

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

News Release MCBA

Vol. 90 Issue 2-March 2008

MCBA Motto: "Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers"

Spring Events:

Expert Beekeeper Discussion Panel on Swarms

Field Trip to Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve



Calendar of Events

The MCBA board has planned another exciting calendar for our club. Regular general meetings will be held the second Tuesday of even months whenever possible. After the featured event, we will have a brief general business meeting. Board meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of odd months.

Tue, Apr 8 7:00 pm 4-H center The panel will feature Robin Kugler, Jim Bobb, and Mark Antunes. Michaelleen Pacholski will be the moderator.

Tue, May 13 Board Meeting

Sun, May 18 Bowman's Hill Field Trip (See info below)

Tue, Jun 10 TBA, 7:00 pm 4-H center (Speaker and topic to be determined)

Sat, Jul 12 MCBA Summer Picnic The pavilion at the Militia Hill section of Fort Washington State Park has been reserved. There is a grill and there are picnic tables. Restroom facilities are close by.

Aug 7-9 4-H Fair Montgomery County 4-H Extension, Creamery Road, Skippack

Sun, Aug 17 Picnic at Mark Antunes, please RSVP honeyhillfarm@verizon.net

Tue, Sept 9 Board Meeting

Tue, Oct 7 Honey Judging (tentative)

Tue, Oct 14 Hand Cream (tentative)

Sat, Nov 1 MCBA Banquet, Lower Providence Fire Hall

Tue, Nov 11 Board Meeting

Dec 9 TBA



Swarm Panel Meeting

Back by popular demand, another panel discussion meeting on April 8th at 7:00 pm at the 4-H Center. This year the topic is swarms and the panelists are Jim Bobb, Robin Kugler, and Mark Antunes. Michaelleen Pacholski will moderate the discussion; the panel will answer questions:

- What was the most difficult swarm you succeeded in catching?
- How do you prevent swarms in your apiary?
- Do swarm traps work?
- How can I get my name on a swarm list?

Panel Bios:

Jim Bobb: Beekeeper and teacher extraordinaire.

Current President of PSBA and Chair of EAS.

Robin Kugler: Recent recipient of SARE grant (see article below) and experienced swarm catcher.

Mark Antunes: Bucks County intrepid beekeeper with 19 colonies and experienced swarm producer.

This panel meeting will be preceded by a brief MCBA Business meeting with the following agenda:

1. The Swarm List
2. Attendance/programming-are we providing the programs you want to see?
3. Programming and promotions for the year
4. Picnic-July 12th, volunteers needed
5. Other MCBA business



Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Field Trip

When: Sunday May 18th at 2:30 (please arrive by 2:15)

Please RSVP

Where: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, 1635 River Road, New Hope, PA 18938 (<http://www.bhwp.org>)

Contact/RSVP: Tara Purcell
purcelltara@hotmail.com or phone: 215 206-0058.

Directions (from points West; this route takes you through New Hope):

Take U.S. Route 202 North to PA Route 179 (Bridge Street) for 1 mile to New Hope, PA. At the traffic light turn right (south) onto PA Route 32. Continue south on River Road (PA Rt. 32), for 3.5 miles. Entrance to the Preserve is on the right.

*Alternate Directions (This shortcut **does not** go through New Hope):*

Take U.S. Route 202 North about one mile past Peddler's Village to the first traffic light, Aquetong Road. Turn right on Aquetong Road and follow for about 4 miles, crossing Route 232 (Windybush Road). Aquetong ends at River Road (PA Rt. 32). At the stop sign at River Road, turn right. Entrance to the Preserve is immediately on the right.

What: Guided tour covering the history of the preserve, native plant identification with a focus on native pollinators. Home to nearly 1000 plants native to PA and over 80 rare and endangered species, trails wind through woodlands along a pond and Pidcock Creek where you'll enjoy an abundance of seasonal wildflowers and other native plants, birds and wildlife.

Cost: \$6.00 per person

Also: native plants are available for sale, visit an arboretum, a library, the Platt Bird collection, go birding and view other indoor exhibits.

The Swarm List

The swarm list is back. If you are interested in collecting swarms, please forward your name, locations/townships to which you will travel, type of service (just bees or other stinging insects), if you do removals, and your phone number to montcobe@yahoo.com or sign up at the Swarm panel meeting. We will distribute these to local first responders.



“Home Sweet Home” Photo Exhibit Planned for July Picnic (July 12)

Is your apiary whimsical? Floriferous? Color-themed? Are your hives creatively arranged to fit an unusual space? Do your hive exteriors serve double-duty as canvases for artistic expression? How do you personalize your bee yard?

