

# The ABA Stinger

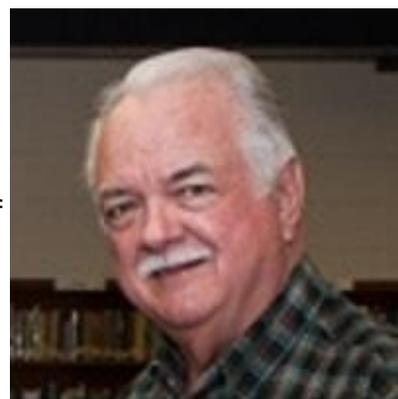


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### Letter from the President – June 2019

It is with some sadness that we see the retirement of Dr. Jim Tew from ACES. For over a quarter century, he has been the driving force behind the Symposium that has always been presented on the first Saturday in February. The event featured a star-studded cast of researchers and authorities in the beekeeping field, headed by an informative and entertaining keynote address by Jim Tew and backed up with classes taught by local beekeepers. I have been privileged to attend the Symposium every year since it began at Auburn University, through its growth and eventual move in recent years to the Conference and Performing Arts Center (CPAC) in Clanton.



But time marches on and change is inevitable. With Jim's retirement, Jack Rowe and Geoff Williams, both with ACES, will assume the responsibility of organizing and managing the Symposium in the future. At this point, no final decision has been made about the date and location of the 2020 Symposium, but we should be getting notice from Jack and Geoff soon. They have big shoes to fill in putting on this event and we wish them the best of luck in their endeavors.



In the meantime, please attend and support your local beekeeping association and encourage all your beekeeper friends to join the Alabama Beekeepers Association at the nominal cost of only \$10 annually.

Bill Evans, President  
Alabama Beekeepers Association

### **June 2019 - Letter from the Vice President**

We hope you're up to a bit of fun & friendly competition at this year's Fall Conference. This year we will be offering a couple of new things.

Throughout the day on Friday and Saturday morning we will have competition on assembling frames. Each contestant will be assembling 10 shallow frames. The contestant will be judged on the amount of time to assemble the 10 frames as well as the quality of the product. If the wax is damaged, you will be judged accordingly. All equipment will be provided.

We will be set up to run three contestants at a time. With the final heat being Saturday with the best three contestants. There will be three judges observing the contest. It is their judgment that will place the contestants, again based on quality of work and time to assemble 10 frames.

Signup for this event will be at the Registration Table on Friday morning at the Fall Conference. The winner will receive what I believe to be a fitting award. Don't miss out!

Additionally, it is our plan to invite grade school children on Friday from the public schools to learn about honeybees. This activity will be available to your children on Saturday. This allows the ABA to pay back to the community of Clanton. Preparation for this event is still ongoing.

Gerry Whitaker, Vice President

### **June 2019 - Letter from the Secretary**

Hello everyone! I hope all of your bees are bringing in a ton of honey! We are getting so excited about our annual conference this September, don't forget to register! Proverbs 19:2 says It is not good to have zeal without knowledge. It reminds me of the annual conference in 2015. A man was saying the opening prayer and he said this, " Enthusiasm without knowledge is dangerous, knowledge doesn't come fast it comes little by little. " It was my 3rd year of



beekeeping and I was very enthusiastic. I have gained so much knowledge every year by coming to the Annual conference each year in September. I hope you come and take advantage of the great amount of knowledge we will have for you to receive from some awesome speakers. Keep learning. Keep seeking that knowledge with all of your enthusiasm. Our great association needs people just like you to come help volunteer, teach and mentor all of the new beekeepers we have joining us this year. God bless you and your bees. See you in September!

Heather Sinyard, Secretary

### **June 2019 - Letter from the Treasurer**

This time of year is so busy for a beekeeper. Some have started pulling honey and others are preparing to harvest their honey. I hope everyone has an awesome harvest of honey this year.

The association is preparing for the Fall Conference and Gerry has some wonderful speakers and classes lined up for the meeting.

You can go online to register for the Fall Conference and pay dues for 2020. Looking forward to seeing you at the Fall Conference.

