



NEWSLETTER

Bowie-Upper Marlboro Beekeepers Association

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www.BUMBAbees.com

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Next BUMBA Meeting: Thursday, December 7, 6:30 PM
Watkins Park Nature Center

Annual Holiday Party

Celebrate another year in the bee yard with your fellow **BUMBA** members at our **Annual Holiday Party Potluck Dinner!** As this is a potluck, please bring a dish to share. There is an online signup for the potluck dishes and volunteers to help with setup and cleaning. The link is here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090b45afa72c7-holiday>. **BUMBA** will furnish plates, drinks and silverware. Please plan to bring appropriate serving utensils. It helps to **label** your dishes and utensils; sometimes the utensils get moved from one dish to another. We also can't have a holiday party without folks volunteering to set up or clean up. Please do consider coming a little early or staying a little late to help make the magic happen!

We will also again have a **gift exchange**. If you would like to participate, please bring a wrapped gift (less than \$20 or homemade).

Since the holidays are no time to talk about (let alone see microscopic images of) bee parasites, our speaker will be **Leigh Walton, BUMBA vice president emeritus**. At our last meeting, members asked for Leigh to speak about his experiences as a longtime beekeeper. He has obliged, and will be sharing his thoughts on what makes a banner year, as well as various lessons learned in the school of beekeeping hard knocks.

Remember the **Annual Festival of Lights**: The Lights will be turned on when you arrive. That means there will be a line of cars driving slowly through the displays for the kids to "ooh" and "ahh". Plan an extra 10-15 minutes! Tell the staff at the gate you are with the "**bee party**" and you can skip making a donation.

Questions? Contact Tracy Velazquez at tvelazquez@mcn.net. See you at the party!

The President's Smoker

Dear **BUMBA** members -

Happy holidays! I hope this message finds everyone and your bees ready for winter. Imho, it's too cold for liquid feeding. It may be a good idea to have fondant on hives for emergency feeding. As temperatures drop the fondant should be below the inner cover in a shim. Some members report success with quilt boards, but I have never used them.

My season ended with a few late summer losses, likely due to Varroa. My bees didn't get as much attention as usual, but they received mite treatment and should have plenty of reserves to get them through winter. I typically install shims and provide fondant just in case they burn through reserves. Thus has been a good practice for me and I see my bees build rapidly in the spring.

I want to thank everyone who helped with the **county zoning issues**. It was wonderful to see the club pull together. We aren't out of the woods, but I trust this will be resolved soon. (See the zoning update, following.)

Two activities I would like to briefly mention at the meeting. The first is planning for the **2018 Beginning Beekeeping Short Course**. We could really use some volunteers to help with weekly classes and the Field Day. If you could, please reach out to me if you can offer a helping hand. The bonus benefit is sitting in on lectures. **BUMBA** is completely run by volunteers who work tirelessly. If you haven't already served, please consider stepping up to help. It's a great way to get to know fellow beekeepers and provides a great opportunity to network and talk bees!

The second activity is an offer from Watkins Park to allow **BUMBA** to set up hives in the Park. The **BUMBA** Board is excited at this offer, but we need a commitment from the club to support it. Many advantages come with this offer, but there are responsibilities as well. We will need a group of volunteers to establish and maintain a possible Park apiary.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone this Thursday at the Holiday Party!

Peace, Love and Bees -

Maggie

Message from the VP

Tracy Velazquez

It was a good year for honey for me. Back in April, a neighbor asked me to take over her colony because she was too busy to manage it. The day I showed up to inspect it for the first time, I got to the yard and the air was full of bees. I was fortunate enough to catch that swarm; I probably got 100 pounds of honey from them. Combined with my overwintered hives and a prolific March package, I ended up with over 250 pounds of honey, which was about 175 pounds more than I'd ever gotten before.

Which brings me to the four 5-gallon buckets of honey in my basement the week before Thanksgiving. What with working full time and going back to school for a PhD (not in anything bee related, sad to say), I never did have the time and bandwidth to figure out what to do with all the honey. I'd called a nearby farmer's market, only to be told (a) they were full and (b) if they weren't full, I would have to commit to going to every market during the season. American University, where I work and go to school, said I could participate in their farmer's market, but I had to get a D.C. business license and liability insurance in case anyone keeled over from eating my honey. So that went nowhere.

