

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

News Release MCBA

Vol. 94 Issue 3 – July 2012

MCBA Motto: “Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers”

Summer 2012 Calendar of Events

July

July 2 – Beginner Beekeeping Course, 4-H Center in Creamery, PA at 6:00 p.m.

July 10 - Executive Board Meeting, Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

July 21 – Annual Summer Picnic

NEW LOCATION

Evansburg State Park, Skippack, PA,
11:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

See below for details and directions.

July 30 – Beginner Beekeeping Course, 4-H Center in Creamery, PA at 6:00 p.m.

August

August 14 - Executive Board Meeting, Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

August 13-17 – EAS, Burlington VT, see below for details, and www.easternapiculture.org

September

September 4– General Meeting in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery, PA, at 7 pm. “Organic Beekeeping and Bio-dynamic Beekeeping”

September 10 – Beginner Beekeeping Course, 4-H Center in Creamery, PA at 6:00 p.m.

September 11 - Executive Board Meeting, Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.



Hive Practices: Monitoring and Testing for American Foul Brood

American Foul Brood (AFB) is one of the worst honey bee diseases that a beekeeper can face. AFB is a highly contagious bacterial disease caused by *Paenibacillus* larvae that kills infected honey bee larvae in their late larval or early pupal stages. Honey bee larvae up to three days old are susceptible to infection and become infected by eating brood food containing AFB spores.

The causative bacteria form a spore that remains capable of causing infection for decades. Once a colony becomes infected with AFB, the entire hive including the pollen and honey remain contaminated with AFB spores which eventually destroy the colony.

AFB spores are spread by the beekeeper moving infected frames or other woodenware among hives, by robber bees, by drifting bees, and by **beekeepers using contaminated gloves or tools in healthy hives**. Many states, including Pennsylvania, recommend the burning of the entire infected hives as the only effective treatment of AFB. Fortunately in our area, we have the possibility of decontaminating the hive by gamma irradiation, thus saving the valuable comb and woodenware. This year, no PA state inspector will be available to assist us in detecting AFB infected hives. We as beekeepers must band together to prevent the spread of this highly contagious and deadly brood disease.

The first critical step for beekeepers in preventing the spread of AFB is monitoring and detection. Each

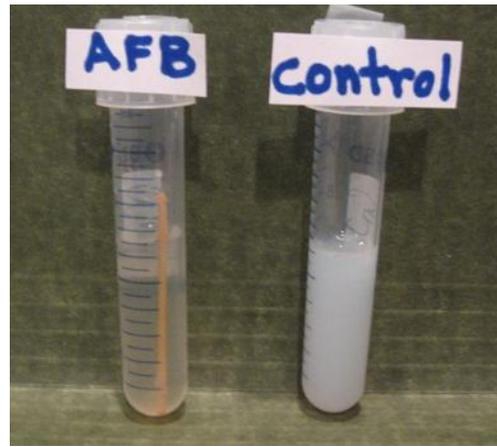
beekeeper MUST learn to recognize the symptoms of this disease. Although only very young larvae are susceptible to infection by AFB spores, a larva does not die until its larval honeycomb cell is capped. Bees detect the dead larva and investigate by partially uncapping the cell. Thus, the first clue to a possible AFB infection is sunken capping with tiny holes. Each time you look at a frame containing capped brood you MUST scan the frame for abnormal cappings.

Since punctured capping can be a sign of other problems in a colony, the next step in monitoring for AFB is the "roping test." A thin twig or tooth pick is inserted into the suspected cell and moved in a stirring motion. The twig is then slowly withdrawn from the cell. If the cell contents cling to the twig or toothpick to form a string or rope (see photo) the larva is probably infected with AFB.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_foulbrood

