

# Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

News Release MCBA

Vol. 95 Issue 4 – October 2013

MCBA Motto: “Beekeepers Helping Beekeepers”

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## Fall 2013 Calendar of Events

### October

**October 8 - Executive Board Meeting**, Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

**October 16– General Meeting** in the Maple Room at the 4-H Center, Creamery, PA, at 7 pm., presentation by Jim Bobb. The Big 6, Cape Bees and Africanized Bees. Chairperson of EAS, past PSBA president and vice-president, past MCBA president, and world traveler Jim Bobb will speak about his trip to South Africa.

### November

**November 2 – Annual Banquet**, Plains Mennonite Church, 50 West Orvilla Road, Hatfield, PA, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**November 12 - Executive Board Meeting**, Lansdale Public Library, 301 Vine Street, Lansdale, PA at 7 p.m.

### December

**December 7 – Holiday Potluck Party**, to be announced

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

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## Tips and Tidbits – Late Summer Re-queening for a Better Spring

If you did not take care of re-queening at the end of this season, you should consider making this effort next year. August and early September are the time you should think about re-queening. Late summer/early fall is a good time to evaluate your queens and replace those that have been subpar performers or produced colonies that have traits you want to improve. Hopefully your mite treatments have been successfully applied, you have done a sugar roll, and the mite loads are down to count of 0-2. If not, plan on doing that before re-queening.

Replacing older or poor queens is a good way to increase the odds that your colony will come out strong the next spring. If you are like me and do not have a good crop of goldenrod and aster for a decent fall nectar flow, you will also want to provide a dose of light sugar syrup to simulate a nectar flow. This improves the

attitude of the colony toward a new queen and increases your chances of a successful introduction.

Another advantage of late summer/early fall re-queening is that the large queen producers still have plenty of stock available. Northern producers may have shut down but you are still better off with a robust queen in the spring that has produced a surge of new brood this fall rather than scrounging for a queen mated in spotty spring weather when everyone else is demanding them too.

Make sure you leave the queen in the queen cage with the candy still corked until the hive has accepted her. Once that has occurred (generally 3-4 days in the hive) pull out the cage, remove the cork, and poke a small hole through the candy as the photo depicts. I suggest using a paper clip that is not as sharp as a sewing needle. Be careful not to poke the queen.



This small opening will assist the bees in their efforts to eat through the candy, thus releasing the queen when the hive is not being disturbed and is closed so the new queen cannot fly away.

I have found that with the plastic cages and California cages pictured below it is more difficult to get the colony to eat out the candy packed in the tube. See photos. If your new queens arrive in these types of cages, make sure you check again after a day or two of allowing for the release and remove more candy if needed.



Remember, nothing is guaranteed in beekeeping so after re-queening, make sure she is laying properly - checking her pattern and capped worker brood. Feed light syrup and provide a pollen substitute to stimulate brood production if needed. Of course, switch to heavy syrup and make sure they have plenty of food stored heading into late fall.

Mark Antunes

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## Preparing Your Colonies for Winter

In addition to re-queening and treating for mites (see Mark Antunes' article), there are other things you should do to help your bees survive the winter. The colony requires lots of young bees at the start of winter. To encourage brood rearing, consider feeding light syrup (1 part sugar plus 1 part water) if there is little or no nectar being gathered in your area. The bees that survive the winter are physiologically different from the summer bees. These so-called winter bees have higher levels of protein in their blood. Therefore, consider feeding a protein supplement if your bees are not gathering pollen.

Your colony requires lots of food (60 to 80 pounds) to survive the winter. This equals a deep super or 1.5 medium supers FULL of honey. If in mid-October your colony does not have this amount of stores, feed heavy syrup (2 parts sugar plus 1 part water). Remember that in a Langstroth hive, the bees eat their way up as the winter progresses. If you use a queen excluder, remove it so the queen can move up with the cluster.

In a few weeks it will be getting cold. Before that time, it is important to provide wind shelter for your bees, if a natural windbreak is not present. Wrapping the hive is optional in this area, but will not hurt. Be sure to provide upper ventilation, whether or not you wrap. Also a mouse guard should be installed to prevent mice from making a happy home in your hive.

Doing these things will increase the chance that your colony will survive the winter.

Vince Aloyo  
www.vincemasterbeekeeper.com

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## David Hackenberg's MCBA Talk Delights

When I read that the clubs speaker for the September MCBA meeting was David Hackenberg, I was impressed and delighted. I had heard his name mentioned numerous times since I began beekeeping 5 years ago, and knew his name was linked to the identification of CCD. I also had seen him on the film "The Vanishing of the Bees", and knew he was a mid-Pennsylvania commercial beekeeper of high regard. However, what I didn't anticipate was that I was about to experience the best talk that I had ever heard on beekeeping. After a brief introduction, he walked up to the stage and began a 2-hour talk without notes or microphone recounting his history in beekeeping and CCD. He had a very impressive memory of names, dates, and events, and I quickly put aside my notepad, so that I could concentrate on everything he had to say.

He not only identified and brought attention to the problem in late 2006, but he continued to stay involved in pushing Congress and agencies like the EPA to hear the voice of beekeepers. If you weren't there to hear him talk, you missed something special. Some of the information was depressing, but the overall message had a glimmer of hope, and reminded me that action doesn't happen without effort and the perseverance of people like David Hackenberg. I also need to add my voice in whatever way I can.

