



Susquehanna Beekeepers



<http://susquehannabeekeepers.com>

Nov-Dec, 2013, Volume 46

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President's Message: How was your beekeeping year? If this was your first season and your hives are strong, *congratulations!!* If your bees did not survive, this is not the time to give up. Your SBA President is a bit of a chess player; I have been for some 50+ years. And there are times that I play a reasonably good game but other times, an opponent beats the tar out of me... leaving this person feeling rather sophomoric. So give some serious thought to what happened with your hives this year, the good and the bad and how you might modify your bee management for next year's season. It remains that we belong to the SBA to share information and to provide a resource for help!! Our Nov 13 meeting discussion in part will center around this summer's results, the good as well as the not so good. Joe Lewis has written for this month's newsletter an excellent article that is just as much a reality check as it is informative, offering timely advice for planning next year's season. His article, will also likely appear in the Dec or Jan issue of "Bee Culture".

So how was your beekeeping year??? Remember even the best beekeepers lose hives. So let's move beyond the disappointments!! The immediate challenge is in keeping our remaining bees alive through this coming winter. ...*Dennis*

Susquehanna Beekeepers Association



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 PO BOX 663, Forest Hill, MD.
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- [Dennis Hertzog](#) - President
- [Harry Dutcher](#) - Vice President
- [Claudia Hertzog](#) - Secretary
- [John Kovac](#) - Treasurer
- **[newsletter/website inclusions](#)**

Next SBA General Meeting:
Wednesday, November 13 at 7:00 pm
at the Forest Hill Extension Office
Discussion: A Review of This Year's Beekeeping
Season - What Worked, What Did Not.
Election: 2014 Board members (see page 3)

SBA-Related Meetings and Events

- Nov 13 - General SBA Meeting - Discussion: A review of this past beekeeping season. Election of 2014 SBA Board members (see page 3 for current nominees).
- Nov 23 - Beekeeping Introduction, 9-12 am at the Forest Hill Extension Office. Register through [HCC Non-Credit](#) - \$10 fee
- Dec 11 - **SAVE THE DATE!!** Pot-Luck Family Dinner at the Kryglik's house (details to follow).
- Jan 8 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).
- Feb 12 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).
- Mar 12 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).
- Apr 9 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).
- May 14 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).
- June 12 - General SBA Meeting (details to follow).



NOTES From The Apiary **Nov 2013** **by Robert Crouse**

If you have been following along with me in your apiary work then you should have little or nothing to do with your bees this coming month. I did some cleanup work with equipment early in October putting away extra supers, etc. PDB (Paradichlorobenzene) in crystal form was available at a Redners store (listed as 'Moth Ice' and next to Moth Ball products) so I treated my drawn combs with the PDB. The crystal form works well in my Brushy Mountain 'moth drawer'. As the crystal dissolves, I'll have to check and reapply if the weather doesn't stay below freezing. This second application may be necessary after two months. I also placed several full frames into an old upright freezer. Freezing will protect the pollen and honey from moth and hive beetle damage without the risk of introducing any chemical contamination. My hives all have entrance reducers on them in order to keep out mice looking for a winter home.

I took inventory of my comb in anticipation of next year's season. My chunk comb, section comb and regular frames that will need foundation replacement have been moved to the work bench, a project for some snowy day. The hive-top feeders are now cleaned and in a place that I can easily access as they will probably be in use by Feb or March, depending if the weather stays as warm as the past couple of winters.

The girls are still bringing in some yellow pollen during the past few warm days, probably late surviving golden rod. But I do wish it would cool down as all of this flying around without a nectar flow means that stores are being used. Just to be on the safe side, I set up a hive top feeder (covered of course) with some 2 to 1 syrup on the top cover of a hive near the middle of my apiary leaving the opening hanging over the side of the hive box (You could have it facing the rear but just don't hang it over the front as this may promote robbing). This way all the bees in the apiary can get to the syrup as needed. This is an example of "thinking outside of the box" to finish feeding before the cold weather hits.

