

2026 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #5a

We have been through a long winter, and I lost a few hives of bees which I normally take for granted. Thankfully, I always make up a few increases to cover my winter losses. This year I am started back to where I was last year. Retired from commercial beekeeping - I have four colonies in my back yard, and I live in a HOA which restricts the number of beehives I am allowed to keep. I have been a hobby beekeeper for the last 10 years which has made beekeeping fun. Learning about beekeeping goes on and on -- each year a bit different from the previous years.

Yesterday, I had a visit by a good friend I had not seen for some time - about 14 years. He was traveling back to West Virginia from Georgia and stopped by to say Hi! This reminded me that I have not seen a lot of my old beekeeping friends. Many have passed and those still around are like me - slowed down considerably. But we still talk bees and enjoy each other's company.

And that got me to thinking how valuable beekeeping friends are! Although older we are still fighting to keep our bees alive. Beekeeping is more than bees to me -- It was a way of life for many years. Those people like Mel Sword's and his wife Kathy, who visited with me, are lifelong friends because of honey bees. Mel and I talked bees and old times. Our wives talked grandchildren and family members and our children. Isn't it interesting about those of us that keep bees. We find very little other than bees to talk about. But we are happy and we watch the weather and a chance to open our hives. What we find sometimes is often disappointing, but life goes on and replacing bees in a hive is as important today as it was in days gone by.

Dana