



The Pennsylvania Beekeeper

June-July 2016
Volume No. 6

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

Note that this newsletter is a double-month issue. A number of events will happen before you receive the next newsletter. The season is in full swing. Clubs across the state are more active than ever. The level of pro-active breeding for mite resistance and winter survivability has stepped up to be a primary goal of many beekeepers. The leaders and champions of this effort put in many hours and set much of their own things aside to make this happen. To battle mites by enhancing the honey bee's own genetic traits is a daunting effort. In the long-term, the bees need to do it. In the meantime each of us need to be diligent in controlling mites in our colonies.

EAS 2016 will take place in Stockton, New Jersey in July. The Short Course will be July 25-27th. The conference will be July 27-29th. If you are looking for cutting edge information, this is the place to be. Registration is open at <http://easternapiculture.org/conferences/eas-2016/2016-registration.html> Presenters include James Frazier and Dennis vanEngelsdorp, Jeff Pettis and Medhat Nasr, Maryann Fraizier, Sarah Red-Laird, David Tarp and [many more](#).

July 18-20 is the **2016 International Conference on Pollinator Biology, Health and Policy** at Penn State Campus, University Park, Pa.

A major theme of this year's conference will be translating the results of recent research advances in the biology and health of pollinators into solutions that can be applied in the field to conserve and expand pollinator populations. The conference will cover a range of topics in pollinator research, from genomics to ecology, and their application to land use and management, breeding of managed bees, and monitoring of global pollinator populations. Recent global initiatives in policy, education, and extension will also be highlighted.

Add to calendar  [iCal](#) PSBA is a sponsor.

Some changes are coming for the **2017 PA Farm Show**. These come from the management, not the committees. For

animal exhibitors, the pen/stall fees will increase. For Family Living and all Commodities, there will be a \$1 per exhibit fee. Exhibits entered late, Dec 16 – Jan 5th, will be \$2. All entrees must be done on-line, where fees will also be paid. As chairperson, I have contacted the Farm Show Manager with several concerns regarding the fees. The most complicated is getting honey into the correct color class. We hope to work with the Farm Show staff to allow class assignment on-site. The reason behind added fees is because other states do it and to generate revenue that can be re-invested into those areas of the Farm Show exhibits.

By now, everyone should have received their Farm Show premium checks. The premium money was attached to a portion of the state budget that did not get passed. Money was transferred from another fund to finally pay the premiums. If you did not get your premium check, please contact myself, Charlie Vorisek, vbeefarm@windstream.net, so that we can forward to the Farm Show staff.

UPCOMING PSBA Summer Picnic and business meeting is **August 6th**. This will be hosted by Fisher Bee Farm, centrally located just west of Lewistown, near McVeytown, PA. Fisher Bee Farm, the largest commercial beekeepers in Pennsylvania, was recently spotlighted in 100th anniversary PA Farm Show book. Please plan to attend and watch for additional information.

Meat and punch will be provided. Bring a casserole, veggie, dessert and beverage to share. Bring a queen to swap!

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News 'n Views (Continued from Page 1)

All county/association presidents or representatives are encouraged to attend the business meeting. We try to stay up-to-date on plans, programs and issues.

Penn State Ag Progress Days <http://agsci.psu.edu/apd> will follow **August 16-18th**. This is the second largest event for PSBA Promotions Committee each year. The PSBA **needs your help** to sell honey and to scoop and serve honey ice cream. This has fallen onto just a few people. They would greatly appreciate any help. Contact Aaron Fisher: aaron@fisherbeefarm.com 717-242-4373 or Stu Mathias 717-991-9948.

At the end of this year, PSBA will need a newsletter editor. Yvonne will be stepping down as Secretary-Treasurer, Membership chair and Newsletter editor, after 40 years. With the help of her husband Glenn and daughter, Debbie, the newsletter has been often taken for granted. They have done an excellent job for more years than some members have been alive. Yvonne has offered to help the transition for whomever steps up. Memberships and newsletter can be separated into separate tasks. Secretary-Treasurer is an elected position.

The PSBA board will entertain any ideas, suggestions, nominees or volunteers to continue the newsletter.

