Section 1. Section 5703(b)(2) of Title 3 of the Pennsylvania 7 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subparagraph to 8 read: 9 § 5703. License required. 10 \*\*\* 11 (b) Exempt retail food facilities.-- 12 \*\*\* 13 (2) A licenser shall exempt the following 14 facilities from the license requirements of this section: 15 (i) A retail food facility in which only 16 prepackaged, nonpotentially hazardous food or beverages

1 are sold. 2 (ii) A retail food facility that sells only raw 3 agricultural commodities. 4 (iii) A retail food facility that is in compliance 5 with the act of July 20, 1974 (P.L.537, No.184), referred 6 to as the Honey Sale and Labeling Act, and in which 100%

7 of the regulated products offered for human consumption 8 are produced or processed on the farm on which the retail 9 food facility is located. 10 A retail food facility that is exempted from the license 11 requirements under this section shall remain subject to 12 inspection and all other provisions of this subchapter. 13 \*\*\* 14 Section 2. Section 5734(d) of Title 3 is amended to read: 15 § 5734. Registration of food establishments. 16 \*\*\* 17 (d) [Exception.--] Exceptions.--All of the following shall 18 be exempt from the provisions of this section: 19 (1) Vehicles used primarily for the transportation of 20 any consumer commodity in bulk or quantity to manufacturers, 21 packers, processors or wholesale or retail distributors [are 22 exempt from the provisions of this section]. 23 (2) A retail food facility that is in compliance with 24 the act of July 20, 1974 (P.L.537, No.184), referred to as 25 the Honey Sale and Labeling Act, and in which 100% of the 26 regulated products offered for human consumption are produced 27 or processed on the farm on which the retail food facility is 28 located. 29 \*\*\*

30 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days. 20120HB-2565PN3935 -2-

## BEEKEEPERS, UNITE!

In case you haven't heard the good news, the Eastern Apicultural Society (EAS) annual conference and courses will be held in West Chester, PA in **2013!**

The EAS 2013 Planning Committee, headed by Linda Betlejeski of Chester Co. Beekeepers Assn., invites your participation in making August 5 - 9, 2013 a week to remember.

In fact, to top it all off, the PSBA picnic will follow on August 10, 2013. How's THAT for planning ahead!

To help raise funds we are selling a very cool t-shirt with the logo you see at the left, for \$15. In addition, we are selling the same artist's graphic novel "The Pollinator's Corridor" for \$20. Get both a book and a shirt for \$30.

There is a special raffle for a handmade, bee-themed quilt for the low, low donation of \$1 per ticket.

### All of these fund raisers will be available at the PSBA Meeting in Lewisburg.

We envision that each and every beekeeping organization in the **four-state area around West Chester**, will contribute time & talent to the success of EAS 2013. Please consider your abilities and resources, both as an individual and as an organization. There is a need for:

**Sponsors** - provide expenses for a speaker, auction donations, or refreshments for the breaks

**Social Directors** - coordinate local tours; hospitality for the speakers

**Greeters and Registration Staff** - assist attendees as they arrive; direct them to program activities.

**Volunteer Coordinators** - staff the "command center" to match volunteers to the needs of the moment

**Vendor Assistance** unload, carry and provide setup assistance to vendors and exhibitors

**Development** - raise funds from traditional and innovative sources to defray costs of the events

EXPRESS YOUR INTENTION TO VOLUNTEER NOW, EVEN IF YOUR DECISION IS TENTATIVE.

Send an E-mail expressing your area of interest to [EAS2013-L@lists.psu.edu](mailto:EAS2013-L@lists.psu.edu)

**Editor's Note:**Just received email stating that the House Bill 2565 passed the House of Representatives with 195 Yeas and 5 Nays. Thank you to all sponsors and supporters!





## Upcoming Dates To Remember



Deadline for the September issue of *The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* is **November 25<sup>th</sup>**.

### Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, October 10, 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.

### Chester County Beekeepers

Saturday, October 13, 9:00 a.m. at the Stroud Preserve. Contact Charlie Karat at 610-998-1407, email: [ckarat54@gmail.com](mailto:ckarat54@gmail.com) for more information.

### Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. For more information, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit <http://www.thebeeyard.org>

### Capital Area Beekeepers

Friday, October 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Building, Harrisburg. For more information, contact Linda Purcell at 717-566-6327, email [linda.sweetbee@gmail.com](mailto:linda.sweetbee@gmail.com)

### Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Friday, October 19, 6:00 p.m. at the Fullerton Fire Hall, Whitehall. LVBA Banquet. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### 2 C's & A Bee Association

Sunday, October 21, 2:00 p.m. at the Village at Morrisons Cove, Martinsburg. For additional information, contact Helen Evans at 814-472-7637.

### Montgomery County Beekeepers

Saturday, November 3, 4:00 p.m. at the Plains Mennonite Church. Fall Banquet. For more information, contact Mark Antunes at 484-955-0768 or email: [honeyhillfarm@verizon.net](mailto:honeyhillfarm@verizon.net).

### Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Saturday, November 3, 6:00 p.m. at the So. Montrose Community Church. Annual Dinner w/speaker Richard Blohm. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for more information.

### Beaver Valley Beekeepers

Monday, November 5, 6:00 p.m. at the Sisters of St. Josephs, Baden. Fall Banquet. For more information, contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email [pattie.zyroll@elkem.com](mailto:pattie.zyroll@elkem.com)

### North East PA Beekeepers

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

### Chester County Beekeepers

Thursday, November 8, 7:00 p.m. at the West Chester Borough Hall. Contact Charlie Karat at 610-998-1407, email: [ckarat54@gmail.com](mailto:ckarat54@gmail.com) for more information.

### PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 9 & 10 at the Best Western Inn/Country Cupboard, Lewisburg. Information throughout this issue or visit <http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org>

### Monroe County Beekeepers

Wednesday, November 14, 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.

### Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, November 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schecksville. Movie Night, "Vanishing of the Bees" and Election of Officers. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 for more information.

### Capital Area Beekeepers

Friday, November 16, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Building, Harrisburg. For more information, contact Linda Purcell at 717-566-6327, email [linda.sweetbee@gmail.com](mailto:linda.sweetbee@gmail.com)

### Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, November 20, 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville. For more information, email: [info@thebeeyard.org](mailto:info@thebeeyard.org) or visit <http://www.thebeeyard.org>

### North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, December 5 at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: [purepahoney@gmail.com](mailto:purepahoney@gmail.com)

### Montgomery County Beekeepers

Saturday, December 8. Time and location to be determined. Holiday Gathering. For more information, contact Mark Antunes at 484-955-0768 or email: [honeyhillfarm@verizon.net](mailto:honeyhillfarm@verizon.net).

### 2 C's & A Bee Association

Sunday, December 9, at the Cambria County Ext. Office, Ebensburg. Christmas Social. For additional information, contact Helen Evans at 814-472-7637.

### 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 see Pages 5 and 23.

### 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](#))



## 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 Winter Meeting on Friday, Nov. 9 from approximately 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

2) All apiary products exhibited must have been produced in Pennsylvania and must have been produced by the exhibitor during 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 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)

## Nature Notes

What is the best thing about **autumn** in Pennsylvania? **Cool nights!** Good sleeping weather has to be near the top of the list.

**Evening** comes noticeably earlier. When the leaves fall from trees, dusk may last longer as we will be able to see the pastel sunset sky. On still nights, **great horned owls** may be booming out their five hoot song: "Who's awake? Me, too."

Trees are lighting up in **autumn colors**. Leaves of the **euonymus**, an invasive alien bush with flutes or wings on its stems, have turned from green to scarlet. **Beech trees** have smooth gray bark. On the forest floor, especially around beech trees, **beech drops** are blooming. A beech drop plant looks a like 6 - 12-inch long bouquet of twigs stuck into the ground. Beech drops are **parasites**, taking nutrients for themselves from beech roots.

