



Susquehanna Beekeepers



<http://susquehannabeekeepers.com>

July-Aug, 2013, Volume 44

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President's Message: It is most encouraging that a number of our club members had put together nucs this past spring for local availability. *I'd definitely like to see this trend continue!!* When in the market for purchasing bees, established nucs offer way too many advantages (in my humble opinion) over southern packages to not seriously consider this viable option. The adage, "You get what you pay for" may reflect some truth as my own limited success rate with packages (colony longevity greater than a full year) has only been 50%. In comparison, bees from my home-made nucs usually expand nicely, overwinter well and produce honey the following spring. There are many creative ways to start new bee colonies from existing hives; a quick internet search can outline some basics. But this subject is so imperative that I would like to dedicate a future SBA meeting exclusively to the topic of making nucs/ expanding existing colonies. To me, growing our own bees is just common sense. How timely was our June speaker's talk, focusing on the characteristics of good queens!! Here's an informative link on doing [trap-outs](#), yet another possibility for increasing local bee stocks. But enough of my pedestal preaching to the choir!! I should be outlining summer SBA-related events and opportunities such as the 4th of July parade, local fairs, and the August 14 SBA Pot-luck Picnic. These are, however, summarized on the following pages so please read on!! ...Dennis

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*****SBA Family Pot-Luck Picnic!!***
Wednesday, Aug 14, 6:30 till dark
Friends Park in Forest Hill
(No July SBA Meeting)

SBA-Related Meetings and Events

- No July SBA general meeting
- July 4 - (Thursday) SBA Float: 4th of July Parade - *Volunteers needed!*
- July 8-13 - [Mason Dixon Fair](#) - *Volunteers needed!*
- July 25-28 - [Harford County Farm Fair](#) - *Volunteers needed! (We'll be in the Civic tent this year)*
- Aug 5-9 - [Eastern Apicultural Society Conference](#) - West Chester U - *More info on pg. 7.*
- Aug 14 - (Wednesday) SBA Pot-Luck Picnic - *Bring your appetite!!*
- Aug 23-Sept 2 - [Maryland State Fair](#)
- Sept 8 - Hayes House - *Volunteers needed!*
- Sept 11 - General SBA Meeting (*more info TBA*)
- Sept 28-29 - [Steppingstone Fall Harvest and Craft Festival](#) - *Volunteers needed!*
- Oct 9 - General SBA Meeting (*more info TBA*)
- Nov 13 - General SBA Meeting (*more info TBA*)
- Dec 11 - General SBA Meeting (*Pot-Luck Family Dinner*)



NOTES From The Apiary July 2013 by Robert Crouse

My last "Notes" ended about May 27th and I had previously ordered two VSH queens from Log Cabin Bee Farm and received a pick-up date of June 1. The old queens needed to be found and remove from the hives no less than 8 hours before the new queen introduction. Twenty hours would be even better. On May 31st, in the morning, I went through both hives but found only one queen. She was quickly transferred into a 'Benton Cage' and the cage was placed into my queenless tower hive. I would have to wait until afternoon to return to my other hive to find the second old queen. This hive was very full and got a bit testy after the morning disturbance. But the second search revealed the other queen, which was also placed in a 'Benton Cage'. This one was put into one of my nucs. Now I was ready for the new queens. I picked up the queens in the morning on June 1 and by 1:30 had introduced these queens via the push-in cage method. Here's a word of caution for any of you doing queen introduction for the

first time, especially if you transfer the queen from the shipping cage. Don't try to transfer the queen out in the open as she might get away. Either do it inside of your vehicle (if out in the field) or in your enclosed honey house as I do. Then if she should take wing, she can be retrieved at the nearest window. My own system is to set up a frame support on my workbench so that the frame receiving the push-in cage does not get damaged on the underside. Then the queen is released onto the comb and the cage is placed over her.

