



THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

It's the day after Christmas as I attempt to toss some thoughts together. Facebook friends from Susquehanna Valley, Elizabethtown and Pittsburgh confirm it's snowing across every area of Pennsylvania. The wind is howling. Some of the grandkids stayed overnight and are sharing my desk. I've got to stage a truck load of products, exhibits and miscellaneous stuff for the Farm Show.

Preparations for the PA Farm Show have been notched up in the last couple weeks. Communications with the various chairpersons confirms that pieces are coming together at the Farm Show Complex. Once again the volunteers within the PA State Beekeepers Association have stepped up to showcase our products at the largest indoor agricultural event in the United States. Behind the scenes work, is not seen by many, but the hundreds of volunteer hours are not spent unnoticed.

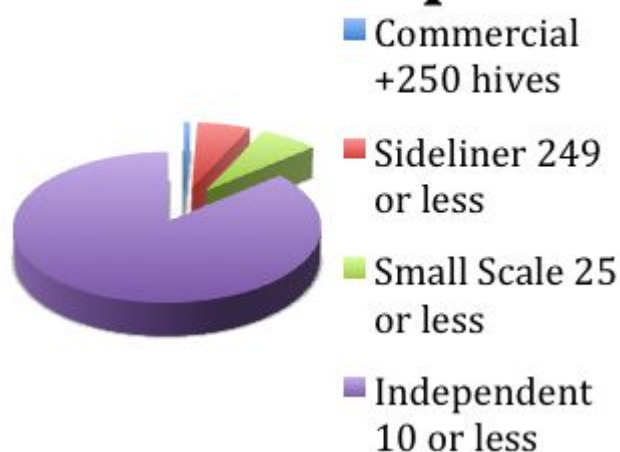
Not to be lost in the hustle of the Farm Show is the ABF convention. 2014 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshaw is taking place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana during this same week. PSBA will be represented by delegates and attendees at this national convention. We wish Elena Hoffman, our 2013 Pa Honey Queen "Good Luck" as she competes for the honor of the 2014 American Honey Queen.

Then beyond the Farm Show and ABF convention, PSBA participates in Cornucopia on February³. This event represents many commodities of Pennsylvania to legislators at the Capitol in Harrisburg. PA State Council of Farm Organizations, of which PSBA is a member, organizes this event. It is important that we stay in front of our legislators and make our presence known. Vice President Vince Aloy and Legislative Committee person, Lori Stahl will attend.

One of the top beekeeping issues for Pennsylvania has been the ability to keep bees in all areas of the commonwealth. Urban beekeeping has stepped up to fill honeybee losses. Small Scale beekeeping is the majority of beekeepers and is growing each year. A quick check with PA State Apiarist, Karen Roccasecca, shows registrations in PA have increased nearly 300 annually over the past few years. Of the 3,300 Apiary Registrations (the most in many years), less than 20 are considered Commercial. This does not diminish the importance of commercial beekeepers, but rather highlights the shift of beekeeping.

In April 2014, PSBA will present at the annual Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) 92nd Annual Educational Conference and Tradeshaw at the Hershey Lodge, Hershey, Pennsylvania. Our application to present a workshop was submitted in August and approved in November. The presentation will illustrate the how's and why's of this growth. Presenters from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and myself (NW PA) will show successful urban and suburban beekeeping. With common sense, science-based guidelines and current Best Management Practices, we hope to bring assistance to those municipalities offering beekeeper friendly ordinances. Creating an open mindset and approval from local townships is a key step if there are hopes to state-wide laws doing the same.

Pa Beekeepers



News 'n Views (Continued from Page 1)

Stay tuned to your local association events. Many offer workshops, conferences, beginner courses and sources for purchases in the next months.

To local associations, be sure to **update your 2014 activities** for the newsletter. AND pass along information to webmaster@pastatebeekeepers.org The PSBA website, <http://pastatebeekeepers.org>, is a wealth of reliable information. It is only as current as the information provided. The website has become an important link and reference for Pennsylvania beekeeping interests.

To all membership, if you are able to take the newsletter by email, please do. As our membership grows, the task of a hard copy becomes more burdensome... not to mention cost and time. As I imagine printing, stapling, folding and mailing nearly 900 hard copies (12 pages each), I get tired just thinking about it. We need to consider options and formats to keep this publication coming. Thanks for consideration.