Given the chance **pokeweed** will grow above head height and produce masses of ink-filled poke berries. Robins fill up on poke berries, which can be poisonous to humans.

A nearby **pond** may have red and yellow trees reflected in its **calm surface** early in the morning. As ducks move south to avoid winter freeze-up, they spend autumn and early winter on Pennsylvania lakes. **Bufflehead** ducks are boldly patterned in black and white. They dive to feed on insects and insect larvae. **Ring-necked ducks** are the size and shape of mallards with dark purple heads, black backs, and gray sides. They dive, too, feeding on everything from plants to fish and insects.

At the birdfeeder, the handsome small nuthatch with a white stripe over its eye is **red-breasted nuthatch**, a winter visitor from the north.

**Chimney swifts** ("cigars with wings"), which have been flickering across the sky all summer, head south this month. They are diurnal (daytime) migrants and drift south feeding on flying insects. Late in the day, they gather by the hundreds, perhaps watching for other swifts circling a likely chimney. At dusk, the mass of swifts becomes a whirling gyre of birds, dropping one or two at a time down into the chimney. Chimney swifts migrate south to the **Amazon Basin of South America** and spend the southern hemisphere summer eating insects above the jungle.

**Capella**, bright and by itself, is low in the northeast as darkness falls. Early-risers are still seeing brilliant **Venus** in the southeast morning sky.

Tim Sterrett



## PSBA Fall Conference Program

Nov 9-10, 2012

Country Cupboard, Lewisburg, PA

### Friday Morning PSBA Special Board Meeting

President: Warren Miller

9:30 – 11:30 Board Meeting

– Each local organization should send one delegate.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and develop action items to be presented at the PSBA General Meeting Saturday. Each committee chairperson should attend and present the report of his committee. All PSBA members are free to attend and contribute to the discussion and voice or hand votes. Should any voice or hand vote be close, the president can, at his discretion, ask for a vote of just delegates.

Lunch – on your own

### Friday Afternoon and Evening Program

12:00 Registration opens for the conference

12:30 Vendors Open

1:00 State of beekeeping in PA

– Rick Donovall; PDA

1:30 A Queen Breeder's Take on Varroa Tolerance

– Adam Finkelstein

2:15 Center for Pollinator Research and

PSU queen rearing course

– Bernardo Nino; PSU

2:30 Break and visit vendors

3:00 The Rise of On-Line Education and

Beekeeping 101

– Thomas Butzler; PSU

3:45 Evolving Honey House Regulations

– W. Barrett; PDA

### 6:00 Banquet

Entertainment – Cliff Sunflower

**Cliff Sunflower** is a master beekeeper, environmental educator, storyteller and performer. In his audience participation program, “**Dancin’ with the Honeybees**”, he brings the scientific magic of the honeybee hive to life.

Adieu to our 2012 Honey Queen

Crowning of the 2013 Honey Queen

Door Prizes and Brief Auction

### Saturday Morning Program

8:00 Registration  
Vendors Open

8:30 Welcome and comments  
– Warren Miller; PSBA President

8:35 Honey Bee Queen Breeding: A Regional Perspective

– Adam Finkelstein

9:15 Controlling West Nile Virus in Pennsylvania

– Matt Helwig; DEP

10:00 Break (Visit our vendors)

10:30 Northern Vs. Southern...Queens

– Maryann Frazier; PSU

11:00 Business meeting, reports and election of 2013 officers

12:00 - 1:15 Lunch – On your own

### Saturday Afternoon Program

1:15 Announcement of honey show winners

– Lee Miller

Presentation of the Paul Ziegler Award

– Dennis Keeney

1:30 PSBA Honey Queen Report

– Rachel Bryson, chairperson

– Jessica Long, 2012 PSBA Honey Queen

1:45 EAS Comes Back To Pennsylvania – Linda Betlejeski; EAS president

### 2:00 – 3:00 Breakout Sessions (select one)

EAS 2013 – working session;

volunteers welcome

Protecting yourself from Lyme Disease

– Steve Jacobs PSU (webinar)

3:00 Break

### 3:15 – 4:15 Breakout Sessions (select one)

Protecting yourself from Lyme Disease

– Steve Jacobs PSU (webinar)

Honey Judging – Lee Miller

Principles of Rearing Quality Queens

– Adam Finkelstein

4:30 Closing Comments and Passing of the Gavel



## Jeremy's Corner

Sara George's historical novel, "The Beekeeper's Pupil," is the story of the remarkable relationship between the blind naturalist Francois Huber, and his manservant and 'eyes', Francois Brunens, as they investigate the behavior of the honeybee against the backdrop the Scientific and French Revolutions.



