



The Beeline

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Highlights:

**News from the Apiary
Inspector's Office
Upcoming Events
MSBA T-Shirts** Page 2

**Winter Meeting Agenda
Meeting Vendors: Please
Reserve Your Place** Page 3

Winter Meeting Speakers Page 4

**Imirie and Free State Award
Winners**

**2013 Honey Show Results
Membership Renewal** Page 5

**"Beepeeker" Observation Hive
Advice**

**Valentines Honey Hot
Chocolate Recipe** Page 6

**BeelInformed Disease Load
Monitoring Project, Positive
2013 Pilot Experience** Page 7

**MSBA Officers & Local
Associations** Page 8

Only In the Electronic Edition:

**Five Friends Every In-Town
Beekeeper Needs** Page 9-10

News Briefs Page 11

MSBA Membership Form Page 12

MDA Apiary Registration Form
Pages 13-14

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rlcrouse@qis.net and tell us your name
and email address!*



President's Message

by Toni Burnham

Most years, I pretty much know right now how many (and which) colonies my apiaries will bring into the Spring. This winter, I'm not so sure. Last year, I tried to be extra "on top" of things, but even so all bets are off. Many of you have probably already heard that 2013 has been widely bemoaned as one of the most difficult years for beekeeping on record: Kim Flottum pegged it as the worst honey harvest year in history. It's odd to hear beekeepers from Maine to California reporting the same problems, though it is heartening (and sometimes annoying!) to hear the odd case of a bumper crop here in Maryland. All beekeeping is local, but some larger trends affect us all.

This year, with the honor and responsibility that goes with being President, I'd like one trend to be better awareness, from one end of the state to the other, of information and tools we can use to help our bees thrive. Wayne Esaias' presidency left us with a historically large membership, and solid assets, which now include ownership of what was the MDA ETO Chamber. Only North Carolina can currently offer its beekeepers this type of fumigation: an additional tool in the fight against honey bee pests that reside in woodenware and comb. We are attempting, step by step, to bring this option back to Maryland, and will be communicating with you over the next months as we seek the skills and the feedback necessary to make this a reality.

In recent board discussions, it has become more clear where a statewide club can make a contribution, rather than duplicating local efforts: the ETO Chamber is one of them. But another is promoting collaboration with the Maryland Farm Bureau. In other states, beekeepers have successfully cooperated with farm associations on issues like information sharing on crop spraying and seeking legislative support for agricultural activities in increasingly suburban landscapes. Many of us already know members of our local Farm Bureaus: 2014 may be the year to start collaborating a bit more.

In the near term, we have a solid Winter Meeting Program prepared by our new First Vice President, Mr. Allen Hayes, of Howard County. We will be welcoming an exciting speaker, Gary Reuter of the University of Minnesota, who works beside Dr. Marla Spivak on innovative bee genetics and experimentation programs, but is nonetheless a solid nuts-and-bolts beekeeper with a long record of connecting with sideliners as effectively as PhD entomologists.

I look forward to working with you this year, and wish you a sweet 2014!

News from the Apiary Inspection Office

Jerry Fischer, State Apiary Inspector, MDA

Phone: 410-841-5920, Fax: 841-5835, Cell: 410-562-3464, Jerry.Fischer@Maryland.Gov

Apiary Statistics: Maryland's Law (Mandatory Registration – Free)

This is a reminder to re-register your apiary for 2014 if you have not done so (registration form is included in the e-edition of this newsletter. It is very important to register so we have an accurate number of beekeepers and colonies and locations for inspection purposes.

Ending statistics for 2013:

- Beekeepers: 1,821
- Colonies: 14,711
- Apiaries – 2,397
- AFB still remains under 2% in Maryland

Ethylene Oxide: The ETO chamber has been turned over to the MSBA. Look for these services in future.

Nuc Producers Please Note: We have been promoting the production of nucs as an alternative to package bees from southern states.

If you are planning to sell nucs, even within the state (out of state vendors must have a request and permit documentation), contact your local inspector or state office for an inspection. Please call prior to making up nucs so the mother colonies can be inspected. You will then receive stickers for the number of nucs that will be sold.

Local Associations: Please send the contact information for your 2014 president to MDA. We receive multiple calls during the year from the general public requesting this information.

Inspectors Enhancement Fund: THANK YOU for your contributions to the enhancement fund. These monies have made it possible to increase our staff with an additional inspector for southern Maryland, an area which has not had one for many years.

MSBA T-Shirts Available For Sale at Winter Meeting

Many local clubs have reported that member t-shirts have been valuable to their individual and club activities. To test their value statewide, MSBA will offer a limited number of 100% cotton t-shirts (see illustration, right) at the February 15 meeting, followed by sales via the web site at www.mdbeekeepers.org.

The shirts will be available in adult sizes M-L-XL for \$15 (cash or check only at the meeting). If demand is strong, we will offer more shirts in additional sizes.

