

## 2022 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #50a

I am winding down 2022. I have several thoughts about those about to start keeping honeybees. Rather than tell anyone about what I should be saying to new beekeepers, I had a meeting with some of the individuals who call me their bee mentor. I asked them to answer one question: "What advice would you give to a person who is thinking about becoming a beekeeper."

These individuals are experienced! They had the joy of handling some beekeeping issues: nuc's, packages, swarms, getting their own honey crop, and yes, some failures along the way. Three of them were faced with very mean bees -- the kind that would make you want to quit. But all hung in there and are looking for more learning situations in the coming year. Two of them have looked to beekeeping as a source for additional income selling nucs and raising some queens. I have encouraged them to become more involved in clubs of their choice. They are the future of beekeeping! I think it is wise to ask them what to say to new beekeepers. All of them have at least one full year of hands-on work with honeybees and as I tell them it takes time to become comfortable with bees. Don't do what I do! Develop you own style -- be willing to try new things. I am not their answer to all bee questions. A few are now about to become teachers in local bee schools. It gives me joy to watch what started as a brief assignment to take on a new beekeeper as their mentor to watch and still feel they are still part of my beekeeping family.