So when I got an email from the **Community Forklift**, a nearby nonprofit home improvement reuse center-slash-social gathering space, saying they were having a "Green Friday/Buy Local Saturday" event the Monday before Thanksgiving, I decided that maybe I should take action. I called them to see if I could have a table there during the event; they said they'd be happy to make room for me.

Many of you long-time beeks probably know the next part of this story – my opening up the five-gallon pails, to find honey the consistency of wet beach sand. Turns out, it is a laborious process to de-crystallize honey while keeping it below about 104 degrees. Instead of making pies for my family or working on my final semester projects for my PhD, I was engaged in experiments in the chemistry of sugar. I had honey in the crockpot, honey in double boilers, honey in an igloo cooler with a heating pad... and me alternating between one glob of melting honey to another with my digital thermometer, making sure none of them were getting too hot or staying too cold. And then, of course, I had to bottle and label all the melted honey.

The good news is that we sold over 75 pounds of honey on Friday and Saturday. I sweet-talked my spouse into keeping me company, so he could be the sales guy and I could do my schoolwork and answer occasional questions about bees and honey. We also got to be a part of a fun community event, and do some honeybee PR. And I now have a few leftover jars and only one and a half five-gallon buckets of honey. In terms of spousal goodwill for my hobby, the cash gave me a little breathing room for justifying my next bee-related purchase. And amazingly, I still got a turkey cooked and a pumpkin pie baked for Thanksgiving (although I would have still liked an apple pie as well...).

However, what this whole experience brought to the surface is that I'm spread way too thin between family, work, bees and school. Therefore, I'm going to need to step down as Vice President of BUMBA at the end of my term this spring. I plan to still stay active in BUMBA, particularly on the policy side of things. But I know that I'm not able give as much to the Club and its members as it deserves. If you are thinking about getting more active in the club, I'd be happy to chat with you about the role of the V.P.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this a great year for BUMBA. And thanks to the bees, for another great year in the bee yard. I look forward to seeing you at the holiday party!

Other Bee Meetings

MSBA Winter Meeting

February

Date and Location still TBD

Check back at: www.mdbeekeepers.org

Featured Speaker: TBD

The **Maryland State Beekeepers Association** Winter Meeting is normally held in mid-February. We should have meeting information in the February, 2018, BUMBA newsletter.

Doors open at 8AM and morning refreshments will be available. Check back with the MSBA website for future announcements.

Apimondia 2019

Montreal, CA

September 8-12, 2019

The Biennial Apimondia ("Bee World") Congress will be in North America in less than two years. If you want to know what the experience is like, ask Maggie Mills. She attended this year's Congress in Turkey!

EAS 2018

August 13-17

Hampton Roads, VA



You can find out all about the current and future meetings of the **Eastern Apicultural Society (EAS)** at the EAS webpage www.easternapiculture.org. **EAS 2018 is scheduled for Virginia.** Come and join the fun!

*Timothy McMahon
Maryland EAS Director*

DC Beekeepers' Alliance

www.dcbeekeepers.org

The DC Beekeepers Alliance monthly meet ups are scheduled for third Wednesday of each month at the Hill Center (www.hillcenterdc.org) at 921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20003 (Capitol Hill), 6:30 PM to 8 PM. Monthly meetings always include member discussions and speakers on topics of relevance to local beekeepers. For directions and other meeting information, visit www.dcbeekeepers.org.



CLUB HAPPENINGS

BUMBA 2018 Short Course

BUMBA's popular (and most excellent) short course registration is open! Classes will run from mid-February through April. We already have received several emails asking when the Short Course registration will open. Tell your interested friends to go to **BUMBAbees.com** to register. The course is limited to 50 students.

This class is for new beekeepers and would-be beekeepers and depends entirely on volunteers. Any member who has successfully maintained a hive of bees for a couple of years and has been attending club meetings is fully capable of instructing some portion of the class. Don't be shy! Teaching is a fun experience and you will learn just as much, or more, as you share with others. How do I know this? Because I plucked up my courage many years ago and agreed to teach a class. I read and studied, and learned a lot. I made notes, organized a talk and learned more. And, I was able to sit in on other speakers and learn from them as well. I became a more knowledgeable beekeeper because I accepted an opportunity to learn.