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

4th Annual Natural Beekeeping Symposium, Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild, February 9, Philadelphia, PA. \$35 nonmember, \$25 member. www.phillybeekeepers.org

Western Pennsylvania Beekeeping Seminar, February 14-15, Mars, PA. Randy Oliver, Mike Palmer. Register by February 8, www.pastatebeekeepers.org

Maryland State Beekeepers Association Winter Meeting, February 15, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship. Keynote: Gary Reuter, University of MN.

Chester County Beekeepers Association (CCBA) Annual Seminar, Saturday, March 15, West Chester University in West Chester, PA. Larry Connor, PhD, keynote. \$50, college students \$35. www.ChescoBees.org

Delaware State Beekeepers Meeting, March 15th at St. Jones Reserve, Dover, DE. Keynote: Michael Palmer. For more info: ken.outten@comcast.net

Mid-Atlantic Organic Honey Bee Convention, March 15, 4500 Kensington Ave. Richmond, VA: maohbc.com

West Virginia Beekeepers Association Spring Meeting, April 5, Trinity Assembly of God, Fairmont. Jeff Harris and Kim Flottum, keynotes. www.wvbeekeepers.org

VA State Beekeepers Assoc. Spring Conference, June 13-14, Lynchburg, VA, www.virginiabeekeepers.org

Other Upcoming Events

7th Annual Organic Beekeepers Meeting, February 28-March 2, 2014, Oracle Arizona. \$190 per person. Contact Dee Lusby for information at: 520-398-2474.

Eastern Apicultural Society Conference and Short Course, July 28-August 1, 2014, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky. <http://www.easternapiculture.org/conferences/eas-2014.html>



Maryland State Beekeepers' Association Fall Meeting
February 15, 2014
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD

8:00 am	Refreshments, Coffee, Donuts, etc. .	
9:00 am	Opening and Welcome	Toni Burnham, President
9:15 am	Maryland Apiary Inspector's Report	Jerry Fischer, Maryland State Inspector
9:30 am	Selecting Local Queens	Gary Reuter, University of Minnesota
10:30 am	From Hobbyist to Commercial and Beyond!	Larry Welle
11:30 am	Update on Black Locust Propagation	Dr. Wayne Esaias
12:00 Noon	Lunch	
1:15 pm	Q&As on Pollinators and the Three Ps	EPA Team Presentation: Dr. Thomas Steeger, Thomas Moriarty, Reuben Baris, Meredith Laws
2:15 pm	The Experimental Process For Beekeepers	Gary Reuter, University of Minnesota
3:15 pm	Ask Expert Beekeepers Your Anonymous Questions	Panel Discussion
4:00 pm	Adjourn	Toni Burnham, President

Directions to the Howard County Fairgrounds

Via I-70: Get off I-70 at Exit 80 (Rt. 32 Exit); go south on MD Rt. 32 for 1/8 mile to first traffic light; turn right (west) onto Rt. 144; turn right at crest of hill onto Fairgrounds Road; turn into second entrance; meeting is in the Dining Hall, second building on left

Via Rt. 32: Stay on Rt. 32 to West Friendship; turn west (left, if coming from the south) onto Rt. 144, at the traffic light within sight of I-70; turn right at crest of hill onto Fairgrounds Road; turn into second entrance; meeting is in the Dining Hall, second building on left

From Eastern Shore & Annapolis Area: From Rt. 50, just west of Annapolis, take I-97 North toward Baltimore; exit onto Rt. 32 toward Columbia; follow directions above, via Rt. 32

From NE MD: Proceed to Baltimore Beltway (I- 695); take I-70 west toward Frederick; follow directions above, via I-70 Lunch / Refreshments at the Winter Meeting:

MSBA will provide Coffee and Donuts, Sodas and Water as refreshments during the winter meeting.

There will be an opportunity to order a Subway sandwich on a cash-only basis for those who register before 10:00 AM for this meeting. Members/attendees are welcome to order upon registration or are advised to bring their own lunch or to make plans to dine at a local establishment.

VENDORS: PLEASE RESERVE YOUR TABLES

At our largest event of the year, space is limited. We cannot promise a table unless you reserve, first come first served: email thehayeshouse4@aol.com or call (443) 803-8245. Please note: vendors are asked to contribute a door prize item.

MSBA WINTER MEETING WEATHER POLICY

In the event of a major winter storm, please listen to WBAL (AM 1090) or WTOP (FM 103.5) for announcements. If a Snow Emergency Plan is in effect for Howard County, the meeting is cancelled.

Winter 2014 Meeting to Feature University of MN Bee Scientist and Educator Gary Reuter

A long time hobby beekeeper trained in technology education, keynote **Gary Reuter** began working with Dr. Marla Spivak at the University of Minnesota when she moved there in 1993. Without his hard work, the program would not be what it is today.