The story is presented as the fictionalized diary of the latter from the date of his appointment in 1785 to his departure from the household nine years later. On October 10, 1789, the entry reads in part, "We feel as though we're living in uncertain times, as though what has always seemed the natural order is beginning to turn upside down. The Paris mob dictating to the King of France. It would have seemed unthinkable even a week ago."

In the study of Group Dynamics there is a concept called the Groan Zone. In essence it says that an essential part of the creative process is the ability to let go of preconceived notions and expected outcomes and to be truly open and available to the possibilities based on the questions asked and the data available. It is uncomfortable – one has to set aside one's comfort zones and agendas – hence the term Groan Zone. It's proponents argue that despite the discomfort it is important to stay present, to stay involved, until a new paradigm emerges from what feels like chaos.

It seems ironic, for example, that the turmoil of the late C18th in both American and France is now called 'The Enlightenment.'

Today there is an argument that the world, rather than any one single country, is in a state of transition which is both a threat and an opportunity that occurs remarkable rarely. There is a sense that the global economic system is not working, the political system is no longer democratic or representative, society is dysfunctional and even religious systems are honored more in word than in action. These systems worked well once upon a time but today they are corrupt and broken. We find witness in the Arab Spring, the economic plight in Europe, the political debate in the US, the on-going turmoil in much of Africa, the drug wars of Mexico....

A significant percentage of the population yearns for security, for a return to the perceived stability and comforts of the past, for the predictability and security of the known with an emphasis on what worked best in earlier times. I use the word 'perceived' because it is easy to romanticize both the past and the future.

Such yearnings are understandable and very human.

There are others who see this as an opportunity. They argue

these systems worked before but times have changed, and rather than try to resurrect them we need to let go of preconceived notions and expected outcomes and avail ourselves of new possibilities.

This too is an understandable and human condition.

Perhaps we are in a global groan zone, the dichotomy and tension of which is uncomfortable but vitally important whatever the result. How felicitous that Edvard Munch's painting, "The Scream", which for me symbolizes the intense feelings and tensions that preceded the First World War, sold recently for \$120 million, the most every paid for a single painting, and is on display in the US.

Honey bees have a role to play as we navigate these tricky waters. Thomas Seeley defines a 'smart swarm' as "A group of individuals who respond to one another and to their environment in ways that give them power, as a group, to cope with uncertainty, complexity and change." He seems to be describing more than just honey bees.

"It is from controlled messiness that the wisdom of the hive emerges" writes Peter Miller in his book, "Smart Swarm," which includes fish, birds and ants together with honey bees.

With increased frequency bees are referred to as our 'canaries in the coal mine.' To counteract the lack of ventilation in early coal mines, miners would routinely bring a caged canary into new coal seams. Canaries are especially sensitive to methane and carbon monoxide which made them ideal for detecting dangerous increases in gas levels. As long as the bird kept singing, the miners knew their air supply was safe. A dead canary signaled an immediate evacuation.

Life for the unfortunate canary can be described in three words, "short but meaningful," and the implication is that the current difficulties experienced by honey bees are symptomatic of an increasingly toxic environment. But unlike the miners we cannot 'immediately evacuate' our environs when the bees diminish.

The bees also offer us solutions. One of the reasons Thomas Seeley's latest book, "Honey Bee Democracy," is appealing is that he draws lessons for effective group behavior from the way honey bees make decisions when swarming – decisions made under pressure that are vital to the survival of the colony - and if there is any validity to the argument outlined above, decisions that might be vital for the future quality of life as we know it.

