



East Texas Beekeepers Association

December Report by Dick Counts

December 6, 2018

I was privileged to attend the TBA State Convention in Temple, TX on November 8-10. TBA did an outstanding job of planning and operating the convention. Last report I heard, the attendance was over 600 people from all across the state. There were many activities and classes and outstanding speakers. I would encourage you to plan to attend next year's convention. You will have a good time, meet a lot of beekeepers, and come home knowing more than before you went. I will give you a report on the Convention at our December meeting.

December is the time of year we think about our accomplishments over the past year and start making plans for the 2019 bee season. Three things you need to be thinking about are equipment, bee purchases, and beekeeper training. If you need equipment for the upcoming season, get your orders in now before the spring rush. If you plan to purchase bees or queens, know what you need and be prepared to order as soon as your favorite supplier starts taking orders. If you plan to buy bees through me or Eddie, you need to talk to us as soon as possible.

Our 2019 Beginners Beekeeping Training starts January 12. There are still a few openings for additional students, either adults or youth scholarship students. However, commitment for the class needs to be made soon. Details about the Youth Scholarship Program, including qualifications and the scholarship application, are available on our ETBA.info website.

Our club also needs young ladies and young men to participate in our Honey Queen and Ambassador program. ETBA was a pioneer in the Ambassador program for young men. Its success has led to several other bee clubs developing Ambassador Programs.

If you know of youth interested in participating in these programs, please contact me as soon as possible. For youths who have never been beekeepers, the youth scholarship program is a good way to get started in bees and move into the Queen or Ambassador program in the future.



- President—Matt Thomas
- Vice President—Eddie Collins
- Treasurer—John Holladay
- Secretary—Bridgette Thomasson
- Ex. Director and Reporter—Dick Counts
- Honey Queen Chair—tbd
- Director-at-Large—Stanford Brantley
- Program Director — Joe Laws
- Co-Program Director—Bridgette Thomasson
- Webmaster—Ken Wilkinson
- Newsletter Editor—Trish Wilson



Next Meeting *December 6th*



United Methodist Church
405 West Main in Whitehouse
6:45 PM
On the Web: etba.info



East Texas Beekeepers Association's 2017-'18 Ambassador



This is my last month serving as the ambassador for ETBA. Serving as the ambassador has been one of the most profound experiences of my life.



Being the ETBA Ambassador has taught me many things. Public speaking has been one of the many life skills that I have learned from being the ambassador. Most importantly, it has taught me how to be a better speaker. Being comfortable speaking in all environments is a skill I have developed during the past two years. From cooking demonstrations to garden clubs, I have been able to speak in many environments. Each new experience helped me to become more comfortable as a speaker. In the same sense I have learned how to adapt my presentations to my audience. By giving the same or similar presentations I have been able to really learn how to make my presentations relevant to my audience speaking

in terms they will understand, and sharing information that will benefit them.

Another benefit from being the ambassador is that I have learned many things I would not have learned otherwise; one example was the Master Beekeeper Program.

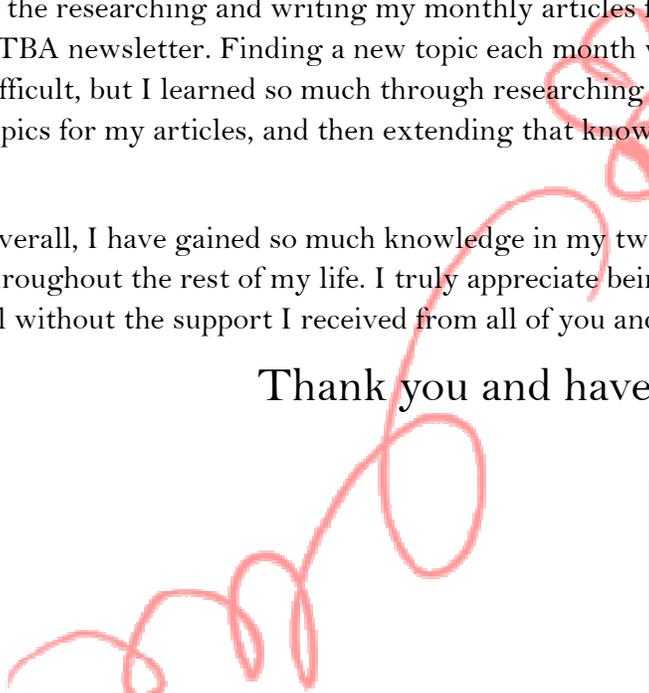
Becoming the ambassador, in turn, helped me to reach each of my personal goals and levels of becoming a master beekeeper. On my own, I would not have accomplished this. In addition to becoming a master beekeeper, I have also learned a lot from all of the researching and writing my monthly articles for the ETBA newsletter. Finding a new topic each month was at times difficult, but I learned so much through researching these new topics for my articles, and then extending that knowledge others.