**SUSQUEHANNA BEEKEEPERS
OFFICIAL BUSINESS NOTICE:**



New Membership Classification

The SBA general membership voted affirmatively to the addition of a yearly "Family" SBA membership option for \$15 for 2014. A "Family" membership would include all persons living at a single residence. Therefore:

*****For 2014, single yearly SBA memberships will remain at \$8.***

A yearly family membership option will now be available for \$15.

**SBA Board of Directors
Election for 2014:**



Elections of new SBA Board members will take place at our Nov 13 General Meeting. New nominations can still be accepted until Nov 13.

Current Nominees include:

- *President* - Dennis Hertzog
- *1st Vice President* - Harry Dutcher
- *2nd Vice President* - Pam Kryglik
- *Secretary* - Claudia Hertzog
- *Treasurer* - John Kovac

Other available positions:

- *Webmaster*
- *Newsletter editor*



The annual salary for these last two positions pays twice as much as the SBA Presidency!!

Step up and make a difference!!

*****SBA "Beekeeping Intro" - Nov 23,
2013***

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

The Susquehanna Beekeepers Association sponsors a yearly "Intro to Beekeeping" class and a "Beekeeping Short Course" through Harford Community College. This year's Beekeeping Intro is 9-12 AM on November 23, at the Forest Hill Extension Office. Registration is \$10 though [HCC Non-Credit schedule](#). Search 'beekeeping' for the latest information.

Beekeeping Equipment For Sale

Sidney Steelman has a variety of ***beekeeping equipment to sell***. Some is new, some used. For a list of available items, email Sid at: sidndeb@hotmail.com.

John Knapstein and **Suzette Jackson** have both ***8-oz and 2-oz plastic Honey Bears*** for sale. The price is \$3.50 for a bundle of ten (with lids). These are perfect for filling with honey and giving as gifts. Either contact John jdk92048@aol.com or Suzette Jackson (410) 939-5128. Suzette will have them available at our Nov 13 meeting.

"ODDS and ENDS"

- [Dance of the Honeybee](#)
- [The Honey Launderers](#)
- Many thanks to Dr. Phil Nivatpumin for speaking at our October meeting. If anyone wishes to contact Dr. Phil for further info, his email is: pnivatp@gmail.com.

Beekeeping Two Point Five



by Joe Lewis

Overview – In simplest terms, the concept of Beekeeping 2.5 is managing within one’s apiary a minimum of two hives and a nuc. With this combination, the beekeeper has the resources and flexibility to take necessary actions for maintaining healthy bees colonies indefinitely.

Challenges - Keeping bees is harder than it used to be. That’s unfortunate, but we have to recognize things are different now. Mites, viruses, pests, pesticides, fungicides and herbicides, habitat loss, fescue instead of clover, Round-up ready monoculture, etc. are some of the reasons. *But we cannot let these become excuses!!* Yes, a lot of beekeepers lose interest after a year or two because their hive fails and they are not sure why. This piece will explain in part how to overcome some of the challenges and help you keep bees indefinitely.

The One-Hive Beekeeper - A first year beekeeper, especially the one-hive beekeeper is up against some major obstacles. He/she does not have the opportunity to compare the performance and condition within multiple colonies. How can we know what is normal if our sample hive population is one? The one-hive beekeeper has no backup plan when things go bad or the queen fails. There is no room to maneuver and little that can be done after things “turn South”. The one-hive beekeeper had no chance to make a split after the queen had failed, a laying worker had taken over, wax moths or small hive beetles had exploded throughout the hive, etc. Discouragement is not good for anyone and unfortunately many inexperienced beekeepers give up at this point.