To receive an email newsletter request this from Yvonne Crimbring pabee1@frontier.com Remember to keep your email CURRENT.

You will love the email copy. Pictures are in color. Emails and websites referenced are all 'hot links'. You can create a computer folder just for the newsletter and always have the latest copies at your finger-tips.

Charlie Vorisek
PSBA

President

Introduction to Beekeeping Classes

The Lehigh Valley Beekeepers are hosting Introduction to Beekeeping Classes at the Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville, PA. The classes will be held February 5, 19, March 5, 19 plus a field trip day, 7:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. There will be an informational meeting and early bird sign-ups held Saturday, January 18 from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center, Allentown.

The classes will be taught by members of the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association, some of whom are Certified Master Beekeepers! The field trip to the club apiary located at L.C.C.C. for some hands on experience will be held in late March or early April depending on the weather.

The cost of the classes is \$60 per person. Children under the age of 16 years and accompanied by an adult: \$30 per child. Book, Course Materials and Refreshments are included in the cost of the class. Adults who register and pay at the January 18th Informational Meeting will receive a \$5 discount off the registration fee.

For more information and to register please visit the Lehigh Valley Beekeepers Association website: <http://www.lehighvalleybeekeepers.org> or contact Steve Finke, LVBA President at sjfinke@msn.com phone: (610) 737-7676.

Western Pennsylvania Beekeeping Seminar

Penn State Extension and experts from local beekeeping organizations and the PSBA are again pleased to offer the Western Pennsylvania Beekeeping Seminar, Friday, February 14 (7:00 – 9:00 p.m.) and Saturday, February 15 (8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.). The Seminar will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton Pittsburgh North, Mars, PA. The cost of the Seminar is \$50 with the registration deadline of February 8.

Managing and maintaining healthy, high-producing honey bees continues to occupy the minds of the best beekeepers. Worldwide, honey bee numbers, adequate insect pollination for food crops, and honey production continue to decline. While research has provided many answers, success in beekeeping lies with healthy bees, good nectar flows, and knowledgeable honey bee managers. The Seminar is aimed at addressing these concerns in an atmosphere of creative idea sharing to improve the knowledge and management skills of those who attend. The speakers for this year's seminar include: **Randy Oliver**, Grass Valley, CA scientific beekeeper, author, and practical beekeeper; **Mike Palmer**, Vermont beekeeper and advocate of sustainable beekeeping; **Karen Roccasecca**, Pennsylvania State Apiarist; **Doug Oster**, writer, co-host of KDKA Radio's The Organic Gardeners; **Craig Cella**, Loganton, PA beekeeping entrepreneur; **Jim Hoffman**, Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers Association; **William Kopar**, Natrona Heights, PA beekeeping entrepreneur; **Barry Leicher**, West Central PA Beekeepers Association and **Lee Miller**, Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers Association.

Penn State Extension, Burgh Bees and Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers Association cosponsor the event. For additional information, contact Janice Hassen at PSU Beaver County Cooperative Extension at 724-774-3003 (9-4 weekdays), email jma2@psu.edu or website <http://extension.psu.edu/beekeeping-seminar>

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Jeremy's Corner

Winter is a thoughtful season for beekeepers if not necessarily for the bees. We have survived the brisk energy of spring when the colonies broke their cluster for the last time and explored the bouquet of nectar and pollen surrounding them. We have labored through the summer, making splits, checking for mites, moving hives and finally, if all is well, extracting honey. And we have fed through the fall as temperatures cooled and changing foliage transformed the landscape.

Now is the time to think, to imagine. "Next year will be better" is the beekeeper's mantra. We are perpetually hopeful people and, by the very nature of our avocation, are always looking forward to the next season.

Not all of those thoughts are reverent. It occurred to me, for instance, that keeping bees is much like raising children. Although a little intelligence goes a long way, one does not have to be a genius to do either. And thank goodness for that. Imagine if one had to achieve a GPA of 4.0 in a BCR (Bachelor of Child Rearing) before one could have children. Instead it's amazing how many successful people have come from humble, even deprived, families. Similarly at every bee meeting I am struck by the wide range of backgrounds and professions evident in those who attend. And none of those backgrounds make one a better beekeeper than anyone else. Bees, like children, are great levelers.