Wynelle Milstead,  
Treasurer

**Pre-register for the 2019 Fall Conference [HERE](#). Knowing the number of participants for which to plan really helps with name tags, programs, seating, meals, snacks, etc.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**

### **Editor's Note**

Talk about some big shoes to fill! Once I accepted the job of editing The Stinger I realized the enormity of the baton that had been handed to me. It was pretty humbling! So assembling this first issue has not been without its intimidation as well as appreciating the hard work of all our great past editors. To my knowledge Lonnie Funderburg started this communication and set the bar high for those who have followed his footsteps.



No doubt you noticed the logo. After studying a gazillion “Stinger” logos for wrestlers, pubs, comic book characters, radio stations, toys, teams, shrink wrap, etc it seemed like a good idea to 1) KISS (“Keep It Simple, Stupid” to quote my Mr.) and 2) identify OUR Stinger with our association initials in case any other local beekeeper associations out there are as smart as we are.

Regardless please know that this effort is for YOU. The beekeepers of Alabama are some of the finest folks to practice this noble art and your feedback, both good and bad, is welcome and appreciated. And please, don't be shy - contributions are welcome!

A big shout out too to our Board of Directors who solidified some of the long standing traditions and policies of The Stinger, along with a few new ones, by approving an official editorial policy to help keep things on track going forward. It's pretty boring reading but if you wish you may view it at <http://www.alabamabeekeepers.com/documents/Stinger/Index%20page%20V1.htm>.

Bee Blessed,  
Ros Horton, Editor

## Screened Bottom Boards by Christina Snoddy

The benefits of using solid bottom boards over screened bottom boards is currently a contentious topic in beekeeping. Proponents of solid bottom boards have highlighted temperature stability, pollen and wax retention, and the preservation of hive pheromones as the main reasons to choose solid bottom boards over screen bottom boards. This article will establish why you should be considering screen bottom boards.

When deciding the bottom board, one needs to weigh factors that affect the entire bee colony. Varroa mites are the greatest threat to honey bee health today. In fact, varroa is so pervasive, the number of mites in a colony can double in a week. If growth remains unchecked, the mites will kill the colony. Screen bottom boards are not only recommended by the Honey Bee Health Coalition but also by the Bee Informed Partnership as the desired integrated pest management practice for sanitation removal of varroa mites. Ross Conrad, in *Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture* says screen bottom boards are the



cheapest and least labor intensive method of removing 20% of the mite load year around.

Many solid bottom board proponents claim screen bottom boards result in decreases in hive temperature. While there is no empirical data on this subject, screen bottom boards prevail across the country even in cold weather. Long Lane Honey Bee Farm in Vermont uses screen bottom boards and experiences an average yearly temperature of 45°F, with temperatures that can drop down to 10°F.

No studies have been done on the potential disruption of pheromone concentrations and the effects of loss of pollen and/or wax through the bottom screen. We will have to wait to see the definitive answer, but if you are looking to reduce varroa load, most authorities will recommend screen bottom boards. While we do not know much, at least we know if it was dangerous, Randy Oliver would be studying it.

*Christina Snoddy is a journeyman beekeeper in Jefferson County working towards her masters. She is a master gardener, nurse practitioner, wife and loving mother to two children and four dogs. She is passionate about the relevance of bees in today's world, including their effects on health and wellness.*

*sources:*

Ross Conrad Bee Culture Oct 23 2015 Screen bottom boards: There's always something new to learn

BeelInformed.org

[honeybeehealthcoalition.org/hivehealthbmps/](http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/hivehealthbmps/)