He maintains the research colonies, helps train and work with students, designs and builds specialty equipment and speaks to beekeeping, student and civic groups. He plans the Extension short courses and together with Marla teaches beginning as well as experienced beekeepers. He is a past president of both MN Hobby Beekeepers Association and WI Honey Producers Association and director of the American Beekeeping Federation. He still finds time to manage his own colonies while learning to blacksmith, maintaining an orchard, and helping his wife raise sheep.



Larry Welle is well known to many MD beekeepers. He is retired from serving as Director of Finance for the Md. State Prison System, and now lives in South Carolina. He travels, works for Habitat for Humanity, tends his bees

and...works with Kutik's Honey Farm, a commercial beekeeper who is located in both NY and SC. He's also President of OxaVap LLC..

Because it is increasingly important for beekeepers to understand the regulations and organizations around the use of pesticides and their impact, and we also need to

make sure that we are understood, this meeting includes a team discussion from the EPA titled *Q&As on Pollinators and the Three Ps*. Risk assessors and risk managers from the **EPA Office of Pesticide Programs** will discuss activities related to pollinators and the three Ps (pesticides, pathogens and poor nutrition) and government efforts to addressing honeybee declines. EPA will provide an overview of how it assesses the likelihood and magnitude of adverse effects to bees (i.e., risk) from pesticides and what efforts are being brought to bear toward understanding and mitigating the factors that have been associated with colony collapse disorder and the broader phenomenon of global declines in honeybee health. The audience will have an opportunity to ask EPA staff members about EPA's perspective on pollinator declines and pesticide regulation. Among presenters are **Dr. Thomas Steeger**, well known from recent sessions at ABF in Baton Rouge and their online Webinar series; **Thomas Moriarty**; **Reuben Baris**; and **Meredith Laws**.



Above: EPA staff (wearing hoods) meet with commercial beekeepers during almond pollination
Top: UMN's Gary Reuter, Left: Larry Welle.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



Imirie Education & Free State Beekeeper Citizenship Awards 2013

Each year the Maryland State Beekeepers Association has the opportunity to present awards in beekeeping education and citizenship to noteworthy members of our community.

At the November 2013 Membership Meeting in Annapolis, the MSBA announced that the George Imirie Award for Beekeeper Education would go to Pat Haskell, for many years our Fairfax, VA Second Vice President and renowned regional beekeeper. Though based in Virginia, Pat has been instrumental in helping Maryland beekeepers access additional educational opportunities in Queen Rearing, Top Bar Hive Beekeeping, and preparation for the Eastern Apicultural Society Master Beekeeper examination process.

The Free State Beekeeper Citizenship award was given to former MSBA Board member Beth Passavant for her role in organizing The Baltimore Backyard Beekeepers Network (BBBN) and for her work to ensure that city beekeepers were not subject to burdensome fee and permitting requirements. Her efforts linked individual city beekeepers with the MDA Apiary Inspectors Office and city officials to ensure a result that was informed and reasonable. The award also recognized her years of service to Maryland beekeeping on the eve of her departure from the area. Best of luck, Beth!

77th MSBA Honey Show Results!

The MSBA hosts the final Maryland Fair Board supported Honey Show of the year at the November meeting, this year attracting 76 entries from 10 clubs (and a few unaffiliated beekeepers) across the state.

The "I. Barton Smith" Award for Best in Show went to **Steve McDaniel**, Manchester, Md.

The Division I/Hive Products winner was *first time entrant* **Richard Parry**, Kensington, Md. Special congratulations to Richard!

Division II/Arts and Crafts was won by **Steve McDaniel**, Manchester, Md

Division III/Honey Cooking went to **Mellie Landow-Whitlow** of Brandywine, Md

The Best Club Showing award goes to the **Susquehanna Beekeepers Association**.

This year, MSBA invited **George Wilson** of the neighboring state of Virginia to judge our honey show, as he recently completed Welsh Honey Judging Training. He was ably assisted in judging and administering the show by **David Morris**, **Beb Wellemeyer**, **Ian Bens**, and volunteers from the **Anne Arundel Beekeepers**, including **Lloyd and Doris Luna**.

Memo From Your Treasurer: Membership Renewal Time!

by *Bob Crouse*

It's that time of year again for you to renew your membership with MSBA. Those of you who receive the online edition of the newsletter will find the renewal form on Page 14; you can also find it linked via <http://www.md-beekeepers.org/membership.html>.

I have several items that I would like to remind you of that present problems for me.. some having to do with misdirected forms, some with bank requirements. At this time, I have reached the maximum number of deposits that Bank of America will let me make without a charge for each check. Therefore, if you have sent me a check dated 12/18/2013 or later I can not make the deposit until February. I just want you to know as I personally don't like having my checks held past more than one statement period.

Several of the checks have been made out to "Bob Crouse:" soon I will have enough for my airfare to the Virgin Islands in February. **Please, make checks payable to MSBA or Maryland State Beekeepers Assoc. Inc..**

We have a membership form for a reason. If there are changes in your address, phone number or E-Mail please show them so that I can up-date my files. If no changes, it is not necessary to do anything except place your name at the top of the form. Please do at least that much! I receive 700 plus applications and each will be filed for reference in alphabetical order. When no name is on the form I must place it there myself.

