



# BEE BUZZ

December 2022

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## *From the President...*

Greeting all and Happy Holidays.

The beekeeping year is coming to a close in a few weeks and we all look forward to spring and hope our bees survive the winter. With the unseasonably cold weather we are having now right before Thanksgiving I sure hope this is not the norm for the next few months.

The Thanksgiving potluck was nice and considering we did not have a lot of tables we were not too crowded. All the food was good and I helped my self to a couple of the desserts. It's hard for me to pass up pecan pie.

As we go into 2023 we are without a program director. This is a tough position because you just cannot please everyone but with that said I really need to hear for all of you on topics you would like to hear about. Without topics we'll just have open discussions with topic focus on the tasks a beekeeper should accomplish over the next two months. I plan to open a chat room in Facebook and Slack focused on topics and ask that you provide inputs.

Your board has changed a little bit for 2023 and includes:

President – Tim Schartung  
Vice President – Tom Cairns  
Secretary – Katelyn Hentrich  
Treasurer/Public Information Officer – Dennis Hessel  
Directors – Frank Dorris, Johnny Murdock, and Darla Haiso  
Program Director - Vacant

Dennis Hessel has informed me that 2023 will be his last year on the board. If you have any ambition of serving on the board for 2024 let Dennis or myself know. We'll need to accomplish a graceful transition of his duties around October/ November 2023. This position is critical for running the club smoothly and essential that we fill and execute transition smoothly.

Thanks for your consideration and I look forward to serving another year as President.

Tim Schartung

President

PS. Share the Introduction to Beekeeping registration form on page 7 with your friends.

## ***December Southern Illinois***

by Ken Kloepper

*DISCLAIMER: The most important thing to remember is that you cannot manage honey bees by a calendar. Location, topography, climate, weather, floral resources, and management goals are all factors to consider.*

- ◆ The winter solstice usually occurs on December 21st and marks the shortest day of the year. In all but the strongest colonies egg laying will have stopped weeks ago as the bees allowed the brood nest temperature to lower to about 70 degrees to conserve food and the effort necessary to warm the nest.
- ◆ As the shortest December days pass, gradually the bees will sense the longer days and increased daylight. About two to three weeks after the winter solstice, the queen may resume egg laying, especially if we are experiencing above normal temperatures in January. After all, the cluster will need to warm the brood nest to 93 degrees in order to rear brood.
- ◆ **IMPORTANT!!** I try to find the warmest day above freezing between Christmas and New Years day, to quickly inspect each of my hives if possible. I try to assess hive strength and add any additional sugar bricks they may need. Each inspection should be only a minute or tow in length.



### **\*\*\*\*\*DUES NOTICE\*\*\*\*\***

The 2023 dues are due January 1st.

Club membership runs January through December, and the dues are \$20.00 a year and are due January 1st. Each year we ask that you submit the membership renewal form with your current information. You may pay your dues form that page using PayPal or you may mail a check payable to SCBA to Dennis Hessel, 1720 Cloverdale Dr, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

On our website [www.stclairbees.com](http://www.stclairbees.com)—click on Members Only in the top menu bar. On the next page you will be able to submit your renewal form and pay your dues.

Each year we purge the swarm, cutout, and mentor list to ensure we have the latest information. If you would like to be on one of these list you may submit your information from the Members Only page..

## ***Beekeeping in December***

*DISCLAIMER: The most important thing to remember is that the bees don't live by a calendar. Location, topography, climate, weather and, floral resource are all factors to consider when determining what tasks need to be completed*

The cold weather of winter is here and the holiday spirit is in the air. By now the bees are clustered and enjoying the stores they put up during the summer. If the temperature is warm enough the bees may take a cleansing flight. Fortunately, there is little physical labor you have to do so relax with a hot tea and honey while reading a good bee book.

### **Tasks to Perform –**

#### *Hive Inspection*

Bundle up and go the apiary and check that no damage has occurred to the hive from wind or critters.

Inventory your equipment, tools and supplies and write your letter to Santa with your wish list (share the list with your family so they can “suggest” things to add).

Start to formulate your plans and goals for the upcoming year.

Keep the snow from drifting over the entrance to your hives

#### *Miscellaneous Chores*

Renew your St. Clair Beekeepers Association membership.

Consider how you may help out with the club

Research what classes or seminars you will attend next year.

Consider expanding your apiary

Relax and enjoy the Holidays,

### ***LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY***

January weather may be the harshest of the winter. The bees are hunkered down in a tight cluster trying to stay warm and are consuming very little food. Try not to disturb them unless you feel supplemental food needs to be added to prevent starvation.

### **Observations and Actions to take –**

*Cleansing Flights* – Honey bees don't defecate inside the hives, if you have a sunny day, with lite winds and temperatures over 40 ° F, you may see some bees taking a quick, short flight to void feces or what's called cleansing flight.

Make sure the snow is not blocking the entrance to the hive

*Dead Bees on the Ground* - Although winter bees live longer than summer bees, many of them will die before spring. They drop and accumulate on the bottom board, because the worker bees are in the tight cluster. They will be removed from inside the hive on warmer days.

Don't panic when you see a lot of dead bees on the snow at the entrance of your hive.

Don't panic if you don't see a lot of dead bees on the snow at the entrance of your hive. It just means they haven't broken the cluster.

*Continued on next page....*

## **LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY continued...**

### **Tasks to Perform –**

Determine Stores – Be sure your hives have enough stores. If you have a nice day, quickly open the outer covers and see if the bees are clustered and active around the inner cover hole. If they are low on food you will need to feed them

DO NOT Break up the cluster by pulling out the frames.