Overall, I have gained so much knowledge in my two years as the ambassador. Many of these things will help me throughout the rest of my life. I truly appreciate being the ETBA Ambassador and would not have been able to do it all without the support I received from all of you and my family.

Thank you and have a wonderful holiday season!

~ Peter





We had a good turnout for our November meeting. We had numerous entries for our honey tasting contest and voted for beekeeper of the year. The December meeting will post the results of both Beekeeper of the Year and Honey Tasting Winner. So you won't want to miss that meeting.

This past year, in reflection, has been a tremendous year for our club. We have had many quality speakers to both inform and inspire us to have better beekeeping practices. A special thanks to Joe Laws for diligently acquiring tremendous speakers. Joe and Kathy also feed each speaker the night of the meeting and sometimes provide lodging. We are blessed to have them. Doc Holliday and Trish Wilson, respectively, keep us informed with newsletter and accounting. They keep up with membership, finances and disseminating information to all of us. The club is quality because we have quality people leading the charge to help facilitate beekeeping. Next time you see one of these selfless volunteers, give them a huge thanks. Thank you all for all you do.

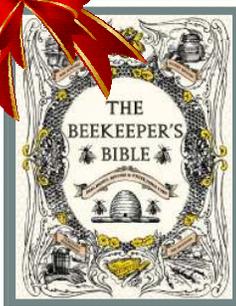
As we move into winter, you will want to make sure your bees are treated for Varroa Mite and fed properly. You should have 7-8 frames of feed in the top box if you run a two deep configuration. If they the honey bees don't have that much, feed them thick syrup so they can have some stores for the winter. Check the bottom box on a warmer day and see how much they have in the bottom. The density of the syrup should be thicker. Fill a bucket or jar $\frac{3}{4}$ full of sugar and fill it with warm water and stir it up until it is completely liquidities. The point of feeding thick syrup is so that they don't have to process the excess water out of it. They can simply eat it and store it in the comb. The bees will appreciate warm syrup rather than cold syrup. It is best to feed bees, especially this time of the year, from the top middle of the box. Inboard feeders are good when days are warmer but when it is really cold, bees won't leave the warmth of their cluster to run over to the outside feeder to partake, especially if they are clustered in the middle. Feeding through the lid is preferred because it is right on top of the cluster and the bees can take syrup and not have to break their cluster. If you pull me aside at the December meeting I will tell you how to do that. If you have a super or several deep frames still full of honey in the top center, you should have adequate stores and won't need to feed, unless those stores are depleted before spring time.

The past couple of years, some of my colonies have clustered in the top deep but the majority stayed in the bottom. Translation - this means the bees collected enough food in the fall (pollen and nectar) in the bottom box and they didn't have to come to the top for feed. I found myself breaking a lot of frames of honey on the top box to feed the bees in early spring. We will discuss breaking honey combs in the December meeting. Again, you may want to check the bottom box and count how many combs of honey you have there. I plan for the absolute worse winter imaginable and hope for the best. Good cold and wet winters are really good for beekeeping and flowers for the spring. I would rather have enough stores and have to break comb, than letting my bees starve.

In December we will be having a panel discussion on topics such as these topics. Many people lose their bees this time of the year for many reasons. The December meeting's discussions will hopefully help reduce some of your losses.



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The Beekeeper's Bible is as much an ultimate guide to the practical essentials of beekeeping as it is a beautiful almanac to be read from cover to cover. Part history book, part handbook, and part cookbook, this illustrated tome covers every facet of the ancient hobby of beekeeping, from how to manage hives safely to harvesting one's own honey, and ideas for how to use honey and beeswax. Detailed instructions for making candles, furniture polish, beauty products, and nearly 100 honey-themed recipes are included. Fully illustrated with how-to photography & unique etchings.

Available from Amazon and other on-line book sellers for around \$27.

Practical Experiences in the Beeyard by Stan Brantley



The weather turned a bit chilly, with a couple of winter-like days and nights. Some areas even reported a few snowflakes. During these cold days, there was not a bee flying in my beeyard. Hopefully, you were a pro-active beekeeper and your hives were ready for the cold weather.