Children learn to walk and talk by never-ending practice, by consistent trial and error, by falling down and getting up again. All too often, later in life, if it doesn't work the first time we give up on it. If that applied to childhood we would have a population that was universally sedentary and mute. Beekeeping too is about getting one's hands dirty, about never-ending practice, about persistence. In both cases there are mentors, examples to inspire and follow, but in the apiary no matter how much one has read, ultimately one has to get over that initial fear so that one can start to 'see' what is really happening in the hive. Some give up when it doesn't work the first time; others persevere, accepting trial and error as a necessary part of the process and realizing that the bees are remarkably tolerant of our mistakes, as were our parents.

With both bees and children, the act of stewardship can be so engrossing that years fly by imprinted with certain landmarks - the first tooth, the first swarm, the soccer lesson, the new queen, the prom, a successful nuc. Both pursuits are things you have to do in order to appreciate how challenging and also how incredibly rewarding they can be. Only other people who are parents or beekeepers want to hear about your various struggles and triumphs. I am often asked "How are the bees this year?" and the last thing the questioner wants is a detailed response. He or she hopes for a quick, positive response that will absolve them for feeling responsible or concerned about the news they hear of bees 'disappearing.' The last thing they want is stories

about winter losses, mites and failing queens. It's the same glassy stare that one receives as one proudly describes the newly acquired hand-to-mouth cup-handling skills of one's youthful pride and joy.

And with children, as with bees, one has to be vigilant. Just as you think you have everything covered, along comes the unexpected. The three year old who slams his fingers in the car door (as my grandson recently did,) or the colony that, without warning, absconds half way through the fall with no chance of survival in the big outdoors (as one of mine did in September.)

You can do everything right and still end up with less-than-ideal results, or you can screw up right royally and end up with a successful product. I shudder at some of the things I did in my early years of beekeeping, and yet the girls seemed not to mind; similarly it's astounding how children from the same parents, like two neighboring hives, can have very different temperaments. I like to think that my occasional successes as a grandparent and beekeeper are due to skill, loving attention and untiring efforts yet I suspect it's really a matter of dumb luck.

No matter how hard one works, as a parent or as a beekeeper, one is never really finished, either in the 'doing' sense or in terms of learning. The failures can be heart-breaking, like that first dead-out in the spring, and the rewards are sweeter than nectar. The only ones who think that either task is easy are inexperienced, lucky or suffering from dementia.

Jeremy Barnes

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

4th Annual Natural Beekeeping Symposium

The Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild (PBG) is thrilled to announce that Dean Stiglitz and Laurie Herboldsheimer, nationally renowned beekeepers and authors of "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Beekeeping," will speak at the **4th Annual Natural Beekeeping Symposium**, February 9, 2014 in Philadelphia. Stiglitz and Herboldsheimer will share valuable information on natural beekeeping based on their extensive experience, including "**Microbial Environment in the Hive**" and "**Raising Queens & Breeding Local Bees.**"

The Natural Beekeeping Symposium takes place from 10am to 4pm, Feb. 9, 2014 at William Penn Charter School on 3000 W. School House Lane, Philadelphia, 19144.

A box lunch is included in this bargain ticket price: \$35 (adults); \$25 (students with ID and members of PBG). Group rates are available for groups of 10 or more. For more info or to reserve your space, visit www.phillybeekeepers.org by January 31 to ensure enough lunches.

Come join us for this amazing day of beekeeping education and camaraderie!

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

January 2014

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

As one of our EAS Certified Master Beekeepers in Pennsylvania, I was asked by PSBA President Charles Vorisek if I would continue writing this column in the P.S.B.A. monthly newsletter. The idea being to answer questions that may arise from our members and to help fellow beekeepers become more proficient in their craft. I agreed to do so as long as I have questions to answer.

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 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

Q: Received: Jan. 3, 2014

Hi Bill,

*Good Morning Bill,
Happy New Year...Hope you are well and staying warm on this fine wintery day....!
Could I trouble you for your thoughts about a bee question?
I noticed that the snowstorm has covered the entranceway to our hives. They still have the top hole for air but the snow covering the bottom entranceway will block circulation.*

Given these low temperatures, is it better to just let the bottom remain blocked by the snow to hold in the warmth...

Your thoughts...

