



Volume 11 Issue 4

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**Words from the President**

Greetings Fellow Beekeepers,

Although a bit wet, spring has finally arrived. The swarm season is upon us and we have been preparing our members for it with February's presentation of causes, prevention and capturing honey bee swarms and the swarm bucket workshop in March. Many thanks to Buddy Hoggard for teaching both of those events. Buddy is now the Guild's swarm coordinator, if you would like to be on call for swarms, please contact him to provide your contact information and other details he needs. If you do happen to capture a swarm and are on the nuc list, please be kind to fellow beekeepers and let the Nuc Coordinator know so she can drop you down the list. This doesn't remove you from the list, but yours might come later as we would love to get everyone working with bees soon as possible. I would also like to extend a special thanks to all who have volunteered to mentor new beekeepers. We are still short for the Norfolk area, if you would like to become a mentor or if you still need a mentor, please contact our Mentor Coordinator, Dennis Heidenthal.

This upcoming meeting is important as the Nomination Committee will present their proposed slate of officers for the next year. Once the slate is adopted by the members, it is set for elections in June.

Hope to see you at our Open Hive Demonstration for our 2019 students and spring picnic on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Happy beekeeping,

Dave



*Dave Robinson,  
President  
Beekeepers Guild of  
Southeast Virginia*

**Send Your Opinions!**

Send your opinions and ideas for the Bee Line to [vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com)

Also, send in any bee articles that you would like included in the BEE LINE..

**This Month's Meeting**

May 13  
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
Towne Bank  
137 Mt. Pleasant Rd  
Chesapeake, VA

**Speaker: Charity Mack**

**Topic: "You must bee kid-ing! How to Inspire kids about honey bees."**

**Thank You, Pam**



Thank you, Pam, for taking care of our newsletter for so long on your own. Pam has been keeping bees for over 25 years. She is a founding member of the Guild. She has served as newsletter editor, webmaster, events coordinator, vice president, and president.

*"Like our beloved bees, when beekeepers go together, we can accomplish great things." -Kevin Inglin*



Photo courtesy of USDA

## Thank You!

A big thank you to Ms. Toni Burnham for her presentation on Urban Beekeeping last month.

Toni's presentation was about beekeeping life in Washington DC. Her presentation also touched on the 'Swarm Squad' of DC. Toni spoke about the different pests and how to treat them. She briefly mentioned the hive scale project, queen rearing, and bee education.

Be sure to thank Ms. Toni Burnham for her incredible presentation and for coming out to speak to us.

## Bee Space

Man's beehive takes into account the 3/8" bee space. Every frame is aligned so that there is exactly 3/8" separating side, top and bottom. Any less space, and the bees can't easily move around. Any more space, and the bees build comb, which could block man's access. In the natural world, bees build their rows of comb 3/8" apart.

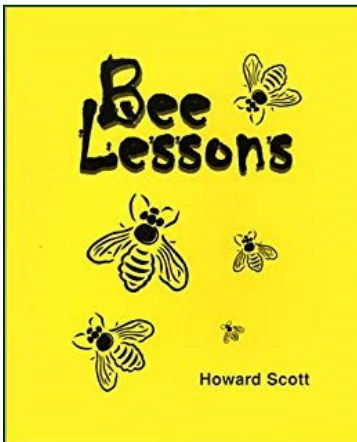
~Howard Scott

The Hoffman frame is self spacing because the side bar is the same width as the intended spacing. It is wasted away, so it is not full width for the whole depth. It is most common for one edge to be flat, the other beveled, to reduce the area of contact, alt-



hough in some countries I have seen both edges flat.

~Dave Cushman



## Trivia

1. How much honey is one honey bee likely to produce in her lifetime?
2. Approximately how many eggs does a queen bee lay in one day?
3. Which honey bee does not have a stinger?
4. What is propolis?
5. How many drones does a queen normally mate with?
6. How many queens are in a colony?
7. T/F Honey bee's use dances as one way to communicate.
8. T/F The honey bee is the only pollinator.
9. T/F Bees sleep when it gets too dark outside.
10. T/F Pollen provides bees with protein.



Photo by nativewildflowers.net

Find the answers in next month's Newsletter!

## Hives Survive Historic Fire

Three beehives on top of Notre Dame survived the fire of the cathedral. Nicolas Geant, the owner of the hives, was worried they wouldn't survive, but saw on a drone flying over the cathedral that the hives looked normal. He had no way of knowing that the bees themselves had survived the fire. He finally received word from Andre Finot that bees were seen flying from the hives. Geant is very grateful that the bees survived.



