

FCBA NEWS



Franklin County Beekeepers Association

P.O.Box 341, Chambersburg, PA 17201 fcbapa.org info@fcbapa.org

January, February, March

2018 Volume 1 Issue 1

PREMIER ISSUE

We are very excited to bring you the first Issue of our FCBA News. We are still getting our sea legs since George Hurd retired in the end of June. (more on that on page 2) We thought just to continue the "Honey Drippings" but we just couldn't seem to fill his shoes. So a few of us got together and with membership support and hopefully participation we will bring you our very own beekeeper newsletter. These are a few of the ideas that you will be seeing during this first year.

"Honey and Product Prices" so you know what your harvest and commodities are worth locally and beyond. "To Treat or not to Treat" showcasing different methods of mite control and the why and whens. "My view from inside the Hive" a view from a Franklin County beekeeper. "Did you try this?" a new product or method you may like to try that has been working for others. "In the News" headline and/or articles collected from our facebook page or the internet. A monthly calendar with reminders of things to do, places to go and people to meet up. Funny stories in "it happened to me". Local beekeepers

share actual true stories of things they have done, so that maybe it won't happen to you. That's not everything but we hope we spiked some interest. We will always have room for birthdays wishes, anniversaries and notices if you would like to submit them.

We are trying to keep you informed, included, educated and maybe inspired. Keep you in touch with what's going on in, at and around the Franklin County Beekeepers Association. There is no better resource of knowledge than you, a seasoned beekeeper. Even first year beekeepers have lots to offer to a newbee.

We need your help! If you have anything to add, would like to be involved, submit a story or article, have an idea or know of a event to be covered or added to our calendar write to FCBA, P.O.Box 341 Chambersburg, PA 17201 or email us at info@fcbapa.org. Contact information is also available on page 2 or at FCBAPA.org. This newsletter is free to members of the FCBA and on our website and facebook page Franklin County (PA) Beekeepers Assoc.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the drones from your bee yard almost never breed with the queens from your bee yard? That's right. You read it. Your queens fly further than your drones. They are looking for genetic diversity in ever changing environments. So if you buy two wonderful breeds of bees in an effort to have them mate each other, they should be kept in different bee yards. Preferably 1 to 3 miles away. You can even make a drone yard. If you queen would breed a drone from her own hive, The workers will pull the larva out and dispose of it, outside the hive, or eat it if in need of protein.

Thanks and Farewell to George Hurd

The Franklin County Beekeepers Assoc. would like to give our utmost thanks to George Hurd for 26 years of 'behind the scenes' support that he has given to our organization. He has faithfully attended our membership and board meetings, arranged the meeting room and equipment, kept membership lists, edited and mailed the Honey Drippings newsletters, kept all the records of our organization, and many other unknown activities. We truly value and miss his kindness to our organization and dedication to the future of beekeeping.

Treasurer Georgia Townsend's Notes

I wish to remind those who pay their dues annually that the 2018 dues are due in January 2018. Our new dues rate is \$10 and covers the mailings of our Newsletter and notices. Individual life memberships are \$50. Those who have paid their dues at our October banquet and after are current for the 2018 year. If you are a life member, no dues need to be paid and you will continue to receive the mailings. If you are unsure of the status of your membership, please contact me by mail or email. Contact information below.

*1st Issue - Volume 1
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*FCBAPA News is free with membership
Memberships \$10.00 a year per family.
Lifetime Memberships \$50.00 per individual
Send check or money order: no cash*

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It Happened to Me! (guest columnist)

The Best Lesson in Beekeeping

This really did not happen to me but I did witness it as it happened. One of the major beekeeping supply houses, Brushy Mountain, has a series of live online productions to help new beekeepers gain some knowledge. A couple weeks earlier, they had a live broadcast of installing a package of bees into their new home. I watch these on Facebook.

I do not recall much about that episode but they went through what to expect in a package, how to get the queen cage ready for installation & install it, how to dump in the rest of the bees, and what to do with the stragglers in the box. It went well for a live broadcast.

I assume they checked to make sure the queen was released & the next broadcast I saw was in two weeks to check on the progress of this installation. So the two weeks passed and they arrived at the hive. They went through all the tools they brought & what to expect when they opened the hive.

They opened the lid, removed the inner cover and found no bees. Not a one. Alive or dead. They had absconded.