Two days later, I discovered that the bees had chewed the comb away and released the queen earlier than I would have liked. Now there was nothing to do but hope that all was right with those \$35 queens!! With the rainy weather and all, I did not get back into the hives until June 12th. I found one of the new queens but there were no sign of the other one, just a virgin queen and some queen cells. I removed the cells and can only hope the new queen is still there somewhere. This is my most populous hive consisting of 3 deeps with bees from top to bottom. (*"Notes" continued on next page...*)

("Notes" continued...) In checking my nucs, I found two virgin queens in one box, so I moved one to a queenless box with the hope that she is young enough that the bees will not reject her. With any luck I will have laying queens in the nucs in 10 days or so. I also placed previously used and scraped frames with plastic foundation in the hives with the new queens to see how well the bees will draw out on the reused foundation. When I started using plastic foundation mounted into the wood frames; my goal was to reuse it when the wax was three to four years old. I will let you know how well the bees draw it out.

The following are some notes for new beekeepers on working bees and hive manipulation, at least as I do it: Before leaving my "honey house", I decide what it is that I want to do. Then I set aside any equipment that might be needed (new beekeepers will get better at this after having to make a few trips for a forgotten tool, etc.). I light my smoker and give 3 or 4 puffs in the ventilation area under the top cover and puff some smoke on the underside of my screened bottom boards. I always work from behind the hive, not in front! Now I put on my veil as this gives the smoke some time to work. After removing the top, I place it topside down on the ground beside the hive. Now I have a place to put hive parts and keep them out of the dirt, grass and leaves. I check the hole in the inner cover. The bees will tell you if you need more smoke. After removing the inner cover and checking the bottom of it for the queen, I lean the cover against the side of the hive. The first frame I remove is usually the second or third one from the end. The end frame is usually stuck to the end of the box with burr comb. After checking for the queen, I place this frame against the inner cover (leaning against the box). Now I have room to work across all of the remaining frames one at a time. I always replace the frames back into the hive in the same orientation.

As I am right handed, I keep the hive tool in my right hand and have a habit of working from right to left in the box. I first use the tool

on the left frame ear, grab it with my left fingers the pry loose the right ear and lift it out with the hive tool. I place the frame on the edge of the box and hold the right ear with my fingers before lifting. After looking at the frame, I place it back in the box moving it to the right so that I have room to get the next frame. When I get to the next to last frame, there is now space for the frame that was first removed. However, if that frame has brood in it, I slide all of the frames back so that the first frame is placed back in its original position. Usually the second or third frames will only have stores on them and no brood.

If you have two boxes and want to work both of them, place the inner cover back on the top box and set this box off center on the hive top. This will leave space for the bees and burr comb on the bottom. Now you can again remove the inner cover and place it on the ground topside down giving you a place to lean a frame (against the box) keeping it out of the dirt.

Now is a good time to compare the production of your hives to each other and to check your notes on the age of each queen. If the hive is not productive and/or the queen is two or more years old, she should be replaced. The replacement should be done no later than Sept. 1st. Keep your hive tool sharp and enjoy your bees. ...*Bob*

Claudia's Corner

"I like pulling on a baggy bee suit, forgetting myself and getting as close to the bees' lives as they will let me, remembering in the process that there is more to life than the merely human."

Sue Hubble, *A Book of Bees:
And How to Keep Them*

Susquehanna Beekeepers 4TH of July Parade Preparations:

After receiving float approval from the Bel Air Independence Day Committee, our SBA float committee began executing our plan this week. The 16-foot trailer has been sanded, repaired and painted. Almost everything has been purchased and prepared. The trailer has been moved closer to the parade location in Bel Air. On Tuesday the committee met to convert a trailer to a nifty looking float.

Green carpet was installed, bee hives painted red, white and blue were loaded, a honey extractor installed and the queen seat made ready. The club's new banner was unrolled, a wagon full of honey-related items made ready, a large poster was hung and the music system tested. The committee is planning to finish the float this Saturday by installing flowers, bees, an oversized bear and various other decorations. Club participants will be dressed as bees. It has been a lot of fun for everyone involved. While the float is sure to "put us on the map", so to speak, we are all shooting for winning a prize this year.