Inspire us at the picnic! Bring a favorite photo of your decorated hive(s) or your overall apiary layout to hang on the display board we will provide. I know we are a creative bunch, so let's see how many unique ideas we can bring together for this display. See you at the picnic!

Contact Anne Brennan with questions at 215-376-0230 or anne.brennan@verizon.net



You're Invited!

Why not attend an MCBA Executive Board meeting? All members are encouraged to join our fun filled board meetings. Call a board member – contact information at the end of the newsletter. We will be having board meetings on the second Tuesday of odd numbered months. Next board meeting is Tuesday May 13th. Call any board member for more information or time and location.



MCBA Club News

2008 Membership Dues Now is the time to pay your 2008 membership dues. Check your mailing label to verify that your membership is current. If your membership has expired, please complete the membership form at end of this newsletter. The dues are again \$10.00, the same as last year.

You may also wish to join the PSBA (Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association) for an additional \$20.00. Although membership in the state is optional, you will receive ten newsletters each year filled with useful beekeeping information and advertisements.

4-H Club News Calling all youth ages 8-18. Join us for 4-H meetings. We hold our meetings at the same time as the beginner class. Our club owns the hives located at the 4-H center, so youth do not need to own their own bees to participate. Children do not need to be members of MCBA. This is a great way to make friends, learn about bees and have a lot of fun as well as to build leadership skills. We had a great year last year and have additional activities planned for this year. The 4-H fair is scheduled for August 7-9, 2008 this year and we are all looking forward to making posters and entering honey. For more information, please call Michaeleen Pacholski at 610-409-0284 (evenings).

Electronic Communications MCBA has been trying to reduce operating costs by sending out e-mail reminders for upcoming events. As postal costs

rise, we need to find ways of keeping you informed that are low cost. If you haven't received a reminder, maybe we don't have the proper e-mail address. Just send a note to montcobee@yahoo.com with your name and we will update our records. If you don't have e-mail, you will continue to receive paper mail.

Recipe of the Month- Submitted by Allison Uehling

Chicken Honey Nut Stir Fry
1 lb. boneless chicken breasts
3/4 c. orange juice
1/3 c. honey
3 T. soy sauce
1 T. corn starch
1/4 t. ground ginger
2 T vegetable oil, divided
2 large carrots, diagonally cut
2 stalks celery, diagonally cut

1/2 c. cashews or peanuts
hot rice

Cut chicken into thin strips and set aside. In a small bowl, combine orange juice, honey, soy sauce, corn starch and ginger. Mix well. Heat 1 T. oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add carrots and celery; stir fry about 3 minutes. Remove vegetables and set aside. Pour remaining oil into skillet. Add meat; stir fry until the meat is no longer pink. Return vegetables to skillet; add sauce mixture and nuts. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until sauce is thickened. Serve over hot rice.

PSBA – The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association

Since its foundation in 1904, the **Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association** has lobbied against adulteration of honey, crusaded for research to understand and control introduced parasites, promoted control of diseases and pests through integrated pest management techniques, disseminated information on modern practical

apiary management to maintain a healthy honey bee pollination workforce, and educated the general public on the importance of honey bees and other beneficial insects.

Today, the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association assists beekeepers in all 67 counties of the State and encourages and assists new members to start beekeeping and increase the honey bee population to provide pollination for both agribusiness and the residential gardens of this Commonwealth.

PSBA members receive a monthly newsletter with timely articles and local advertisements. The association holds a summer picnic that is hosted by local bee organizations around the state and a two day annual meeting and banquet in November with national and international speakers. The PSBA website, www.pastatebeekeepers.org, contains articles and announcements of beekeeping classes and other issues of concern to the Pennsylvania beekeeping community. To join PSBA, please contact the MCBA treasurer or email treasurer@pastatebeekeepers.org.

PSBA Needs YOU!!

Are you an experienced beekeeper who likes to talk to interested new beekeepers about how to manage honey bees, what to look for in a colony, what to expect, and what to watch out for? Do you have some time to mentor a new beekeeper? If so then P.S.B.A. is looking for you. Let me explain. My name is Mark Antunes and I am a member of the Montgomery Co. Beekeepers Association and PSBA. Some of you may remember me from the 2005 state meeting as the gentlemen who spoke after dinner about, "What I Have Learned About Beekeeping". Since then I have learned more and had even more things go wrong. But, I learn from my mistakes and misfortunes and I am willing to help others who want to start keeping bees and help them avoid some of the problems I have experienced.

