

# Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

News Release MCBA

Vol. 92 Issue 2- April 2010

MCBA Motto: "*Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers*"

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## Spring 2010 Events:

### Calendar of Events

#### April

**April 14- Wed. 7:00 pm.** General Meeting- **4-H Center**  
**Hive Inspection** – How to Properly Inspect Your Hives and Spot Trouble. Speaker: Rob Snyder (former Inspector Bucks, Philadelphia, Montgomery, Chester Counties and current Penn State Research Assistant)

**April 21- Wed. 6:00 pm- 4-H Center** New Beekeepers –  
**Feeding Bees** (bring veil, no gloves) **6 pm** In the Beeyard: Feeding Bees. **7 pm-** In the classroom: Bee Equipment, Splitting Bees, and Swarming.

#### May

**No General Meeting in May.**

**May 19- Wed. 6:00 pm- 4-H Center** New Beekeepers –  
**Working Bees** (bring veil, no gloves) **6 pm** In the Beeyard: Working Bees **7 pm-** In the Classroom: Summer Management – Feeding Bees, Supering, Swarming Prevention & Warning Signs.

#### June

**June 16- Wed. 6:00 pm- 4-H Center** New Beekeepers –  
**Sugar Rolls & Mites** (bring veil, no gloves) **6pm** In the Beeyard: Sugar Rolls **7 pm** In the Classroom: Introduction to Mites.

**June 17- 7:00 pm 4-H Center-** General Meeting- **Note- This is a Thursday.** General Meeting – **Queen Rearing** – Queen Rearing on a Small Scale. Speakers: Mark Antunes and Brian Marcy; and **Beekeeping in France.** Speaker: Margaret Zittel.

#### July

**July 17- Saturday- 11 am- 4 pm- MCBA Summer Picnic** for the whole family at the **Militia Hill Day Use Area of the Fort Washington State Park.** Hotdogs, hamburgers and the fixings will be provided, bring a salad or desert. Games and contests will also be held.

**July 21- Wed. 6:00 pm- 4-H Center** New Beekeepers – New Beekeepers – **Treatments & Harvesting 6 pm** -In the Beeyard: Treatments (bring veil, no gloves) **7 pm** -In the Classroom: Harvesting Honey, Extraction. **July 23- 24- Friday & Saturday- All Day-** PSBA Summer Picnic [www.pastatebeekeepers.org](http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org) Erie County, PA.

#### August

**Aug. 2 – Aug. 6- Monday – Friday-** Eastern Apiculture Society Annual Meeting [www.easternapiculture.org](http://www.easternapiculture.org) Boone, North Carolina.

**Aug. 11 Wed.- 7:00 pm.** General Meeting- **4-H Center**  
**Healing Qualities of Honey, Allergies, Venom**



**Therapy and More.** Speakers: Vince Aloyo, Michaelen Pacholski, and Rebecka Drew.

**Aug. 25 Wed.- 6:00 pm-4-H Center** New Beekeepers –  
**Diseases & Treatments 6pm** In the Beeyard: Working with Bees (bring veil, no gloves) **7pm** In the Classroom: Bee Diseases & Treatments.

#### September

**Sept. 8 Wed. 7:00 pm.** General Meeting- **4-H Center**  
**Africanized Honey Bees** – Their Current Status in the U.S. and the PSBA Response Plan. Speaker: TBA.

**African Top Bar Hives** – Construction and Maintenance. Speaker: Linda Swyderski. **Tower Hives and Other Hive Constructions.** Speaker: Mark Antunes.

**Sept 22 Wed.- 6:00 pm-4-H Center** New Beekeepers – New Beekeepers – **Fall Management** (bring veil, no gloves) **6 pm** In the Beeyard: Mouseguards & Fall Managements **7pm** In the Classroom: Feeding Bees, Over-Wintering Bees, Over-Wintering Supers, The Beekeepers Year.

#### October

**October 2- Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual** **Bee Fest** –Speakers **Jerry Hayes, Apiary Inspection Assistant Chief** and **Dr. Christina Grozinger, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Entomology** at Penn State Location Temple Ambler Campus (See Article Below)

TBA- Fall Hive Irradiation

#### November

TBA-MCBA Annual Fall Banquet and Awards Ceremony –

TBA- PSBA Annual Meeting at the Country Cupboard

#### December

No Meeting, See you in 2011!



