



PROPOLIS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
MONROE COUNTY
BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
www.monroecountybeekeepers.com

President's Message

It's another year and time to start putting our plans for 2010 in effect. Already the queens in our hives have started laying eggs to begin replenishing the supply of worker bees nearing the end of their winter tasks. This means that food stores will start to be consumed at an increasing rate and it is the beekeeper's task to make sure that hive larders are full.

On a day when the weather is over 40 degrees you may see the bees making their cleansing flights. This is a good time to pop the top off the hives and add some extra fondant or even a pollen patty. It is amazing how fast a thriving colony can go through a few pounds of fondant added at this time. This is also a good time to check for die-outs and seal up those colonies that didn't make it until you have a chance to check these hives for diseases and clean them up for reuse later in the Spring. It is also the time to get old equipment repaired and new equipment built and painted, and to order any packages or queens that you may need.

This is also an important time for our club to begin its own growth and expansion through our Intro to Beekeeping Class scheduled for Saturday, February 27. This program infuses new blood into our organization and helps us to grow. You can help by printing out and distributing the flyer included in this newsletter.

The first meeting of the year is scheduled for next Wednesday, February 10, at 7 PM at the Ed Center. This is an important event because it sets the tone for the New Year. We hope as many of our members as possible will be able to attend as there are committees to form, ideas to share, and fellowship to enjoy. The video, "Beekeeping in Northern Climates" by the University of Minnesota Extension Program will be shown and a basic outline of their program will be presented. Hope to see all of you there. *Fr. Mike*

Jan/Feb, 2010

In This Issue . . .

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| President's Message | pg 1 |
| Gearing Up for 2010 | pg 2 |
| Good Rap for Bees | pg 2 |
| Hive Helpers | pg 3 |
| Package Bees | pg 3 |
| Club Apiary News | pg 3 |
| Contact Info | pg 4 |



From

"The Song of Bees" by Kirsten Traynor

The wind howls cold,
sneaking through
chinks and window
panes, but in defiance
we spoon into our
honeyed gold,
crystallized into creamy
smoothness, nourishing
our souls, as we
remember last years
flowers and our bees.

For they are surely
ours, hard toiling ladies
we thank in our hearts
for their delicate
confection and the
dream of all the flowers
yet to come!

**MONTHLY MEETING:
FEBRUARY 10, 7 PM**

**DUES FOR 2010
\$10 PER PERSON**
Submit them to Laurel or Richard!

Gearing Up For 2010

Winter is the perfect time to perform maintenance on your beekeeping tools.

| <i>Smokers</i> | <i>Hive Tools</i> | <i>Bee Suits and Veils</i> |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Smokers can be scraped to remove those deposits of tar and charcoal that eventually make the lid hard to open and close. After scraping the hardest deposits, I usually spray the inside with a heavy-duty oven or bbq grill cleaner and let it soak for a bit. Then I rinse it well several times to make sure there is no residue left and dry it thoroughly. To keep it rust free, I spray a light coating of cooking spray over the metal parts and wipe them down with a paper towel. The hinges receive special attention. A light coating of leather wax applied to all areas of the bellows, including the wood, finishes the job. A galvanized pail is great for storing the smoker.</p> | <p>Most hive tools are made of spring steel and have a tendency to rust if not properly taken care of. I wash my tools in hot soapy water with bleach to remove any honey (and disease spores) then I scrub my tools with a non-metal abrasive pad to remove all the propolis and wax. Then it is washed again in the water above, rinsed, and dried. You may repaint the handle with enamel paint or a plastic-type coating. I finish by spraying the steel with a cooking spray or wiping it down with a paper towel soaked with a little canola oil. Wiping with a dry paper towel finishes up. I perform the same treatment on my other tools.</p> | <p>My bee suit gets pretty filthy and smells like my smoker after a few uses. Perspiration also adds its aroma. There are also bee droppings and a few stingers here and there as well. There is nothing quite like spritzing the bad areas with a little laundry stain remover and giving it a good soak and gentle wash to get it sparkling white and fresh smelling again. The bees seem to agree. I also check the seams and zippers and get any damaged areas repaired. This also goes for my veil, which seems to acquire a little tear now and then. I know that I'm a better beekeeper when I don't have a little lady crawling around inside my veil or suit!</p> |

Do the Honey Bee!



Honeybees Get Good Rap!