An additional detection test for AFB includes the Holst Milk test. This test was routinely performed by PA state inspectors as a secondary field test for detecting AFB contaminated larvae. A 1% powdered milk and water solution is prepared by adding 1 teaspoon of powdered milk to ½ cup of cold water and mixing gently until the powdered milk is completely dissolved. Place approximately ½ teaspoon of the powdered milk solution into each of two clear containers (test tubes are best). Using a twig or tooth pick, add a diseased larva to one container (to detect AFB) but nothing to the other (as a control sample). Keep both containers warm (close to body temperature, about 95 degrees F); your shirt or inside pocket will work. In about 20 minutes, compare the clarity of the two samples. If positive for AFB, the suspected AFB samples will (partially) clarify the milk, a change that will be evident when compared against the control sample which will look like the original 1% milk solution. Although this test is good, it is NOT 100 % reliable. Below is an example of the effects of a larva infected with AFB on powdered milk.



© Vince Aloyo

See http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/holst_milk_test.html

Another, very reliable and rapid test kit was recently developed for consumer use by Vita Europe. The Vita test kit makes use of an antibody which is very specific for a protein found only in AFB. **This kit is available through MCBA and from Dadant (catalog #M00133).** The kit contains all that you need to test for AFB except for disposable gloves. Use the test kit's spatula to remove as much of the suspect diseased larva from a honeycomb cell as possible. Place the sample in the test kit's 'extraction' jar and shake vigorously for about 20 seconds. Using the test kit's eye dropper, place only TWO (2) drops of sample at the indicated place on the included test slide. Wait until the control line appears (labeled C) and read the result (c1-3 minutes). The line at C must appear for the test to be valid. A second line will appear at 'T', if the sample contains AFB.

<http://www.vita-europe.com/products/afb-diagnostic-test-kit/>

Tip and Tidbits By Mark Antunes Early Summer

I recently got a question from Susan, a beginner beekeeper, who asked what she should do now that her hives had filled three mediums with drawn comb, brood, and stores. She wants to avoid swarming and doesn't know what she should do with her other supers that have only frames and foundation.

Dear Susan,

Your questions are all in line with what a first year beekeepers experiences. My responses to your questions are as follows:

1. Now that your colonies have drawn out three boxes of comb you can stop feeding for the moment if you want to. Monitor them and see if they bring in nectar. The nectar flow is

diminishing but Dutch clover and Sumac is available now.

2. By all means add another super to give them space. Try making a double switch. First find the queen and make sure she is in the bottom two supers. Then take a super that is drawn out off of the hive and put an empty one on top of the other two. Put your queen excluder on top of the new super that has just frames and foundation. Then put the super you pulled off of the hive on top of that. Now you have given them space below the queen excluder and restricted the queen from laying eggs in the drawn comb above the super. That should help reduce the mid-summer population; a time when you don't need as many bees because there is no major nectar flow to gather, and keep the drawn comb above the queen excluder free of brood and available for honey storage.
 3. Don't worry about breaking up the brood nest at this time of year. The weather is warm and the bees in a strong colony will be able to keep it warm.
 4. If the nectar flow is still on in your area and you have enough frames of capped honey to fill a box, you can use it as a natural queen excluder by putting that on top of the brood boxes with the queen below it. She generally will not cross a full frame of honey to lay eggs above it. In your case, you could configure the hive to have two boxes of brood on the bottom, the box of honey on the brood boxes, and a new box on top of them that the bees can draw out and not have the queen lay eggs in. If the nectar flow is mostly over, the bees will not draw out new comb. They will use whatever nectar they can harvest to feed larvae.
 5. Finally, be alert for signs of low food supplies and starvation as we move into real summer conditions. With the onset of spring early this year the annual bloom cycle has been accelerated ahead of its normal calendar schedule. This means that the traditional mid-summer dearth of nectar may happen sooner and last longer than normal. You may need to start feeding again to keep your colonies alive. If you don't, the net result may be a cessation of new brood being raised and the possible starvation of the adult bees. After all of the work you have done and expense you incurred to get your colonies to flourish, it would be a loss that represents all of that and more – no colony to over winter for next spring.
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Give a Bee-g Welcome to MCBA's New Public Speaker Coordinator- Katie Pietrak