## **Communications with MCBA**

**Our address: MCBA PO Box 203 Hatfield, PA 19440.**

Use this address for any communication with MCBA. Remember, we send newsletters to you by email if you gave us your email address. Members who prefer a paper copy will still receive the newsletter by US Mail. If you don't receive event reminders by email, maybe we don't have your proper email address. Send a note to [montcabee@yahoo.com](mailto:montcabee@yahoo.com) with your name and we will update our records.

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## **IMPORTANT! HIVE LOSS SURVEY**

The Apiary Inspectors of America and the USDA-ARS Beltsville Bee Research Laboratory are seeking your help in tabulating the winter losses that occurred over the winter of 2009-2010. This continues the AIA/USDA survey efforts from the past 3 years which has been important in quantifying the losses of honey bees for government, media, and researchers.

This year's survey is faster, easier and does not require your time on the phone. It is all web based and automatic, just fill and click.

Please take a few moments to fill out our winter loss survey at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/beeloss0910>

This survey will be conducted until April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**We would also appreciate it if you would forward this information to other beekeepers. The more responses the better.**

If you have any questions or concerns please email [beeloss@gmail.com](mailto:beeloss@gmail.com), or [Honeybee.Survey@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Honeybee.Survey@aphis.usda.gov)

Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Jeff Pettis; USDA-ARS Beltsville Bee Research Laboratory

Dennis vanEngelsdorp; Penn State University  
Jerry Hayes; Florida Department of Agriculture  
Dewey Caron; University of Delaware and Oregon State University



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## **HOST-A- HIVE PROGRAM**

MCBA member, Suzanne Matlock, is directing the Host a Hive Program. At present, she has a list of about dozen people who would like to host hives on their property. MCBA has developed an agreement by which the host purchases the package of bees and the MCBA member provides the woodenware and the labor. In some cases, the hosts are interested in participating in hive management and expressed their desire to work alongside the MCBA member.

It is time for you to raise your hand if you want to take advantage of the opportunity. Potential host locations exist in the following areas:

Ambler, Doylestown, Gwynedd, Philadelphia, Upper Black Eddy (NE of Quakertown), and Albany Twp (Berks Co.).

Express your interest as soon as possible by emailing [Host-A-Hive@montcabeekeepers.org](mailto:Host-A-Hive@montcabeekeepers.org). Be sure to include your name, preferred contact info – either e-mail or phone number – and list the top three locations which interest you. If there are no locations that currently interest you, please describe where you would be willing to place hive(s) and how many.

You will be connected with your host by MCBA member Suzanne Matlock who is the current point of contact for the Host-A-Hive Program. It will be important for us to contact our hosts shortly in order to assess the locations they're offering. When both the host and you agree on your partnership, you'll want to make arrangements for your new packages or splits from your current hives.

This program will be an important way to keep people interested in the activities of MCBA and increase the honey bee population in Montgomery County, PA. A pamphlet describing the MCBA Host-A-Hive Program is available on our website.

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## **2010 Beginners Off to a Good Start**

As some of you may know, last year we had a record number of beginner beekeepers take the Beginner Beekeeping Course and Join the MCBA. Surfeit has it challenges; the most pressing of which was finding a room large enough to accommodate 70 beginner beekeepers when we were scheduled for a room that held 25. After completely rescheduling the dates and location of the class and holding the second class in two separate sessions for those getting early packages and those getting later packages; we managed to finish in sound fashion.

Not wanting to repeat that circumstance again, for 2010 the Maple room which is the largest classroom in the 4-H facility was reserved. It holds up to 90 and the class was closed out at 70 students. To date we have met twice and thanks to the sharp record keeping of Priscilla Bonsell and Sandy White all who have attended have received their text book and course outline and been recorded as such. The class has been instructed on assembling hive equipment and what equipment they need to purchase, general bee biology, locating hives, how to use a smoker, plus ordering and installing packages. The group has been great to work with and range in age from preteens to senior citizens. I commend all of you for your efforts, questions, and eager attitude.

Some of our experienced beekeepers have been there and made themselves available to the beginners. In

particular Keith Snedeker and Jesse Howe who were there at most of last year's meetings have returned to lend a hand. They are not to be out done by our 4-H hive steward Harold Jenkins who not only serves up great beekeeping tips during the bee yard inspections and class but functions as our own version of Martha Stewart with a touch of the Wizard of OZ. I have found myself saying "Pay no attention to man behind the curtain" while Harold clatters around the kitchen. He routinely brings the coffee pot and coffee along with whatever cookies he decides to serve and disappears behind the folding divider that separates the classroom from the kitchen. As I am teaching in front of the divider Harold is rattling around behind it brewing, slicing, boiling, opening packages of his delectable goodies, and carefully arranging them on platters that entice even the most strong willed dieters to taste just a little. And then presto, he opens the dividers and serves in grand style with a side order of beekeeping wisdom for any who ask. I am delighted to say that this year's class has followed in the footsteps of others at MCBA by bring excellent desserts to share with the rest of the class. I really commend all of you who have done that!