The '15-'16 winter loss survey conducted on the PSBA website had 509 respondents. The survey showed a 39.5% loss for Pennsylvania, slightly better than 43% a year ago and 41% of 2013-14 winter. The winter was milder, so reasons for losses didn't seem to be related to cold. Interestingly, 53% of the responses came from non-PSBA members. The survey was promoted by email and social media. About half surveyed had treated for mites. Starvation, mites, too small cluster and 'Other' were considered the most common reason for loss. It is a little hard to draw absolute conclusions for losses. It does help us to pay attention to what we are seeing. I've been told over the years that we should take our losses in the fall. In other words, combine those weaker colonies and food supplies to make a single stronger colony going into winter.

A great lineup of presentations are coming to the Annual Fall Meeting and Conference. This year's conference will be in State College, November 11-12th at the Day's Inn.

This conference is open to all membership. Watch for details.

Charlie Vorisek,
President PSBA
president@pastatebeekeepers.org

PSBA Summer Picnic and Queen Swap

The PSBA summer picnic will be held August 6th, hosted by Fisher Bee Farm, located at 1 Queen Bee Lane, McVeytown. (The same location as the picnic held two years ago, but the address has changed.) The Fisher's will be providing meats and punch. Guests are asked to bring a side dish and dessert to share. Also, please bring a lawn chair. The hosts will also have plating, cutlery and napkins on hand.

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

The Executive Board will meet at 10:00 a.m. with lunch to follow at 12:30 p.m. All clubs are encouraged to send a representative.

Make a queen swap from your really great colony. A queen swap will take place among anyone that wishes to share that great genetics.

Directions from Mt. Union:

At the 522 and 22 merger (just outside of Mt. Union), continue on 522N, 22E for approximately 7 miles to Ferguson Valley Road. Make a left hand turn onto Ferguson Valley Road, travel approximately 1 mile Queen Bee Lane will be on your left.

Directions from Lewistown:

Take the 522 South bypass at Lewistown, follow approximately 11 miles to red light in McVeytown. Continue straight on 522S/22W for 7 miles to Ferguson Valley Road. Make a right hand turn onto Ferguson Valley Road, travel approximately 1 mile Queen Bee Lane will be on your left.



2016 PSBA Special Edition to be Featured

The *Bee Culture Magazine* will be sharing our story of the 2016 Pennsylvania Farm Show with their readers in the August 2016 magazine. Bee Culture Editor, Kim Flottum, contacted PSBA President, Charlie Vorisek, with a request to publish our PA Farm Show Special Edition of *The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* newsletter.

Thank you to all who gave their time, effort, product, and knowledge to make the Farm Show a success along with a special thanks to those who shared their experience through words and photographs.

Yvonne Crimbring and Debbie Morse
Editors of *The Pennsylvania Beekeeper*

Nature Notes

Although the Sun and Earth will not line up for summer until about June 21, summer has already begun by June 1. Pennsylvania fields are carpeted with young corn and soybeans.

The big **honey-flow** for Chester County's honeybees is just about over: **locust** and **tulip poplar** trees are finishing their bloom. For the rest of the summer, the weight of a hive will slowly decrease as the bees produce slightly less honey than they use. A healthy hive can produce 600 pounds of honey in a year. That same colony may use about 550 pounds of honey to feed adults and larvae in the hive.

The health and success of a honeybee colony is determined by two factors: the **quality of the queen bee** (which should lay more than a thousand eggs a day from early spring until the end of summer) and the **number of Varroa mites** in the colony. Varroa mites arrived from the other side of the world about 1990, live only in honeybee colonies, and feed on the blood of bees and bee larvae. **An untreated hive will be killed by mites in three or four years.** Yes, someday mite-resistant bees will likely evolve somewhere in the Americas. Beekeepers who maintain hundreds of colonies may be able to watch for colonies that are not killed by mites. The wait could be tens, hundreds, or thousands of years. Backyard beekeepers have to treat their colonies for mites or the colonies will die in a couple of years. Mite treatment should be applied no later than mid-summer to give the colony time to raise the healthy bees that will winter over in the hive.

Monarch butterflies will reappear, descended from monarchs that survived the winter in Mexico and laid the eggs that became the monarchs we see in our gardens.

In the evening, **June bugs** may be batting against screen doors, attracted by light inside the house. June bugs are harmless. A pet screech owl once ate seventeen June bugs in one evening. Joining the June bugs at the screen door is a crowd of small gray and brown **moths**. Most of these insects do not feed as adults. Their winged life stage allows them to find a mate not as closely related to them as they might if they remained slow-moving caterpillars. Mixing genes leads to diversity. None of us is exactly like either of our parents. Diversity helps insure that some individuals will survive.