In addition to speakers we will need help organizing and conducting the annual **Field Day**. The class is never a slam-dunk. It takes work and time from **BUMBA** volunteers.

Please ask an officer how you can help.

BUMBA Outreach Program

Frank Fennell, BUMBA Outreach Coordinator
Bumba.Outreach@gmail.com

Again, I want to thank all the volunteers who have supported the **BUMBA** events this year. Without their help and energy we would not have the level of success that we do. A special thanks to **Gerald Jones** who has been kind enough to bring an observation hive to every event supported and for providing the knowledge to the public only a master beekeeper can give.

Yours in beekeeping, THANK YOU!

MEMBERS' CORNER

This is *your* space for *your* story. Tell us why you started beekeeping, what you enjoy most, or least? What have you learned or want to share?

UPDATE:

County Re-Zoning Plan and Beekeeping

Zoning meeting attendance get recognition

*David Morris
EAS Master Beekeeper*

BUMBA members got the attention of the **Prince George's County Planning Department and the Clarion Corporation** by attending the three "listening sessions" held to present the zoning comprehensive review draft.

A BUMBA member even forwarded the **Special Edition** newsletter (available at www.bumbabees.com/downloads/BUMBAeNewsletter2017-zoning.pdf) to the County's comment page. That issue, and all the reasons given in it, are now part of their records.

Members attended the evening meetings and spoke up about their concerns. At the second open meeting, in Laurel, my wife and I attended along with **Kim & Mike Mehalick, David Clark, Jeff Forbes, Allan Hayes, President of the Maryland State Beekeepers Association**, as well as others I am sure I am forgetting. At the opening of the meeting the representative from the Clarion Company stated outright: "We heard from the beekeepers last night and we realize we got it wrong! We will make this right." He also admitted that the company was unaware that the Council had passed a zoning regulation in November, 2016, that permitted beekeeping in residential areas. Several BUMBA members spoke at the meeting and (I believe) Dave Clark offered to have the people working on the zoning visit his apiary to see for themselves how benign the presence of honey bees really is in a neighborhood. We also were very pleased that even non-beekeepers spoke up in support of honey bees and local beekeepers.

At conclusion of the meeting, I spoke to **Chad Williams**, the project manager in the Planning Dept. who is responsible for overseeing this effort.

He had read the BUMBA Newsletter Special Edition and acknowledge the many reasons given why beekeeping should not be banned.

The Comment period is open until December 15. **If you have not made a comment yet, please do so before December 15.** Do not accept the positive response and acknowledgements we have seen so far as a forgone conclusion that this is a done deal. Just like "every vote counts"; here, every voice counts. Send an email, make a phone call, or send a letter to your council member. You can find their contact information in the Special Edition or on the County Council web pages.

There are multiple ways you can comment on the zoning project. Please use one of them. For your convenience, the contact avenues are provided here. **BUMBA** Special Edition newsletter on the zoning issue is available at www.bumbabees.com/downloads/BUMBAeNewsletter2017-zoning.pdf

Call: 301-952-4944 | TTY: 301-952-4366

Email: zoningpgc@ppd.mncppc.org

Webpage: zoningpgc.pgplanning.com

Facebook: ZonePGC Twitter: @ZonePGC

For questions or more information contact Chad Williams, LEED AP BD+C, who is serving as the Department's Project Manager.

He can be reached at: chad.williams@ppd.mncppc.org or (301) 952-3171

PROVIDE REAL-TIME FEEDBACK:

<https://pgplanning.civiccomment.org/>

It Could Be Worse!

As a result of my letters to the editors for the **American Bee Journal** and **Bee Culture**, I have heard about beekeepers in California, Oregon and New Jersey facing new zoning issues. Apparently San Diego beekeepers are facing proposed zoning changes to restrict beekeeping. **Dewey Caron** reported that in **Oregon**, beekeepers have been facing increasing pressures from hostile zoning boards. **New Jersey** beekeepers are facing a bill in the State Legislature that would impose new restrictions on numbers of hives across the entire state. The bill differentiates between beekeepers who qualify under a Right To Farm law (basically, farmers) and those who don't, as well as commercial (sold hive products) and hobbyist (only gifted hive products).