Finally, we really caught a break with the recent warm spell and were able to open the hives and pass frames of comb with larva, pollen, honey, and bees around to all of the students who came in time for the bee yard session. I was a genuine treat for me to have that opportunity so early in the season with so many curious beginners all around me. The bees were beautifully behaved. Even the one that got under my veil and down my shirt walked out without stinging me. What a satisfying experience the entire evening was. I thank everyone involved.

*Mark Antunes*

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### **PSBA INFO**

The PSBA website, [www.pastatebeekeepers.org](http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org), has articles and announcements of beekeeping classes and other issues of concern to the PA beekeeping community. To join PSBA, contact the MCBA treasurer or email [treasurer@pastatebeekeepers.org](mailto:treasurer@pastatebeekeepers.org).

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### **Observations From the Apiary April 2010**

Welcome spring! After a winter with more snow than I can remember for quite some time I am looking forward to more warm days like we recently experienced. Last spring and summer were very challenging for bees and beekeepers alike. The extreme wet weather in the spring and early summer limited the flight days available to the bees and when they did get out the nectar was not as abundant as it normally is. Then the in later part of the summer and fall the nectar flow was weak. The net result was that there was no worthy amount of late honey production for the bees to take in as winter stores. If you were like me, you were feeding a lot of sugar syrup to sustain the bees through the winter.

In my discussions with other beekeepers I have found many who have experienced more than incidental winter losses. Hopefully this season will be better and the weather more conducive to beekeeping and a quality honey harvest.

The recent unusually warm weather has stimulated even the weak hives and I am seeing lots of pollen being brought in. If you did not get into all of your hives during the warm spell you missed an excellent opportunity to seriously evaluate the condition of your colonies. I am always surprised by beekeepers that don't open their hives for over a month and try to evaluate their condition by just looking at the activity at the entrance. It is true that some understanding of the hive can be gleaned by noting the amount of bees flying in and out and checking to see if pollen is being brought in but that is only part of the story.

A case in point is that of a gentleman who I have been mentoring in beekeeping. He has sent me e-mail reports about what is going on in each hive on a regular basis during the late winter and early spring. He has observed the bees so carefully at the hive entrance that he knows the general color characteristics of each hive and can tell which bees drinking at the bird bath come from what hive. After several reports during the last month I paid him a visit. We did something he had not done and opened all the hives inspecting most of the frames in both the top and bottom deeps.

I assigned a grade to each hive. One hive rated an "A" with lots of brood, pollen, and stores being brought in. A second hive I would rate as a "C-" with a smaller population of bees less brood, pollen, and stores. The third hive had more bees than the second and a queen that moved well on the comb, but no eggs or brood. The queen is apparently sterile. I rate that hive as an "F". If it was later in the season and queens were readily available I would re-queen. At this time of year we will kill the queen and simply combine that hive with another a few miles away that needs more bees. Needless to say my pupil was very surprised that the third hive was not going to survive for long without radical intervention on our part.

The bottom line for me is you have to open the hives and really find out what is going on in there on a frequent basis and particularly at critical times of the season. And when the weather provides an unusual gift of excellent days as we recently experienced do some serious investigating in your hives. What you find in a timely fashion and counter act may determine if a colony will survive or perish, thrive or under perform. Ultimately beekeeping is a hands-on endeavor that goes beyond occasionally looking into the hives. So get your gear in order and get into those boxes as soon as you can.

Good luck to all of you and your bees as we progress into the new season.

*Mark Antunes*

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## Southeastern Pennsylvania Honey Bee Symposium 2010

Planning is well underway for our second annual **Southeastern Pennsylvania Honey Bee Symposium**, which will happen on Saturday, October 2, 2010. For this year's meeting we are targeting beekeepers and will have information of value to beginners and long-time beekeepers. We have reserved two rooms in the Temple Ambler Learning Center: the auditorium plus a classroom large enough to hold 100 people. The program will be partially separated into two parts. One section will be for beginners and the other for advanced beekeepers.