December is that time to tend to the indoor activities of beekeeping. It is time to assemble new wooden ware, clean and repair old wooden ware, reflect on successes and failures of the past year, and make plans for the new season. Most beeyard activities will involve making sure your hives do not run out of stores and feeding if needed.

Entrance reducers should already be installed. If not, do so as soon as you can. If the entrance reducer is difficult to install, check the hive entrance for propolis buildup. Use your hive tool to scrape away enough propolis to get the reducer firmly seated in place.

I like to use a little smoke around the hive entrance even if the temperature is below 40 degrees. The smoke will let the bees know you are outside doing some work. It may also prevent the bees from breaking cluster to investigate the outside disturbance.

If you use a solid bottom board or do not leave your screened bottom board open, make sure your hives are ventilated to prevent condensation from building up on the lid and dripping down into the hive. Placing a tongue depressor, popsicle stick, or small twig on the back edge of the top box or inner cover will provide adequate ventilation. Do not create such a large gap that robber bees would be able to enter. Given our Texas winter pattern of a couple of cold days followed by several warm days, bees will be flying on the warmer days and looking for any forage available. Other hives will be tempting targets.

If you use a migratory cover, insert a 6 or 8 penny nail under the back edge of the cover to make a small crack for moisture to escape.

If your hive has a slight forward tilt, water from rain or condensation will not puddle near the rear of the bottom board. Top bars from old frames can be inserted under the back of the bottom board to create that slight forward tilt. Hive supports can easily be set-up using cinder blocks. I prefer to use one block long-ways under each side rather than a block on each end of the hive. With blocks only on the ends, the blocks are a couple inches too short to fully support the hive. I never feel comfortable using that method. You can make a wooden hive stand and place it on the cinder blocks to keep the wood off the ground. Two 45 inch long 2x6s with 14 inch spacers placed between them will support two hives. If the spacers are less than 14 inches, the stand is too narrow and the hive can fall off. Place a cinder block under the wooden frame at each end; this will keep your hives about 10 inches off the ground. When building your hive stand, consider how high your boxes will be when supers are added. It is difficult to work supers stacked chest high or higher. Beekeepers come in different heights, so plan the height of your hive stand to match the beekeeper. Think "Safety First" and build your hive stands accordingly.

On a personal note, I would like to say "Thank You" to all the people who walk up to me at meetings and conventions and share how much they have learned from these articles. I am a believer in beekeeper education and am committed to sharing my experiences to help others learn to be better beekeepers. Sometimes, I feel I am repeating information but then remember that new beekeepers are coming to meetings all of the time. Every new beekeeper deserves the opportunity to learn the essentials of beekeeping. I encourage every beekeeper to read books and magazines, watch YouTube videos, and become active in a local beekeeping organization. Be available to share your knowledge and experiences with the new and novice beekeepers in your group.

Merry Christmas



The Got Questions?

The group will be open 6:00-6:30 before the meeting. Join us if you are a new beekeeper or have some beekeeping questions. If you have not joined us before, ask someone to point you to the Got Questions? Room. We will try to help you find some answers.

Honey and the Flu Season

Drinking hot tea or warm lemon water mixed with honey is a time-honored way to soothe a sore throat. According to some studies, honey alone may be an effective cough suppressant too.



It is very good, especially if you have a cough or congestion. The lemon juice helps break through congestion, while the honey soothes the throat.

Honey is also proven to have healing properties due to the fact that it offers antibacterial activity, and aids in the treatment of upper respiratory infection.

In studies, (James M. Steckelberg, M.D.), honey appeared to be as effective as a common cough suppressant ingredient, dextromethorphan, in typical over-the-counter doses.

However, please note that due to the risk of infant botulism, never give honey to a child younger than age 1.

Additional research link:

www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/264667.php



...from the Editor



How do you make honey and lemon for a cough?

What you will need ...

1. Combine one cup of honey with three tablespoons of lemon juice.
2. Add warm water to it and stir until the ingredients are mixed completely.
3. You can take one tablespoon of this mixture twice a day for a cough ; once in the day, and once before going to bed for an undisturbed sleep.



Word Scramble



EOHNBCYMO

IYPAAR

TRTAOEINCX

RDBNGIAE

LALMS IEVH EBLETE

EEEPBRKEE

OPLNOTSILAR

BEAESCEP

NEEUQ

NDORE

WKERRO

RSUEN

OAVRRA SMTEI

STRISWPDHEA

AIPS

EDRYABE

OIELCSON

ANMGRWSI

SIBTEUE

MOEKRS