How many **surviving** young should a pair of tigers, butterflies, or house wrens produce to keep their population stable? Only two. But the world is a perilous place. Here's what happens in one backyard. "From Chester County in (SE) Pennsylvania, Steve Cottrell wrote in mid-May: "On my one acre lot, House Wrens presently have 5 nests with eggs, two with 7 eggs each, and another two boxes have completed nests which may show eggs in the next few days. Since each of the pairs are also likely to produce second clutches, the yard is on track for fledging 80+ House Wrens this season. Since the House Wren boxes with the smaller holes are set on the perimeter of the property against tall brush piles which line two sides, House Wrens are not interfering with the Eastern Bluebird and Tree Swallow nests which are positioned in the more open interior area." Thanks, Steve.

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Save the Date!

Beekeeping 102

Brought to you by Deb Delaney and Jim Bobb

Friday, November 11, 2016

9:00 AM – Noon

(Immediately prior to the PSBA Annual Meeting, Days Inn, State College, PA)

Bee Anatomy – A Look at Bees from the Inside Out

Beekeeping through the Year with a List of Top Ten Goals, Tips, and Techniques

Keeping Bees Alive over the Winter

Look on the PSBA website and future PSBA newsletters for more information on this edifying and enjoyable workshop.

Nature Notes (Continued from Page 5)



House Wren (Photo by dfaulder via Creative Commons)

Groundhogs (woodchucks) spend the summer trying to get fat enough to survive winter, and they pack on the pounds by



eating only **salad** (no dressing.)
Young Groundhogs
(Photo by Wobblyball via Creative Commons)

Clear, dark summer evenings are good for spotting Earth-circling, artificial **satellites**. Google <heavens-above> for a website that will show the time, direction, and height above the horizon of satellites. The International Space Station is the largest artificial satellite.

After dark, **Arcturus** is overhead. Follow the arc of the Big Dipper's handle to Arcturus. **Jupiter** is high in the southwest. Orange **Mars** is in the southeast. Near Mars is cream-colored **Saturn**.

Summer evenings are also a good time to remember what we

are made of. A **star** is a ball of **hydrogen gas** held together by gravity. Stars fuse hydrogen atoms into helium atoms. While gravity compresses a star, heat from fusion inflates the star. The star releases heat and light. When a star runs out of hydrogen, gravity begins to collapse it. The increased pressure raises the temperature, and the star fuses helium into elements up to, and including, iron. Every atom of iron in our blood was produced in a dying star. Finally, the star may really collapse and explode in a titanic release of heat and light. The final collapse fuses atoms into heavier elements like lead and gold.

Every atom in our bodies, except for hydrogen, was created long ago in a star. We are made of **stardust**.

Tim Sterrett



2016 Beekeeper of the Year Nominations Requested

Nominations are requested for the 2016 Beekeeper of the Year Award. This award is presented annually to a beekeeper that the committee feels meets the guidelines listed below. If you would like to nominate a fellow beekeeper, please write a letter of recommendation and send to Stewart Mathias, 514 Earlys Mill Rd., Hummelstown, PA 17036.

Guidelines for Beekeeper of the Year

The following rules are absolute:

1. Must be an active member.
2. Active membership for 15 years in the State Association
3. People that are employed in the honey bee industry, and whose full time job is funded by tax monies are excluded.

Judgments made by the committee:

- 1) The individual's role with the State Association.
- 2) The individual's innovations.
- 3) The individual's promotion of the industry.
- 4) Although members in county associations are desirable, it is not necessary.
- 5) Beekeeper score card (items for judgement by committee).

- Honey producer
- Efficient operation
- Queen Raiser
- Showmanship of apiary products
- Pollinator



Upcoming Dates To Remember



Deadline for the August issue of
The Pennsylvania Beekeeper is **July 25th.**

Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers

Monday, June 27, at the Pavilion at Hereford Manor Lake, Harmony. Speaker: Frank Licata (PA State Rep for Mann Lake) "Making Overwintering Nucs" Contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email pattie.zyroll@elkem.com or visit the website beavervalleybees.com

Burgh Bees

Tuesday, June 28, 7:00 p.m. at Dundee Farm, Sewickley. Meet Up: Pot luck supper, fellowship and educational discussion. For additional information, email Bob@burghbees.com

Franklin County Beekeepers

Thursday, June 30, 7:00 p.m. at the Ag Building, Chambersburg. Summer Newbie Workshop. Contact Randy King at 717-328-9256 for additional information.