Katie Pietrak has generously offered to serve as MCBA's new Public Speaker Coordinator. *Thank you Katie!* Katie resides in Telford and grew up in Philadelphia and has a background in Corporate Finance. She was able to escape the corporate-life a year ago and started her business, Vintage Vinyl Journals (www.vintagevinyljournals.com), which up-cycles vintage LP albums and turns them into writing journals. After her parents moved from Philadelphia to Telford and hearing her father talk about bees and wanting to become a beekeeper many years ago she decided on the perfect Christmas gift for him -- sign them both up for beekeeping class and start raising bees! After being taught by Jim Bobb they have since been hooked and enjoy having a shared hobby.

She finds that beekeeping is a great conversation topic and people are fascinated with the subject. Katie deems herself as a "bee's best friend" as she has never once been stung by a bee. She is far from an expert beekeeper but is always anxious to learn more and is passionate about bees and educating others about her "little winged friends" and their importance in the environment. Katie is an active member and volunteer in many local organizations and loves increasing the public awareness of the benefits of beekeeping and the mission of the MCBA. In this role Katie will coordinate requests for local speakers in the area as well as house the MCBA training materials for the speakers to use. She can be reached at katielovesbees@gmail.com or 215-915-6421.

Farm Show Theme Contest – Your Help Needed

In January 2013, the American Beekeeping Federation will meet in Hershey at the same time the Pennsylvania Farm Show occurs. Beekeepers from across the country will visit the Farm Show apiary exhibits. MCBA has entered a group exhibit for several years and in the past we have created our display in just a few weeks before the show. This year we would like to put more time and effort into making the display. We need your help in deciding on a theme and design! Submit your ideas to Priscilla at cillab@earthlink.net. We will vote on entries at the September General Meeting and the winning entrant will receive a t-shirt of his/her choice.

Our exhibit must have apiary products from at least five beekeepers from MCBA. The display must promote honey, be developed around a specific theme and be designed with a goal of educating the public. The use of bee equipment is discouraged, except as back ground material. The display space is 8' wide, 4' deep, 4' high and is elevated approximately 30" off the floor on a specially built table.

Displays are judged on the following:

Public appeal	10 points
Attractiveness, grammar and professional appeal	10 points
Educational value	20 points
Variety and quality of bee products	20 points
Originality	20 points
Time and effort of exhibitor	<u>20 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points

Farm Show 2012 MCBA Display



Call to Action!

In 2010, the Pennsylvania Food Safety Act was created to regulate home food processors, such as people who bake or can in their homes and sell at farmers' markets. Unfortunately, honey was included in the list of products. A grass roots effort has been started to amend the law. We need every beekeeper in Pennsylvania, their friends, relatives and customers to contact their state legislators and ask them to support an amendment to Act 106 of 2010 (The Food Safety Act), exempting hobby beekeepers. You can find your legislators at this website:

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/#address>

Currently, the law requires anyone processing honey in their home to obtain a home food processing registration. This involves obtaining permission from

your township, having your water tested if you have a well, filling out an application, having your home inspected, and paying a \$35 annual fee. More information is available at www.eatsafepa.com. There is a \$5,000 fine for noncompliance.

Please write, email or call your legislators today. Here is a sample letter. If emailing, put Act 106 of 2010 in the subject line.

Dear Legislator,
I am writing to you today to request that you support an amendment to Act 106 of 2010 soon to be sponsored by Rep. Sandra Major and Rep. Tina Pickett. Act 106 is counterproductive to the production of honey by hobby beekeepers in Pennsylvania and they should be exempt from this law. The majority of registered beekeepers in Pennsylvania have 25 or fewer colonies, yet they contribute enormously to local pollination. The Commonwealth has a legitimate responsibility to protect the public from dangerous food products, but honey should not be included. Honey is the only food that is not perishable and the "processing" consists only of extracting and bottling.

