

The Bee Line

Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia

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Article submissions are always welcome! Email the editor, Jennifer Bell, at: jenniferburdock@gmail.com

HOLIDAY SOCIAL

Please join us for a Holiday Social, beekeeper style! Guild members will be getting together on Monday, December 11th at our regular meeting place, the Towne Hall of Towne Bank located at 137 Mt. Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322. Dinner starts at 6:30 PM and will be followed by a gift exchange. Friends and family are welcome.

In the spirit of the season, the guild is catering the meal over the first \$10 per adult. The menu includes ham, turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, green beans and soft drinks. Should you like a little spirit with your meal, kindly BYOB. Potluck side dishes or desserts to share are welcome too. We ask that you please RSVP by December 5th.

The Beekeeper of the Year will be announced after dinner, and door prizes will also be given. In addition, we'll have our traditional gift exchange better known as "Cut-throat Pollyanna". To participate, bring a wrapped gift valued at \$20-30. The gift exchange is the highlight of the evening as participants pick and steal the best gifts. Just when you think the prize is yours, someone good-naturedly snatches it away from you!

So come on along and share some holiday fun with friends. Hope you'll bee there!

[Click HERE to RSVP and pay](#)

Maker Fest Portsmouth



A special thanks to Brad & Kami Webb, Bailey Bunn, and Jen Bell who volunteered to staff the Guild booth at this year's Maker Fest. This free educational event was held at the Portsmouth Art & Cultural Museum and hosted a variety of craftsmen, artists, and makers with interactive displays and hands on activities. The observation hive was a big hit with visitors, and many kids enjoyed the honey sticks as well.





FINS AND FRIGHT NIGHT

What would a world without bees look like? That's something that the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center asked us to explore in a table display for Fins & Fright on October 20th and 21st. The Aquarium requested an exhibit for Halloween that would demonstrate the frightening concept of a world without bees and the impact their absence would have on both the food chain and the ecosystem. Special thanks go to Jen Bell for developing two new teaching posters which illustrate a world without bees in sobering graphics. And a huge thank you goes out to John Hathaway for staffing the exhibit both nights. We appreciate the valuable time and talents of you both!



VIRGINIA
AQUARIUM
& MARINE SCIENCE CENTER



Guild clothing is
now available for
purchase!

[Click HERE to order](#)





BEEKEEPERS INTRODUCTORY COURSE 2024

The Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia is excited to offer an introductory course featuring three renowned beekeeping experts!

Classes will be held virtually and in-person on January 20, 27, and February 3, 2024.

Learn more at www.beekeepersguild.org or register using the QR codes below!



Virtual Class



In-Person Class



Volunteers Needed

Help is needed with hosting the Beekeepers Introductory Course at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center, located at 1444 Diamond Springs Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455.

We'd like to make sure that each student receives a warm welcome to our guild, and you can help. Guild members are encouraged to attend and engage the students before and after class as well as at the break. As always, any tasty treat you'd like to bring and share is much appreciated by all!

In exchange for your valuable time, members assisting with the class may sit in on any of the instruction for free, including the advanced training immediately following the beginner classes.

Classes will be held on January 20, 27, and February 3, 2024. For more information, and to sign-up, please click [HERE](#)



Apiary Tour Request

The guild has received an apiary tour request for Friday, March 22, 2024 from a group of five teens and two adults interested in beekeeping. If this is something you would consider hosting in your bee yard, please contact Pam Fisher at beeskneesapiaries@gmail.com or 757-620-0945 for more details. The guild will work with you on securing additional personal protective equipment for the visitors if you can open your apiary to them. Thank you for your consideration.

HIVE ACT

Congressman Kelly Armstrong from North Dakota has introduced a bill called the Honey Integrity and Verification Enforcement Act (H.R. 4764). Passage of the HIVE ACT is very important to all U.S. honey producers both large and small.

With the creation of manufactured or synthetic honey we need Congress to pass the HIVE Act so that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be required to establish a Standard of Identity (SOI) for honey. The FDA has a long list of reasons they have not established a SOI for honey. Only through a change in legislation will they do what is needed - defining exactly what honey is and what it is not. Manufactured "honey" is syrup plain and simple and should never be labeled as honey. It looks, tastes, granulates, and cooks like natural honey, but neither a bee nor flower has contributed to its creation. The consequence of this manufactured product being called "honey" is that real honey will be replaced with this synthetic product based on price, resulting in two-thirds of real honey usage being displaced by this manufactured product.

What can you do to help?

Please send a simple letter to your Representative and Senators in Washington D.C. in support of passage of the HIVE ACT. This letter can be emailed directly to your congressmen and senators offices. After sending the letter, please follow up with a call to their offices and politely ask if they have received your letter and if they have decided to co-sponsor the HIVE Act. Also ask if they or their staff have any questions you can answer. This legislation needs to become law. To find your elected officials, go to: <https://www.contactmypolitician.com>.

“The Magic Spells That Herded Medieval Bees”

An excerpt from Andrew Coletti’s article, available at:
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/swarm-charms>



“If you had a problem in Early Medieval Europe, chances were good that there was a spell for it. “Metrical charms” were sets of magical instructions for addressing dilemmas with spoken words and actions that combined herbal medicine, prayer, and ritual. Many dealt with the challenges of agriculture, with Old English examples having titles like “For Unfruitful Land,” “For Lost Cattle,” and *Wip Ymbe*, meaning “For a Swarm of Bees.”

Although it was discovered copied into the margins of an 11th-century manuscript, “For a Swarm of Bees” is believed to be older, from the ninth century. It’s one of the earliest examples of a subset of metrical charms called “swarm charms.” These were magic spells once used by beekeepers across Europe to control and direct their precious honeybees and prevent them from flying off when they gathered into a swarm.

"For a Swarm of Bees" begins with physical instructions and ends with what you should say to the bees:

"Take [some] earth, throw it with your right hand under your right foot, and say: 'I catch it under foot, I have found it. Lo! Earth has power against all and every being, and against malice and against mindlessness, and against the mighty tongue of man.'

And then throw dust over the bees when they swarm, and say: 'Sit you, victory-women, settle to earth! Never must you fly wild to the wood. Be you as mindful of my welfare as each man is of his food and home.'"



Tossing dirt over the bees would have been just as important as the magic words; perhaps more important, since it would have produced the desired result of getting the confused insects to settle on the ground en masse. The bees are addressed as “victory-women” (*sigewif*, in Old English) because this term was also used for Valkyries and warrior women, and like them, worker bees are females who wield a “sword” (their stinger).

Other swarm charms gave the insects pet names like “little animals,” “beauties,” or “dear ones,” in languages from German to French to Greek. Though most examples come from the Medieval era, swarm charms persisted until as recently as the 19th century, when changes in beekeeping made them obsolete. Experts suggest that new technology and cultural shifts like the Scientific Revolution ushered in a new approach to beekeeping that was less reliant on magic and more conscious of why and when bees swarm. ...”



Future Meeting Dates

December 11th - Holiday Party

January 8th - Monthly Meeting

Guild meetings will continue to be offered both virtually via Zoom and in-person at Towne Bank 137 Mt. Pleasant Rd., Chesapeake, VA 23322 at 7:00 pm.