Margaret Zittel

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## It is Time to Sign-up for the MCBA's Beginner Beekeeper Course!

Now is the time to sign up for the MCBA Beginner Beekeeper Course. See the attached flyer for detailed information. Don't delay, classes start in February!

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## Honeybees at a Wedding?

First, let me introduce myself and my now husband - Trevor and I (Michelle) have been members of MCBA for the past couple of years now. During those years we have grown to find a love of beekeeping. We have discovered that beekeeping is not just what we do, but is really a part of who we are as a couple. Recently, in July, we were married in northern Michigan at my family's summer cabin. When I was looking for ideas for a unity ceremony one idea that came to mind was to do a honey unity ceremony. It seems no one has done this before so that left me with the task of creating it myself. I incorporated what we have learned from the bees and tied it to values of a successful marriage. This is what I

came up with... our Honey Unity Ceremony!

So here are some interesting facts about honeybees that parallel aspects of a successful and happy marriage.

1) Each bee is part of a greater community, just like each of us is a part of what makes up our marriage.

2) Each bee has a different role to play in the hive and their roles can change over time, individual bees will change their roles as the needs of the hive change. Similarly, Trevor and I will each have different roles to play in our marriage, as our marriage grows and changes so we will need to change the roles that we play in order to meet the needs of our marriage and each other.

3) Bees are selfless creatures, always considering the good of the hive above themselves, they will make great personal sacrifices in order to promote the health of the hive. As such, Trevor and I will need to make sacrifices and compromises, we will need to remember that at times we will have to put the needs of our marriage before the needs of ourselves.

But here is the great part... when all the bees in the hive are working together, fulfilling their roles, and striving to grow the greater good of the hive as a whole, the outcome of these efforts is the most beautiful and sweet gift - honey!

At this point, Trevor and I each dipped our fingers into a pot of beautiful golden honey and fed it to each other. We were invited to savor the honey and to taste the sweetness of it. From this point forward whenever we taste the sweetness of honey (and this will probably be often as we are beekeepers) we should remember that if we work together, strive to fulfill our marital roles, and put the needs of our marriage before the needs of ourselves, that our marriage can and will be as sweet as honey!



Michelle Zulkowsky

## MCBA's Annual Banquet – November 2<sup>nd</sup>

The Montgomery County Beekeepers Association will hold its Annual Banquet on Saturday November 2, 2013 from 4-9 p.m. at the Plains Mennonite Church. The church is located at the corner of Welsh (Rte. 63) and Orvilla Roads, West of Lansdale.

This year we will have a delicious buffet dinner featuring roasted chicken, roast beef, vegetable lasagna, salad and rolls. Instead of having an entertainer we will bring back the honey baked goods contest and will have a honey exchange and honey tasting. To participate in the honey baked goods contest, bring any baked good with honey as a main ingredient. Please bring a recipe card with your entry. To participate in the honey exchange, bring one or more one pound jars of your honey to exchange with other club members. Also bring a small jar of honey for taste testing - you can do this even if you don't participate in the exchange!

As always, we will have the raffle, door prizes, white elephant, 4-H honey auction and T-shirt sales; plus, our annual business meeting and election of officers. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please bring your family and friends. "Bee" thinking of your best or worst beekeeping story of the year and come to the banquet for great fun and lively discussion. See the attached flyer for more information and the registration form to RSVP. A reminder to all those who took the 2013 Beginner Beekeeping Course, your banquet tickets were included in your course fee so you only need to RSVP to Priscilla at [cillab@earthlink.net](mailto:cillab@earthlink.net)

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## MCBA Participated in a Honey Bee Educational Event at East Norriton Day

See link for photos [http://jrc-timesherald.smugmug.com/NEWS/East-Norriton/East-Norriton-Day/31717684\\_JQ3Bt5#!i=2749943359&k=zxgR78m](http://jrc-timesherald.smugmug.com/NEWS/East-Norriton/East-Norriton-Day/31717684_JQ3Bt5#!i=2749943359&k=zxgR78m)

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**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 and advertisements in this newsletter may not represent the general views of the MCBA or its membership.

# MARKETPLACE



**To advertise in Marketplace: If you have beekeeping-related products to sell or services to offer, please send your advertisement to the newsletter editor at: [News@montcobeepers.org](mailto:News@montcobeepers.org)  
In order to promote or advertise beekeeping classes or products and services in the MCBA newsletter or on the MCBA website, you must be a member in good standing.**

## Native Plants For Sale

Good for Butterflies, Hummingbirds, Honeybees, and Native Pollinating Insects.

Swamp Milkweed, Bee Balm, Tickseed, Joe-Pye Weed.

Contact: Ed Bonsell, 267-825-4674, [ebonsell@earthlink.net](mailto:ebonsell@earthlink.net) , <http://ebonsell.wordpress.com/>

## Montgomery County Beekeepers Association Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are applied on a calendar year basis. January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>

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.montcobeepers.org](http://www.montcobeepers.org)**

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**MCBA OFFICERS and Executive Committee Members – 2013**

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Public Speaker Coordinator	Scott Famous	famous55@verizon.net

**MCBA WEBSITE!**

[www.montcobeekeepers.org](http://www.montcobeekeepers.org)

Check out the MCBA website for news updates and items of interest. Pass the address to anyone you know that may be interested.

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