

***an open letter to the members of Bucks County Beekeepers Association  
from Kate Steck***

**The Introduction**

I'm hoping, or maybe assuming, that a lot of you already know who I am. I have been beekeeping for over ten years and for the better part of that I have had an active role in supporting Bucks County Beekeepers Association (BCBA, our club). I am currently the interim President (also having been the past president for several years).

I've had the great fortune to meet so many beekeepers in our wonderful community: beekeepers with a great deal of experience and expertise and many just starting their beekeeping journey. For some of you, I might have been your first introduction to beekeeping. This is a true pleasure and I consider it a great accomplishment if I have been able to contribute to beekeeping, or your individual beekeeping journey, in any way.

**The Thank You**

I want to start this letter with a thank you. So many thank yous they can't be numerated. I have always known the BCBA Board, in all its iterations, to work hard to reach our goals for our members. Expanding and diversifying in the best ways available to honor our club and mission. Board members, volunteers, snack-bringers, table-movers, speakers from far and near, mentors, and regularly attending members—all these people and more contribute to BCBA being what it is and from the bottom of my heart: I THANK YOU.

The last few years have been challenging for so many and I admire and I'm grateful for the hard work of those who have been an important part of this club. The impact of the few has been invaluable. I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for all the hard work that you do for us!

I am so grateful for the incredible people who have contributed their time and energy to ensuring our mission and our members get what they need to be good stewards of our bees. Your dedication is what keeps us going and again, I thank you.

**The Ask**

As far as we have come and as obliged as I am for all the people who have come before us and continue to volunteer their time, BCBA is in a position where it is not enough. The Board and the Club in general are facing a turning point.

The current workload is exceeding the availability and ability of those currently volunteering. ***At this point additional help is not an option but a necessity.***

Not only am I unable to do everything, but I'm also not good at it! The Board and BCBA benefits from diversity! You might feel inadequate or ill equipped but this is not about expertise. It's about giving a little of your skill and/or time. Many hands make light work.

I don't want to give up on this club or be forced to reduce the scope of what we are able to do for our beekeeping community. Without this help, we will need to make tough decisions to reduce the range of what BCBA can offer.

For some of you this might be okay, and I understand that as well. Not everyone has the time or ability to offer help. You are still valued as members, and we want to do right by you. But BCBA might look different: maybe we only meet every other month, eliminate our intermediate class, limit the number of attendees for beginners, etc. and we will still be an important resource for many beekeepers in this reduced role.

But I'm hoping that most of you want to see BCBA continue to thrive for not just yourselves and the next generation of beekeepers as well. And you might be able to volunteer an hour or more to help the club succeed. You might have great ideas and skills to contribute—and we need that too!

I want to see this club continue to succeed, grow, be an invaluable resource to our community during and importantly after my tenure. My promise to you is this: to guide, to communicate, to train, to ask for help, and most importantly support this club and its members. You all are this club's greatest asset.

### Up Next

- Stay tuned for information about a volunteering **Q&A brainstorming session** in October. This will give us an opportunity to talk and discuss openly about what the club can look like and how you can help.
- We have our **Board Nominations in October** and our elections in November.
- If you already know you'd like to be involved, [please click here to sign-up](#) and let us know what you might be interested in.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information about volunteering! If you have any questions or would like to discuss other options for getting involved, don't hesitate to contact us or [fill out this form](#).

We'll be happy to talk with you about how you can help further our mission and support the community we care about so much.

Volunteering means doing something extra. Something you don't have to be doing. And doing it in your free time. As long as there is work to be done, we hope you will continue to help us achieve great things, no matter what challenges lay ahead. And once again, not for the last time, I thank you.

### **(Some of) What We Do**

- Two club hives in Forest Grove apiary
- Two 8-month Beginner Beekeeping Classes
- 8-month Intermediate Beekeeping Class
- 1-day Seminar on Splits & Nucs
- 12 monthly General Meetings
  - Arranged speakers
  - Newsletters
  - Space to meet, snacks, A/V, etc.
- Annual June Picnic
- BCBA Merchandise
- Two extractors available for rent
- Maintaining and updating website including membership
- Monitoring and responding to general email inbox
- Presentations for Intro to Beekeeping
- Informational tables at various events for the community-at-large
- Revising by-laws, filing taxes, maintaining financial responsibilities

As always, with thanks,

Kate