Bee hives on Notre Dame

Photo by Saskya Vandoorne and Gianluca Mezzofiore

Information from [CNN](#)



Comic courtesy of Avari Merritt

## HISTORY SECTION

Although Europeans brought honey bee's to North America in 1622, there was a native honey bee in existence 14 million years ago. The native honey bee's fossil was discovered in Stewart's Valley by Michael Engle of the University of Kansas. The fossil was traced back through the years by Michael Engle from.

The native honey bee has been names the Apis Nearctica. This native honey bee is now extinct.

Photo and information:  
Kathy Keatley Garvey  
[Ucanr.edu](http://Ucanr.edu)





## Meet a Guild Member

By Avari Merritt



Bill Gregory

Acre Apiary

Hickory, VA

9 Years in Beekeeping

3 Medium 10 frame hives & 5 nucs

Bio: Bill, and his wife Joan, lived in Virginia Beach at various times since the 1970s, finally settling in Chesapeake. After a lifelong interest in animals and largely because of Joan's associations with the Chesapeake Master Gardeners program, Bill was introduced to the notion of hobby beekeeping. In 2010 he joined the hobby with

his first nucleus, and hasn't looked back. Beekeeping now occupies a notable part of their backyard, Bill's time, and helps guide many of their choices and actions. Bill Gregory has a passion about beekeeping similar to other's in the Guild. He has no plans in giving up beekeeping and wants his apiary to thrive. He currently uses 10-frame mediums with plastic foundation for his frames. Bill Gregory not only loves the bee part of keeping bees, he loves to meet new people! Bill Gregory's favorite thing about keeping bees is that it is "never the same," and that "there is always something to learn".

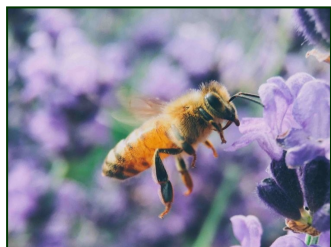
Bill is retired and so he predicts that he will have more time to work with his bees. He just wants to keep producing honey and helping to pollinate the plants. All of his hives survived this last winter and he hopes that it stays that way. "This year," Bill said, "I've learned drone trapping for varroa prevention". This is where you wait until there is a full frame of capped drone comb, take it out, and stick it into the freezer.

Bill seemed very excited to continue working with bees and the Guild. Be sure to find him at the next meeting! It's always good to meet new people.

**"It's not reasonable to give up beekeeping. I was sucked into it."**

**-Bill Gregory**

## 7 Fun Facts!



- \* In a worker bee's 6-8 week lifespan, they can fly 1.5 times the circumference of the Earth.
- \* The honey bee is North Carolina's official insect.
- \* Honey bees beat their wings at 200 times per second, which gives them their 'buzz'.
- \* Morgan Freeman is a beekeeper
- \* Honey bees can be trained to locate land mines.
- \* 2019 Queen color is GREEN!
- \* George Demaree is well-known for his swarm prevention method.

# Swarm Season

It's swarm season! Keep your phone on sound and keep a nuc or swarm bucket ready.

If your bees are preparing to swarm, you should know some swarm prevention methods. You can add boxes and/or frames to your hive to prevent swarming. You could also use a top entrance to prevent them from swarming.

If you are too late and the bees are about ready to swarm, you still have options! You could make a split off of your hive that will simulate a swarm.

But, as always, bees don't read our books and still swarm sometimes. Even if you have done these few tasks and they still swarm, it might just be because they were WAY too overcrowded.



# An Artisan Gathering

By Sandra Johnson

Our beekeepers guild participated in the Artisan Festival & Gathering of the Guilds on Saturday, April 6. This was the 26<sup>th</sup> annual gathering, occurred at the Francis Land House in Virginia Beach. The day was cool with heavy moisture in the air that occasionally turned into little droplets. Still, there was a constant flow of interested folks looking at and asking about bees in the observation hive and taking literature about beekeeping. Members of the Native Plant Society were present and offering native plants at great prices. Another group of pollinators were represented by the Butterfly Society. And there were local chapters of various guilds from all over Hampton Roads demonstrating their specialties and sharing information about them. Many thanks to all the guild members who volunteered for this event; we couldn't have done it without you!





## What's the Buzz?

### Events for May



## Open Hive Field Day

ATTENTION 2019 BGSV new beekeepers; the Open Hive Demonstration of your class syllabus is scheduled for 4 May 2019. It will be held at the New Earth Farm, 1885 Indian River Rd, Virginia Beach, VA. Beginning at 9 AM. Following the demo, we'll enjoy a spring potluck luncheon.