Honeybeeonline.com

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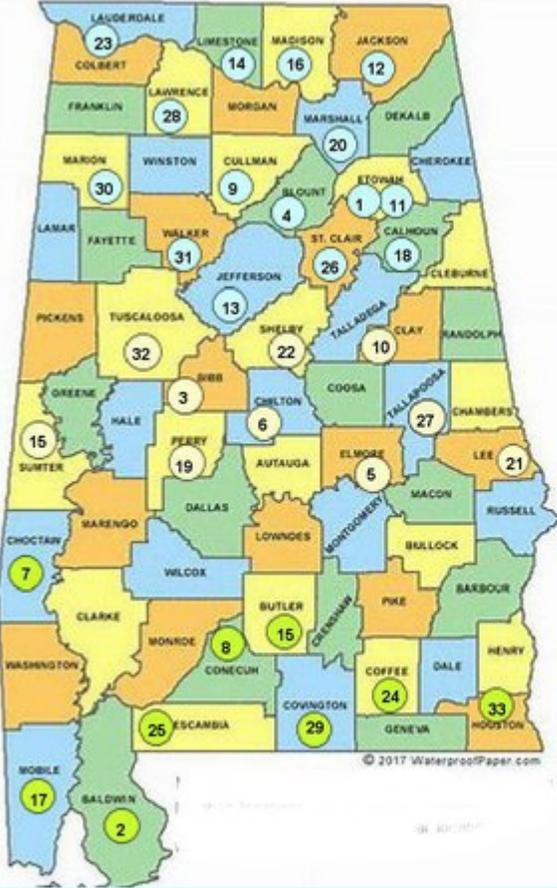


The neighborhood geese enjoy a summer stroll after finishing their inspection. (Photo courtesy of Bill Miller)



## Nominations

We will elect Officers and two Directors at this year's Fall Conference. One Director will be from the Northern Area and one from the Central Area of the state. If you have suggestions for a nominee for any position up for election, please contact one of your area nomination committee members.



**Director's County Responsibility**

**NORTHERN COUNTY DIRECTORS**  
**Marshall Standifer and Ray Latham**

**-NORTHERN COUNTIES-**  
 Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion, Lamar, Fayette, Winston, Lawrence, Limestone, Morgan, Cullman, Walker, Jefferson, Blount, Marshall, Madison, Jackson, DeKalb, Etowah, Cherokee, St. Clair, Calhoun, Cleburne.

**MIDDLE COUNTY DIRECTORS**  
**Vince Wallace and George Baldwin**

**-MIDDLE COUNTIES-**  
 Pickens, Sumter, Marengo, Greene, Tuscaloosa, Hale, Perry, Dallas, Autauga, Chilton, Bibb, Shelby, Talladega, Coosa, Elmore, Macon, Tallapoosa, Clay, Randolph, Chambers, Lee, Russell.

**SOUTHERN COUNTY**  
**Rebecca Fritschle and Troy Latham**

**-SOUTHERN COUNTIES-**  
 Choctaw, Washington, Mobile, Baldwin, Clarke, Wilcox, Monroe, Conecuh, Escambia, Covington, Butler, Lowndes, Montgomery, Crenshaw, Bullock, Pike, Coffee, Geneva, Dale, Barbour, Henry.

### 2019 Nominating Committee

<p><b>North Alabama Region</b>                  Patti Butler  <a href="mailto:jimmybutlerBz@gmail.com">jimmybutlerBz@gmail.com</a>                  Home 205-695-6448                  Cell 205-695-3779</p> <p>Mike W. Price  <a href="mailto:mike.w.price08@gmail.com">mike.w.price08@gmail.com</a>                  Cell 256-783-4226                  Preferred contact is email</p>	<p><b>Central Alabama Region</b>                  Larry Wyatt                  Nominations Committee                  Chairperson  <a href="mailto:Larry2660@centurytel.net">Larry2660@centurytel.net</a>                  205-660-3040 (h) 205 -602-3514 (c)</p> <p>Chuck Allen  <a href="mailto:Chuck@chuckallen.us">Chuck@chuckallen.us</a>                  205-202-0501</p>	<p><b>Southern Alabama Region</b>                  Pat Noonan  <a href="mailto:nanoontap@gmail.com">nanoontap@gmail.com</a>                  251-404-3794</p> <p>Billy Blair  <a href="mailto:blairmobileva@yahoo.com">blairmobileva@yahoo.com</a>                  251-236-3774</p>
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## North Alabama Symposium Announcement

The Ninth Annual North Alabama Beekeepers Symposium Will Held Saturday August 17, 2019 at the Friendship United Methodist Church, 16479 Lucas Ferry Rd, Athens, AL. 35611. Registration is open now. The registration fee is \$25.00 per person for pre-registration. The pre-registration deadline is August 10, 2019. Classes and demonstrations were designed to suit the needs of beekeepers at every level of experience: from beginner to advanced. Even those who are just thinking about becoming involved in beekeeping will benefit from attending. Children 12 and under attend free. Lunch will be provided.

