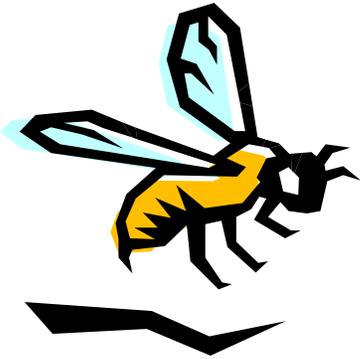


Northwestern Pennsylvania Beekeepers Association

October 2015 newsletter

Susan Breckenridge, editor



Next meeting: Saturday, February 13, 2016

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

Edinboro, PA

1:00-3:00

Please bring a snack to share .

Susan Breckenridge

12972 N. Watson Run Road

Meadville, PA 16335

News 'n Views...

Farm Show

At the 100th annual Pa Farm Show, our NWPBA county exhibit again received a 2nd place. The theme was “100 Years of Tradition”. It was a nice portrayal using last year’s “Faces of Beekeeping” along with bee journal covers and photos illustrating many years gone by. Although the presentation appeared simple, there was a lot of time and miles logged. Ross and Peggy Bell, along with Charlie and Cathy Vorisek, combined efforts to create this exhibit for the NWPBA. The end result was a professional appearance and display. The exhibit included an array of hive products from Bell’s, Vorisek’s, Ken Andryc, Charlie Schroeck, Lynn Urban and Al’s Melons.

This year’s 2nd place premium is \$300. We look forward to some brainstorming for the next exhibit at the 2017 Pa Farm Show.

In addition to the ‘County Exhibit’, six NWPBA members entered other entries in judged Apiary classes. That is the most entries, ever, from our region.

June Field Day

Preliminary plans are underway for our summer field day. As last summer, we plan to raise queen cells to give away. The best chances of success are introducing those cells to nucs at the same location then letting them hatch and mate in a drone-strong area. If all goes well, the queen stock will be daughters from Purdue ‘leg-chewers’ and Ontario Buckfast. Purdue ‘leg-chewers’ are selected stock that bites varroa mites, leaving them to dehydrate. Ontario Buckfast are a northern survivor stock from Canada. Both these traits are pieces of the puzzle for sustainable beekeeping in our area. We are interested if anyone with an exceptional queen that has survived 2-3 years, even better if the hive has had little or no treatment for mites. This is the kind of genetics we want in the Queen Improvement Project.

Anyone interested in getting a queen cell will need to bring a 4 or 5 frame nuc to the June meeting. Last year we had 62 nucs and used over 80 queens so that every nuc went home with a new laying queen.

The June 18th field day will be held 12-3:30 at Vorisek's Backyard Bee Farm, outside of Linesville. This will be an 'event', more than a meeting. This field day has been included as an 'out reach' as part of a SARE grant for the Pa Queen Improvement Project. This event will likely draw more people from the surrounding region. Three experts with the project are planning to attend. Dwight Wells, from Ohio, is one of the founders of HHBBC (Heartland Honey Bee Breeders Cooperative) working with Purdue University. Joe Kovalski, heads the project with 2Bs and a C in south central Pa. Jeff Berta is co-chair for the Pa project, representing Pa on HHBBC and lives in Slippery Rock.

We will ask a \$5 donation for each successful queen. Limit will be 2 nucs per person at \$5. Provided we have enough queen cells, additional nucs will be \$40 per queen. (\$20 for the project+\$20 for queen producer)

This will be the only \$5 give-away of queens/queen cells for the season at this location. Stay tuned for more details as plans are finalized.

Apiary Registration

Registered beekeepers have increased over the past 5 years from 2,000 to 4,000. Colonies operated have increased from 40,000 to around 63,000. Still, the majority of beekeepers (85%) operate 10 or fewer colonies. Registration is important to monitor the health of honeybees through inspection. In addition, the many individuals become an important voice regarding overriding regulations.

Renewal Applications for Apiary Licenses have arrived in the mail. Renewals can also be done on-line using credit card payment. Every registered beekeeper can access their information on the Dept of Agriculture website. Go to <https://www.paplants.state.pa.us> Then Logon/Register" on the menu. Your PaPlants ID and PIN are printed on your renewal form. If you do not have your renewal form, you can contact the department at 717-787-4843 or via [email to obtain your PaPlants ID and/or PIN](#)

NWPBA website

The NWPBA website is up and running. Thanks to Alek Buntic for stepping up as webmaster. Information is current and growing. www.nwpabeekeepers.com

July 30 @ Ernst

I received a confirmation from Calvin Ernst to hold our July 30th meeting at the Ernst Conservation Seed farm, just south of Meadville. The meeting will tentatively be using my hives in the field and instructions of various mite treatments, followed by a tour of the seed plant and switch grass pellet plant.

