

# The ABA Stinger



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### June 2020 - Letter from the President

I hope this letter finds everyone doing good and getting ready to start harvesting the spring honey crop. I'm sure South Alabama is already extracting. It's about two more weeks before Nancy and I start harvesting. It will take us around three to four weeks to complete the spring crop. We're going to be sticky for a while!

I have some news about Alabama Beekeepers Fall Conference: the Officers and Board of Directors met May 30th at Peach Park to get things going for our Convention and after a very good discussion on the present conditions and all the stipulations we all felt like in best interest of everything it is best to CANCEL the 2020 Fall Conference. We didn't want to but everyone felt it best.

Just a thought, if things were to get really better in September or October we might consider having an big getaway some where state wide. I'm sorry to bring this kind of news to everyone, but pray for our State and the whole world that things will get better.

Hope everyone has a wonderful spring honey crop.

Your President,  
 Phillip Garrison.



## VIP LETTER FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Dear Members of the Alabama Beekeepers Association (ABA),

I trust all is well with everyone.

It is with great sadness that I announce the cancellation of the 2020 Alabama Beekeepers Association Fall Conference. I was elected as Vice President September 21, 2019.

Immediately thereafter, I began reaching out to varying speakers around the country, forming what would become our 2020 Fall Conference. Many of you who know the ABA Officers and Board understand our desire for

the association to shine, mediocre is not an acceptable outcome. There was great excitement about some of the “out of the norm” speakers who were scheduled.

Move ahead to March 2020 – everyone’s world significantly changed due to Covid-19. The itinerary for conference was already complete with the exception of moving speakers to different time slots to maintain better fluency. 17 speakers were scheduled over two days. On May 30, 2020 the Officers and Board of Directors of the ABA had our 2nd quarter board meeting at Peach Park, Clanton, AL.

I addressed the Officers and Board with the current obstacles we were facing as a result of the Corona Virus. The information is as follows:

1. Two Keynote speakers canceled.
2. One speaker was not allowed public engagements tentatively until August 1st , with the potential of being extended.
3. One speaker was not allowed public engagements tentatively until August 8th, with the potential of being extended.
4. Our vendor chairman was not allowed public engagements tentatively until August 8th, with the potential of being extended.



5. We are held at a 50% capacity in an auditorium that seats 608. That takes us down to 304 before social distancing. (We had 475 in attendance in 2019) This would have forced a cap on registration numbers.
6. The classrooms that would tightly hold 72 people, would be reduced to approximately 18 people plus the instructor.
7. The children's program (an enormous success) would not be held.
8. All meals would need to be catered as per current Alabama Health Department guidelines.
9. The vendor's area would be reduced more than 50% and many vendors had indicated they would not attend.
10. Our venue was completely shut down until the end of July, with the potential of being extended.

And the list goes on...

Please realize, we began thinking WAY out of the box with ideas to hold Fall Conference. The mountain of issues and constraints was great and realistically insurmountable. Personally, I wish the outcome was different – remembering conferences past, catching up with old friends, establishing new relationships, all surrounding that special insect we have grown to love and care for is heart wrenching.

Ultimately, the buck stops here. If you have complaints, concerns, questions or suggestions feel free to contact me, my contact information is at the end of this letter.

In closing, I would like to thank our President, Phillip Garrison, Secretary Heather Sinyard, and Treasurer Wynelle Milstead for their dedication and hard work. Know too, our current Board of Directors is dedicated and very engaged. Those participating in our May 30th meeting were: Sandra Emery, Hal Hendrix, Ray Latham, Troy Latham and Scott Lucas. All of these folks listed continue to sacrifice time, and are truly dedicated to the advancement of the ABA.

Please continue to stay safe and enjoy your bees.