Robert

A: Hi Robert...and Happy New Year to the both of you. You have a good question and I don't know that I can give you the perfect answer. I've seen this happen to my hives over the years and on some of them I've seen a small gap in the snow at the entrance. I don't know if the air circulation opened it or not, and on many of mine the snow is just piled up on the bottom entrance and I've left it like that with no ill effects. I would not be overly concerned about the lack of air circulation due to snow on the bottom entrance. I used to think this was very important but over the years I haven't experienced any losses due to snow covered bottom entrances. For the past many years I've been putting a piece of half-inch insulation board above my inner cover/

under my outer cover. I THINK (using my common sense) this would keep the inner cover warmer (not being in direct contact with the outer cover) and I haven't seen any condensation on the inner cover. I always tend to think about bees living in a tree...there usually is no bottom entrance/top entrance, just one hole.

Just my thought Robert,

Bill

Beginning Beekeeping Workshops

Penn State Extension, in conjunction with the Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers, Westmoreland County Beekeepers, and the Central Western PA Beekeepers, is pleased to again offer the Beginning Beekeeping Workshop at two locations. The same information will be presented at each location.

Workshop dates and locations are:

February 1st – Soergel Orchards, Wexford, PA 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$50. Registration deadline is January 25

February 8th – Penn State Extension, Westmoreland Co., Greensburg, PA, 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$50. Registration deadline is February 1

The goal is to provide new beekeepers with the knowledge and information to help them achieve a successful start. Topics include: Bee biology, Basic equipment, Keeping bees healthy, and more... Speakers and planning committee are: Paul Bagnall, Jim Hoffman, Bill Kopar, Lee Miller and Terry Shanor.

For additional information, contact Janice Hassen at PSU Beaver County Cooperative Extension at 724-774-3003 (9-4 weekdays), email jma2@psu.edu or website <http://extension.psu.edu/beginning-beekeeping>



IF THE READER that receives the newsletter at 4542 Game Preserve Road, Schnecksville, PA will send his/her name and an account of his/her beekeeping operation to the editor at 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724 by February 20th, he/she will receive a years free subscription to either *Gleaning in Bee Culture*, *American Bee Journal*, or *The Small Beekeepers Journal*. When you respond, please specify your choice of magazine.

Subscription Rates
(These are for PSBA members ONLY!)

American Bee Journal		Bee Culture	
1 year	\$21.00	1 year	\$21.00
2 years	39.75	2 years	38.00
3 years	56.25		

The Small Beekeeper's Journal
\$12.95
(Regular Rate)

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

PSBA Advertising Rates


<u>1 Month</u> <u>3 Months</u>			
Full Page	\$33.00	Full Page	\$ 50.00
1/2 Page	22.00	1/2 Page	35.00
1/4 Page	19.00	1/4 Page	25.00
1/8 Page	15.00	1/8 Page	19.00
<u>6 Months</u> <u>One Year</u>			
Full Page	\$85.00	Full Page	\$ 160.00
1/2 Page	50.00	1/2 Page	85.00
1/4 Page	33.00	1/4 Page	60.00
1/8 Page	22.00	1/8 Page	36.00

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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.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

Email _____ County _____

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 February issue of
The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is **January 27th**.

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, January 8, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale.
Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Beginning Beekeepers Class – Beekeeping 101

Three classes will be held on Monday, January 13, Wednesday, January 15, and Monday, January 20 – 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Classes will be held at the Penn State Extension of Allegheny County Pittsburgh. To register:

<http://burghbees.com/?product=beekeeping-101>

Intro to Beekeeping Class (Informational meeting)

Saturday, January 18, 1:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center, Allentown. Informational meeting for the classes to be held in February and March. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, January 21, 7:00 p.m. at the Columbia County Extension Office, Bloomsburg. For more information, email: info@thebeeyard.org or visit www.thebeeyard.org

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, January 23, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center, Allentown. Marshall Slotterbach will be speaking about Top Bar Hive Management. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

York Co. Beekeepers

Thursday, January 23, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Speaker: Jeremy Barnes “The Perfect Beekeeper Meets Varroa”. Contact honeybee-whisperer@gmail.com for more information.

Burgh Bees

Tuesday, January 28, 7:00 p.m. at the Carson City Saloon in the Southside, Pittsburgh. For more information, email burghbees@gmail.com

Beginning Beekeeping Workshop

Saturday, February 1, at the Soergel Orchards, Wexford. Registration deadline is January 25. Visit the website <http://extension.psu.edu/beginning-beekeeping> or contact PSU Beaver Co. Coop. Extension at 724-774-3003 for more information.

Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers

Monday, February 3, 7:00 p.m. at the Beaver Conservation District Wetlands, Aliquippa. For more information, contact Patty Zyroll at 412-848-3506 or email pattie.zyroll@elkem.com

Introduction to Beekeeping Classes

Wednesdays, February 5 & 19, March 5 & 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, February 5, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepahoney@gmail.com for more information.

Beginning Beekeeping Workshop

Saturday, February 8, at the Penn State Extension, Westmoreland Co., Greensburg. Registration deadline is February 1st. Visit the website <http://extension.psu.edu/beginning-beekeeping> or contact PSU Beaver Co. Coop. Extension at 724-774-3003 for more information.

4th Annual Natural Beekeeping Symposium

Sunday, February 9, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at William Penn Charter School, Philadelphia. Speakers for the event are Dean Stiglitz and Laurie Herboldsheimer, authors of “The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Beekeeping.” For more information or to reserve your space, visit www.phillybeekeepers.org

Wax Rendering Workshop

Sunday, February 9, 1:00 p.m., location to be determined. This workshop takes you through the processes used to take your raw wax and render it so that it is useable for creating lip balms, candles or exhibit and judging. Visit the website: <http://burghbees.com/?product=wax-rendering-130> for more information or to register.

(Continued on Page 11)

Italian Package Bees and Queens for Sale:

Delivered to the Lehigh Valley

3 lb. Package w/Queen - \$96
Queens - \$23
Add \$3.50 for marked queens

Available for pickup on or about April 13
(Actual date may change due to weather)

See the order form at
www.lehighvalleybeekeepers.org

or contact
Bill Mondjack: 610-751-4483
billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com
or
Steve Finke: 610-737-7676
steve@meadowviewbees.com

Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

Western PA Beekeeping Seminar

Friday and Saturday, February 14 & 15, at the Four Points by Sheraton, Pittsburgh North, Mars, PA. The cost is \$50 for participants and \$30 for their guests and children under 18. Registration deadline is February 8. For additional information and registration visit [Western PA Beekeeping Seminar](#)

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley

Tuesday, February 18, 7:00 p.m. at the Union County Government Center, Lewisburg. For more information, email: info@thebeeyard.org or visit www.thebeeyard.org

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Thursday, February 20, 7:00 p.m. at the Seipstown Grange, Fogelsville. Starting/Boosting Beehives in spring. Also Beekeeping Hardware Swap Meet. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, February 27, 7:00 p.m. in the Ruhl Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Speakers: Four Nu-bees share stories from their first years of keeping bees. Contact honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com for more information.

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, March 5, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Advanced Beekeepers Class – Beekeeping 201

Saturday, March 15, 8:30 a.m. at the Penn State Extension of Allegheny County Pittsburgh. “What to Expect in Your Second Year and Beyond. To register:

<http://burghbees.com/?product=beekeeping-201> **Chester**

County Beekeepers Seminar

Saturday, March 15, 9:00 a.m. at the Merion Science Center at West Chester University, West Chester. This seminar will include sessions for beginners and advanced beekeepers. Visit the Association’s website www.ChescoBees.org for more information.

Southern Adirondack Beekeepers Seminar

Saturday, March 15, at the HVCC TEC-SMART Extension Bldg., Malta, NY. Speakers include, Dr. Jerry Hayes, Dr. Thomas Seeley and Michael Smith. For more information, contact Anne Frey at 518-895-8744 or email annef@capital.net

PSBA Summer Picnic

Saturday, August 9, 2014 at the Wade Fisher Bee Farm, McVeytown. Additional information will be posted on the [PSBA website](#) and printed in the newsletter as it becomes available.

PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 14 & 15, at the Country Cupboard/Best Western Inn, Lewisburg.

Attention Counties: Please submit your 2014 list of officers and meeting dates to Yvonne as soon as possible. Her mailing address and email are listed on Page 8.

Nature Notes:



Although days are getting longer, winter is still fresh and new with bright sunlight reflected from snow. For many of us, the darkest days of winter will drape themselves over us in mid-February when snow and cold weather have turned stale and **Florida** was invented to solve that problem. In the decades after the Civil War ended in 1865, the development of heavyweight railroad equipment let fruit and vegetables be delivered to cities all year. The **Christmas orange**, once a rare treat, became wooden crates of oranges in grocery stores. Railroad passengers traveled in relative comfort. Henry Flagler, a founder of the Standard Oil Company, built hotels in southern Florida, and a railroad to them, around 1900. In 1940, a dozen trains left New York for Florida every day. The highway through the Florida Keys to Key West is built on the path of a Flagler railroad.