In the proposed bill, in residential areas, non-qualified hobby beekeepers may not keep bees on lots less than a quarter-acre. For lots

larger than a quarter-acre and less than five acres, a *waiver may be petitioned* for to allow two hives. On a lot of five acres, a waiver may be permitted for up to 10 hives. On a commercial lot, a non-qualifying beekeeper may keep 10 hives on a lot larger than a quarter-acre and less than five acres. On lots of five acres, a waiver for 20 hives may be permitted. The proposed new regulations are nine pages long!

Maintaining good neighbor and best management practices are important defenses against retaliatory zoning actions. Enjoy our wonderful hobby, but be a good neighbor as well.

Fondant

Fondant is the preferred winter feed for honey bees. Do not feed syrup in cold weather the syrup because the syrup will probably ferment before the bees can finish it. The water also increases hive moisture, causing mold, and the bees can get dysentery.

2-1/2 cups sugar

1/2 cup water (1:5 water:sugar ratio)

1/4 cup light corn syrup (never dark)

Pour the sugar into the water, stir and heat to 238 degrees (soft-ball). Cool to around 140-150 degrees. Stir until the mixture begins to thicken or turn cloudy. Pour onto wax or parchment paper. Spread it as thinly as possible, unless you use hive shims (spacers to make room for the fondant in the hive). Before it completely hardens, score it with a knife into usable sizes. Wrap in wax paper and store in the refrigerator.

Ann Harman has a very simple alternative: sugar bricks.

10 pounds of white granulated sugar

8 ounces (one measuring cup) of water

Mix well – you now have ‘wet sugar.’

Make slabs on wax paper or plastic wrap to fit under the inner cover. Let them sit at room temperature overnight. In the morning they will be as hard as a brick. Peel off plastic wrap before putting on top bars.

For two very good articles on feeding bees, read the Bee Culture articles by **Dr. Clarence Collison** and **Ann Harman**. You can find them here:

[Bee Culture, February 17, 2017 “Sugar for Bees”](#)

[Bee Culture, March 23, 2016, “A Closer Look: Feeding Sugar Syrup/HMI](#)

BEES IN THE NEWS

Made in Virginia TV features Virginia Beekeepers, Honey Packers, Queen Breeders and more

A recent minute production of “Made in Virginia” TV walks the viewer through basic honey bee information and focuses on various aspects of honey production. Featured in the nearly 27-minute episode are several Virginia State Beekeeping Association (VSBA) members, friends and neighbors including **Bob Wellemeyer**, VDACS Regional Apiary Inspector, **George H. Wilson** of The Backyard Farm and Eastern Apicultural Society (EAS) Honey Show Chair, **Lynn Hewitt White** of Richland Honey Bees, and a member of the Russian Bee Breeders Association, **Dan Price** of The Sweet Virginia Foundation and **Gunther** and family from Gunther’s Honey.

You can see Episode 7 here: <http://madeinva.tv/s1e7.html> .

American Bee Journal “Extra”

Genomic Study Explores Evolution of Gentle ‘Killer Bees’ in Puerto Rico

A genomic study of Puerto Rico's Africanized honey bees - which are more docile than other so-called "killer bees" - reveals that they retain most of the genetic traits of their African honey bee ancestors, but that a few regions of their DNA have become more like those of European honey bees. According to the researchers, these changes likely contributed to the bees' rapid evolution toward gentleness in Puerto Rico, a change that occurred within 30 years.

The findings, reported in the journal Nature Communications, could lead to advances that will bolster honey bee populations in the Americas, the researchers said.

Ironically, what scientists failed to do in the laboratory was eventually accomplished by happenstance. Africanized honey bees arrived in Puerto Rico (most likely on a ship, by accident) in the 1990s, and within three decades had evolved into the gentle, yet hardy, Africanized bees that dominate the island today. Biology professor **Tugrul Giray**, of the

University of Puerto Rico, first reported on the gentle Puerto Rican bees in the journal *Evolutionary Applications* in 2012. Giray is a co-author of the new study.