Sincerely,

Vince Wallace, Vice President Alabama Beekeepers Association  
Cell/Text: 205-339-3318, Email: [wallacebees@gmail.com](mailto:wallacebees@gmail.com)



## June 2020 - Letter from the Secretary

Hello everyone! I hope you are doing well. I am very sad we are not having the Fall Conference this year in September but, as an association we are working together to try and find new ways to connect with you and keep you informed and bring you the education you desire to learn more about our amazing honey bees. When we get everything in place we will be letting you know ASAP. We have an amazing group of officers and board members who love our organization and work hard together and have only the best intentions for our organization. In the meantime, if you haven't checked out our new and improved website, go on and look it up. It is great! Last time I wrote you I was planning on trying my hand at raising queens and I'm sorry to say it did not go well for me but maybe next time. That is the great thing about beekeeping, if you don't get it right the first time you can always try again. I'm sure you will be harvesting your honey soon and so will I. Let's hope and pray we all bring in tons of honey this year. Which reminds me to remind you, check your inventory and make sure you have everything you need to harvest your honey and if you don't, look to our amazing vendors that support us each and every year. Thank you for your support in our organization and I look forward to the next time we meet again.

Heather Sinyard  
Secretary

## June 2020 - Letter from the Treasurer

Spring is coming to an end. My honeybees have been busy. This year has been a challenge for me with Queens. The weather destroy my queen area last year and I lost all my nucs I used for queens. I will be doing more queens in a couple of weeks.

I was so disappointed we were not able to do the Fall Conference this year. I am sure Vince is already lining people up for next year.

The new website is up and you can pay your dues online anytime of the year. I hope everyone has a abundant honey harvest this year. Looking forward to next year.

Bee Safe,  
Wynelle Milstead  
Treasurer



## Bee Venom and SARS-CoV-2

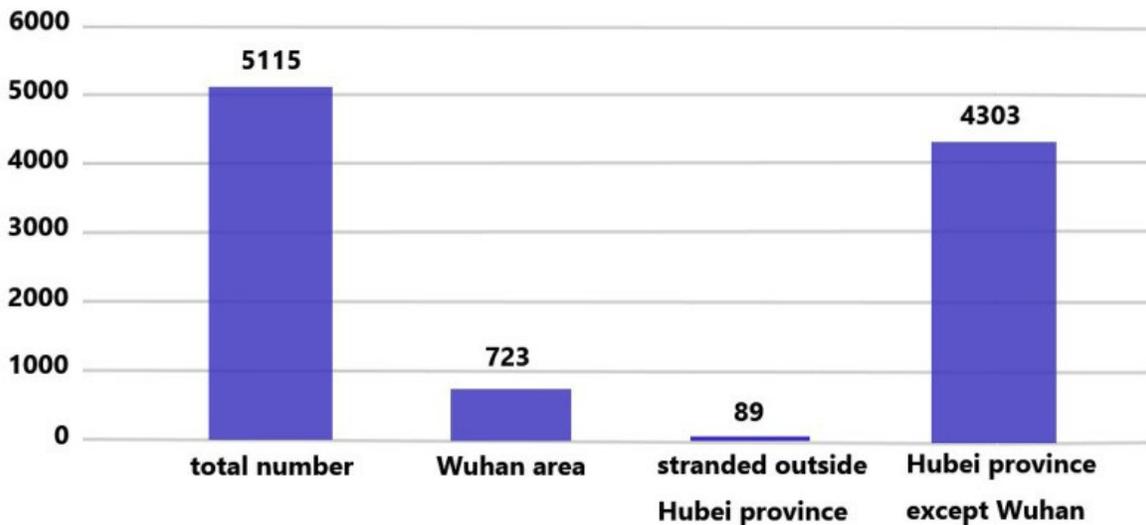
*The article that follows was published online April 30, 2020 by the National Institute of Biotechnology Information (NCBI). NCBI is part of the United States National Library of Medicine, a branch of the National Institutes of Health and is located in Bethesda, Maryland.*

*This is a peer reviewed article citing many sources which are not included in this issue of The Stinger. If you would like to study this further the complete publication is at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7190514/#!po=4.16667>.*

According to data from Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, the global number of confirmed COVID-19 case exceeded 2.0 million on the 15th of April. I am a physician, and I participated the prevention and control of coronavirus in China.

