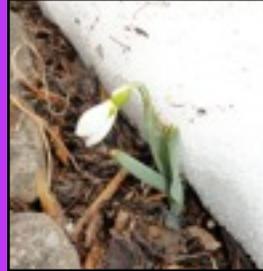




# Susquehanna Beekeepers



<http://susquehannabeekeepers.com>

Mar-Apr, 2014, Volume 48

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**President's Ramblings:** Finally, we've had enough of a break in the weather to check bees!! Though one of my six hives has died, four others are exhibiting normal activity. My strongest hive (*using rather unscientific descriptors*) is going gangbusters; this huge cluster has depleted all it's stores!! Our bees should be able to forage on maples and other early bloomers as temperatures moderate but if the bees can't get out, do some feeding because they can starve to death!

We have discussed a variety of topics over the course of past SBA meetings. However, I feel the content of our March and April meetings better reflects what every local beekeeper should be doing this spring, **raising our own local bees!!** David Papke is always an excellent speaker and will talk directly about practical solutions for increasing this winter's survivor stock. For April, Jeff Maenner will outline in detail how to create conditions (without sophisticated equipment) for inducing your bees to produce new queens. Honeybees naturally do this on their own so why not take advantage of this natural instinct, harvest a few queens and make some additional hives this year!!

*And something new!!* The SBA will have a "**BeeWare**" **Swap Meet** at the Extension Office parking lot on Saturday, March 22 from 10 until noon (rain date is March 29), a great opportunity to pick up some bargains! *See you at our March 12 meeting!! - Dennis*

## Susquehanna Beekeepers Association



C/O Md Co-op Extension Office  
PO BOX 663, Forest Hill, MD.21050

- [Dennis Hertzog](#) - President
- \*\*[newsletter/website inclusions](#)
- [Harry Dutcher](#) - Vice President
- [Claudia Hertzog](#) - Secretary
- [John Kovac](#) - Treasurer
- [Pam Kryglik](#) - Officer Intern

**Next SBA General Meeting:**  
**Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 7:00 pm**  
**at the Forest Hill Extension Office**  
**Speaker: David Papke - Practical Applications**  
**for Increasing Our Own Local Bee Stocks**



**NOTES From The Apiary**  
**March 2014**  
**by Robert Crouse**

I have really been eager for some warmish weather so that I could get into my hives. A quick check on Feb. 19 was in order because temps. were above 45 deg. and the girls were flying at all six of my hives (4 standard and 2 nucs). I added about two tablespoons of snow on top of the sugar cake atop two hives to aid bees in processing the sugar. Today, Feb 20, I filled entrance feeders with 1 to 1 sugar syrup as the bees were again flying.

Tomorrow and Saturday (21st and 2nd) the temperature is forecast to be close to 60 degrees and I plan on going through all of my hives to reverse boxes and generally check on their condition. My plan is to get the bees into the bottom box, place a frame of stores on each side of the cluster and fill the balance of the box with empty frames. Then the second box can be placed over the cluster. Two frames that have empty cells will be placed in the middle and stores on each side in the center over the cluster. More frames with stores will go on each side of the center frames until the box is full. The reason for the partial frames over the cluster is so that if the queen does move up there will be cells for her to lay in. In the past, failing to provide for egg laying has cost me some early build up.

If the entrance of your hives are clogged with dead bees, reach into the entrance opening with a small stick or the end of a hive tool and pull out the dead bees. Cleaning off dead bees from the bottom board helps prevent disease and conserves energy that the bees would have had to expend doing that job.