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, July 6, 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, July 8 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. How the Harford Fair demonstration hive is prepared. Contact Jim Perkins at 570-967-2634 or visit www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

York County Beekeepers

Saturday, July 9, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Bill Sprenkle's Queen Breeding/Production Apiary. Field Day. Visit the website www.ycbk.org for more details or contact Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Wednesday, July 13, 6:30 p.m., location TBA. Club picnic. Visit LVBA website or contact Brett Dyer at 484-553-2967 for more information.

Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers

Saturday, July 16, 11 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden. Club Picnic. Speaker: TBA – RSVP by July 10th to Sr. Lyn (lynszym@comcast.net). Grilled chicken and burgers supplied – please bring a covered dish.

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Saturday, July 16, 11:00 a.m., location TBD. Annual Picnic. Contact Dan Boylan, dpboylan83@gmail.com or visit the website: www.montcobeekkeepers.org for more information.

North Central PA Beekeepers

Saturday, July 16, 1:00 p.m. at NY apiary. For more information email northcentralpabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com or contact Joan Bradley at 814-697-7586.

Burgh Bees

Saturday, July 23, 9:00 a.m. at Homewood Apiary, Pittsburgh.

Apiary Work Day. For additional information, email Bob@burghbees.com

Burgh Bees

Sunday, July 24, 11:00 a.m. at Homewood Apiary, Pittsburgh. Want to learn more about bees and beekeeping? Want to see inside a beehive? Come out to our Open Apiary. Limited to the first 15 people who register. Register by email to Lynnetta Miller at lynnettam@burghbees.com by 5:00 p.m. Friday, July 22.

EAS 2016

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

Franklin County Beekeepers

Thursday, July 28, 7:00 p.m. at the Ag Building, Chambersburg. Fall Newbie Workshop. Contact Randy King at 717-328-9256 for additional information.

Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers

Thursday, July 28, 6:30 p.m. at the Abington Community Library, Clarks Summit. For additional information, contact Renee Czubowicz, 570-335-3091 or Dr. Maggie Miller, 570-877-3064 or visit the club's Facebook page or website: Lackawanabackyardbeekeepers.blogspot.com

Northwest PA Beekeepers

Saturday, July 30, Ernst Seeds Field Day. For more information, contact Deb Chilcott at 814-398-8520 or visit the website www.nwpabeekeepers.com

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Saturday, July 30, at the Harford Fair Grounds. Fair cleanup and nominations for the following year. Contact Jim Perkins at 570-967-2634 or visit www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

Franklin County Beekeepers

Monday, August 1, 6:00 p.m. (weather permitting) at the Swamp Fox Apiary Chambersburg. Fall meeting. Contact Randy King at 717-328-9256 for additional information or call 717-375-2352 if in doubt due to weather.

North East PA Beekeepers

Wednesday, August 3, 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

PSBA Summer Picnic

Saturday, August 6 hosted by Fisher Bee Farm, McVeytown. See the article on Page 3 for additional information.

The Executive Board will be meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Burgh Bees

Sunday, August 14, 10:30 a.m. at Settlers Cabin Park – Apache Shelter. Annual Picnic. For additional information, email Bob@burghbees.com

Franklin County Beekeepers

Saturday, August 20, 9:00 a.m. Kingsland Apiary, Mercersburg. National Honey Bee Day, Picnic and Yard Sale. Contact Randy King at 717-328-9256 for additional information.

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Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers

Thursday, August 25, 6:30 p.m. at the Abington Community Library, Clarks Summit. For additional information, contact Renee Czubowicz, 570-335-3091 or Dr. Maggie Miller, 570-877-3064 or visit the club’s Facebook page or website:

Lackawanabackyardbeekeepers.blogspot.com

Montgomery County Beekeepers

Thursday, August 25, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Katie Lee, Midwest Honey Bee Tech-Transfer Team, Topic: Varroa Management (presentation via Skype). Contact Dan Boylan, dpboylan83@gmail.com or visit the website: www.montcobeekers.org for more information.