If you are a new member it is very important that I have more than just your name on a form. Also, please check the correct "Questionnaire" box if you are a new member. When not checked I am forced to review several back years of member lists looking for your information. If you have E-Mail, we would like to use that method to send out our newsletter as that saves postage, addressing and printing costs.

To date, at least a dozen folks have sent their MSBA membership form and check for dues into the MDA office along with their Hive Registration Form. This requires the MDA office folks to forward all of that mail back to me. On our side, I have 26 MDA forms and seven checks made out to either MDA or the Apiary Inspection Fund that I have got to send in to the MDA office. When this happens, I have to phone or E-Mail each individual to clear this up. Please send to the correct address as printed on the forms.

Your beleaguered (*and beloved [Ed.]*) Treasurer,
Robert Crouse

Observation Hive Information from “The Beepeeker”

Frank Linton is an EAS Master Beekeeper, a popular speaker at MSBAs, a beekeeping gadget enthusiast, and a local expert on the ins and outs of observation hives. Frank adds, “I have been keeping honey bees in an observation hive since 2005 and I have learned a lot about bees - and observation hives - as a result.”

Continuing, “Recently, I have noticed an increase in observation hive postings on the internet and an increase in the number of observation hive vendors. I have put together a list of what I consider to be the most authoritative sources of information on observation hives at <http://thebeepeeker.com>”

The wealth of Internet information can be a help and a tremendous source of confusion to beekeepers and many others with specific practical and scientific interests. Having an experienced and articulate guide to this subject matter will save time, hassle, money, and bees.

“Whether you want an observation hive to increase your own knowledge of beekeeping, or you want to set up a

hive for introducing others to the wonder of honey bees, we trust you will find this site useful!” says Frank.

The site is a tremendous resource both to individuals who might want to try an obs hive, but also to the many clubs that take on an observation hive as part of their outreach efforts.

The “Beepeeker” site is divided into sections dedicated to preparation (“Considerations before you buy or build”), valuable places to find reliable information (“Helpful books, information sheets, and images”) and shopping/building advice (“Sources of observation hives”).



The site is clean, well-designed and compact: this is another one to add to your personal bookmarks or club list of helpful beekeeping links.

Valentines Honey Hot Chocolate

By Chef Ian Bens, special to the BeeLine

This recipe is a special treat from a local chef featured in this month's issue of *BeeCulture*! It makes 4 to 6 portions, and can be customized for either kids or grown ups!

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of milk
- ¼ vanilla bean
- ¼ cup cocoa
- ¼ cup honey
- 3oz semi-sweet chocolate, cut into small pieces

Instructions:

Pre warm some cups or bowls with hot water.

Cut about ¼ piece of vanilla bean from the whole bean. Then cut this small piece of bean in half lengthwise and scrape the tiny seeds out with the back of a knife (place the leftover half cut bean in a cup, top with sugar and wrap to make vanilla sugar which you can use in any sweet recipe). Bring milk, and scraped out vanilla seeds to just below a simmer (180F). Remove from heat and add cocoa and honey.

Mix with an immersion blender until smooth. Add chocolate and mix again with the immersion blender until completely smooth and frothy. Taste it and add a bit more honey if you want it sweeter.

You can experiment with different honeys if you want- try orange blossom for a lighter flavor, buckwheat for a more earthy flavor, or try some honey from your local

farmers market.

Serve with marshmallows or your favorite cookies for dipping.

Optional: Adding an ounce of brandy or liqueur will turn this recipe into a decadent adults only hot chocolate!



Honey Hot Chocolate by Chef Ian Bens.

Bee Informed Partnership Real Time Disease Load Monitoring Project

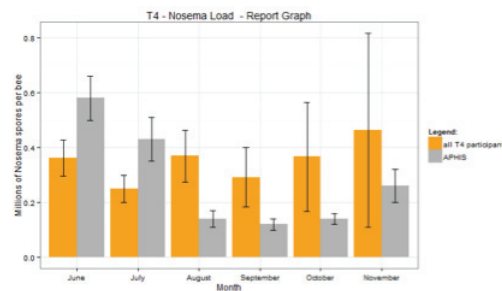
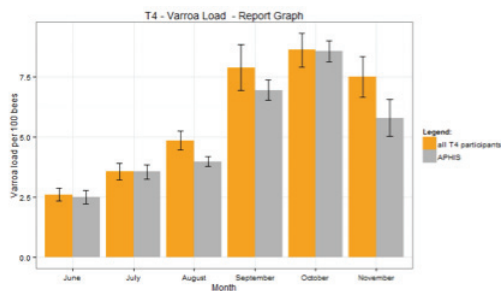
The Bee Informed Partnership is launching the Real Time Disease Load Monitoring Project beginning April 2014. We aim for one hundred participating beekeepers managing 10 or more colonies throughout the country. Participants should have 10 or more colonies from which you will sample 8 of them for six months. Participants will take their own samples every month and send them to our lab where we will report back to their Varroa mite and Nosema spore loads so that they can make better informed management decisions. Participants will also be able to see regional data/averages for each month. We conducted a pilot study for six months in 2013 and here are examples of two graphs with Varroa mite and Nosema spore load averages from our final 6 month report.