At the 2006 PSBA Fall Executive Board Meeting Charlie Kinbar and I volunteered to look into ways

of developing a new beekeepers program for PA. The rationale for such a program was to generate interest in beekeeping and increase the number of beekeepers in Pennsylvania. North Carolina, New Jersey, and West Virginia have all done such development programs varying in size from 50 to 250 individuals. After speaking with several people in those states who were involved in the process Charlie and I submitted a report to the PSBA Executive Board at the 2007 Fall Meeting. That report and the New Beekeeper Incentive Program proposal are posted on the PSBA website at [http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org/](http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org). We are now in the process of developing a request for funding of this program from the state and that is where all of you can help.

One thing that became clear from our investigation is that the highest rate of success realized in such programs is directly influenced by providing good mentorship for the new beekeepers. It is no secret that an experienced beekeeper who can guide a new beekeeper during their first season can make all the difference in the world for that beginner. When I started six years ago, I was fortunate enough to be the beneficiary of guidance and input from several experienced beekeepers. I still talk to them to review situations and concerns or just chat about the subject that holds a mutual interest for us. The better the mentoring relationship is the more likely a new beekeeper is going to succeed and continue on with beekeeping.

As a preliminary step in trying to gauge what realistic level of a funding to request; we are looking for the number of specific individuals who are willing to devote their time, energy, and assistance to mentor a new beekeeper who may be funded in your area. That information will allow us to stand on a much more solid foundation as we explore funding possibilities. What we need to know from each local beekeeping organization throughout the state is how many of its members are willing to join in this mentorship effort. If you or anyone you know is available and interested in becoming a mentor to a beginning beekeeper please contact your local organization and poll your membership to see who else is willing to step up

and volunteer their time and knowledge. Then get that information to me. You may e-mail me at honeyhillfarm@verizon.net or call me at 215-257-7121, or mail me that information at 932 Callowhill Road, Perkasie, PA 18944. For those who are willing to participate, please provide their name, phone number, e-mail address, standard mail address, local beekeeping club, and county of residence. Charlie and I thank all of you who are willing to step up and volunteer in this effort

Sincerely,

Mark Antunes, Montgomery County Beekeepers Association
Charles Kinbar, Wayne County Beekeepers Association



Beginner Beekeeping Class

The Beginners Beekeeping Class has started, but it's not too late to join in. Do you know of anyone that is interested in raising honey bees but is a little nervous about getting started? Have you just started raising bees and are interested in learning modern management techniques? Perhaps you have been raising honey bees for a few years and just want some refresher techniques. Or maybe you have questions about what your hive is doing. For the ninth year, the Montgomery County Beginners Beekeeping Course offers classes that are timely to your seasonal beekeeping needs. **The 2008 course continues a tradition of hands-on beekeeping at the Montgomery County (Skippack) 4-H Center Apiary!**

When: Classes are usually held on the **last Tuesday** of each month from **February to September**; exceptions are the March class (3rd Wednesday) and the June class (4th Monday). Classroom activities start at **7:00pm**. Hands-on

activities in the apiary start at **6:00pm**. Please bring a face veil if you have one.

Attendance: The course does not need to be taken in its entirety. You can start midyear or attend individual sessions. The 6:00pm activity in the apiary is optional – if you cannot attend, just come for the classroom portion at 7:00pm.

Where: Montgomery County 4-H Center, 1015 Bridge Rd (Rte 113), Skippack, PA 19426.

Cost: The cost for the course is \$10.00 per household for the year. If you have already attended the class in previous years, there is no additional charge to attend refresher classes this year. It is also recommended that you join the Montgomery County Beekeepers Association (MCBA) and the PA State Beekeepers Association (PSBA) to receive newsletters and participate in club activities.

Contact: Jim Bobb, (610) 584-6778 or JimBobb@gct21.net, for more info.



Meet Your Local

Beekeeper!

A new feature to our newsletter, we will introduce you to some of the beekeepers in our club so we can get to know each other better. If you have suggestions for the next featured beekeepers or some questions you would like to ask them, contact Allison Uehling.

Robin Kugler

How and when did you begin beekeeping?

I started beekeeping about 1994 or so by catching a swarm at my own house. I got 8 gallons of honey the second year from 3 hives and split all the swarm cells into nucs and watched at about 4:00 in the afternoon to see the queens coming back from their mating flights. That was so cool.

You collect pollen and propolis. Is this production difficult?

For collecting the propolis, I just scrape off old equipment and there are companies out there that pay a lot for the scrapings. For pollen you need a pollen tray and you have to empty the tray every evening or it could become moldy because of the overnight moisture. A good hive will bring in about 1 lb. of pollen per day. I only collect pollen after the nectar flow is over.