Wish us luck and root for us at the parade! - John Kovac

"ODDS and ENDS"

- [Feds: Many Causes for Dramatic bee Disappearance](#)
- [Report on the National Stakeholders Conference on Honey Bee Health](#)
- [Winter honey bee deaths devastate keepers, puzzle scientists. Nearly 60 percent of Maryland's bees succumbed, twice the national average.](#)
- [Honeybee Hives Disappearing At High Rates In Maryland](#)
- [Illinois illegally seizes Bees Resistant to Monsanto's Roundup; Kills remaining Queens](#)
- [What the Produce Section Looks Like in a World Without Bees](#)
- [Support the Pollinator Protection Amendment to the Senate Farm Bill](#)
- [Israeli Scientist Discovers Treatment to Save Bee Colonies](#)
- [Bob Crouse has 1 lb. Pet classic Honey containers with pop up lids for sale at 50 cents each.](#)
Email - rlcrouse@qis.net

(Many thanks to all who contribute to our newsletter!!)



GOING TO THE FAIRS? - by Harry Dutcher & John Knapstein

It is summertime so this must be fair season. The first local fair is the **2013 Mason-Dixon Fair**, July 8-13, 2013. The fairgrounds are located just across the MD-PA line in Delta, PA. Gates open M-F at 5 pm and Saturday at 9 am. For complete information, see <http://www.masondixonfair.com/>. Come and **HARVEST YOUR DREAMS.**

As in past years, SBA members will be staffing our booth in the Home and Garden tent. Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to work a shift. I will be getting fair passes to volunteers prior to the fair. If you have a demo hive, bring it with you. Live bees are always a big attraction. ***By the way, if you still want to volunteer, no experience is necessary, just some enthusiasm. It's usually very easy for beekeepers to talk about bees!! Again, contact [Harry Dutcher](#).***

Don't forget your Apiary Products entries. Info and rules on various classes and the **Bake with Honey Contest** are on the Mason-Dixon Fair website. All exhibits must be entered at the fairgrounds between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm on Sunday, July 7. Contact the Superintendent, Harry Dutcher, if you have questions. Exhibits will be released from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm on Sunday, July 14. The Mason-Dixon Fair is a great place for first time exhibitors (see the "Tips for Submitting Entries" on pg. 6).

The next local fair is the **Harford County Farm Fair**, July 25-28 2013 at the Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air MD. For complete information see the website <http://www.farmfair.org/>. **GET READY FOR THE FUN!** Unfortunately, at this time the **SBA** has not gotten booth space at this year's HCF fair. We will let you know if that changes.

Enter your Bee Products in the Farm Fair Open Class Competition. You may pre-enter your exhibits on-line via the fair's website before July 21, 2013 or by mail before July 19, 2013. Walk-in entries are accepted on July 24 from 12 noon to 5:30 PM. Entries must be received at the fairgrounds on Wednesday, July 24 before 5:30 PM. Entries are released Sunday, July 28, 6:00-8:00 PM. Contact the Superintendent, John Knapstein, if you have questions.



Finish your summer at the **Maryland State Fair**, August 23-September 2, 2013, Timonium, MD. For complete information, see <http://www.marylandstatefair.com/index.cfm?page=info>. If the **SBA** is again asked to support Honey Sales, we will be looking for volunteers. When we help with the Honey Sales, the club receives a percentage of the sales. More info will follow.

Now that you are an experienced exhibitor bring your Apiary Products to the State Fair. See their website for registration and drop-off information and times.

**SUSQUEHANNA BEEKEEPERS
OFFICIAL BUSINESS NOTICE:**

Proposed New Membership Classification

Your SBA Board has been discussing during the past few months the addition of a yearly "Family" SBA membership option for \$15. A "Family" membership would include all persons living at a single residence. At our June general SBA Meeting, a motion was introduced and passed to vote on the following membership structure change at our upcoming September General SBA Meeting:



For 2014, single yearly SBA memberships would remain at \$8. A yearly family membership option would also be available for \$15.

