

THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers



ISSUE

Fall 2017

UPCOMING MEETING INFORMATION

September 16, 2017

4:00 p.m. ISU Plant Introduction
Station Tour at ISU

6:00 p.m. Business Meeting at the ISU
facility

7:00 p.m. Social gathering at Buford's
Restaurant

Buford's Restaurant, Ames, Iowa
2601 E. 13th Street
Ames, Iowa

BUSINESS MEETING

- ✓ Treasurer's Report
- ✓ Meeting Site Update
- ✓ Spring Auction Update
- ✓ Non-profit Status Update
- ✓ Website Update
- ✓ Election

PROGRAM

- ✓ ISU Plant Introduction Station Tour

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE: November 15, 2017

Email Submissions

justiowahoney@gmail.com

Mail Submissions

Valerie Just
4609 Crestmoor Drive
Des Moines, IA 50310

We encourage you to receive the newsletter via email. You may make updates to your subscription, or add a subscription by sending a notification to:
justiowahoney@gmail.com

From the President, Mike Sander

We have an interesting meeting planned for September. The time and location will be different from normal. Jamie has what looks to be a great tour set up for us at ISU. We will be able to have a quick business meeting at the ISU location. After the meeting, we will be traveling to the restaurant for: a time to answer beekeeping questions for new and curious beekeepers, good conversation, and you can buy a meal if you so choose. Look for the schedule, map and timing on the CIBA web site or [in this issue](#).

My bees have been busy all summer and I hope yours are doing great as well. It is the first part of August as I write this. I have been working in the garage preparing equipment for the bees often throughout the summer. Just now the bees are discovering the bucket of burr comb scrapings sitting on the floor. My interpretation of this is that we are just now running across a dearth. Hopefully by the time you read this we will all have completed our mite checks, and started or completed the necessary treatments. One of my first spring meetings I remember sitting with an experienced beekeeper who had been absent from beekeeping for a few years and was beginning the hobby again. He was describing to us the distinct difference in his recent winter survival rate based on the timing of his mite treatments the fall before. Mite treatments done shortly after the state fair seemed to play a big role in high survival rates.

Hope you have a bountiful harvest, and looking forward to seeing you at the tour and post-tour meeting to hear about it.

Mike

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September Meeting: Program Details

Editor's Note:

- [Directions](#) to the Plant Introduction Station and Buford's Restaurant are provided after the program details.
- The tour starts at 4:00 p.m., at the ISU Plant Introduction Station, with the business meeting commencing at the ISU facility immediately after the tour – we are estimating that the business meeting will start around 6:00 p.m.
- Our social gathering will take place at Buford's Restaurant in Ames after the tour and the business meeting.

USDA Bee Research Facilities at Iowa State University Tour with Steve Hanlin, Entomologist with the USDA

Bio of Steve Hanlin

Mr. Hanlin manages the controlled insect pollination program at the North Central Regional Plant Introduction Station (NCRPIS). He recommends to curatorial staff and other cooperators the most appropriate insects to utilize for each specific crop and directs support staff in the proper placement and management of pollinating insects. The primary pollinator used at NCRPIS is honey bees; a large amount of Mr. Hanlin's time is spent producing queens and the "nucleus" hives which are placed into individual cages for plant pollination. Mr. Hanlin purchases and manages several other pollinators including *Osmia* bees (hornfaced and blue orchard bees) and bumble bees. He arranges for the purchasing and assists the entomology technician with the incubation and distribution of alfalfa leaf cutter bees, house flies and blue bottle flies. He also directs support staff in the building of insect domiciles and other equipment which is used for the management of insect pollinators and pollination activities. Mr. Hanlin conducts insect pollination studies in cooperation with curatorial staff and other USDA researchers to determine the most appropriate pollinator to use in a specific situation. He assists the entomology technician and the curatorial staff in the identification of insect specimens found in seed samples or increase plots and provides control recommendations.