Is there one thing you have learned that you would like to pass on to readers?

One of the many things is that mites are one of our biggest problems. (See article below) I think just having a screened bottom board, not necessarily open to the outside, but with a sticky board to catch the natural mite fall works well. I think a totally open board is too drafty and will lessen the amount of brood.

Mark Antunes

I was born and raised in Bucks County living in Hilltown Township from the age of six month on. Most of my youth was spent where I presently reside on a 17 acre tract of land on the north side of the highest ridge between it and the Jersey shore.

My father kept bees during his high school years in Wakefield Massachusetts prior to WWII. He kept the hive equipment he had as a youth and brought it to PA when he moved to the area in the 1950's. He attempted to keep bees when I was about 12 and was wiped out by American Foulbrood; something he had never seen in New England. He burned His contaminated equipment, tried again and was ravaged again by foul brood. He called it quits, leaving a few unused hive bodies stored in our garage.

When I moved back to the homestead six years ago one of my first tasks was to clean out the garage. I tried to sell the old hive equipment and amazingly not one beekeeper would pay even a dime for any of

it. So I thought, I'll get some bees, harvest lots of honey and save money in the process too. Ah the bliss of naivety. I am glad I did not get equally as excited about supplying my own dairy needs.

At that time, I stopped at a roadside fruit stand and saw honey from Worcester Honey Farms. I called the number on the jar and a kind gentleman named Jim Bobb answered the phone. I was full of questions and he spoke to me for 1-1/2 hours that night and another hour the next. I was fascinated and became captivated by my interest.

Since then I have bought many packages, lost several swarms, captured swarms, done splits, saved a single lonely queen that survived the winter and produced a full hive with her, increased my hive numbers, and lost many hives for various reasons. I have had enough things go wrong to consider myself somewhat experienced and I am willing to pass my knowledge along to others who may be interested. I have currently over wintered 19 colonies of varying strengths and am looking forward to the new season.

SARE Grant awarded to Robin Kugler for Varroa mite research

Sustainable Agricultural Research Education (SARE) is a USDA competitive grant program that supports research and education and helps build the future economic viability of agriculture in the United States.

Below is an excerpt from Robin's application. Congratulations and best of luck to Robin in his research!

Due to the growing number of recent losses of honey bee colonies world wide due to parasitic varroa mites, it has been my interest to find an economical and effective way to reduce or eliminate varroa mites, which are known vectors for disease. Most current mite treatments require synthetic chemicals, which can lead to residue in the wax and chemical-resistant mites. Some hives must have repeated treatments, which are time consuming and

costly. The professional and amateur beekeeping community would greatly benefit from a simple, effective and natural mite treatment. Initial experiments in my apiary show promising mite reduction using tobacco leaves inside a bee hive. This effort would be sustainable in that it uses locally available, natural products to control an agricultural pest exposing the beekeeper and consumer to safer practices and potentially reducing the burden of labor on the beekeeper. Further, many older beekeepers have given up this profession because of the increased complications and expense due to the introduction of the varroa mite to the Northeast. These beekeepers are no longer helping the next generation of beekeepers. Mite drop has been seen by others using tobacco smoke. Tobacco leaves are known to have bioactivity due to sucrose octanoate esters, which are already approved for use in mite treatments. The efforts in this proposal serve to establish efficacy of treatment duration and application as well as to gather data in a statistically significant method. I plan to observe 25 hives with 4 test of 5 hives in each group plus a control group of 5 without

treatment for a period of two years to see if there is better winter survival.

Bees for Sale

I have 3 over-wintered hives for sale. Each hive consists of a bottom board, 2 medium depth (Illinois) supers, inner and outer covers. Each will have sealed brood and a laying queen, ready to make honey this season. Available early April. Call Vince Aloyo at 610-278-1621.



Coming Soon: A Survey of our MCBA Members!

We care what you say, watch your mailboxes and please participate!

Montgomery County Membership Renewal Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Dues are for the 2008 Season

I prefer electronic newsletters and meeting reminders.

MCBA DUES \$10.00 per year \$ _____

PSBA DUES \$20.00 per year \$ _____ (Recommended)

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make Checks Payable to "M.C.B.A."

and mail to:

Anne Brennan

145 Cedar St

Jenkintown, PA 19046

Thank you!

News Release MCBA VOLUME 90 ISSUE 2
March 2008

MCBA Motto: "Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers"

MCBA OFFICERS and Executive Committee Members – 2006

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