There is one discovery we would like to report here. It reminds us the story of the discovery of cowpox and the eventual victory of humans over this disease ([Bennett and Baxby, 1996](#)). In Hubei province, the epicentre of COVID-19 in China, the local beekeepers association conducted a survey of beekeepers (See chart). A total of 5115 beekeepers were surveyed from February 23 to March 8, including 723 in Wuhan, the outbreak epicentre of Hubei. None of these beekeepers developed symptoms associated with COVID-19, and their health was totally normal. After that, we interviewed five apitherapists in Wuhan and followed 121 patients of their apitherapy clinic. These patients had received apitherapy from October 2019 to December 2019, and all the five bee apitherapists have the habit of self-apitherapy for their own health care (apitherapy means making use of bee venom from the honeybee's sting to treat or prevent certain diseases). Without any protective measures, two of the five apitherapists were exposed to suspected COVID-19 cases and others were exposed to confirmed COVID-19 cases, but none of them were infected eventually. None of the 121 patients were infected by SARS-CoV-2, and three of them had close contact with immediate family members who were confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection cases. It might be supposed that beekeepers are less likely to be exposed to SARS-CoV-2 because they live in less densely populated rural areas. But the five apitherapists and their patients are from densely populated areas in Wuhan. These people have one thing in common: they develop a tolerance to bee sting.





Bee sting can cause allergic reactions ([Park and Lee, 2016](#)), and it can even lead to death due to the excessive stress response of the immune system ([Vazquez-Revueleta and Madrigal-Burgaleta, 2018](#)). Bee venom can affect the body's immune system ([Cherniack and Govorushko, 2018](#)) and enhance the differentiation of human regulatory T cells ([Caramalho et al., 2015](#)), which play an important role in control of SARS-CoV infection ([Chen et al., 2010](#)). Does the stimulation of the immune system caused by bee venom reduce susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2? To test this, animal experiments would be needed. Monkeys might be suitable for this study. Monkeys could be divided into two experimental groups with the same breed and age. One group could be made tolerant to bee venom after a period of daily bee stings, while the other group receives no intervention. They could then be raised in the same environment contaminated by SARS-CoV-2, and multiple tests performed to see if they were infected by SARS-CoV-2.

Our purpose in writing this letter is to ask scholars with appropriate research conditions to test this assumption. In the absence of vaccine of SARS-CoV-2, if this method works, then it could offer one hope towards victory over COVID-19.

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**Cell Punch Queen Rearing:** Rear queens using the cell punch method. Kit with complete instructions including photographs using the tool. Kit includes several items to get started plus a tool that is hand fabricated from raw materials. Send \$20 plus a couple dollars for shipping to: Wil Montgomery, 1401 Lakemont Dr. S, Southside, AL 35907-5636



## NEW ABA WEBSITE

by Wynelle Milstead

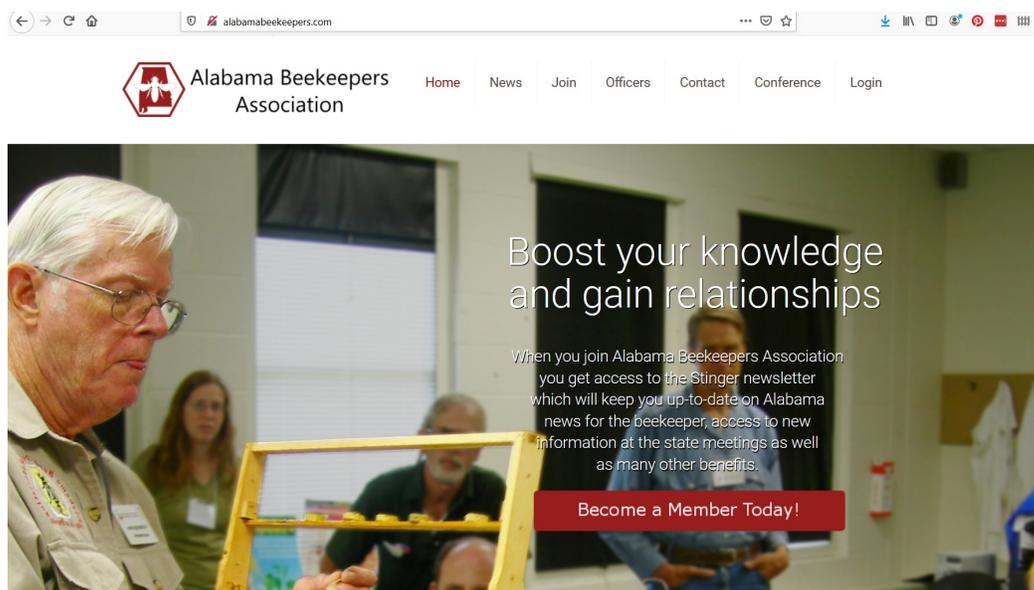
The ABA new website is awesome. It was designed and managed by fellow beekeeper London Perry who has done a fabulous job. It has several new features including the ability to pay dues year round. The process is different than in the past but I believe it will be easy for everyone to use.