We might not notice the longer days, but our **bees** do. In healthy honey bee colonies, the queen begins laying eggs in January, starting the process that will explode the colony from a mere ten thousand or so worker bees to perhaps eighty thousand in time for spring nectar flows. One of the frustrations of modern beekeeping is colonies that do not build up in time for nectar flows in April and May.

Birds notice longer days. **Tufted titmice**, which look like small gray cardinals but are cousins to chickadees, are singing “peter, peter, peter.” **Black-capped chickadees** are singing “fee-bee.” **Carolina chickadees** live in the SE corner of our commonwealth and sing “fee-bee, fee-bay.” Bright red **cardinals** are tuning up, too. David Sibley describes their song this way: “woit, woit, woit, chew, chew, chew, chew, chew.” And, from the tops of medium-sized **treehouse finches** sing their bubbly, explosive, jumbled song.

The white drooping flowers of **snowdrops** and the yellow sunspots-on-the-forest-floor of **winter aconite** both appear in January. On warm, still days, aconite may flood the air with perfume to attract pollinating bees. Both snowdrops and winter aconite are aliens brought here from Europe. Our honeybees were brought from Europe, too. Snowdrops, winter aconite, and honeybees evolved together.

Planet **Venus** is the super-bright evening “star.” Through binoculars, Venus is an obvious crescent until mid-January. We see a crescent because Venus is moving between the Sun and us as it orbits the Sun. If Venus were on the far side of the Sun, we would see light reflected from a Sun-lit round disc.

Planet **Jupiter** is high in the east by mid-evening. Just to the left of Jupiter are **Castor** and **Pollux**, the Gemini (Twins).

Time to turn the page on our own **almanacs** and start recording firsts of this New Year: first snowdrop, winter aconite, crocus, singing cardinal, and house finch.

By Tim Sterrett

Photo: black-capped-chickadee-tom-munson; Bing.com

PSBA November Conference Survey

A grateful thank you to the 145 members who completed the survey

1. Have you attended a previous PSBA Conference?

- 41% YES
- 59% NO

2. If NO, what determined your decision?

- 36% Too far to travel
 - 21% The fact that it was spread over two days
 - 12% Cost
 - 9% Nothing on the program appealed to me.
 - 39% Other
- NB The %ages do not total 100 because respondents could check more than one response.

The comments fall into a number of categories:

- 10 - my schedule/job does not allow me to take the time
- 4 - Was not aware of the conference
- 3 - this was my first year of beekeeping
- 1 - conflicts with beekeeping classes
- 1 - my husband does not want to go and I don't want to go alone.

3. If you have not attended a previous conference, would you be more likely to attend if the presentations were confined to one day, Saturday?

- 64% YES
- 36% NO

4. If you have attended a previous conference, did you also attend the banquet?

- 57% YES
- 43% NO

5. If the presentations were all on Saturday, would you be more likely to attend the banquet if it was held on (a) Friday evening...?

- 22% YES
- 78% NO

Comments:

- 11 - too far to travel
- 7 - requires an over-night stay which adds to the cost
- 5 - Not really interested in the banquet; my focus is on keeping bees
- 4 - Like it just the way it is
- 3 - What would take its place? Best to meet folks before the conference... perhaps a welcoming reception?
- 2 - Weekends conflict with other activities, priorities.
- 1 - The Board needs to meet on Friday before the

conference

- 1 - Will go no matter

6. Or (b) after the conference on Saturday night?

- 51% YES
- 49% NO

Comments:

- 13 - More efficient use of my time; already there anyway, gives a choice of driving home the same day; etc.
- It makes sense to celebrate and dine after a conference; a great way to finish the day, etc.
- 6 - Too late to travel home.
- 2 - A banquet after a full day's conference is too much
- 1 - Need to leave in time to prepare for Sunday worship
- 1 - Would mean spending two nights in Lewisburg, which is too expensive.
- 1 - Lunch together is enough

Other Comments

- "Thank you for letting us provide feedback."
- "Have two headline speakers. Ask researchers to have a poster session."
- "After 40 years of keeping bees as a hobby, what am I going to find out at PSBA?"
- "Offer activities on Sunday for those who choose to stay over, including "beekeeper church."

#3 Package

Honey Bees

For Sale

Available Monday, April 7, 2014

\$90.00

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