**All guild members, friends and families are more than welcome to attend.** This will be a first look inside of a bee colony for many of our new beekeepers; let's make it a safe and memorable day. Members who have extra protective gear to share, please bring it even if you do not plan to go near the hives yourself. For planning purposes, please sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-20194>

### Introductory Course Field Day

May 4, 2019  
9am-3pm  
New Earth Farm  
1885 Indian River Rd  
Virginia Beach, VA

**2019 Queen Order**  
Delivery May 8, 2019  
5pm-6:30pm  
Towne Bank  
137 Mt. Pleasant Rd.  
Chesapeake, VA

## 2019 Queen Bee Order

The guild has purchased a very limited number of Carniolan queen bees for this spring; they arrive on May 8th. Carniolans are known for their rapid spring buildup, their extremely docile nature, their reluctance to rob other colonies and their exceptional comb building. If you are in need of a queen, place your order at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0549afa92aa1fe3-20196>

They are going fast!

## 2019 Guild Officer Nominations

It's time to nominate Guild officers for the 2019-2020 year. Please consider nominating someone or running for an office yourself. The duties and criteria for potential candidates are outlined in our guild's bylaws at :

[https://www.beekeepersguild.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=148&Itemid=119](https://www.beekeepersguild.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=148&Itemid=119)

Please contact the following nominating committee members with your candidate suggestions:

Lisa Luker	<a href="mailto:lisamartinezespino@gmail.com">lisamartinezespino@gmail.com</a>	619-746-3440
Christopher & Tracy Shonts	<a href="mailto:tshonts1@hotmail.com">tshonts1@hotmail.com</a>	808-741-9713
Bill Snyder	<a href="mailto:wtsnyder07@gmail.com">wtsnyder07@gmail.com</a>	757-633-7294

## Solid Bottom Boards

By Avari Merritt

The base for all beehives is a bottom board, so it is important that you choose what you think is best. There are advantages and disadvantages to both screened and solid bottom boards, so it's really up to the beekeeper.

I use solid bottom boards for my hives. Not only is it cheaper, but we have found that by using solid bottom boards, we have eliminated the Small Hive Beetle populations. Also, by keeping the bees in full sun, it lowers the SHB populations even more.



I also use solid bottom boards because it provides an extra insulator for hives. That extra warmth can stimulate egg laying when my queen would otherwise not be laying.

## Next Month

Do you use screened bottom boards?

Send an email to

[yabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:yabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com)

telling us why you use screened bottom boards.

## POLL

What do you use?

[Screened bottom board](#)

[Solid bottom board](#)

## Pictures!

Want to see yourself in the next newsletter?!

We'd love to see you in your hives! Send some action shots of you or a loved one working in the hive!

## Questions!

Are you a new beekeeper and you want to ask a question to the guild veteran beekeepers? Send in your questions and we'll post it in the next newsletter.

SOLID  
BOTTOM BOARD



SCREENED  
BOTTOM BOARD



Solid vs Screened Bottom Boards

Photo by Bee Built



## Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia

<https://beekeepersguild.org/>



Guild members, Mike and Lisa Luker, at Hickory Elementary for career day!

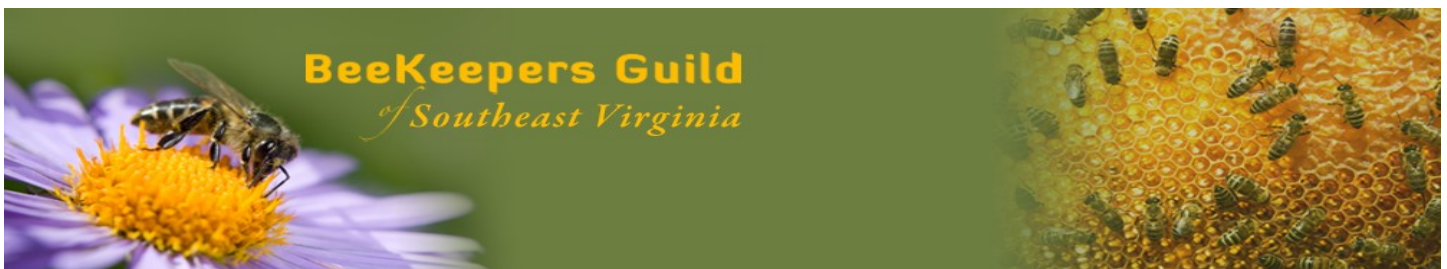
## EMAIL

Avari Merritt at [vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com)

to give opinions, ideas, or any feedback.

Send any articles to the same email (see above).

We are open to discussion on many topics this year. Feel free to contact us at [vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:vabeekeeperguildnewsletter@gmail.com).



### Avari Merritt

Keeping Bees: 3 years

Hive Count: 1 8-frame

I started beekeeping with my parents and have fallen in love with it ever since. I am thankful that the Guild has asked me to help with the newsletter and look forward to working with them on it.

Can you find two (2) queens?



Find the answers in next month's newsletter!