For the advanced section, two speakers have agreed to address our event. We are very fortunate that **Jerry Hayes, Apiary Inspection Assistant Chief** for the state of Florida will speak. Jerry is the author of the monthly column "The Classroom" in the American Beekeeping Journal. Jerry has also written a book of the same name. We are also delighted that **Dr. Christina Grozinger, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Entomology** at Penn State will also be speaking. Dr. Grozinger will give a talk on "Social Communication in Honey Bees: Effects on Colony Health and Productivity" and another on Queen Breeding. Additional events are in the planning stage.

*Vincent Aloyo*

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## Family Fun for All- MCBA 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Movie Night

It was another fantastic evening at the MCBA Annual Movie night. We had a great potluck meal and watched 'Antz' about a worker ant who falls in love with an ant princess and runs into a lot of trouble. After seeing 'Antz', we had an extra treat- Jim Bobb appearing in the recently released film, 'Nicotine Bees,' by Kevin Hanson. 'Nicotine Bees' is a documentary about CCD. In the movie, a group of beekeepers go through all the possible causes of CCD to find out what has changed since this disorder started to happen. They eliminate most of the possible causes because they were already present before CCD started. The one thing that has changed is the type of pesticides farmers, landscapers and home owners are using. The pesticides causing the problem are called neonicotinoids. They are made from synthetic nicotine compounds. A major use of these pesticides is to coat corn and soybean seeds. The chemical is systemic and travels through the plant as it grows ending up in the pollen and nectar where the bees feed. 'Nicotine Bees' is a must see for every beekeeper. It is available on Amazon.com and the club will have a few copies to loan out at the next meeting. 'Nicotine Bees' is really a must see and would be great to share with your non-beekeeping friends.

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## Montgomery County 4-H Beekeeping Club

MCBA is affiliated with the 4-H Beekeeping Club that meets at the same time as the beginner's course. All kids ages 8 to 18 as of January 1, 2010 are eligible to join. Owning hives is not necessary; there are hives at the 4-H Center in Skippack. Experienced 4-H kids will lead activities like cooking with honey, bee anatomy and flower dissection. This year all 4-H meetings will be held on Wednesdays.

Join us for fun and educational activities. Contact Michaelleen at [FourH@MontCoBeekeepers.org](mailto:FourH@MontCoBeekeepers.org) or 610-409-0284 (evenings) if interested in joining the 4-H Beekeeping Club.

## Bring Your Paper Recyclables to 4-H

Please help 4-H to raise funds to keep their programs going. Bring your paper recyclables to the center when you come for meetings and place them in the Papertriever in the parking lot. 4-H offers many excellent youth programs that teach our children about the environment, animal care, and crafts.

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## Recipe of the Season

Here's a recipe for those spring vegetables we're expecting any day now.

### Honey Lemon Buttermilk Dressing

1/4 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest  
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
1 heaping Tablespoon of honey  
1/2 Cup buttermilk  
1/2 Cup of mayonnaise  
Fresh tarragon chopped  
Salt and Pepper

Beat all ingredients together and use on steamed broccoli or other veggies, or on spring salad. Enjoy!



# MARKETPLACE



Marketplace is a feature to our newsletter. If you have beekeeping-related products to sell or services to offer, send your advertisement to the newsletter editor at:

[News@montcobeepers.org](mailto:News@montcobeepers.org)

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## Southeast Pennsylvania

## SPRING PACKAGES

Available for Pickup Friday, April 30\*.

(\* Actual date depends on weather.)

Order your packages now for pickup Friday, April 30\*. At 2:00 P.M. on the day of pickup, see a demonstration on installing package bees. Conveniently located in the exact center of Montgomery County near Valley Forge, Norristown, and Lansdale turnpike exits. Package cost is \$83.00 which includes 3-pounds of workers with an unmarked Italian queen. April queens also are available. Queens can be marked and/or clipped for a small additional fee. For questions or ordering information, contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 or [JimBobb@Verizon.net](mailto:JimBobb@Verizon.net).



**We are new beekeeper friendly. Call or e-mail for advice, help, or a sympathetic ear.**

Worcester Honey Farms, 2011 Shearer Road, Lansdale, PA 19446

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## HIVE EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

**NEW PRE-ASSEMBLED HIVES AND INDIVIDUAL DEEPS OR MEDIUMS, WITH FRAMES AND WAX COATED PLASTIC FOUNDATION. COMPLETE HIVE WITH TWO DEEPS AND TWO MEDIUMS \$195 OR 5 MEDIUMS \$210. Inner cover, outer cover, screened and solid bottom boards, plus metal queen excluder included.**

**For additional pricing and to order call Mark Antunes at 215-257-7121.**

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**FOR SALE: A.I.ROOT-Two frame mechanical extractor, hand operated. Comes with new set of gears. \$75.00**

**6.1 CUBIC FOOT HONEY PROCESSING TANK/VESSEL-** Galvanized circular tank,has flat bottom, with carrying handles,no legs,tank is fitted with a 1 1/2 inch diameter drain port above the base. It also comes equipped with a 1 1/2 inch Syracuse, NY honey drain valve. Asking \$100 or best offer.