York County Beekeepers

Thursday, August 25, 7:00 p.m. at the York County School of Technology, York. Speaker: Meghan Milbrath, Topic: Sustainable Beekeeping Using Fall Nucs and Local Queens. Visit the website www.ycbk.org for more details or contact Jeremy Barnes at honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com

Northwest PA Beekeepers

Saturday, August 27, Albion Fairgrounds, Albion. Annual Picnic. For more information, contact Deb Chilcott at 814-398-8520 or visit the website www.nwpabeekeepers.com

North East PA Beekeepers

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

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA

Friday, September 9, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Contact Jim Perkins at 570-967-2634 or visit www.susquehannabeekeeping.com for updates.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers

Wednesday, September 14, 7:00 p.m., Kutztown University, Kutztown. Movie Night. Visit LVBA website or contact Brett Dyer at 484-553-2967 for more information.

2016 PSBA Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, November 11 & 12, at the Days Inn, State College. The theme is Audacious Ideas for the Future of Beekeeping and the keynote speakers will be Mark Winston and Keith Delaplaine. See additional information on Page 15.

Notice

Arlene Shaffer, wife of Robert Shaffer, passed away May 9th. Arlene not only accompanied Bob to the PSBA functions, she was an active member and took part serving on several committees. Bob has been an active member of PSBA, as he was President of the Association in 1979 and 1980, Beekeeper of the Year in 1994 along with serving on numerous committees. If you would like to send Bob a card, please send to: Robert Shaffer, 23 Oakwood Drive, Palmyra, PA 17078.

Jeremy’s Corner

In the light of the theme for the November Conference, **Audacious Ideas for the Future of Beekeeping**, here are two ideas involving rodents and soldiers with PTSD that relate to the big (VERY big) picture.

If a rat in a small cage is given two water bottles - one with just water, the other with water laced with morphine, heroin or cocaine - the rat will almost always prefer the drugged water even though it leads to its own demise.

This was the prevalent theory of addiction: drug dependency is a moral failing and we are inherently hedonists who party too hard until the brain is hijacked.

In 1981 Canadian psychologist Bruce K. Alexander and his colleagues at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, asked if the choice was a reflection of living conditions rather than the addictive properties of the drugs. So they built a kind of rat heaven: a colony 200 times the floor area of a standard laboratory cage, with 16–20 rats of both sexes in residence, food, balls and wheels for play, and enough space for mating. Everything a rat might want.

They also got both the water bottles - the contaminated and the normal water. Fascinatingly, in this environment, the rats chose the latter. To generalize the overall finding of some complex experiments, few of the rats overdosed, few developed a behavior that looked like compulsion or addiction.

Alexander argues that addiction is caused not by morality nor by our brains, but by our ‘cage.’ Addiction, he argued, is an adaptation to our environment. Large numbers of us cannot bear to be present in our lives without some form of drug. We’ve created a hyper-consumerist, hyper-individualist, isolated world whereas what we yearn for is connection with people, a sense of relationship, self worth and dignity. This is contrary to the prevailing message that skillfully trains us from a young age to focus our hopes, dreams and ambitions on things we can buy and consume. A dependence on money has replaced our direct relationships with one another and nature, and not only do we use money as the measure of our accomplishments but we relinquish control of our lives to institutions that control our access to money.

It is important to say that the findings remain controversial. The results have been difficult to replicate and it appears there might be a genetic component to the behaviors.

Driving home from our May beekeeper meeting, I listened to ‘On Point’ on the car radio, specifically an interview with

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Jeremy's Corner (Continued from Page 11)

Sebastian Junger, the author of "Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging." He described how, after months of combat during which "soldiers all but ignore differences of race, religion and politics within their platoon," they return to the United States to find "a society that is basically at war with itself. People speak with incredible contempt about — depending on their views — the rich, the poor, the educated, the foreign-born, the president or the entire U.S. government."

It's a formula for deep despair. "Today's veterans often come home to find that, although they're willing to die for their country," he writes, "they're not sure how to live for it."