The project comes with a kit including all participant sampling materials. The cost of the full project would be \$480, but the Bee Informed Partnership is subsidizing it by 50% for this year. So participant cost will be \$240 for 6 months (April-September) and then \$40 per month for each additional month should a participant want to extend their year's sampling.

If you have questions or want to sign up to participate, please send an email to askbeeinformed@gmail.com. If you would like to view the sampling protocol or read the final report from our Pilot in 2013, please visit: <http://beeinformed.org/tier-4-protocol/>



Below: Examples of graphs with Varroa mite and Nosema spore load averages, Sample Kit for 6 months of sampling, Credit: BeeInformed Partnership



Positive Experience with BIP 2013 Tier 4 Test Pilot Project

By Charlie Brandts

In January 2013 I met with BeeInformed, seeking help with an IPM plan for the year, after which the opportunity to participate in their Tier 4 Varroa mite and Nosema testing pilot program was offered. The invitation arrived in the Spring, and they sent all the testing materials necessary to get started.

My job was to use these tools to sample eight colonies located in the same yard: I used my apiary at the Sandy Spring Friends School.

Sampling began in June and occurred once per month for six months. I was fortunate: Jane Keller and Julie Fortin work along with me on my bees often and proved to be great sample collectors. Big thanks to them! I found it helpful to get the lab results throughout the test period to track Nosema and Varroa mite loads.

Quarterly I would answer an in depth management survey that included all hives and yards I keep.

The BIP team sent results back in a very organized fashion that included graphs and comparisons to the national pool of samplers and APHIS. I chose not to treat because I believed the numbers did not warrant it. When I got my report on the last two samples, these numbers

rose quickly, so the non-treatment approach which I adopted may be a regret this Spring.

In September I collected two samples from each of the eight tier 4 colonies: I wanted to use my mite test results to compare with BIP's. We both use the alcohol wash but I harvest the mites a bit differently. I wanted to see if their results resembled mine closely enough to be a useful comparison to my data on all my colonies in my various yards. Turns out they were very similar!

Julie, Jane and I learned a few tricks to collect bee samples:

- A standard funnel is a poor choice. The neck is so small the bees fly away before you get them into the sample bottle. It helps to cut the neck down to make it a larger opening. I finally ended up with a home made rig that used the funnel attached to a pint size water bottle with good ole duct tape. I could use that rig one handed by myself.
- A quarter cup scoop did not work well for us either. We became adept at eye balling the number of bees in the sample bottles in just a short time.

The BIP team was always there for us if we had questions. It was a very rewarding experience.

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MSBA HOME PAGE:

www.mdbeekeepers.org, webmaster@mdbeekeepers.org

If your dues are not current, please pay them at the next meeting or mail to: MSBA Treasurer, Robert Crouse, 1606 Dogwood Lane, Bel Air, MD, 21015. Note: we will only accept dues payments for a single year.

THE BEELINE

c/o A. Burnham
 318 12th Street NE
 Washington, DC 20002



Address corrections requested

**Using email saves MSBA more
 than \$2,000 per year.
 Can we have your address?**

Five Friends Any In-Town Beekeeper Wants to Have

By Toni Burnham

Beekeepers located within municipalities often worry about whether there are adequate resources near their bees. Well, here is a reason to take heart! We live in a 360°, 365-day-a-year throng of interesting and active people and all their assets, skills and interests, many of whom are ready to become willing collaborators. The Friends of Beekeepers aren't just spiritual buddies, they can help us get (almost) free bees, apiaries, access to cool tools and certified facilities, and help you avoid trouble. And what follows is a tiny start on a list of local heroes available to help city bees and beeks. Some community institutions even fit into two or more categories! To make friends, you have to make contact, of course, and that can happen a few ways: out of normal living, out of good luck, or by screwing up your courage. Whatever works! Remember, most of your would-bee collaborators have seen the pitch-black magazine covers warning of the death of bees (you could make a couple of copies to carry around) and have heard dire things on the network news. Half of your overture is already made. Advice about how to extend the hand of friendship that works well in each case is included below.

The Police

No one wants trouble with the police, but these are the people who often come face to face with the trouble stinging insects can cause when they set up in the wrong place. It's *way* better for the police to experience us as an asset before they experience honey bees as a problem.

Every Spring I write our Chief of Police and District Commanders with a phone number, an email and the promise that if they get a swarm of bees on public space, they have a responding beekeeper. I try to recruit a responder from each district, as well.