Pollination of flowers, fruit trees and gardens is a service of great value to the public and to our environment. Most of us sell honey to help underwrite our hobby or to bring in a relatively small return on our investment of time, labor and resources. Beekeeping is more challenging and expensive than in the past, and we have seen a loss of beekeepers as well as honey bees. The fee of \$35, along with the registration process and penalty for non-compliance, can be a serious detriment to beginning beekeeping, as well as to long term beekeepers. This law has already effectively put some beekeepers out of business. Another consequence of this law would be to make local raw or natural honey almost impossible for the consumer to find and legally purchase. Also, due to the likely reduction of supply from small producers the price of honey would increase.

The beekeepers of Pennsylvania would appreciate your support in changing Act 106.

Sincerely,
Name
Address
Phone
Email

For more information or to get on the list to be informed of future Act 106 developments contact the Act 106 Committee of the Susquehanna Beekeepers Assn.
Richard Chapin, Chairman
oldbeekeeper@epix.net
James Barber
jbeekeeper@hotmail.com
John Brunner
elsejohnmolly@gmail.com

Plenty of Time to Prepare for the EAS Honey Show

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

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

Honey Show Foibles

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

Hm, what else? I've never yet entered a photography class, but I've heard of people arriving with their photos framed (not allowed), mounted incorrectly, or wanting to enter whole stack (only one entry per class permitted). I've heard of exhibitors getting pretty steamed at the volunteers at the drop-off table. Before the Rules were published they were examined with a fine-tooth comb by

the Honey Show Committee, and are very clear. Please read them carefully! EAS volunteers and judges will be using the same Rules you are using and there should be no need for any disputes. Have you ever noticed that the angriest you've ever been was when you were angry at yourself? Please be kind to the volunteers and honest with yourself.

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

Remember, EAS is 8/13-17. People can come to the Short Course (2½ days of workshops and bee-yard instruction), or the Conference (2½ days of presentations both large and small), choose a single day to visit, or stay the whole 5 days! Registration begins in May.

Anne Frey

Read All About It!

Bees and the Threat of Insecticide Use

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Science/2012/0329/Are-bees-threatened-by-insecticide-use-New-studies-say-yes.-video>

Honeybee Fest is in need of volunteers.

Please contact Mark Antunes at honeyhillfarm@verizon.net to volunteer and make this event happen.

Website Update

In case you haven't noticed - the MCBA website is back in action! Check it out at montcobeekeepers.org. Becky Brewer, our website guru, has updated the site and is looking for content. We would like to start a marketplace section which would list bee keeping items for sale or items wanted, people with hives looking for a host and people willing to host hives, and honey and other hive products for sale. **Do you sell your honey at stores or farmers' markets? Please let us know where.** Many people search our website for places to purchase local honey. Also, if you have a link, tidbit, news or information you would like to see on the website, send it to:

MCBAwebsite@gmail.com

MCBA is also looking for a website assistant to gather information for the website and edit and fact check the information for Becky's monthly posting. If you are interested, send an e-mail to the above address.

JOIN IN! **The Annual Picnic Smoker Lighting Contest**

What do we need?

1. We need lots of Contestants for our Picnic's Smoker Lighting Contest! Be prepared to have your fuel inspected and discuss your technique after the contest.
2. We also are looking for some Judges - 2 per contestant if available and at least 1 with a stopwatch (Please bring a watch)
3. Smokers and fuel – enough fuel for two long burns.

How does the competition work?

The competition will consist of three contests -

1. The successful light contest: Using any size smoker, each contestant will be timed from a start signal until he/she has successfully lit, closed and set the smoker down on the ground. There is one other (secret!) criteria which will be announced at the picnic.
2. The max burn contest: Contestants will be given a generous but fixed amount of time (per agreement of the

3.

contestants) to light a smoker. Once the smokers are lit and on the ground we will take a break to eat lunch and to watch those smokers burn. The last smoker to puff smoke will win. The let's show them how it is done contest: We will have one match between the long-time beekeepers and the newbies (up to 4 years of beekeeping). All entrants must have participated in both the max burn and the successful light contests. The successful light contest rules will apply.