The Brushy Mountain guys were quite embarrassed & apologetic. You could tell they thought this was a complete disaster. Since it was on Facebook, I could comment. In my opinion, I thought it was a good lesson. The lesson was not about packages or checking up on packages. The lesson was that these things can happen to the experts.

If a first time beekeeper had installed the package & returned to find no one home, they would blame themselves. But here we learned that it is not always the case.

A very important lesson indeed.

PA honey retail per pound 2017

January - \$7.30	July - \$7.25
February - \$6.99	August - \$7.26
March - \$6.85	September - \$7.27
April - \$7.04	October - \$7.37
May - \$7.06	November - \$7.18
June - \$7.25	December*

PA beeswax retail per pound 2017
1 lb - \$16 - \$20.00 white and yellow

*unavailable at time of printing

Winter bee blues?

The winter season could look to laymen like a vacation from beekeeping. Actually it can be a busy time for beekeepers.

Round up all your equipment for cleaning, painting and repairing.

Go through your journals and see if there is something you want to change or rethink.

Do you want to further your education? Take a class, buy or borrow a book on new skills. How about researching different breeds of bees? Maybe join our queen rearing class. Buy that new shiny queen that will change your life.

Is there anything you need to order for spring? ~~X~~ Get those new frames, supers or protective gear you were looking at? ~~X~~ just because we are not in the hives there is lots to do to be a better beekeeper.

FREE SUGAR FOR FCBA MEMBERS BEES

On December 14, 2017 ~~Knouse~~ ^{Knouse} has come through again to offer the members of the FCBA free sugar for our bees. Thank you Charlie Bennet and Julia Badger for thinking of us once again. Steven Hill and Georgia Townsend have been in contact and are making arrangements ~~to~~ to go and pick it up. Steven is using his truck and trailer ~~to~~ to pick up the sugar in 36 barrels, each about 250lbs. and is storing it at his place until we can distribute it to members.

To get some of the free sugar, you must have paid your membership dues for 2018. If you need to pay your membership- send a check or money order, made out to the FCBA for \$10.00 to P.O.Box 341, Chambersburg, PA 17201. Please bring your own containers, boxes or bags to fill.

Steven will have liability waivers and everyone who comes to get sugar must sign one and hand it back to Steven before loading up. We will be distributing from Steven's barn at 2148 Leafmore Rd, Chambersburg, PA 17201

We will be announcing a pick-up date and times the first week of January after the holidays, when the weather is cooperating. If you do have an email, contact Randy King 717-328-9256 so that we know you are interested. We will call you when a date and time is set.

This sugar is only for the use of feeding your hives. It should not be used for any other reason.

My View From Inside the Hive *by David King*

Bees are under constant threats in our apiary. We try to protect them from bears & four legged predators with our electric net fence. We try to protect them ~~m~~ from visiting bees with issues from other hives with the use of robbing screens. We watch for those European bee killing hornets.

We try to help ~~the~~ out with the mites through splitting using the artificial swarm method rather than treating with miticides & caustics.

I ran across a site on the internet where they go treatment free in regards to mites. I was thinking they were of like mind. But I was wrong. They considered any manipulation of the hive to fight mites as a "treatment" & hence bad.

They can split their bees to make more hives but they can't split the bees to fight mites.

WTH? (What the heck)

Their philosophy is that if we save a hive from mites, through whatever action, we are allowing honey bees that are susceptible to mite infestation to live & spread those "poor" genetics to surrounding apiaries.

I see their point ...if we assume mites are a solely bee problem & not a problem caused by varying mite strengths that can create a situation in a particular year where even mite fighting bees can not survive.

If we assume some bees are better fighting mites than others, we can certainly use non chemical treatments & manipulations that will save the better genetics while perhaps losing the poorer mite fighters?

In the mean time, we can use queen rearing techniques to introduce the new mite fighting genetics to our area. Leg Chewers. Ankle Biters Mite Maulers.

These "super" genetics can ~~then~~ then breed with our existing better genetic bees to push future generations to excel in the mite battle. I don't think we need to sacrifice all hives that would die from mites without our help. We can certainly take actions to give our bees an edge. The truly weaker genetic hives will likely still succumb and the better ones get a genetic boost. It is a gradual rising path we need to take.