In preparation for the first-ever National Honey Bee Awareness Day that took place on Aug. 22, big bee backer Häagen-Dazs used the creative efforts of five brothers from Los Altos, Calif. to make a short video raising awareness. The lyrics extol bees' agricultural importance, and the beat's pretty catchy, too. But don't take our word for it—check out the video. You just may want to “shake your stinger, bend your knees / Get down real low, and do the honey bee.”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpyY9_9y9Qw

HIVE HELPERS *Hints and Tips For Our Members*

DO's

- DO check your bees once this month on a mild day (upper 40's to low 50's) to see if they are still alive and maybe at the top of the inner cover – quickly place fondant over but in contact with the cluster and close up (you don't want to chill and kill the brood).
- DO seal up any dead-outs to prevent robbing and cross contamination. These hives should be removed and cleaned up when the weather breaks.
- DO clean stored supers and frames of burr comb and propolis.
- DO paint and repair equipment; replace with new equipment when necessary.
- DO order any packages or queens you may need.
- DO take some time to read up on beekeeping topics and to make a management chart of what you want to accomplish this year and a schedule of how you plan to do it!
- DO start a journal NOW and record your observations of the daily temps, weather, the bees, and important events such as maple budding times. A simple calendar to record daily info can help.
- DO order and assemble new equipment:
 - a) New brood frames and foundation – your goal is to replace all brood comb every 5 years so plan on two new brood frames for each brood chamber each year and remember to mark the frames the year you install them;
 - b) Extra brood chambers, bottom boards, and covers so that you may do increases or splits or hive a swarm. Top covers for hives do not have to be fancy – you may even use a simple piece of exterior plywood as some commercial beekeepers do (just make sure it covers tightly). Every beekeeper is recommended to have at least two hives to assist in making hive management easier (being able to switch brood and stores between hives). A full size hive body can always substitute as a nuc in a pinch.

DO NOT's

- DO NOT open the hive unnecessarily (only once this month, weather-permitting) or keep it open any longer than necessary (30 seconds) to glance at the cluster and place fondant. Then CLOSE UP!
- DO NOT look for the queen or brood or break up the cluster for ANY reason!
- DO NOT allow bees to rob any die-outs – SEAL THEM UP!
- DO NOT get discouraged if you lose a hive – typical winter losses average 20% even among the best beekeepers so they plan for this by making increases in the summer! Another good reason to have two (or even three) strong hives going into the winter!

PACKAGE BEES/QUEENS AVAILABLE!

New York State Bee Inspector Ron Pappas will have packages and queens available for April. He is also our guest speaker for the March Meeting and will be taking orders at that time. To pre-order, contact Fr. Michael.

Ron's presentation for March will be "Spring Management of Overwintered Colonies" and will also cover "What to Expect from Package Bees" for newbees and oldbees alike.

March Meeting will be Wednesday March 10 at 7 PM at the Ed Center

Club Apiary News

All three colonies were checked two weeks ago and were doing fine – additional fondant was added to insure an adequate food supply!

PACKAGE BEES/QUEENS AVAILABLE!

I'm taking orders for 3 lb. packages @ \$77.50 ea. and marked queens at \$19.00 ea., they should be here **Saturday April 24th - weather permitting.**

Orders should be submitted to:

billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com or called in to:

Hm Ph: 610-264-0494, Cell: 610-751-4483

Limited quantity available so orders will

be handled, **first come - first served by**

payment received. Checks are to be sent to:

Bill Mondjack 2236 N. 1st Ave., Whitehall, PA 18052-3906

Order info should include: Name, address & phone # of person placing order with an email address, number of packages and/or queens ordered along with check for FULL PAYMENT.

Schedule

Monroe County Beekeepers Association meets at the Monroe County Conservation District Education Center on Running Valley Road in Stroudsburg the second Wednesday of each month beginning at 7 PM from February through November. Guests and visitors are always welcome.

- February Meeting begins at 7 PM on Wednesday February 10th
- Intro To Beekeeping Course scheduled for Saturday February 27th.

TENTATIVE FIELD DAYS

- March – Assembling your Hive For Newbees
- April – Installing Packages, Hive Inspection Basics
- May – Making Splits and Nucs

Contact List

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| <i>President</i> | Rev. Michael Salnicky | 570-595-3265 | pocbkpr@earthlink.net (NEW EMAIL ADDRESS) |
| <i>Vice-President</i> | Glenn Bachman | 570-722-3671 | bkeeper@ptd.net |
| <i>Secretary</i> | Laurel Bishow | 570-223-1760 | laurelbishow@yahoo.com |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | Richard Sudnik | 570-223-1239 | spanky@epix.net |

Coordinators and Volunteers Needed For 2010:

Fellowship/Refreshments, Club Apiary Maintenance, Observation Hive Maintenance

JOIN THE PA STATE BEEKEEPERS AND HELP ALL BEEKEEPERS IN PA!

PROPOLIS – A glue-like substance which honeybees use to structurally strengthen their home to keep it snug and safe. It also has certain properties that protect against some pathogens.



c/o RR3 Box 3170
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