Are there prizes?

Yes!



MCBA Annual Potluck Picnic July 21, 2012 11:30 AM

NEW LOCATION.....NEW LOCATION.....NEW LOCATION

Evansburg State Park
Picnic Pavilion
851 Mayhall Road
Skipack, Pennsylvania 19426

Directions from the 4-H Center:

Turn right onto Bridge Road (Rt. 113)

Left onto Mill Road

Left onto Mayhall Road

Second right

Pavilion is on the right

Be sure to enter the park from Mill road- the other roads are blocked off and you cannot get to the pavilion from them.

What to bring:

Dish to pass.

Entries for the honey baked goods contest with copy of the recipe.

Smoker and fuel for the smoker lighting contest.

Your kids, relatives and friends.

MCBA will provide:

Hamburgers, hot dogs & drinks.

Paper goods and utensils.

Come meet your fellow beekeepers and tell us your latest adventures in beekeeping! In addition to the smoker lighting contest we will have fun family games with prizes. **RSVP** (helpful but not necessary) to cillab@earthlink.net

July 2012

July 2 - Beginner Beekeeping Course

4-H Center, PA at 6 p.m.

July 10 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

July 21 - Annual Summer Picnic *NEW LOCATION*****

Evansburg State Park, Skippack, PA, 11:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

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July 30 - Beginner Beekeeping Course

4-H Center, PA at 6 p.m.

August 2012

August 14 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

August 13-17 - EAS, Burlington VT, www.easternapiculture.org

September 2012

September 4 - General Meeting in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery, PA, at 7 pm. "Organic Beekeeping and Bio-dynamic Beekeeping" - Speaker to be determined

September 10 - Beginner Beekeeping Course

4-H Center, PA at 6 p.m.

September 11 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

October 2012

October - Honeybee Fest

October 2 - General Meeting in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery, PA, at 7 pm. "Judging Honey" - Dr. Berthold will explain what criteria is used to judge honey and judge all entries submitted

October 9 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

November 2012

November 3 - MCBA Fall Banquet, Plains Mennonite Church, 50 W. Orvilla Road, Hatfield, PA, 4-9 p.m.

November 9-10 - PSBA Fall Meeting, Country Cupboard, Lewisburg PA

November 13 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

December 2012

December 8 - Holiday Gathering (location to be determined)

December 11 - Executive Board Meeting

Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: The advice provided in this newsletter is the relevant writer's opinion and should only be taken as a guideline. Always seek several answers to your questions and review professionally written resources. The articles in this newsletter may not represent the general views of the MCBA or its membership.

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Dues are applied on a calendar year basis. January 1st to December 31st

New membership _____ Renewing membership _____

MCBA DUES \$10.00 per *household per year \$ _____

**PSBA DUES \$20.00 for one person per year or \$25.00 per household per year \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

*Household = 2 adults and all children living at one address.

**PA State Beekeepers Dues are recommended in order to encourage research on bee health, and promote efforts to dissuade local township and boroughs from restricting beekeeping. You will also benefit from the 10 annual state newsletters and information sharing.

Mail to: MCBA PO Box 203, Hatfield, PA 19440 or renew online at www.montcobeekkeepers.org

News Release MCBA VOLUME 94 ISSUE 3 July 2012

MCBA Motto: "Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers"

MCBA OFFICERS and Executive Committee Members – 2012

President	OPEN	
Vice President	Brian Marcy	pahomestead@aol.com
Secretary	Annabelle Butterworth	skyfire1320@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Priscilla Bonsell	cillab@earthlink.net
Exec Comm Mem	Charlie Breinig	charlienospam-bee@yahoo.com
Exec Comm Mem	Harold Jenkins	
Exec Comm Mem	Vince Aloyo	vincent.aloyo@gmail.com
PSBA Rep	Harold Jenkins	
Public Speaker Coordinator	Katie Pietrak	katielovesbees@gmail.com

MCBA WEBSITE!

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.