**\*\*\* Registration at the door will be \$30.00 \*\*\***

Registration forms may be found on the Limestone County Beekeepers Association webpage at <http://lcbees.com/symposium.php> .

**Location:**

Friendship United Methodist Church  
16479 Lucas Ferry Rd.  
Athens, AL. 35611

**Send checks to:**

Lionel Evans  
1307 Fern St.  
Athens, AL 35613-2111



### Stay Cool, Work Smart

It's hot out. Overheating and dehydration can be fatal to the beekeeper. Keep yourself hydrated and take breaks . Most sporting goods stores carry backpacks designed with a refillable bladder to hold liquids. Originally designed for hiking, they are marvelous inside a bee suit. When filled with ice water it feels cool against your back and the drinking tube, usually with a bite valve, can be positioned close to your face so it's easy to safely sip or drink as needed. First made by Camelback, hydration backpacks are available at most sporting goods stores. Follow instructions for care and cleaning.



## Young Beekeeper Update

*Many thanks to Emily Outlaw (our 2018 Young Beekeeper Scholarship Recipient) for updating us on how things are going in her first year of beekeeping!*

As of June 2019, my hives are doing great. I have two supers on each of them, and hope to make a split soon. Although the bees can be a challenge, they are fascinating and I continue to learn more about them each time I open my hives.

I am incredibly grateful to the Alabama Beekeepers Association and the members of the Etowah County Beekeepers Association for this opportunity. They have been incredibly kind and have always been willing to help.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this journey, was the opportunity to speak about bee keeping to a group of elementary school students. They were eager learners and very attentive to the information. I hope to get similar opportunities in the future.

Emily Outlaw

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## CLASSIFIEDS

1. 30 frame electric extractor, ex-large galvanized tub, in great condition. \$3500.00. Text or call....256.557.1138 for more details and pictures.
2. Five & Six frame Nucs or Ten frame hives with 2019 Queens. Each Nuc or hive will have at least 4-6 frames of capped brood. We sell anything you need for keeping Honeybees. Contact Lookout Mountain Honeybees for prices, 256-523-4767 or [honeybees60@gmail.com](mailto:honeybees60@gmail.com)

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**The next ABA Stinger will be published August 15, 2019.**

**The deadline for submissions is August 1, 2019.**



## June/July Hiveworks

Adapted from The Wired Bee by Bill Miller

The big nectar flow is soon ending for the year, so the colony goes into summer maintenance mode. Brood rearing reduces, and the large field force that worked the nectar flow dies off. Net result: colony population declines over the course of the month. In the old pre-mite days, this decline meant fewer bees would need to be fed over the course of the summer nectar dearth. While this is still true, the population decline now also means that the percentage of bees with Varroa mites goes up dramatically.

If you have not harvested honey yet NOW is the time to make sure the queen is not in the supers. The best way to do this is by installing a queen excluder. That way any brood in the supers will finish developing provided you wait long enough for them to hatch before robbing and harvesting honey.

Due to small hive beetles, only harvest as many supers during the day as you are willing to extract that night.

Varroa usually peaks during this part of the summer. You will probably be treating for Varroa in the next month or so. Now is the time to pick what you will use and get it ordered. Considerations for a Varroa treatment include expected temperatures (it will be hot) and what treatment you used last time (you don't want to use the same treatment twice in a row).

Be sure you have harvested honey supers before installing or doing Varroa treatment.

Check the remaining shelf life of any treatment you get. Also, remember that with some treatments (notably Apivar® strips) you should use the whole package contents as soon as you open the package.

Check your beetle traps and clean them out if needed.

Comb building will cease with the end of the nectar flow. With the hot weather and few nectar sources available, what was once a pleasant colony to work now becomes defensive. As the beekeeper, you will end up using more smoke and find your protective gear more important than it was in the spring. "When in doubt, stay out" becomes a mantra when deciding when and how much to inspect a colony.

Robbing can become a problem. Whatever you do, don't let frames with honey lie around the apiary for any length of time (this includes frames you pull when working a colony).

Make sure to check the food stores of splits and new colonies. Any colony with less than 3 frames equivalent of capped honey stores should get a gallon of 1/1 sugar syrup.