We looked at several membership management programs and chose Findjoo which is very user friendly. Findjoo has online payments, event registration, donations, automatic renewal notifications, newsletters, send mass emails and more. Unfortunately we won't be able to use the event registration feature this year as previously announced.

And if your Stinger notification email looks different this month it's because we're using Findjoo to send it.

We do encourage everyone to explore the site and use its functions for paying dues and making donations. You can login to our ABA member portal to review and update your information. You will find the Member Login page in the menu.

If you have any trouble registering feel free to give me a call or you can send me a email through the website and I will get back to as soon as I can.



Editors Note: This is the new landing page of alabamabeekeepers.com. When visiting you should scroll down to see some great articles about beekeeping around the state.



The Stinger would like to add to all the THANK YOU's to Bob Fanning for all the years of work that he put into the associations website. Bob has been a giant on the web for Alabama Beekeepers. Bob was our first alabamabeekeepers.com webmaster and created sites for many of the local associations in addition. He always pushed to make sure that information was up-to-date and pertinent. Many of the local websites he created are still in use. Bob's work has been invaluable to everyone in the state with an interest in beekeeping.

Thank you Friend!

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## ALABAMA MASTER BEEKEEPER UPDATE

by David Kelton

Congratulations to the eleven new 2020 Master Beekeepers who passed their final exams in February:

Harold Deason  
Jeff Monroe  
Katie Pugh  
Wynelle Milstead

David Brasher  
Nicole Nygaard  
Christina Snoddy  
Ben VanDortrecht

Kristen Irions  
Broderick Peters  
Vince Wallace



As of today we have 36 Alabama Master Beekeepers whose certifications are current.



Our next Master Beekeeper certification program will be April 8-9-10, 2021. We are adding a new program for 2021 for anyone that is interested in starting beekeeping for the first time. This program will help in learning what equipment is needed as well as obtaining their first hives and also to teach them about beekeeping and this wonderful insect God has created for us to learn from and about.

We also have a new group of Master Beekeepers to serve on the master beekeeping committee; Chairman-David Kelton, Secretary-Marilynn Parker, Treasure-Allyson Andrews, Website coordinator-Richard Ramsey, Retention-Rebecca Hargraves & George Baldwin, Tests-Vince Wallace, Hal Hendrix & Dr. Jim Tew,

Alabama Master Beekeepers has awarded Master Beekeeper certificates to 38 individuals who are available to help with presentations at your club meetings and answer your beekeeping questions. Go to [alabamamasterbeekeepers.com](http://alabamamasterbeekeepers.com) to get the latest about Alabama's Master Beekeeping program and to contact one of our Master Beekeepers. The website information should be ready for viewing by June 20, 2020 as it is presently being updated with the latest information.

Thanks,  
For Better Beekeeping,  
David Kelton

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T & A Bee Farm, Russellville, AL , Italian Packages, Nucs, Ventilated Suits, Equipment, Distributor for Strong Microbials Super DFM, 256-331-2337 or 256-810-4495. We recently became the Alabama Distributor for Strong Microbials Super DFM.

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**Editor's Note:** If you have a great story, photo or idea you would like to share, please do! The stated purpose of The Stinger is *"to maintain ongoing communication and connection with its members. We desire to keep you up to date with beekeeping events and developments in our organization, in our state and in our country to the end of educating our members, strengthening our association, and helping elevate the status of beekeeping and beekeepers as a whole. The Stinger welcomes all submissions that meet that criteria."* Your editor would love to travel around the state attending local meetings and interviewing beekeepers, but as that's not possible, it IS possible for you to send your news and information!

Bee Blessed! Ros