Contact:

Bill Jasulaitis

610-275-1106

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*The MCBA Marketplace is provided as a convenience for MCBA members and others. The inclusion of ads is at the discretion of the MCBA editors, and is neither an express nor an implied endorsement of any particular product or seller.*

## MCBA Beekeeping Course Calendar 2010

<u>February 2010</u>				
Wed	Feb. 17	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Hands On: Assembling Equipment</b> Welcome to Beekeeping – Sign In and Introductions, Equipment, Packages, Assembly and Location of Hives
<u>March 2010</u>				
Wed	Mar. 17	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Lighting Smokers &amp; Installing Packages</b> 6pm In the Beeyard: Lighting Smokers (bring yours!) 7pm In the Classroom: preparing for package arrival, equipment, packages, assembly and location of hives (review), Installing packages, When and How to Use Smoke
<b>Sat*</b>	Late March-early April	<b>9:00 am - Noon</b>	Worcester Honey Farms	<b>Packages Arrive from Georgia. Special Saturday Class</b> at Worcester Honey Farms, 2011 Shearer Road, Landsdale, PA Installing Package Bees Demo, Feeding Packages Demo, Lighting Smokers (optional bring your smoker) *Date & time subject to change based on weather and bees. Call Jim Bobb to confirm at 610-584-6778*
<u>April 2010</u>				
Wed	Apr. 21	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Feeding Bees</b> (bring veil, no gloves) 6pm In the Beeyard: Feeding Bees 7pm In the Classroom: Bee Equipment, Splitting Bees, and Swarming
<u>May 2010</u>				
Wed	May 19	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Working Bees</b> (bring veil, no gloves) 6pm In the Beeyard: Working Bees 7pm In the Classroom: Summer Management – Feeding Bees, Supering, Swarming Prevention & Warning Signs
<u>June 2010</u>				
Wed	Jun. 16	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Sugar Rolls &amp; Mites</b> (bring veil, no gloves) 6pm In the Beeyard: Sugar Rolls 7pm In the Classroom: Introduction to Mites
<u>July 2010</u>				
Wed	Jul. 21	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Treatments &amp; Harvesting</b> 6pm In the Beeyard: Treatments (bring veil, no gloves) 7pm In the Classroom: Harvesting Honey, Extraction
<u>August 2010</u>				
Wed	Aug. 25	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Diseases &amp; Treatments</b> 6pm In the Beeyard: Working with Bees (bring veil, no gloves) 7pm In the Classroom: Bee Diseases & Treatments
<u>September 2010</u>				
Wed	Sep. 22	6:00 pm	4-H Center	New Beekeepers – <b>Fall Management</b> (bring veil, no gloves) 6pm In the Beeyard: Mouseguards & Fall Managements 7pm In the Classroom: Feeding Bees, Over-Wintering Bees, Over-Wintering Supers, The Beekeepers Year



# News Release MCBA VOLUME 92 ISSUE 1 January 2010

*MCBA Motto: "Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers"*

## MCBA OFFICERS and Executive Committee Members – 2010

President	Mark Antunes	president@montcobeekkeepers.org
Vice President	Brian Marcy	vicepres@montcobeekkeepers.org
Secretary	Allison Uehling	secretary@montcobeekkeepers.org
Treasurer	Priscilla Bonsell	treasurer@montcobeekkeepers.org
Exec Comm Mem	Charlie Breinig	charlienospam-bee@yahoo.com
Exec Comm Mem	Harold Jenkins	--
Exec Comm Mem	Vince Aloyo	aloyo@verizon.net
Newsletter Editor	Judith Finkelstein	news@montcobeekkeepers.org
PSBA Rep	Harold Jenkins	--

**MCBA WEBSITE!** [www.montcobeekkeepers.org](http://www.montcobeekkeepers.org)

Check out the MCBA website for news updates and items of interest. Pass the address to anyone you know that may be interested. Email addresses have also been set up so you can communicate with the board.

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association  
**MCBA PO Box 203**  
**Hatfield, PA 19440**  
Return Service Requested