Charlie Vorisek



From member Aleksandar Buntic::

I wanted to propose to add Buy/sell part of the newsletter where members can advertise their products/services. Some people selling honey, some nucs etc..

I would like to place small ad that I want to buy:

1. Radial extractor;
2. Bee-vac;
3. Hive scale;

October 31st 2015 Northwestern Pa. Beekeepers Assoc.

Meeting started at 1:08 p.m. Pres. Paul Gorlowski, Tara Miller Sect. Thora Kuntz Treas. present. Vice Pres. Kirk Johnson did not attend. Meeting opened with Paul G. thanked members and visitors for coming; then discussed winterizing hives for winter. Reducing the hive entrance not only helps to keep the weather from rushing in but also to keep predators like mice out. To insulate some do some don't. It is important that the hive is not completely in-closed so that the hive does not have condensation build up. Bottom screened boards to close off or leave open. Many close then off a few choose not to. Everyone keeps bees different. It depends on where you live in Erie County if you're south of I 90 the winters can be sever. North of I 90 can be somewhat different. // Charlie Schroeck spoke about in hive feeding with a Zip-loc bag cut on top with an X of a sugar/water lay it X up on the inner cover then place the top cover on with spacers on edges. If they need feeding starting in early Oct. then take it off as soon as it starts to get too cold. You do not want them to have too much moisture. The bees don't keep the hive warm they keep the cluster warm. Q&A continued. Good advice is to read *Bee Culture* and *American Bee Journal* for lots of information. Winter questions were in abundance. Bees need to exit the hive on a good day even in winter to defecate. Otherwise they can get dysentery this is why you can try to keep the front of the hive clear of dead bees so that on a good day they can get out, yes even in the middle of winter. A drawback about using ¼ inch hardware cloth on the front, they cannot drag their dead out. This will add high maintenance on the beekeepers part to clear the entrance all during winter. Do not feed too early in the spring this would be a big mistake if the hive starts too soon. // Questions to Charlie V. spoke about the queen breeding program how it was going. Too soon to tell until spring. Charlie V. announced \$250.00 + another \$250.00 was matched and collected from queen bee sales and donated back to the Queen bee program. // 3X5 cards were passed around to write down suggestions, opinions, and ideas for our group. // Paul G. said he would like to see us continue to help at the Tom Ridge Center on Pollinator week also to continue to help Asbury Woods Nature Center. (Asbury Woods sells beekeeping equipment) He also thanked the picnic committee for all their hard work.// Picnic date and location will be moved to Sat August 27th 2016 at the Albion Fair Grounds in Albion, Pa. There is a big pavilion with tables, sink, electric, and public restrooms available and all handicap accessible. There is a nice playground nearby also lots of parking space. We are hoping to have warmer weather and maybe we won't get rained on each year. Paul would like to see members visit at the picnic enjoy the day of games. Tara called several places for dates they are mostly spoken for 2016 and many do not have restrooms, a sink, or electric. Many are over \$100.00 and one almost \$600.00. Some people never even called me back because they are full for next year and cannot accept any reservations until 2016 start of for future dates. Because of the several past years of being rained out and too cold; the board decided to move the picnic up into August in hopes of better weather. It is interfering with the last day of the fair Charlie V. said, many members will be helping out that day at the bee display. This picnic date can be changed for the year of 2017 if the group so chooses. (Secretary Note: The NWPBA picnic has been the first weekend of Sept for 15 years and the weather usually awful, the picnic pavilion at Woodcock Dam was down a big hill and not easily accessible. Betram Park was ok but the bathrooms were a bit dated. Let's hope for the nicest day for our picnic. Rain or shine great food, door prizes, good camaraderie, mentoring, and lots of wax chewing.) Paul G. is asking for willing members to learn bee removal during the summer months. He is willing to teach anyone who wants to learn the right way. There can be a wrong way and this will make a bad name for beekeepers. You must learn how to teach the homeowner what is going on, what's going to happen and the hole in the wall they will have. Each home is a challenge esp. if it is very high up. Paul has cleaned out many homes that have been devastated by another beekeeper doing removals. Those who just make a bad removal of the hive and take the bees and honey then leave the big mess. There is a need to rescue the hives and give them a home. The home owner wants to do their part to save the honeybees. //

Business: Thora K. Treas. report \$3,248.91 Thora asked for a payment for the printing of her membership list. Motion made unanimously made and passed to pay her church for the printing \$50.00. NWPBA hats and T-Shirts for sale. Paul suggested that now that we have money saved to use it to bring guest speakers to speak at our meetings. Also to have teaching tools for our group at the meetings like postures and info.