To gain insight into how the bees became gentle, the researchers sequenced the genomes of 30 gentle Puerto Rican bees, 30 Africanized bees from Mexico and 30 European honey bees from central Illinois.

The team discovered that, for the most part, the genomes of the gentle bees resembled those of their Africanized forebears. Specific regions of the DNA, however, had shifted in the gentle bees, reflecting more of their European heritage. These regions appeared to be under "positive selection." This means that something in the bees' environment was favoring these genetic signatures over others.

The scientists hypothesize that the bees evolved to be more docile as a result of living on a very densely populated island from which they could not easily escape. Humans likely eradicated the most aggressive bees, aiding their more docile counterparts.

The new findings offer a bit of hope for the beleaguered beekeeping industry, the researchers said. European honey bees tend to have less genetic diversity than Africanized bees, which carry both European and African honey bee genes. European honey bees also are more susceptible to a host of debilitating parasites and pathogens.

In previous research in the Giray laboratory, scientists showed that Puerto Rico's gentle Africanized bees groom themselves aggressively when infested with varroa, removing the mites almost as soon as they appear.

Bee Culture - "Catch the Buzz"

CATCH THE BUZZ – FUNGICIDES MAKE INSECTICIDES AND DISEASES EVEN WORSE FOR BEES

When a Cornell-led team of scientists analyzed two dozen environmental factors to understand bumblebee population declines and range contractions, they expected to find stressors like changes in land use, geography or insecticides.

Instead, they found a shocker: fungicides, commonly thought to have no impact.

"Insecticides work; they kill insects. Fungicides have been largely

overlooked because they are not targeted for insects, but fungicides may not be quite as benign – toward bumblebees – as we once thought. This surprised us," said **Scott McArt**, assistant professor of entomology and the lead author on a new study published Nov. 15 in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*.

While science has studied insecticides, such as neonicotinoids, that attack bugs' central nervous systems, this new work shows how fungicides – particularly chlorothalonil, a general-use fungicide often found in bumblebee and honeybee hives – may negatively affect bee health, said McArt, a fellow at **Cornell's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future**.

While fungicides control plant pathogens in crops, the bees pick up their residue when foraging for pollen and nectar. As farms use both insecticides and fungicides, the scientists worry about synergy. "While most fungicides are relatively nontoxic to bees, many are known to interact synergistically with insecticides, greatly increasing their toxicity to the bees," McArt said.

Chlorothalonil has been linked to stunted colony growth in bumblebees and an increased vulnerability to Nosema, a fatal gut infection in bumblebees and honeybees.

"Nosema can be devastating to bumblebees and honeybees," said McArt. "Since fungicide exposure can increase susceptibility of bees to Nosema, this may be the reason we're seeing links between fungicide exposure, Nosema prevalence and bumblebee declines across the United States in this data set."

For domestic and global agriculture, bumblebees are a key component due to their ability to use "buzz pollination" that vibrates and shakes pollen loose from flowers. In the United States, bees contribute more than \$15 billion to the economy and \$170 billion to global agribusiness, according to global economic research and a 2012 Cornell study. While half of crop pollination work is done by commercially managed honeybees in the U.S., the other half is done by bumblebees and wild bees. In New York, pollination services contribute \$500 million to the state's agricultural economy.

Read the full article here at "[Catch the Buzz](#)"

CLUB PROGRAMS

BUMBA has initiated several programs over the years *and we are always looking for members' assistance*. For more information about a program please contact an officer.

BUMBA Extractor for members' use

BUMBA equipment manager, Gerry Jones, reports that a total of 10 BUMBA members borrowed extractor #2. The equipment is still in very good condition and has been returned in nicely cleaned fashion from all the borrowers.