Tour

The tour will be at the Plant Introduction Station and will start at 4:00 p.m. We will drive around the research fields in people mover trailers and look at cage pollination and some of the plants in the cages. The sunflowers might be the showiest at this time of year. While we are in the field, Steve will talk about the different pollinators they use and will have a show and tell of equipment when we are back in the conference room. They use honey bees, bumble bees, blue orchard bees, alfalfa leaf cutting bee and two species of flies, blue bottle flies and house flies. Steve will talk about how they raise queens and use nucleus hives for pollination and how they make them up throughout the summer. He can even go into some details on how they use the seed and storage. We will look at their over-wintering room.

Business Meeting

Our business meeting will be held in the conference room at the Iowa State facility. Agenda items include:

1. Treasurer's Report
2. Meeting Site Update
3. Spring Auction Update
4. Non-profit Status Update
5. Website Update
6. Election

Dinner at Buford's Restaurant

A room has been reserved at Buford's Restaurant for those club members that would like to go out to eat after the tour and meeting. Buford's is the restaurant at the Quality Inn & Suites (used to be the Starlight Motel) on 13th Street next to the interstate. We believe the tour and business meeting should be adjourned around 7:00 p.m.

We can compare notes about our bees and answer our new club member's questions. For the new beekeepers and members – bring those questions; for the “old timers” bring the answers.

Directions to the Plant Introduction Station, 1305 State Avenue, Ames, Iowa

1. Head North on I-35N towards Ames.
2. Merge onto US-30 W via EXIT 111B toward I-35 Bus W/Ames/Iowa State Center.
Drive 3.53 miles.
3. Take the University Blvd exit, EXIT 146, toward Iowa State University.
Drive 0.19 miles.
4. Keep right to take the ramp toward Iowa State University/Cultural Facilities/Athletic Facilities.
Drive 0.16 miles
5. Merge onto University Blvd.
Drive 0.24 miles
6. Turn left onto Mortensen Pkwy.
 - Mortensen Pkwy is 0.1 miles past Christensen Drive
 - If you reach S 16th St you've gone about 0.3 miles too far**Drive 0.55 miles**
7. Mortensen Pkwy becomes Mortensen Rd.
Drive 0.60 miles
8. Turn right onto State Ave.
 - State Ave is 0.3 miles past Hayward Ave
 - If you reach Seagrave Blvd you've gone about 0.6 miles too far**Drive 0.09 miles**
9. 1305 STATE AVE is on the left.
 - If you reach Arbor St you've gone about 0.5 miles too far

Directions from the Plant Introduction Station to the Buford Restaurant in the Quality Inn & Suites, 2601 E. 13th St, Ames, Iowa (7.97 total miles from the Plant Introduction Station)

1. Start out going south on State Ave toward Mortensen Rd.
Drive 0.09 miles
2. Take the 1st left onto Mortensen Rd.
 - If you reach Meadow Glen Rd you've gone about 0.5 miles too far**Drive 0.59 miles**
3. Mortensen Rd becomes Mortensen Pkwy.
Drive 0.55 miles
4. Turn right onto University Blvd.
 - University Blvd is just past Beach Ave
 - If you are on University Blvd and reach S 16th St you've gone about 0.3 miles too far**Drive 0.43 miles**
5. Merge onto US-30 E via the ramp on the left toward Nevada.
 - If you reach Green Hills Dr you've gone a little too far**Drive 3.57 miles**
6. Merge onto I-35 N via EXIT 151B toward Minneapolis.
Drive 1.83 miles
7. Take EXIT 113 toward 13th Street/USDA Veterinary Labs.
Drive 0.37 miles
8. Turn left onto 220th St.
Drive 0.22 miles
9. Stay straight to go onto E 13th St.
Drive 0.34 miles
10. 2601 E 13TH ST is on the right.

Meeting Minutes: June 17, 2017

By Jolene Eriksen, CIBA Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Mike Sander, President, at 7:30 p.m.