The premise is simple: modern civilization may provide us with unimaginable autonomy and material bounty, but it has also deprived us of the psychologically invaluable sense of community and interdependence that we hominids enjoyed for millions of years. It is only during moments of great adversity that we come together and enjoy that kind of fellowship — which may explain why, paradoxically, we thrive during those moments. (In the six months after Sept. 11, Mr. Junger writes, the murder rate in New York dropped by 40%, and the suicide rate by 20%)

War, too, for all of its brutality and ugliness, satisfies some of our deepest evolutionary yearnings for connectedness. Soldiers have a chance to demonstrate their valor and loyalty, to work cooperatively, to show utter selflessness. Platoons are like tribes.

Back home we have "detrified". Our personal loyalties have shrunk to a universe the size of our homes (our immediate families, maybe a few friends;) we have little regard for what's collectively ours - we litter, we fudge on our taxes, medical providers defraud Medicare, bankers perform sleights of hand with the markets and destroy the commonweal.

Mr. Junger's asks why roughly 50% of our Iraq and Afghanistan veterans apply for permanent PTSD disability when only 10 percent of them saw combat? "The problem doesn't seem to be trauma on the battlefield," he concludes, "so much as re-entry into society."

Soldiers go from a world in which they're united, interconnected and indispensable to one in which they're isolated, without purpose, and bombarded with images of politicians and civilians screaming at one another on TV.

Is there any relevance for what we see in the behaviors of honey bees?

First, let's think of the cage analogy as the roughly 10 000 acres within which a colony of bees will forage. We know only too well that the gasses developed to kill people in the First World War (and they were damn good at it) were later adapted to kill insects. Arsenic and salts were replaced by organochlorines like DDT in the 50's, by organophosphates in the 70's, pyrethroids in the 80's and neonicotinoids in the 90's. These were massively applied to the monocultures, which replaced smaller diversified farms at the same time as new parasites, and pathogens from Asia and Africa were introduced and the world climate reacted to the environmental abuses of the Industrial Revolution.

And what if we shrink the dimensions of the cage to that of a beehive? Wax absorbs impurities from the atmosphere, much as our kidneys do on our bodies. Jim and Maryann Frazier, together with Chris Mullin, demonstrated that forager bees bring back to the hive an average of six different pesticides on the pollen they collect. Nurse bees use this pollen to make beebread, which they then feed to larvae. Over and above this are the chemicals that beekeepers themselves introduce into the colony.

So is the current behavior of the bees an unhealthy response to their macro and micro environments to the point that they are no longer capable of choosing the 'clean water' when it is available to them?

Bees also have some kind of long term memory, which we improperly understand. For example, how do bees know to prepare for a winter when none of them, except possibly the queen, has lived through a full year? Is it only a genetic response to changing daylight hours? And Tom Seeley demonstrates how, given choices, scout bees will unerringly choose the ideal dimensions for a future home. The means that those bees, who have never experienced any other abode, somehow know what the requirements are for sustainable living in terms of volume, height above ground, size of entrance, which direction it faces and ability to withstand moisture. How do they know this? Is it some kind of inherited long term memory?

Is it possible that honey bees can compare the ideal with reality, not least when we as beekeepers, apparently in the bees' interests, tear the roof of the house, fill it with smoke, separate the different stories, pull out the room dividers, turn the bees upside down (literally) and then reassemble that house often in a different order?

Perhaps the problem is that the bees, after having fought a war with the environment, have trouble reentering their own society. Are we witnessing PTSD at an insect level?

Jeremy Barnes

Please share the following
with your local municipality officials.

Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association Bee Friendly PA Program to Recognize Towns Encouraging Beekeeping

PITTSBURGH- June 20, 2016 – The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association (PSBA) is kicking off National Pollinator Week with the launch of its Bee Friendly PA Program, an effort designed to recognize communities throughout the Commonwealth for their efforts in supporting honey bee health through legislation, education, pest management, green space care and community support.

“Honey bee health is critical to supporting agriculture and gardening,” said Charles Vorisek, PSBA president. “With 40 percent of bee colonies failing each year, it’s important for communities to help support local beekeepers in order to sustain pollination. Our goal is to encourage discussions about the importance of bees and how cities and towns can support best practices in pest management, bee-friendly green space and community support for local beekeepers.”

Town managers who are interested in applying for Bee Friendly Community status can download an application from beefriendlypa.org. Applications will be reviewed by a PSBA committee on a rolling basis. The program is sponsored by Country Barn Farm, the Beaver Valley Area Beekeeping Association and Yakim’s Apiary.