Please email your SBA Board members if you have a comment or question.

Tips for Submitting Fair Entries - by John Knapstein

The first thing that you need to do before submitting any entry in a fair is to review the open classes and determine what categories you want to enter. Most fairs have a website and/or a catalog. Note any pre-entry dates and if walk-in entries are accepted. Determine if there are any restrictions on size of displays, size of jars, number of entries, etc. You don't want to go to a lot of work and submit an entry only to find out that the rules weren't met. An example would be submitting a jar of honey in a glass pint mason jar when a 1-lb. jar is required. If you have questions about what is appropriate, contact the superintendent of the department. Ask questions!

Know how your entries are being judged. The main thing judges look for are cleanliness. Is your jar clean, free of fingerprints and smudges, clean cap without dents? Does your candle have a waxed wick and is the bottom finished with a fluted shape? Has your wax been sufficiently filtered? Filter through milk filters several times to catch all the unwanted particles. Make sure you're artistic and gift entries are appealing and presentable. Is your educational display too busy? You should be able to read the information from about four feet away. Information should be "short and sweet"; people are going to be walking by and won't read lot of detail.

Visit other fairs and see how entries are judged. How would yours compare? Talk to others about how they prepare their entries. Careful! Some probably won't want to divulge their secrets. Review the judging sheets that you receive. Compare your entry to what others have submitted. Talk to judges and ask what they look for. Although there are standards for judging for consistency, judges have things that they look for in a top quality entry.

Winning a blue ribbon at any fair is exciting and a rewarding experience. An award winning entry is "bragging rights" for at least a year! Enter something at the next fair and **GOOD LUCK!**



THANK YOU!!

*To Nathan Ottensmeyer,
business owner of
[Maui's Car Wash and Signs](#)
at 328 Baltimore Pike, Bel
Air, MD for producing our
Susquehanna Beekeepers
banner!! Nathan does
excellent work!!*

EASTERN APICULTURAL SOCIETY (EAS) 2013

"Swarm to [West Chester University](#) for the 2013 EAS Conference and Short Course", August 5-9, 2013.

The 2013 EAS is practically in our backyard. West Chester University is about 60 miles from Bel Air. EAS 2013 will feature local, regional and national experts giving lectures and workshops, plus a long list of other beekeeping activities.

Highlights from the EAS 2013 website <http://www.easternapiculture.org/>

Three-day [Short Course with Core & Electives](#), Including:

- o Queen Rearing
- o Top-Bar Hive Management
- o Natural Beekeeping
- o Sideline Sessions
- o [Train the Trainers](#) Session Full (Put Your Name on the Wait List)
- o [Microscopic Explorations](#) in Beekeeping
- Three-day Conference with Multiple Symposia
- Vendor Booths of Beekeeping Supplies
- Live Auction & Honey, Wax, and Photography Award Dinner
- Friday Banquet
- Hands-on Beeyard
- [Master Beekeeper Certification](#)

Come for the whole week, the short course only, or just the conference. You choose! Need a place to stay? Check out the housing options on the website, including the dormitory rooms.

Registration is open. Don't miss this opportunity to increase your bee knowledge. See you at EAS 2013!

The SBA Family Pot-Luck Picnic

Everyone is invited!! So plan on coming to the SBA's Family Picnic on Wednesday, August 14 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Friends Park in Forest Hill on East Jarrettsville Road just beyond the Extension office. We will supply burgers, dogs, condiments, drinks, plates, and silverware. Bring your best dish to share and watch one of our "drones" work the grill!!

See you Aug 14!!

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

- **Bob Crouse:**
Notes From The Apiary
- **John Kovac:** *Parade Preparation*
- **Harry Dutcher/ John Knapstein:** *Going to the Fairs, Tips, EAS*
- **Claudia Hertzog:**
Claudia's Corner, Picnic Info
- **Dennis Hertzog:**
the usual stuff...