Keeping Two Point Five Hives - So one answer is to keep at least 2.5 hives. That means two full hives and a nucleus colony or 5-frame nuc (the point five!). The nuc is used for raising a new queen or keeping a new queen as a backup. Nucs consist of split-offs from one of the large hives and can be created using any one of many techniques. Having two full hives will allow the beekeeper to compare performance, condition on a regular basis and have multiple data points to reference. Therefore, the beekeeper can make better judgments about what should be done to manage each hive because he or she will recognize more readily when something needs adjusting. *And something always needs adjusting!* The large hives act as a source of brood when hive strengths need to be cross-leveled. Eggs and young larva from a large hive provide an emergency source for a queenless hive to make a new queen. And a strong hive will often make really nice queen cells in the spring and early summer that can be used to make instant splits or nucs. (...continued on the next page)



(Beekeeping Two Point Five continued...)

The Nuc - There is really no reason not to have a couple of nuc boxes on hand at all times. During swarm season, keep an empty nuc box in your vehicle at all times. This can be used for collecting swarms, making unexpected splits, or carrying spare frames. A small hive in a 5-frame box is highly portable and can be moved to another location easily when bees need time to re-orient. A nuc box is easy to build and can be made in minutes from scrap wood on a table saw. Plans are on the Internet if you need details. I also keep sample wood pieces on hand for nucs. These are easy to copy and I will loan them to anyone who asks. If you don't want 3 big hives, sell one to another local beekeeper. Many beekeepers find better success through nuc hives taking advantage of the bees natural reproductive tendencies and the advantage of breaking the brood cycle to naturally reduce mite loads. Homegrown nucs have a greater chance of long-term survival because *you are making LOCAL bees rather than importing bees from other areas!!* (See my article on nuc making at: <http://susquehannabeekeepers.com/styled-8/files/page11-the-nuc-option.pdf>)

Queens Fail. Yes, unfortunately queens fail. Get used to it and don't be so surprised when it happens. She will not live forever. A good queen might last 2.5 years. A poorly mated one, not an entire season. Also consider that a queen might fail in the middle of the fall or winter, when she cannot be replaced, and ordering a new one is not an option. It is like having a flat tire in the worst possible place. But it happens eventually to everybody. If you have a spare queen in your backup nuc, you have a really good option to make a combine and save the hive. Or, you have another option, to pull young larva and brood from another hive and let the failing hive make their own queen (yes, a less desirable, but possible option.) Bottom line, you HAVE options. If you have only one hive, the options are to start over or give in to failure and quit.

Making Queens, Keeping Queens, Keeping Beekeepers. Yes, I make queens and I keep some queens. I bank some queens. I sell some queens. But I am not trying to make a living on queens or bees. Like many of you, I just enjoy beekeeping and am excited to be a small bee farmer, watching things grow and multiply. And I enjoy sharing this excitement with others. Seeing newer beekeepers quit the hobby is sad. I think a lot more new beekeepers would stay in the hobby/business if they did not experience the inevitable failure associated with having one hive. So let's place the challenge of keeping bees in the beekeeper's favor by adopting the concept of Beekeeping 2.5 and advocating it to others.

One More Recommendation. Make it your resolution to read two point five books on beekeeping this year. More has been written about bees than one could ever read in a lifetime, so there is a lot to learn. Be a lurker on [Bee-L](#), or [Beemaster](#), buy a book or get to the local library and check one out!

Full Disclosure: Dr. Larry Connor and I came up with the idea of beekeeping 2.5 in about 2010 when he was a guest in our home.

Retired Army Officer Joe Lewis is a sidelinier beekeeper in Bel Air, Maryland and operates *Harford Honey*.



- Claudia's Corner -

*Man is handicapped in that
he must go to school and
study in order to learn
anything, while the bee is
born with its college diploma
in its hand.*

Jay Smith - Better Queens

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

- **Bob Crouse:**
Notes From The Apiary
- **Joe Lewis:**
Beekeeping Two Point Five
- **Claudia Hertzog:**
Claudia's Corner, Colorist
- **Dennis Hertzog:**
*Thinking, composing, snapping pics,
rewriting, using the delete key
way too much...*