If you get into your hives and find the bees have moved up into the top box you should consider doing hive manipulations to get the bees back into the bottom box (by mid

March) with food frames back over the top of the cluster. Don't split the cluster by reversing with half of the bees in each box!!! You could move the frames with bees down from the top box to the sides of the frames with the cluster on them in the bottom box. Do this only if there is no brood or eggs in the comb. Replace these frames with full frames over the top of the cluster. Leave empty frames on the outside edges of the box. Of course you have to wait for temperatures to be in the 60s for this kind of work. February and March are the months to do your equipment inventory, order sugar syrup, foundation etc. for the new season. By April you should be concentrating on cleaning out the hives, reversing brood boxes, feeding and doing early season medications if needed. All medications need to be removed from your hives at least 3 weeks before the main nectar flow. Otherwise you risk honey contamination

If you plan on getting packages or nucs this year, place your order NOW! Bees will probably be in short supply and arrive even later than last year. Better yet, order your bees from a local supplier. Both of my nuc's are sold and you will find that prices have jumped for this year.



### SBA-Related Meetings and Events:

- It's time to renew your SBA membership for 2014 and get a friend to join!! Here is the quick link to our [2014 Membership Form](#).
- Mar 12 - General SBA Meeting at 7 pm - *David Papke*: Practical Applications for Increasing Our Own Local Bee Stocks
- Mar 22 - Saturday SBA "Bee-Ware" swap meet - 10-12 at the Forest Hill Extension Office parking lot. Rain date is Mar 29.
- Mar/Apr - SBA Short Course at HCC - Dates and times are listed in the [HCC Non-credit Continuing Education Division](#). Search 'Beekeeping' for the latest information.
- Apr 9 - General SBA Meeting - *Jeff Meanner*: "Making Our Own Queens w/o Grafting"
- May 14 - General SBA Meeting - Q&A Town Hall Forum - Pick the brains of some of our most experienced beekeepers. Also "Queen-Making" followup
- June 11 - General SBA Meeting - SBA Summer Activities: Fairs, Parade, Summer Picnic etc.

### Winter Workshop - by Dennis Hertzog

Though that comfy couch seems to beg for an afternoon snooze during snowy days, my productivity can sometimes extend to some basic woodworking. Between naps this winter, my motivation has manifested into constructing some nuc boxes. A nuc box is just the ticket for starting a brand new hive, transferring queen cells, catching swarms, etc. during the warmer months



How much wood is necessary? My estimate is one 8-ft 1X10 is needed for each complete 5-frame nuc. I use medium frames so if you want to build deep nucs, measure accordingly. Helpful tools include a table saw, router, coping saw, hammer, drill, screws, nails, paint and a few brushes. It's possibly overkill but I always make my nucs with screened bottom boards figuring that mite control is serious business, even within these starter boxes. The bottom board's two long sides and two shorter blocks are simply fastened with deck screws. A few staples later and the hardware cloth is in place.

Migratory covers work just fine and are certainly less complex than piecing together four sides. In being optimistic, each nuc should expand into a full hive by next winter. These small boxes will hopefully be empty and stored away ready for use the following spring! Many diagrams exist for constructing nuc boxes. So if you are handy with a few tools, making your own can be a satisfying and worthwhile winter endeavor!



### **Pristine Valley Farms - by Rose Miller**

As we approach the beekeeping season, I would like to remind our members that there is a beekeeping supplier that is local, offers top-quality products and also actively maintains membership with the Susquehanna Beekeepers Association. Mike DeWald, owner and operator of Pristine Valley Farms, located in Joppa, MD, has been pleased to supply the SBA with their "Young Beekeeper Grant" equipment during the past two years. Here's some information concerning Pristine Valley's equipment and operation:



Pristine Valley Farms sells beekeeping woodenware and supplies. The majority of products are typical woodenware hive components but we also have specialty items such as the "Baby Nuc" which allows the user to start 3 new colonies from queen cells. Another available item is the ventilated inner cover which can be used year-round. Our candy board feeder is available in 4 sizes – baby nuc, nuc, 8 and 10 frame. For those who want to purchase nuc boxes, we have assembled nucs and unassembled kits. We have accessories that may not generally be available elsewhere. This list includes but is not limited to quality feeders, stands and entrance reducers. If you want to better control small hive beetle, we have 3 types of traps. Are you in need of frames, hive bodies, smoker, helmet and veil, hive tools or uncapping knives? Our frames and woodenware are sold either assembled or unassembled. The woodenware is pine and assembled pieces are glued and screwed. *The bottom line is we are local beekeepers and sell those products that we actively use!*