Examples of best practices in the category of legislation include balancing community concerns with non-restrictive permitting for beekeepers, reasonable or no-cost permits, and roadway management that allows the growth of native plants. Communities using pollinator-friendly pest management solutions and green building and wastewater solutions that encourage plant growth will be considered favorably in those two categories. Other categories that will be considered are education – both community and school – and community support, which could be in the form of promoting local honey or hosting community apiaries or beekeeping clubs, as examples.

Contact:

Charlies Vorisek, PSBA
president@pastatebeekeepers.org

Josephine Posti, PSBA Bee Friendly PA Program
412.491.6481 Jo.posti@gmail.com

PSBA CONFERENCE

DAYS INN, STATE COLLEGE

Friday, Nov 11 and Saturday, Nov 12

Audacious Ideas for the Future of Beekeeping

Key Note Speakers

Mark Winston, author most recently of
‘Bee Time’

Keith Delaplane, currently featured in
the American Bee Journal

Presentations by

Karen Roccasecca
Dr. Christina Grozinger
Dr. Juliana Rangel
Dr. Zachary Huang
Dr. Eric Lonsdorf

Guest speaker at the Banquet:

Dr. Deb Delaney

New this year: Beekeeping 102

A special offering for newer beekeepers,
facilitated by Jim Bobb and Deb Delaney

Break out sessions to include

Building a Honey House
Speaking to Children about Honey Bees
The Pollinator Stewardship Council

Call 844-703-8082 to reserve a room
at the Days Inn and mention
the PSBA Conference for a reduced rate.

Free Bees

The program for the April 2015 SBA was entitled "Free Bees" presented by some of our beekeepers. Everyone knows that you can purchase bees as a package, nucleus or even a whole hive. Beekeepers worry about these purchased bees swarming, especially from mid-May to mid-July. Swarms can be a source of Free Bees. You can retrieve these bees or your neighbor's bees in several ways. We discussed these methods at the meeting.

First of all you can find a swarm hanging from a branch or have your friends and neighbors call you when they spot one. Always have a capture box at the ready to put the swarm in. The swarm may fly away while you are preparing a box. Hopefully the swarm is low enough that you can cut the branch off or shake the swarm into your box. Remove a few frames from the box and drop the bees in and close the box. If the queen is in the box with the bees you are successful. If the bees go back to the same place on the branch the queen probably did not fall into the box. You will need to do another stronger shake of the branch. After dark you can move the box of bees back to your apiary. If you need help capturing a swarm call someone on our swarm list on the club web site.

The second way to catch a swarm is to put out a bait hive. You can take an old deep hive and put foundationless frames in it with one frame of drawn comb against one side. A tube of queen lure from a beekeeping supply house and some lemongrass oil will aid in drawing the scout bees. A 1-1/4 inch entrance hole should be drilled in one end. A sheet of plywood screwed to the top and bottom will complete the bait hive. As an alternative a cube box can be made from plywood using six pieces about 15 inches square. The bait hive can be mounted to a tree facing south in partial shade. Search the web for Tom Seeley at Cornell for his booklet on bait hives.

A third method is a little more involved, but will get you free bees. If you know where there are bees in a tree or a building you can do a trap out. You will need a piece of number 8 welded wire hardware cloth, a nuc or hive with a frame of brood with eggs or one day old larvae. Make a funnel with

the hardware cloth with the small end the size of a pencil for the bees to escape. The large end needs to cover the bee entrance to the tree or building. All other entrances need to be closed out. Mount the funnel over the main entrance. Mount the nuc or hive with the entrance close to the wide end of the funnel. The bees will find their way out of the small end of the funnel, but not return to the small open end. They will find the nuc or hive, move in and start raising a new queen. After 6 or 7 weeks the bees in the tree or building will stop coming out. You can take the funnel off and let the bees rob out the remaining honey and take them home.

If you are really ambitious you can get your free bees by doing a cut out. This involves removing the siding from the outside of a build or cutting into the wall from inside. You will need a bee vacuum to collect the bees. You can buy one or build one with plans from the Internet. The comb with honey and brood are cut from the wall in pieces that can be installed in open foundationless frames with strings or rubber bands. The bees and frames of brood and honey are returned to your apiary and placed in a hive. Hopefully the queen was captured with the bees. If not the bees will raise a new queen with the eggs in the brood frames that you brought home.

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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 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.