Place dry sugar on a newspaper inside the hive, a candy board, or fondant as food over the top of the cluster.

Check for dead-outs and take note which hives they are

Visit your hives - Check for wind or animal damage. Make sure the hive openings are clear so the bees can get in and out for cleansing flights.

### Plan for your new beekeeping year.

Review your colony records from last year to determine any changes or additions you would like to make.

Place orders for any queens, packages of bees, or nucs that will be needed in the upcoming spring. Many sources sell out by the end of the month

Clean up your smoker, hive tool, and scrape frames and empty hive bodies

Prepare new equipment for use in the spring and/or to repair old boxes and frames, and cut out old comb.

Consider registering for a new beekeeper course

Plan what conferences you will attend. The Heartland Apicultural Society (HAS) conference is a great educational opportunity held in late June.

Read a good beekeeping book.

Catchup on watching You Tubes.

### ***Hot Topic...***

At the November meeting there was a lot of discussion about small hive beetles . This year they seemed to be a problem more than other years. There were various ideas how to prevent and treat.

The club has an in-depth book about small hive beetles in our library check it out sometime. Here are a few other resources on small hive beetles.

[Small Hive Beetle - YouTube](#) by James Ellis

[Beekeeping | Will You Lose Your Bees To Small Hive Beetles?? - YouTube](#) by David Burns

[Possible New Hive Beetle Control - YouTube](#) on Bob Binnie's channel

[Small Hive Beetle Larva - YouTube](#) - not for the squeamish

## **WE ARE GROWING...**

Welcome these new members that joined the club in November Janelle Dieu-Meacham, Joy Gray, and Oliver and Abby Schwent.

### **Officer Positions Needing Filled...**

**The following position on the board of the Club are still open and in need of someone to step up and help with the running of the club.**

**Program Director.** The Program Director shall:

- Develop a committee of interested members
- Set up an annual plan of programs with the committee for club meetings which will serve to educate our membership
- Serve as the contact for outside speakers
- Provide membership with information about the program for monthly meetings

**Public Information Officer.** The Public Information Officer shall:

- Handle the advertising and distribution of information regarding activities, announcements and the press releases of the association
- Create and print the Association's monthly newsletter and distribute it either through the U.S. Postal Service or through electronic mail to the association members
- Serve as contact person for requests from the media for information or press releases from the Association and coordinate with the President or the Executive Board to provide acceptable replies to requests.

## **A Little Bee Humor**

Q: What's black and yellow and flies at 30,000 feet?

A: **A bee on an airplane.**

Q: The bees went on strike because they wanted

A: **more honey and less working flowers.**

Q: What do you call a Bee that works for the government?

A: **A pollentician.**

Q: What buzzes, is black and yellow and goes along the bottom of the sea?

A: **A bee in a submarine.**



**Okay new guy, I hope you're not claustrophobic because you're going to be inside for a while.**

source: <https://czechtheworld.com/bee-puns>

## *November Meeting in Pictures....*

The Annual Thanksgiving Dinner was held Nov. 13th . There was great food, great company, and a great exchange of information on a variety of topics.

Thanks to Tim Schartung for putting the slideshow together of pictures of 2021 and 2022 events.





# Introduction to Beekeeping

St. Clair Beekeepers Association

One Day in Person Class \*\*

Saturday, February 11, 2023

TIME: 8:00am – 5:00 PM

Location: Madison County Farm Bureau

900 Hillsboro Ave

Edwardsville, IL 62025



The enrollment fee is \$60.00, one additional family member \$30.00 extra. Fee includes handouts, continental breakfast, water, one year membership in St. Clair Beekeepers Association and Illinois State Beekeepers Association. Textbooks and other related resources available. More Information and a registration form are available on the website. [www.stclairbees.com](http://www.stclairbees.com)

## Registration Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional attendee- include \$30.00 per person

Name	Relationship
_____	_____
_____	_____

The above information will be used to forward you the meeting invite and contact you about the above event.

All information will remain confidential and not shared with others.

Please mail this completed form and your check to:

**St. Clair Beekeepers Association**  
c/o Dennis Hessel  
1720 Cloverdale Dr  
Edwardsville, IL 62025

**MAKE PAYMENT PAYABLE TO St Clair Beekeepers Association**

If you have questions email: [stclairebees@gmail.com](mailto:stclairebees@gmail.com) or call 618-560-6434



### St. Clair Beekeepers Association

Promoting interest in bees and beekeeping in Southern Illinois.

Email: [stclairbees@gmail.com](mailto:stclairbees@gmail.com)

The purpose and function of the St. Clair Beekeepers Association is the promotion of interest in bees and beekeeping by such means as encouraging...

- Good beekeeping practices
- The utilization of bees for pollination of agricultural crops
- The dissemination of information about bees and beekeeping

### Tentative Meeting Dates for 2023....

January 27th, 6:30 PM , membership meeting at St Clair Farm Bureau  
February 11th, 8:00 AM, Beginning Beekeepers class at Madison County Farm Bureau  
February 24th ,6:30 PM, membership meeting at Madison County Farm Bureau  
March 31st , 6:30 PM, membership meeting at St Clair Farm Bureau  
April 30th, 2:00 PM, Tim and Linda Schartung Apiary  
May 28th, 2:00 PM, TBD  
June 25th, 2:00 PM, TBD  
July 30th, 2:00 PM, TBD  
August, 27th, 2:00 PM, TBD  
September 24th, 2:00 PM, TBD  
October 27th, 6:30 PM St Clair Farm Bureau  
November 12th Thanksgiving potluck and final meeting, Madison County Farm



## NEXT MEETING DATE

There is no membership meeting in December.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

[Link to Google Maps for Meeting location](#)