

Stahlman Beekeeping

Notes for 2022

A New Year day reflection



Issue 52 – December 31, 2022

Tomorrow brings us a new year! Celebrations are in order for today and tomorrow. Football games, holiday get-togethers, and many of you driving on our highways. Hopefully, our bees are comfortable waiting for warmer weather.

It is common for some of us to make up a New Year's list of things to do in 2023. I am among those that do! Often they include things that are never followed and quickly forgotten. But as a human it is time to look forward to the New Year and what it will bring. As some might say, "Stick a fork in 2022. It's done."

First of all, I am going to make sure I renew memberships in various bee clubs. Driving to meetings after dark has prevented me from venturing out and Zoom is not my cup of tea! But I see value in supporting bee organizations.

I have much to look forward to. I hope I can live up to the words of Abraham Lincoln. "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives to us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

I hope I have the Wisdom of Solomon: "There came of all people to hear the Wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" Kings 4:34.

I hope to carry the attitude of Vince Lombardi: "Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is!" Some have changed it somewhat to say "Winning isn't everything – it's the only thing!" I prefer the former. We can all try but when one loses, not all is lost.

Finally, this -- from an old New York Times Magazine: "Promises, Promises. The promises of youth, so long ingrained in the American character, keeps on taking a beating!"

And this – "Make hay while the sun shines!"

For 2023, take advantage of opportunities when they are available. Time passes quickly and no day is ever repeated. As I continue to study old bee books, I am struck with the common advice given to beekeepers. I passed on remarks made by Kim Flottum in Issue # 50 regarding the Rule for Successful beekeeping. Those rules have stood the passage of time.

Now is the time to prepare a plan for 2023. Everything required of keeping bees depends on timing. Timing is based on the climate zone where bees are managed not a calendar date that fits all.

We are now into Winter Management. Winter conditions vary widely from those that keep bees in Key West, Florida, to Alaska. The climate of Hawaii is far different than any other place in the U.S.

Winter management will depend on where you live. We normally think of four seasons. There are areas in the U.S. that have very short winters or almost none at all. For example, I lived in Ohio for 75 years. I kept bees in Georgia and Ohio during the winter season. The only snow I saw in South Georgia was a scattered snow fall – no accumulation of snow on the ground. It was no big thing for me, but it was amusing to see the people unaccustomed to snow running around trying to catch the snowflakes as they drifted from the sky.

Even our climate is changing and presenting challenges. For humans this winter has been one to remember.



This picture shares the message that not even traffic is moving in Buffalo, N.Y. Airline travel has been really impacted with so many cancelled flights and delays.

But even with frigid weather conditions, my bees made it through this past week. Like my bees I was hunkered down keeping warm.

With bees well prepared for winter, this past weeks' weather should have little impact on the bees.

We are going to have to wait a bit for this. The reality of beekeeping is that not much can be done in most areas of the United States. Dandelions and Dutch clover indicate that spring like weather is on its way.

Signs of bee survival:

On a warm day -- 50° F plus, one will see bees at the entrance of the hive.



As J.G. Digges says in his book, The Practical Bee Guide, "They move about the entrance; examine the doors and porch; meet and salute each other; and rising, fly for a moment in front of the hive."

In my area of North Carolina, this bee note began December 27 (temperature high was 53 °F). This next week's temperature will approach the low 70° F range. As these notes are published in 2023, I will share the advancing days to spring. Most of you in the north will have time to prepare for what is to come.

For me it is going to be some work outside – taking down Christmas tree lights, putting Christmas decorations away and taking inventory of what my beekeeping needs are going to be needed for 2023. My Bee Culture Magazine arrived I would like to draw your attention to an article “Bigger Picture.” I also found two other articles of great interest and timely: One by Nina Bagley of Columbus, Ohio. I had the pleasure to be her mentor many years ago and a very timely article on Winter Projects by Richard Wahl.

It is interesting as I look back at the almost 200 articles I have written, how often I have to return to a seasonal topic. New beekeepers enter our ranks every year and for them many of these topic are new sources of information.

I am working on a new format of Stahlman Beekeeping Notes for 2023. It will be Volume five of notes. At 84, I am still in good health and still kicking. When asked when I will get a project done, I answer, never! I still have a lot to learn and so much to do. Days fly by and as my wife and I discussed this morning, April will be here in no time at all.

I have many to thank for helping me this past year. To all those students I have mentored over the years. In fact, two of them contributed to the information shared with you this year: Lynn Murray and Cary Orange.

Special thanks goes out to the CCBEA Association in Pa., Ken Hover, John Flemming of Hilliard, Ohio and Gov Wallace from Five County Beekeepers Association. I know many others have helped with comments etc. Thank You!

WISHING EVERYONE A MERRY & HAPPY NEW YEAR – 2023

COMING UP: A NEW HEADER AND SIDE BAR IN VOL. 5

A quote from Shakespeare:

*“Therefore doth heaven divide
The state of man in divers functions,
Setting endeavor in continual motion’
To which is fixed, as an aim or butt,
Obedience; for so work the honey-bees;
Creatures that by rule in nature, teach
The act of order to a peopled Kingdom.
From King Henry IV. Part II*