If you can get the word out in this manner, many feral bees will be protected with police tape until you get there, rather than sprayed with insecticide before they have a chance. A little bit of honey from time to time also helps your local policemen feel the love, rather than the irritation of dealing with another entitled hipster. The police are going to be called about a bee incident at some point, and will face some very irate anti-arthropod citizens. Let us be the solution, and let the folks who simply will not tolerate honey bees be the blowhards.



Institutions with Food Service Kitchens

Food and beverage laws vary a lot from place to place, and it is *Not Easy* to figure them out. For reassurance that your hive products are legit for local sale, there is

nothing like a harvest in a certified food service kitchen. Plus, these places can often be cleaned with a hose!

You might first think of reaching out to a restaurant owner, but this can be a hard one for them: these businesses are pretty short on space and resources. Every city, however, has other businesses with large facilities and more flexibility. Some of the churches below have commercial kitchens, as do schools (especially colleges and universities), hotels, food banks, convention centers and some large employers.

And this can be cooler than cool. One business in DC bakes a lot of pastry, and has an industrial proofing oven. It's used to get yeast to rise more quickly without killing them. Why do you care? Because if you have *Nosema* in your gear, you can set that oven reliably within 1 degree of your target, in our case 140°F for 15 minutes, to kill spores without chemical contamination. Your combs will melt at about 150°F, however, and consumer ovens lack that kind of control. Even with the industrial oven, therefore, we went with 135°F for a half hour instead. Make sure to let 'em cool before moving stuff.

Did I mention the walk-in freezers where you can stack gear and come back in a few days to no wax moths? How to get this kind of access? Well, chefs like bees but they *love* local products, and many of the organizations above have green initiatives where a honey bee project would fit in nicely. Find out if the organization could use some honey, a presentation, or some publicity. Sometimes they want an apiary (and you probably have a short course student who needs a hive site). It's also important to keep requests reasonable and infrequent: these folks have food operations to run and tight schedules to maintain. Here, we harvest once or twice a year, borrow the freezer or the oven less than that. They also need to keep it clean, and you need to figure out how to do that to their standard. It helps to have more than one buddy in this category.

Local Land Grant Universities

(and extension programs)

Most cities have a branch of a State University of some kind, usually a Land Grant University. The latter are founded with "practical agriculture" as one of several main goals, often difficult to address in cities and suburbs. Land Grant Universities usually support extension programs tied to ag needs in settled areas, like composting and community gardening. But beekeeping is even MORE practical agriculture, and your extension team might be pretty open to helping you out.



Continued on Page 10

“Five Friends”

Continued from Page 9

Being associated with both the public university and a degree-granting organization also gives you tons of authority when dealing with the authorities, and helps to set good management standards. If you decide to apply for a SARE Grant, or other funding, you have established relationships that help your application, as well.

Down the line, it may be possible to establish community apiaries through these institutions – who else has that kind of safe, publicly accessible space? – but you are going to have to build some trust for that.

To make contact, I would start with an extension catalog and information about the areas of study that touch most closely on pollinators, and contact that instructor or program manager. Whenever we have run a beekeeping course in DC, we have turned up one or two Extension folks by chance, too. Review your student list and your membership: you probably have a contact already.

Big Neighborhood Houses of Worship

Probably every large community in North America has a big community church in every neighborhood: this is a great way of networking into areas where you don't yet have any traction, and to meet folks



you just don't know (yet). And churches, temples, and mosques have deep philosophical and historical ties to beekeeping, as well as meeting rooms, community volunteer programs, catering kitchens, large roofs and/or grounds, and political clout.

If you have a club member or a friend who attends a given church, you have what it takes to get an introduction, and to make the offer of a beekeeping presentation or apiary visit, perhaps for the kids' religious school, or in conjunction with a holiday. You might want to let your members know that such collaborations with their faith communities are possible, and get suggestions. Some congregations actively seek volunteer opportunities: we have had Friends Service (Quaker) folks find us, and then come to build hive bodies and frames.

If you have no ties to religious organizations in some parts of your city, watch the activities or weekend section of the paper (especially around Earth Day) to see which congregations have planned special events or projects. Contact that organizer or the clergy involved! Remember, this is exciting and relevant for them, too.



Your City's Arborists

Urban arborists are crazy wonderful, whether they work for the city or private contractors, because they (and their power

tools, and heavy equipment, and brawny fearless workers) contribute to feral bee saves and opportunities to enhance pollinator habitat. Just think: these are trained biologists roaming every street of your town, folks whose favorite color is green. They often face environmental incentives with which we can help. In our city, the arborists choose the new plantings that go into our tree canopy renewal program, and they ask for beekeeper recommendations. Here, they are planting over 6,000 trees this year (that's a lot of pollen and nectar).