For example, how would the current debate in this country change if, like the bees, we could

- put our egos aside;

(Continued on Page 17)

Jeremy's Corner (Continued from Page 15)

- check the accuracy of information for ourselves;
- utilize the power of positive feedback;
- value diversity in terms of effective decision making;
- debate respectfully in an atmosphere of open enquiry;
- champion fresh ideas?

Environmentalist Bill McKibben suggests the solution lies in working with nature rather than against it. "Past a certain point, we can't make nature conform to our industrial model. The collapse of beehives is a warning – and the cleverness of a few beekeepers in figuring out how to work with bees not as masters but as partners offers a clear-eyed kind of hope for many of our (ecological) dilemmas."

Partnership rather than opposition, cooperation rather than competition, and above all a focus on the long term survival and quality of our community, qualities that most of us exercise really well at our local beekeeper meetings, are perhaps the ways to navigate through the larger Groan Zone.

Jeremy Barnes

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

October 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 - Aug. 27, 2012

*Q: Hi Bill, I am an old Grandpop, have been keeping bee as a hobby for 48 years. In our family we started this year with 7 hives. Three hives in Berks County at my daughter's that are doing fine, two hives in Bucks County at my Grand-daughter's farm, and two that I keep here in Montgomery County. In the*

*last two locations two hives were started in April this year with packaged bees. Soon after they got started the Queen flu away with some of the bees. Twice more we re-queened both of these hives and the queens flu away again. The other two older hives in these locations swarmed this spring and did not make another queen. I bought queens for both hives, and these queens are not laying eggs. The one hive is now dead and the other I see no eggs now after three weeks. I am not sure just what to do any more. I have talked to other bee keepers in this area and hear that some are having the same problem. Is it possible that the queens on the market are not tested, and the natural fertilization process is not happening after the queen is introduced into the hive? I have gone through seven queens this year.*

*So Bill, W.W.B.D.????*

*Regards, Ted*

**Answer:** Hi Ted,

I am sorry for the late response to your email question. I have been really thinking about your problems and just can't figure it out. This one has me stumped! I think I would have had to seen the progress of these hives in question throughout the season. I just can't understand why your queens would have flown away. What really has me surprised is you say some other beekeepers in your area are having the same problems. I honestly can't speak for all of the queen breeders, but from my experience with reputable breeders, they always examine the brood pattern of a newly mated queen before caging and shipping them. You asked the possibility of the natural fertilization process not happening after the queen is introduced into the hive. Well Ted, the mating of the queens all takes place well before you receive her. When queens are produced, the queen cells are placed in mating nucs in out yards where they can mate with the drone congregations made available to them. After the queen hatches and makes her mating flights the breeder examines the mating nucs and when the queen is laying a good brood pattern she is caged and shipped to you. So you see Ted, when you receive a queen through the mail she is already mated and ready to lay.

I must say I feel sorry that you had such bad luck with these colonies. As for W.W.B.D.? Well Ted, if these hives were mine, at this time of the year, I would clean up the wood ware and store everything till next spring. I would not give up and I'd fill these hives with bees in spring AND I'd look for a fellow beekeeper nearby to help if needed.

Sorry I cannot give you better advice Ted but as I've heard stated some time ago...beekeeping is an art, and this year has been much different from years past. It wasn't one of our best years for beekeeping. Your question was just one of many that I received stating strange happenings in the beehive.

(Continued on Page 19)

W.W.B.D. (Continued from Page 17)

From one Grand Pop to another: I wish you the best in beekeeping for 2013,

*Bill Mondjack*

**Received - Sept. 21, 2012**

**Q:** Hey Bill-

*It's me again with another novice question for you...Honey... We now have 2 colonies that are really doing well. One is the parent colony and the other is the split from this spring. I put a honey super on top of the 2 deeps but neither colony did much with them except build out a small amount of comb. So at this point I'm not sure how much honey to take, if any at all. I did the lift test and all 4 deeps are pretty heavy, but I'm leery of doing the wrong thing. Another thought I had was let them have it all and see what is left in the spring and take some off then. I am more concerned with trying to ensure that my colonies will survive the winter than I am with getting a few pounds of honey. Or maybe I'm over thinking the whole thing. Any input would be great.*