BUMBA now has two honey extractors for members to use. The extractor managers are **Gerry Jones** in Mitchellville (gejones486@verizon.net, 301-577-1365) and **David Clark** in Dunkirk (dadicl.clark@gmail.com, 443-871-0494, seven days a week from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm). Each has a complete set of equipment. The Board has established an extractor agreement, rules, and cleaning instructions. Copies are available from the managers. To reserve the equipment, call the manager, bring a \$50 refundable deposit (cash or check upon pickup), and sign the use agreement and inventory form. Please be sure to read what you are signing©. The first 4 days are free!

www.BUMBAbees.com

Check out the club web site maintained by **Larry Prikockis**, www.bumbabees.com. You will find meeting schedules, newsletters, information and membership application forms (payments are still by mail or at a meeting.) *We need content, pictures, ideas, suggestions and help with administration.* If you have any interesting photos to add to the photo gallery, send them with a short description or story to Larry at thirstycat@gmail.com

www.BUMBAbees.com/forums

Check our web forum for questions, answers, opinions and help. Thanks to **Scott Seccomb** and **Toni Burnham**, our private web forum on

the BUMBA web page is available for members' use.

Electronic Newsletter

As with all organizations cost cutting is always on the table. One way we reduce our expenses is by eliminating the printed newsletter mailed 6 times a year at a cost of roughly \$1 per newsletter. People who don't have email, of course, continue to receive a printed copy. Help keep club \$\$'s in the bank for club activities.

Sentinel Hive Project

In the past, BUMBA has participated in the **Bee Informed Sentinel Hive Project**. This is an ambitious undertaking with the University of Maryland to intensively study honey bee hives to better identify the reasons for high hive losses across the country. Volunteers are needed to organize BUMBA's participation as well as to perform the inspections and record keeping. This is an opportunity to participate locally in a significant, national scientific study of apicultural science. Contact **Maggie Mills** (contact info on back page) for more information.

FREE STATE Bee Supply

Your local bee supply dealer

Crownsville Gardens

1241 Generals Hwy, Crownsville, MD 21401

Phone: 410-923-9800 (store); 443-336-1411 (cell)

Email: dedelmann30@gmail.com

Call or email if you have any questions.

Store hours M-S 9-6PM, Sun 9-5PM

As always, thank you for your continued support!

Delia Edelmann

Notice of your dues will either be on your label or in your email message

Every club needs a little money to keep it going. Although **BUMBA** is solvent, dues are needed to cover meeting room rental, speakers, refreshments and the newsletter. **BUMBA** annual dues are **\$15**. Please remember to bring your dues (**checks preferred**) to the next meeting. Consider paying for two years, as a commitment to beekeeping. Larry loves to find checks in the mailbox, so you can mail your dues to:

Larry Prikockis, Treasurer, 6701 44th Ave, University Park, MD 20782

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Check if you are willing to help out with a club activity or program

Bowie-Upper Marlboro Beekeepers Association Officers			
Pres.	Maggie Mills	301-683-8853	maggie.m.mills@gmail.com
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Sec'y	Debby Heyes	301-855-0071	dbheyeshes@comcast.net
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MSBA Pres.	Allen Hayes	410-489-2835	Thehayeshouse4@aol.com
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David Morris, BUMBA Editor
 9309 Montpelier Drive
 Laurel, MD 20708-2553

**BUMBA Meets at
 Watkins Park Nature Center**

BUMBA annual dues are \$15. Our regular meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the even months at the **Watkins Park Nature Center, 301 Watkins Park Drive in Largo**. From Route 301 or I-495 take Central Ave. (Rte 214) to the intersection with Enterprise Rd. (Rte 193). Turn south onto Watkins Park Dr. and go ½ mile to the park. Follow the road all the way to the back to the Nature Center. We thank the Nature Center Staff for their assistance. For information about the Nature Center, please call **301-218-6702**

Club Calendar

Put these dates on your **2018 BUMBA** Calendar:
 December 7, 6:30PM, **BUMBA** Holiday Party
 February 1, 7:30PM, **BUMBA** Mtg.
 February, Saturday, **MSBA** Winter Mtg
 Feb-April, Thursday, 7:00PM Bee Classes
 April 5, 7:30PM, **BUMBA** Mtg.
 April, 10AM-3PM, Saturday **BUMBA** Field Day
 June 7, 7:30PM, **BUMBA** Mtg.
 June, **MSBA** Summer Mtg
 August 2, 7:30PM, **BUMBA** Mtg.
 August 13-17, **EAS**, Hampton Roads, VA
 October 4, 7:30PM, **BUMBA** Mtg.
 November, **MSBA** Fall Mtg/Honey Show
 December 6, 6:30PM, **BUMBA** Holiday Party