Getting in contact: We've done this several ways. Most bee tree calls come from a citizen or landowner with a problem, and mostly that person would like the bees to be saved. To ensure that you are invited in at the beginning, make sure that Jane or Joe Average hears that there are beekeepers around who are willing to help. We do it by posting about swarm and bee tree help on neighborhood message boards (mailing lists, Facebook groups, Reddit) and encouraging folks to re-post them. The process needs to be repeated, preferably every Spring. It helps to make yourself known to arborists on the city payroll, because they cover all the street trees and most home owners take a stab at getting the city to deal with problem trees first.

When contacted by a citizen, ask them to put you in contact with their tree contractor, and offer to work with the latter: be as flexible as possible. Get a look at the tree to be sure you can deal with it, and make sure the contractor understands that they need to get the thing cut and moved (into your vehicle) as you ask. Most contractors are delighted to get contact information for beekeepers, and will often call you on their own afterward.

I'm also not above scanning the ads in my neighborhood newsletter for tree service companies, and introducing the beekeeping club by email or phone. Having a web page or other presence that gives you some credibility helps for cold calls.

In closing

February is an excellent time to work out your strategy for the year, and to figure out where your beekeeping community's needs are. Inside communities, it is almost certain that there is someone out there with the skills, the gadgets, and the access you need to help bees and beeks. And folks love to be on the side of bees! It is so very cool to see these overlapping urban universes, too.

There are also science museums, the local department of the environment, public schools, real estate developers, organic supermarkets...loads more. Lemme know if you wanna hear about them. Spring is coming, and let's hope our friendships bloom along with the flowers!

Tools for honeybee health

Pennsylvania's Montgomery County Beekeepers Coordinate Gamma Irradiation Program

Beekeepers in Pennsylvania's Montgomery County (north of Philadelphia) are coordinating the gamma irradiation of beekeeping equipment for sterilization without chemical residues or by products. The program is offered in March each year to beekeepers who meet the requirements and costs for this irradiation.

The commercial facility for gamma irradiation in our area is the Sterigenics Corporation, 75 Tilbury Road, Salem, NJ 08079. This location offers beekeepers in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Delaware, the opportunity to clean their known and suspect contaminated equipment.

According to the club site, "Gamma irradiation is a physical means of decontamination—it kills bacteria by

breaking down bacterial DNA, inhibiting bacterial division, using high-energy photons that are emitted from an isotope source (Cobalt 60). Energy (gamma rays) passes through hive equipment, disrupting the pathogens that cause contamination. These photon-induced changes at the molecular level cause the death of contaminating organisms or render such organisms incapable of reproduction. The gamma irradiation process does not create residuals or impart radioactivity in the processed hive equipment. The process has been used for years to sterilize imported leather goods, spices, wine corks, medical dressings and devices, pharmaceuticals, etc.

For more details, please visit the program page at www.montcobeekkeepers.org/Pages/Irradiation.aspx

RNA interference: A Tool with Promise for Honeybee Health, or a Source of Worry?

A recent *New York Times* article (January 28, "Genetic Weapon Against Insects Raises Hope and Fear in Farming" available online) lays out some of the promise, some of the potential and some of the concerns around the application of an emerging technique, RNA interference, (RNAi) in targeting agricultural pests, but potentially also pests of honeybees.

In genetics, we often talk about DNA, the double-stranded molecule which stores and transmits all the genetic information for an individual organism, but RNA is less understood by the public. Some scientists use the metaphor of a cookbook: DNA is everything a living thing is able to make, RNA is the set of recipes for making useful proteins out of all of that stuff.

RNAi gives scientists the possibility of identifying a gene sequence unique to a single species—say the Varroa mite—and targeting just that. From an habitat point of view, instead of filling a plant with neonicotinoids, or spraying insecticides across fields, it might be possible to target just the pests that damage the crop in question.

The dangers are being discussed, as well. In January, the EPS held a meeting of scientific advisers to discuss potential risks, which groups like the National Honey Bee Advisory Board consider to be high at this point in the development of the science, which won a Nobel Prize in 2006. Monsanto and others are seeking regulatory approval to use this technology against the western corn rootworm.



Pesticides 'making bees smaller'

Bumblebees exposed to a widely-used pesticide produced workers with lower body mass, scientists find

As MSBA members learned a year ago in a Winter Meeting talk by Dr. Steven Cook of the Beltsville Bee Lab, you don't just measure the impact of stressors like pesticides on bees through mortality, but also through the stresses coping with such contamination places on their lives. Additional study on this topic finds related impacts on bumblebees.

Scientists from the School of Biological Sciences at Royal Holloway, University of London conducted laboratory tests which showed how a pyrethroid pesticide stunted the growth of worker bumblebee larvae, causing them to hatch out reduced in size.

Gemma Baron, one of the researchers, said "We already know that larger bumblebees are more effective at foraging... Our result, revealing that this pesticide causes bees to hatch out at a smaller size, is of concern as the size of workers produced in the field is likely to be a key component of colony success, with smaller bees being less efficient at collecting nectar and pollen from flowers."