*As always thanks a lot for your help and I hope all is well in your corner of the world.*

*Sincerely, Eric Grove*

**Answer:** Hi Eric,

It's good to hear you are more concerned with your bees' survival than harvesting a crop of honey. First I have several questions for you.... when did you add the honey supers? If you would have added them at the beginning of the nectar flow I'm pretty sure your bees (if the hive was strong at that time) would have drawn out the foundation into comb. If you added them AFTER the nectar flow the bees usually don't draw out foundation. Second, did you actually go into the hives and remove frames to observe how much brood and stored food they have? You did mention you did the 'lift test' but I think it is best to actually go in and see how many frames of honey they have. You can (as you mentioned) leave them have it all till next spring. I'm also curious if you treated for mites.

If they were mine I would thoroughly examine the colonies to see the brood size and pattern, the population of bees, check for any signs of disease, I'd also like them to have at least one deep hive body full of honey and I'd also like to see some pollen stored which they will need for early brood rearing next year. Don't forget to install your mouse guards.

Good luck Eric,

*Bill*



## For Sale

Two 550 lb. Dadant bottling tanks  
water jacketed with two Maxant bottling valves

Two custom-made stands for bottling tanks along with one milk tank that holds 2500 lbs. of honey with a stirrer and two electric heaters that set under the milk tank to heat the honey

A custom-made angle iron stand that the milk tank sets on  
above the bottling tanks

**\$1200.00 takes it all**

**Call Jim Griffie at 717-776-5238**

If no answer, please leave a message

Location is close to Carlisle, 25 miles west of Harrisburg

## Pennsylvania Honey Queen Report

By Jessica Long

Greetings beekeepers! The fall season is already here! It's the time of year that beekeepers start pulling the final honey supers and inserting mouse guards for the cold weather. One more month has come and gone with promotions for the PSBA.

To finish out the month of August, on the 29<sup>th</sup> I went to Family Night at the Shippensburg Church of the Brethren. I spoke to 100 people about the importance of honey bees, followed by a honey tasting. Following the event, there was a great article in the Shippensburg Sentinel, which reached 5,100 readers.

The next day, I traveled to Hanover, PA. I spoke to several people at an evening learning session. After talking about honey bees, visitors had a chance to try some different types of honey that they usually don't try. Blueberry honey was the favorite.

On September 1, I attended the Big Knob Fair. The rainy day didn't keep fair goers and bee lovers away from the information booth. I spoke to 800 people throughout the day and welcomed children to the stand with stickers and honey sticks. The next day, I was at the Coburn Park for the annual Crickfest. During the beautiful weather, I spoke to almost everyone that attended, I estimated around 300.

The following day I was at the Cambria County Fair. I worked with members of the 2 C's and A Bee Association, answering questions and handing out stickers. With everyone visiting the fair and passing their booth, I spoke to 800 people. While grabbing a bite to eat, I ran into their newly crowned Fair Queen. She invited me to the Jason Michael Caroll concert that evening. I had the opportunity to introduce myself to the 750 people attending. I also had a chance to talk and get my picture with Jason Michael Caroll as well!!

September 4, I had a chance to visit the Jenner Township 4-H Club in Friedens, PA. I spoke about the importance of honey bees and that everyone can be a beekeeper. Afterwards, I had a chance to listen to four of the members give their demonstrations. It is really great to see students get interested in agriculture the same way I did growing up.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, I attended the York Fair! I had a chance to help point out the queen in the observation hive along with answering some questions. I would like to thank Jeremy Barnes and Jennifer and David Bates, for a wonderful evening after being at the fair.

The next day I was in Hershey, PA, for the "Ugh, it's a Bug!" event. Along with members of the Capital Area Beekeepers Association, we spoke to children and parents about the dif-

ferent types of bee. The children also had a chance to try on a real beekeepers suit! Thank you to Stu and Linda for making my time at the beautiful Hershey Gardens a great time!