Voting: Cathy V. nominated Thora Kuntz was offered to remain treasure she accepted, Charlie V. second. Thora Kuntz will remain NWPBA Treasure for 2016. She will pass up membership to another.

Secretary: Tara Miller passed up the Secretary saying she prefers someone with more computer skills to take over. Paul G. asked for nominees. Growley motioned Liggett second. Tara Miller accepted and agreed to stay on and remain secretary for the year 2016.

Thora Kuntz nominated Aleksandar Buntic for Vice President and he declined. Alek agreed to take membership over for Thora.

Aleksandar Buntic nominated Charlie Schroeck for Vice President, by show of hands unanimous all around.

Thora Kuntz nominated Paul Gorlowski for President, Tara Miller second the nomination, Paul asked again for anyone who would like to run for Pres? Paul accepted and remains by show of hands unanimous and will remain president for 2016. Camaraderie continued for the remainder of the meeting.

Congratulations to the 2016 NWPBA elected officers:

Paul Gorlowski	2016 President
Charlie Schroeck	2016 Vice President
Tara Miller	2016 Secretary
Thora Kuntz	2016 Treasure
Aleksandar Buntic	2016 Membership

Our Next NWPBA Swarming will be February 13th 2016 at Our Lady of the Lake social hall in Edinboro, Pa,
1:p.m. to 3:P.M. Please bring a snack. This will be our first meeting of the 2016 year. The public is welcome.

Sincerely, Tara Miller NWPBA Secretary

Beekeepers Ponder: by Tara M.

By now many of you have discovered that many beekeepers do things differently. It takes trial and error though learning to make good on what works. Do's and don'ts add up and to those who confess the wrong doings give praise to, because they teach the rest of us. When one comes to a meeting you expect to learn a lot in just a few hours. We hope that we provide answers to questions asked in the time allowed. Don't give up its not overwhelming if you start out slow. Don't be intimidated by what you expect to learn from the start. The bees teach us a lot if you pay attention. Don't wonder what you did right wonder what went wrong and learn from it. That is how we all discovered what works and what doesn't for your bees. Find a mentor.

New Bees: We cannot stress how many times we say put an electric fence up around your apiaries / bee hives. This is one of the first mistake one makes in thinking "there aren't any bears around here".... Repeating this warning over again bears listening to... Please take the advice buy and electric fence one that will keep cows and horses in...yes it's already too late to ask Santa. Surround your hives 3 to 4 strands and with enough room = perimeter so that the bears cannot reach in and you have enough room to work. Please do not put in a wooden gate or any other kind of gate for a walk in, the bear can crawl over. The enclosure must be completely surrounded by electric fence. No other fence will work. There are insulated hook handles to install to be able to enter through your electric fence. You can shut it off when you work or cut the grass but remember to turn it back on. Remember, if you never had a bear around where you live Yooouuu will! They will find your bees on a fine spring day and thank you by returning again and again... Spring will be here, you need to put up a fence if you do not have one by now.

Bee Fact: Since the honeybee began man has kept, learned from, manipulated, and studied the honeybee. How many humans have learned how very important the honeybees are to man....?

Beekeeper Info: If you like to shop at National Honey Board I think you'll like what they have to offer.

www.honey.com See what they have to enhance your sales, hand out's, and promotional.
Also for more info on beekeeping and honeybees you can go to: MAAREC = Mid-Atlantic Apiculture Research and Extension Consortium.
Sincerely, Tara Miller

2016 Meeting dates:

March 12, Our Lady of the Lake church, Edinboro

April 23, Our Lady of the Lake church, Edinboro

June 18, Vorisek's bee yard, Linesville

July 30, Ernst Conservation Seeds, Meadville

August 27, Picnic, Albion Fairgrounds

October 15, Our Lady of the Lake church, Edinboro

November 19, Our Lady of the Lake church, Edinboro