If anyone wants to place an order, we will be at the SBA's swap meet on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and can deliver products then, at any SBA meeting or call to set up a mutually convenient time. We do not have a store but rely solely on word of mouth and web orders. We love talking bees so give us a call at 410-679-9235 if you need advice or visit us at [www.PristineValleyFarms.com](http://www.PristineValleyFarms.com) for more information. ***Thank you!!***



***David Dawson recently sent your editor pics of his Mason Bees!***

**SUSQUEHANNA BEEKEEPERS  
OFFICIAL NOTICE:**



*Please renew your SBA membership for 2014 by April 1st in order to be included in the SBA Membership Directory. Here's the fast link to our [2014 Membership form](#). Mail the completed form or bring it with cash or check to the next SBA meeting. As always, feel free to forward our newsletters to others and encourage them to join our organization.*

- Single yearly SBA membership remains at \$8.
- A yearly family membership option is now available for \$15.



**2014 Young Beekeeper Grants:**

*The SBA is sponsoring three new "Young Beekeepers" for 2014. Congratulations to Madison, Josh and Patrick!! The official hardware and certificate presentation will take place during our March meeting. Along with Micayla and Laura from 2013, the SBA has now given out a total of five grants, a great way to cultivate within our young generation a passion and appreciation for honeybees!*

**SBA Beekeeping "Short Course"  
Mar-Apr 2014**

The Susquehanna Beekeepers Association sponsors a "Beekeeping Short Course" each year through Harford Community College. Dates and times are listed in the [HCC Non-credit Continuing Education Division](#). Search 'beekeeping' for the latest information.

**"ODDS and ENDS"**

- [Is Plant Virus Linked to CCD?](#)
- [Elvish Honey is Crazy Expensive](#)
- [More information from Eglute, our January speaker](#)
- [Bees and Tea Survive Sochi Climate](#)
- [Zombie Bees in Eastern US](#)
- [Another Bee Virus Article](#)

*Many thanks to all who  
contribute to our newsletter!!*

**The SBA's  
"BEE-WARE" Swap Meet  
Saturday, March 22, 10-noon  
Forest Hill Extension Office  
Parking lot  
(Rain date is March 29)**

**Pick up some beekeeping bargains!!  
Sell your duplicates. Bring your odds  
and ends. Frames, veils, supers, etc.  
Pristine Valley will have pre-ordered  
equipment. Free overwintered BeeBee  
Tree seeds. So spend an hour or two  
mingling with colleagues!**

**millstone**  
HANDCRAFTED ARTISANAL CIDERS & MEADS

*Thanks to Curt Sherrer from Millstone Cellars  
for speaking at our February SBA meeting.*

Millstone Cellars is open for free tours  
and tastings every Saturday 12-6pm  
and every Sunday 12-5pm.

[www.millstonecellars.com](http://www.millstonecellars.com)

**Page 1 Pics**

- Chris Hash sent a pic of one of her hives engulfed within an iced-over tree.
- Ed Yoder's "I Told You So" award.
- One lonely snowdrop poking out between piles of snow.
- Your editor's hives after our 13+'' snowfall.

**Claudia's Corner**

*Now is the winter of our discontent.*

*William Shakespeare -  
from Richard III, 1594*

**NEWSLETTER  
CONTRIBUTORS**

- Bob Crouse:  
*Notes From The Apiary*
- Rose Miller:  
*Pristine Valley farms*
- David Dawson:  
*Mason Bee pis*
- Claudia Hertzog:  
*Claudia's Corner, Colorist*
- Dennis Hertzog:  
*Ramblings, Winter Workshop,  
editing, and lord knows what else.*