September 9, I was in Philadelphia for Honey Fest. The schedule of events for the day included, mead making lessons, children's story time with a parade, cooking demonstrations, and much more! I gave two cooking demos and I also helped in the children's area and with the observation hive. I had a great time with the 300 people that attended.

September 11 through the 15, was the local Sinking Valley Farm Show. During the week, I helped at the 2 C's and A Bee booth answering questions with the observation hive. I also sold more raffle tickets for the bench set we are raffling off this year. On September 17, I was in Gratz, PA for the Gratz Fair. I spent my day answering questions and handing out honey recipe brochures to the 100 visitors.

On the 20<sup>th</sup>, I had my wisdom teeth extracted and I would like to thank everyone who has sent get well cards and emails.

I am so honored to be your 2012 Pennsylvania Honey Queen! I just want to thank everyone again for this amazing opportunity! With my busy schedule this year, if I did not make it to your events this year please contact Rachel Bryson at (717) 643-0010 or [brysonrachel@yahoo.com](mailto:brysonrachel@yahoo.com), to save the date for next year.

## For Sale

### Dadant Wax Foundation

22 ½ lb. 4 ¾ x 16 ¾ Long Hook Wire #F35200  
\$35.00

### Dadant Wax Foundation

12 ½ lb. 8 ½ x 16 ¾ Long Hook #F3500032  
\$15.00

### Dadant Foundation

51 Sheet Duragilt foundation 2 hole #F39600  
\$35.00

## Contact John R. Frey

90 Ridge Road  
York Springs, PA 17372

Phone 717-528-4630

### We Need Your Help!

We need your help at the 2013 Farm Show, January 5-12.

Volunteers are needed to help at both the Honey Booth, located in the Food Court, and the Honey Stand, located in the Marketplace. If you could **give a half-day** or more it would be appreciated.

The Honey Booth offers waffles and honey ice cream along with bottled honey. The Honey Stand offers bottled honey and bee **products that are donated by you**, the PA beekeeper.

If you are interested in donating bottled honey, bee products or your time, please contact Stu Mathias at 717-533-2231.

The money from the sales goes back to the Pa. Beekeepers Promotional Fund and is used for the Pa. Honey Queen program and the promotion of honey throughout the state.

\_\_\_\_\_

Sign up to **share your knowledge** of the honey bee with the public at the Farm Show. We are now located front and center. We will be side by side with the butter sculpture in the middle of the large exhibit hall. People are excited and eager to learn about the trials and tribulations of this efficient pollinator and you can be a part of this **simply volunteering** a few hours of your time. Contact Warren Miller at 814-383-4331 or email [superbee22@hotmail.com](mailto:superbee22@hotmail.com) to volunteer.

Sign up sheets for the Honey Booth, Honey Stand & Large Exhibit Hall will be located on the registration desk at the annual meeting.

Don't forget to show off this year's honey harvest by participating in the Farm Show Apiary Products Show.

### Volunteer To Help at the 2012 Farm Show

#### Please Complete and mail

Yes, I am willing to volunteer my time at the 2012 Farm Show on behalf of the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association

Please circle if you will help with set-up on Sat. Dec 15, 2012 at 9 AM

YES NO

During the Farm Show I prefer to assist at: (circle preference)

Food Court OR Marketplace

Circle your preferred dates and times:

Jan 5 Jan 6 Jan 7 Jan 8 Jan 9 Jan 10 Jan 11 Jan 12  
AM PM All Day

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list products and amounts you will bring to the Farm Show:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### CHANGE CHANGE CHANGE

Volunteers working one day will receive a one day parking pass that will be collected upon entry into the parking lot by the Security Attendant. Volunteers working two or more days will receive a Weekly Parking Pass.

To receive your name tag and parking pass, promptly return this form before Nov. 12 to: Stewart Mathias, 514 Early's Mill Road, Hummelstown, PA 17036

One Day Pass

Weekly Pass