Researchers exposed half the bees to a pyrethroid while monitoring the size of the colonies as well as weighing individual insects on micro-scales. More on the study at the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.12205/abstract>

Maryland State Beekeepers Association

Name : _____

Returning members – please only detail any *changes* in your contact information.

Email: _____ (home / work)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ County: _____

Phone: _____ (home / cell / work)

Description	Unit Cost	Number	Sub-Total
Annual Membership	\$10		
Or, Lifetime Membership	\$200		
Donations			
To MDA's Apiary Inspection Fund**			
To MSBA, general donation			
To MSBA, for George Imirie Education Fund			
To MSBA, donation for Vehicle Plates (Plus MVA Fee)	\$15		
Grand Total:			

** will be passed on to MDA

Checks for 2014 dues will not be deposited until January

Questionnaire

- ☐ I am a **new Annual Member**
- ☐ I am interested in serving on the MSBA Executive **Board** or a committee
- ☐ I am interested in judging or assisting at the MSBA Annual **Honey Show**
- ☐ I am interested in giving a **presentation** at a future MSBA event
- ☐ I am interested in providing an **article** for the 'Beeline'

Suggestions / Feedback

Do you have any suggestions for the MSBA – topics for future meetings; things you would like to see MSBA doing; improvements to the website etc?

Please make all checks payable to '**MSBA**'
or pay online at www.mdbeekeepers.org/membership.html

Mail checks and forms to:

Bob Crouse, Treasurer
1606 Dogwood Lane,
Bel Air MD 21015

phone: (410) 638-0105
email: **RLCROUSE@QIS.NET**

MSBA Use Only

Check Date.....:

Check Num.....:

Check Amt.....:

Details updated:

Clip and save your new membership card which becomes activated when you pay your MSBA dues. Check our website, www.mdbeekeepers.org, for any changes, updates and program details.

Please do not mail MDA registration forms or checks payable to the Apiary Inspection Fund to MSBA treasurer. Do not mail MSBA membership forms or checks to the MDA.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**PLANT PROTECTION SECTION****APIARY INSPECTION**

50 Harry S Truman Parkway, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF HONEY BEE COLONIES FOR _____

If blank, print Name and Address Below

PHONE NO. (H) _____ (W) _____ IDENTIFICATION NO. _____

By law, all honey bee colonies in the State of Maryland must be registered with the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Will you be keeping bees on another persons property this year? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, at least one colony in apiary must be identified as to ownership with an approved name or number.

If an ID number has not been assigned, check 1 or 2 below.

1. Assign me an ID number or
2. Assign me the following name or number ID _____

PLEASE NOTE THE SPECIFIC LOCATION OF EACH APIARY BELOW

YARD	LOCATION (Street address, road name, town, etc.)	COUNTY	NUMBER OF COLONIES
No. 1			
No. 2			
No. 3			
No. 4			
No. 5			
No. 6			

Total colonies _____**SIGNATURE****DATE****SEE BACK**

Mandatory information - Please fill out

**Have you purchased queens, packaged bees, nucs of colonies
form out-of-state during the previous year?**

Yes _____ No _____

If yes the MDA may examine your bees for mites. Please answer the following:

_____ Date of Purchase _____ State of Purchase _____ Items Purchased _____

Do you employ one or more persons in beekeeping?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, you must file with the Department a Certificate of Compliance with the State Workmen's Compensation Laws, or you may provide the Department, as evidence of insurance, a workmen's compensation policy number or binder number. POLICY NUMBER/BINDER NUMBER, EXPIRATION DATE: _____

Optional information - You are not required to complete this section

Honey For Sale, Collecting Bee Swarms, Stinging Insect Removal

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Offices (CES) receive calls from the public requesting sources of local honey, and reporting honey bee swarms during the spring swarming season. Occasionally a local beekeeper cannot be found that has honey for sale or to collect these bees (usually collected free of charge). Calls are also received regarding honey bee nests in the walls of houses, and yellow jacket and hornet's nests that homeowners would like someone to come and remove (usually removed for a fee).

If you plan on having honey for sale and you would like your name, town and telephone number included on a list that will be distributed to the public, please indicate this below. If you are seriously interested in collection honey bee swarms and/or removing honey bee, yellow jacket or hornet nests, and you would like to have your name included on a list that will be used by the MDA and CES, indicate this below. Your name will be given out to the public when calls that pertain to the categories you have checked are received.

Please note: If you use any insecticides when collecting stinging insects, Maryland Law requires that you be licensed and certified to use pesticides by the MDA or be employed by a licensed pest control company. Collecting stinging insects without using an insecticide does not require any license.

Check Appropriate Boxes. I want to be included on your list and receive calls for:

- ☐ 1. Honey for sale
- ☐ 2. Removing honey bee swarms
- ☐ 3. Removing honey bee nests in walls of buildings, etc.
- ☐ 4. Removing yellow jacket and hornet nests

County or counties in which I am interested in collecting/removing stinging insects:
