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Newsletter Editor: Pam Fisher; Webmaster: Dave Robinson | Deadline for the newsletter is the 20th of each month.

## Words from the President

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I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends! December is a slow month for beekeeping; however, in-between the times of getting ready for the holidays, is an opportune time to prepare for the upcoming year and review your notes from last year to see what went well and what didn't.

As we begin to close out 2018, I would like to express my thanks to everyone for your time and support during the many events, meetings, mentoring and sharing experiences with others. Your time and effort are what has made this guild effective in its mission to educating people on honey bees and beekeeping as well as attracting future beekeepers. The start of 2019 brings on two large events, the Flower and Garden Expo in January and the Beekeepers Introductory Course in February, where we will be asking for your time and support. More details for these events are in this newsletter and our website. The members of BGSV is what has made us successful and I look forward to another great year with you.

Please remember that the December meeting will be our annual Holiday Social event. This year's party will be at the Black Pelican Restaurant and it is a great time to get together to celebrate the holidays. It has always been a fun event and it is also the occasion on which we recognize our Beekeeper of the Year and those who have been our volunteer warriors. Please see more details on our website and this newsletter.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Dave*



Dave Robinson, President  
Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia



## December Holiday Social

There will be **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**  
Instead, please join us for the **Holiday Social at 6:00 PM on Monday, December 10, 2018**  
at **Black Pelican in Greenbrier.**  
**More details inside on page 2.**

## December Apiary Notes for Coastal Virginia

Hopefully you took advantage of the fall season and fed any light hives going into winter. Check the weight of a hive by trying to lift it from the rear - it should feel as if it's full of lead. If you have light colonies, candy or fondant is the preferred feeding method this time of year. See "MRE's for Bees" for bee candy recipes on page 3. **Never feed bees honey from an unknown source; it may contain disease spores such as American foul brood.**

Check under the telescoping top for condensation. Provide ventilation by propping up the telescoping top slightly. Moisture is a bigger concern than the cold for colonies during the winter. Make sure that your hives slope forward so that any precipitation rolls off the front and not into the hive entrance.

You may open the hive on cold days to quickly check the strength of the hive or quantity of food stores. If the bees have plenty of food, you may not see them; they may be down inside the hive clustered on honey. You can gently exhale into the top of the hive or tap on the



side and listen for their answering buzz to determine if they are alive. If the bees are clustered at the top of the hive when you open it on a cold day, they are running out of stores and emergency feeding is necessary. Don't break the cluster of bees by trying to find the queen during the winter; you will only do damage to your colony from the cold.

Now is the time of year to take inventory of your equipment, repair the old and order new. Talk to other guild members before you order so you can combine orders and take advantage of volume discounts. Some suppliers are offering pretty good specials this year, including free shipping for the holidays.

It's also time to consider the scope of your beekeeping operation for next season, to plan and place your orders for queens and nuc boxes should you wish to expand. Most suppliers operate on a first come, first served, basis and if you wait until spring to order you may run into backordered items or sold-out queen producers.



## Beekeepers Holiday Social ~ Dec 10th

Have you made your reservations for the Holiday Social yet? The guild invites members, their families and friends to join us in our holiday celebration which we hold every December in lieu of our monthly meeting.

Come share a holiday meal with your fellow guild members on December 10<sup>th</sup> at Black Pelican, beginning at 6:00 PM. The restaurant is located at 1625 Ring Road, Chesapeake, VA 23320, on the road encircling Greenbrier Mall in Chesapeake. We may order from their entire menu and alcohol is available. And in the spirit of the season, the Guild is picking up the first \$10 of each member's tab! Please sign up via Signup Genius so that we can provide an accurate headcount to the restaurant.

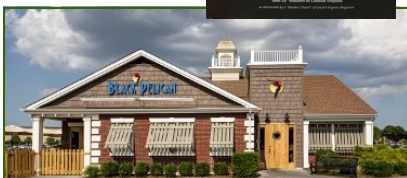
The Beekeeper of the Year will be announced after dinner. Plus, we will again award two \$50 gift certificates to bee supply companies. Each member in atten-

dance will receive a chance at a certificate for every 10 hours volunteered over the past six months. Hopefully you've been signing in each month with your hours of community outreach - the more you've volunteered, the greater your chances of winning!

In addition, we'll have our traditional gift exchange better known as 'Cut-throat Pollyanna' or 'Dirty Santa'. To participate, bring a wrapped gift valued at approximately \$20. The gift exchange is the highlight of the evening as participants pick and steal the best gifts. Just when you think the prize is yours, someone good-naturedly snatches it away from you! So come on along and share some holiday cheer with friends.

Sign up at: [www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-20188](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-20188)

Hope you'll be there!



# MRE's for Bees

## No Cook Bee Candy

- 10-pound bag of granulated sugar
- 1 cup water
- Mix sugar and water thoroughly
- Spoon wet sugar onto plastic wrap and shape into slabs
- Let dry overnight
- Remove plastic wrap and place candy on the top bars of the hive

## Microwave Bee Candy

- Spray mold with cooking spray
- Stir 3/8-cup water into 2 cups sugar
- Microwave at full power for 2 minutes
- Stir and microwave another 4 minutes
- Let sit 3 minutes
- Pour into mold and let harden
- Unmold and place candy on the top bars of the hive

## Do I need to feed?

**"Simply lift the cover on a day when temperatures reach 40°F. If you see bees at the hole in the inner cover, they are running out of food and you should feed them immediately with a supplement such as fondant or granular sugar."**

**--Cornell University**

# The Beekeeper's Garden in December

Although the shortest days of the year are ahead, we are fortunate to live in an area mild enough to keep something in bloom throughout the winter. Honey bees forage on warm winter days so plan your garden to include the following reliable December bloomers in Coastal Southeast Virginia:

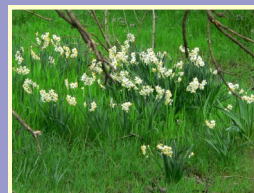


Winter-blooming Algerian Iris (*Iris unguicularis*) is a little known member of the iris family which braves the winter by blooming from November through March with sporadic lavender flowers. It prefers a sunny well-drained spot and grows to 18" tall and wide.

Algerian Iris (*Iris unguicularis*), Camellias (*japonica, sasanqua, oleifera, sinensis*), Dandelion, Eleagnus, *Fatsia japonica*, Flowering Quince (*Chaenomeles*), Hardy Cyclamen (*Cyclamen hederifolium*), Japanese Flowering Apricot (*Prunus mume*), Lammium, Lenten Rose (*Helleborus*), Loquat

(*Eriobotrya japonica*) Marigolds, Mexican Marigold (*Tagetes lucida*), Mexican Sage (*Salvia leucantha*), Oregon Grape Holly (*Mahonia bealei*), Paperwhite Narcissus (*Narcissus papyraceus*), Pansy, *Pieris japonica*, Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Rose, Rosemary, Salvias, Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*), Tea Olive (*Osmanthus*), *Viburnum tinus*, Wintersweet (*Chimonanthus*), Witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)

Paperwhite Narcissus will grow outside in our mild climate once done forcing indoors. Plant in full sun or under deciduous trees for bulbs that are the first to bloom in late fall or early winter with fragrant white flowers.



Pansies, and their smaller cousins, Violas, are cool weather annuals in our area. They bloom through our mild winters and expire in the heat of summer. Although not primary nectar or pollen sources, pansies and violas provide forage when little else is blooming. Plant the more fragrant yellow or blue varieties to help bees find them on warm winter days.





Mark your calendars for the Virginia Flower and Garden Expo from January 25 to 27, 2019 at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. If you've never attended the Flower & Garden Expo, you are in for a treat - landscape companies build actual gardens inside the convention hall. Nothing is more uplifting on a dreary winter day than being surrounded by lush gardens! Speakers, demonstrations, vendors and exhibitors round out the list of gardening attractions.

Our guild will assemble an exhibit showcasing the mutually beneficial relationship between bees and plants. Members may sell honey and hive products but our primary mission is education.



**The Foundation  
for the Preservation  
of Honey Bees, Inc.**



## 4-H Honey Bee Essay Contest

Each year 4-H'ers compete in a national essay contest geared to promoting public awareness of the importance of honey bees. The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees chooses a topic and youth enrolled in 4-H are invited to submit a 750 to 1000 word essay on the subject. Essays are judged first at the state level and the winning essay from each state is submitted to the national competition.

The 2019 Essay Topic is : Honey Varietals, State to State

*Each jar of honey reflects an unrepeatable combination of climate, soil, weather and flowers. Each state has unique honey varietals that beekeepers can market to their customers. Please identify one unique varietal to your state and discuss the flower's uniqueness and how beekeepers can effectively market that varietal.*

The scope of the research is an essential judging criterion, accounting for 40% of their score. The number of sources con-

## January 25 - 27, 2019

The Expo is a major event for our guild due to the extended hours – 9:30 AM to 7 PM on Friday and Saturday and 9:30 AM to 5 PM on Sunday. It takes a lot of volunteers to build our display and keep it staffed the entire time. We will be inside the show on the main floor so anybody assisting with the event will be able to enjoy all the Expo has to offer. If you can give just a few hours of your time, you'll be rewarded with free admission to the show and a little shot of spring to brighten your day!

The schedule is posted on Signup Genius at [www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-2019](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-2019)

sulted, the authority of the sources, and the variety of the sources are all evaluated. Personal interviews with beekeepers and others familiar with the subject are documented in footnotes or listed as resources.

Essays will be judged on (a) scope of research – 40%; (b) accuracy – 30%; (c) creativity – 10%; (d) conciseness – 10%; and (e) logical development of the topic – 10%.

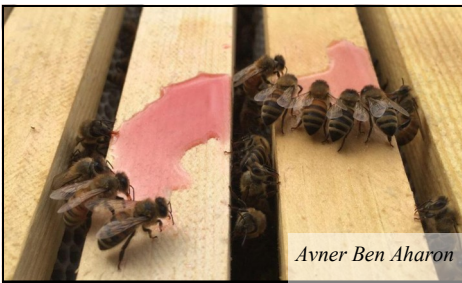
Awards: Cash Prizes to the top three Virginia winners are 1<sup>st</sup> place - \$100; 2<sup>nd</sup> place - \$50; 3<sup>rd</sup> place - \$25. The 1st place state winner will be forwarded on to the national competition and could win cash prizes of 1<sup>st</sup> place - \$750; 2<sup>nd</sup> place -\$500; 3<sup>rd</sup> place -\$250. Deadline for essay submissions in Virginia is Feb. 25, 2019.

For more information, send an email to: [safishe3@vt.edu](mailto:safishe3@vt.edu) with VA 4-H Beekeeping Essay Contest in the subject line. If you do not receive an acknowledgment after 3 business days, please resubmit.

**"I pledge my head to  
clearer thinking,  
My heart to greater  
loyalty,  
My hands to larger  
service,  
and my health to  
better living,  
for my club, my  
community, my  
country, and my  
world"**

**--4-H Pledge**

## Cannabis Honey Creates a Buzz



*PhytoPharma International's honey bees feeding on cannabinoids*

PhytoPharma International, an Israeli cannabis technology company, is causing quite a buzz with its artisanal cannabis honey according to the November 19, 2018 article, *Artisanal Edible Cannabis Honey Causes A Buzz*, published on Forbes.com by contributor Sara Brittany Somerset. This is not a cannabis-infused honey; it is a natural product produced by bees which are fed cannabinoids. Unlike mammals, insects do not get high. Instead, they pass the active ingredients, THC and CBD, intact, through the enzymatic process of making honey to create Pure Bee cannabis honey. The result is a natural reddish-colored product with the taste and texture of honey that delivers the healing properties of cannabis.

And although the cannabis-derived

honey contains up to 1,000 times lower measurable concentration of cannabinoids compared to conventional treatment methods, well under 0.3%, it is highly effective. "There may be two optional mechanisms that can explain the honey's high-efficacy," inventor Ilan Ben Simon explains. "The honey serves as a high-efficient vector to cross the Blood-Brain Barrier. While producing the honey, cannabinoids are transformed in the bees' stomachs into superiorly efficient molecules."

Pure Bee also takes effect much faster, taking only 5 to 10 minutes to alleviate pain in chronic pain patients compared to 30 to 60 minutes for other traditional edible cannabis products. And Pure Bee is a much safer delivery system compared to smoking or vaping plus it has up to 100 times the efficacy. Just two grams of the honey, which contain 50 ppm (0.1mg), were reported to alleviate pain significantly in fibromyalgia patients.

"The pertinent thing that I feel is special about our product is that we are enhancing nature, by nature," says

Avner Ben Aharon, CEO of PhytoPharma International. "Although other people were trying to create natural honey with cannabis, only my inventor Ilan found a way to achieve it. We combined the healing powers of cannabis with the amazing delivery capability of honey," says Ben Aharon.

Pure Bee is marketed as either non-intoxicating CBD Honey or psychoactive THC Honey packaged in pre-measured dosing syringes for direct consumption or for mixing into other foods or beverages. Pure Bee will initially be available in California dispensaries. "In the future, if companies will prove that specific cannabis strains can cure or treat specific illnesses, then we can make honey from those specific strains, specifically to treat the correlating illness," said Ben Aharon.

Another exciting aspect of PhytoPharma's research is the claim that their proprietary food composition is more nutrient-dense, resulting in healthier honey bee colonies compared to colonies fed traditional sugar syrup.

A lot to buzz about!



### Facebook Assistance

The guild is looking for help with our Facebook page. We have over 1800 followers and would like one or more volunteers to help manage our page. We are looking for guild members to manage content, promote guild events and answer or redirect queries in a timely manner. Content runs the gamut from scholarly research to humorous cartoons, including photography, craft ideas, and honey recipes, anything bee-related.

Our primary purpose is to promote aware-

ness of bees (all types), beekeeping and hive products within our social community. We do call attention to environmental issues that affect pollinators but we avoid unrelated subjects, particularly political or religious discussions in accordance with our 501(c)(3) designation.

If you enjoy social media, and would like to join our Facebook team helping to build the guild's online community, please contact Dave Robinson at 757-222-6672 or [dkdrobinson@verizon.net](mailto:dkdrobinson@verizon.net)

#### Where Do Bees Go in Winter?

By Jaqueline Jules

***I love to watch the little bee,  
long before the winter's cold.  
She pounces on each petal  
like a hunter, quick and bold.***

***But the garden has no buzz  
When the air is bitter cold.  
Do busy bees wilt away  
like the yellow marigold?***

***I hope they hide in sturdy  
hives,  
where waxy walls keep out  
the cold  
and spend all winter sipping  
the honey they guard like  
gold.***



# December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 	11 	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

## Dates to Remember

- December 2 - Hanukkah Begins
- December 10- Beekeepers' Holiday Social - 6:00 PM at Black Pelican, Greenbrier **IN LIEU OF MONTHLY MEETING**
- December 11-VA Beach 4-H Beekeeping Meeting
- December 17 - Board of Directors Meeting - Members Welcome!
- December 21 - Winter Solstice
- December 25 - Merry Christmas!
- December 26 - Kwanzaa Begins
- January 1 - New Year's Day
- January 14- Guild Meeting
- January 25-27- Virginia Flower & Garden Expo at Virginia Beach Convention Center.

## Beekeepers' Introductory Course

*Subject to Change*

With the new year coming up, planning is underway for the guild's annual Beekeepers Introductory Course. Classes will be held Saturday mornings, February 9, 16, & 23, 2019 at the Virginia Beach Police Department's Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA). LETA is located close to the oceanfront at 411 Integrity Way, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. We'd like our information to be well received and ensure that the students are given a warm welcome to our guild, things we cannot accomplish without the help of many members. Please consider joining us

to welcome students, answer questions and be available at breaks to provide information about beekeeping and our guild. We all remember what it's like to be the new person and how pleasant it is to make a new friend! We'll need a little help too with refreshments. If you can assist, please sign up at [www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-20191](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-20191). Thanks to our many generous members, the snacks at class are always incredible! Steve Jones, local distributor for both Beeline woodenware and Dadant

beekeeping equipment will be with us on February 16th & 23rd. You can pre-order equipment for pickup from Steve at [sales@handsonbeekeeper.com](mailto:sales@handsonbeekeeper.com) or [757-408-5201](tel:757-408-5201) or shop his equipment trailer. And don't forget that while you're assisting us, you are welcome to sit in on any of the classes. It's a great way to get a little refresher training for spring and help out the guild at the same time! We would be thrilled to have your assistance at all of the class days but will be equally appreciative if you can help out with just one! Hope to see you there!