Old Business

Reading of the Minutes of the March Meeting. A motion was made by Jamie Beyer to waive the reading of the minutes, as they were published in the June newsletter. Marlene Mogle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report. Val Just reported on the status of the accounts, checking, savings and two CDs. The Honey Queen account has a healthy balance. Margaret Hala moved to accept the treasurer's report and Arvin Foell seconded the motion. Motion carried. The question was raised, "Why no King"? One reason was because there is no king in the hive. Another question raised was about the financial information not being published in the newsletter. Margaret Hala explained that leaves the association open to scams.

Auction Report. Margaret Hala stated that a lot more people signed up to sell beekeeping equipment. Attendees increased and the association is looking for more space for the auction. With more consignors, the current space is crowded. There were 16 consignors, of which 7 were CIBA members. Food sales added \$337.00 to the Honey Queen program. More professional signs were helpful.

Julie Sander is the new auction chair and will be heading up the search for a new auction space. Requirements are someplace with restroom facilities, electricity, and a kitchen or a food area. The new space needs to be long-term and in central Iowa. Everyone is asked to be thinking of places, research it if possible, and get the information to Julie Sander. Julie reminded everyone to set aside equipment as they are putting away equipment in the fall for the auction.

Seminar Committee. Jamie Beyer is heading up the committee. A speaker is needed for the seminar in January 2018. Jeremiah Kusel was volunteered for the committee by Jamie. The January 2017 seminar was attended by 230 people. Roy Kraft, IHPA, may have a name for the upcoming seminar.

Community Apiary. Jamie Beyer said that liability insurance is currently the biggest issue in getting the community apiary up and running. It may be cost prohibitive. The association may have to incorporate and become a non-profit. An initial prospective location of the apiary would be situated at Cherry Glen Learning Farm. Curt Bronnenberg has volunteered to donate hives, bees and equipment. It was proposed that all honey from these hives go to a food bank. Roy Kraft wondered, why a community apiary? The answer is to promote beekeeping. Arvin made a motion to investigate avenues to create a community apiary, non-profit or other ways. Margaret Hala seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

New Business

Our Current Meeting Site. The association is experiencing growing pains. Do we need a new place to meet? It was determined during the meeting that food is an important part of the meeting, especially for the out of town members. Also, sharing a meal provides a time of fellowship. Jamie Beyer will be considering new places to meet. Hy-Vee in Altoona was suggested as was Monsanto near the Huxley exit. All suggestions should go to Jamie Beyer.

Office of Vice-President. As of June 13, Linn Wilbur resigned as Vice-President, but not from the club. He and Ann have been big supporters of the association. Anyone interested in the position, please let the President know.

Jamie Beyer made a motion to end the meeting, Val Just seconded the motion and the motion carried. Time was approximately 8:20.

Program: Mike Sander opened the program by asking the new beekeepers if they have any questions. Questions ranged from bees not moving up to supers or upper brood boxes to looking for fellow beekeepers on the area.

Andy Joseph, Roy Kraft and Ginny Mitchell, Iowa State Fair Judge made a presentation on entries to be judged at the fair. Deadline to order tags for entries is July 14th and most cost just \$1.00. All information is in the IHPA newsletter, The Buzz, or online at iowastatefair.org.

Submitted by Jolene Eriksen, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report will be reviewed at the quarterly meeting.

Call to Action

Membership Form

A membership form can be accessed on the CIBA website: [CIBA Membership Form](#)

For members receiving a paper copy, the website address is: <http://centraliowabeekeepers.org/>. Once you are on the website, go to the **Contact Us** section.

Call for CIBA Honey Queen nominees!

We continue to look for candidates for the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association Honey Queen. If you know of any young lady who might be interested, please contact one of the CIBA board members.

Connie Bronnenberg has agreed to assist CIBA and our Honey Queen with information and advice. This is a great opportunity for the CIBA Honey Queen, as Connie has many years in working with the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) Honey Queen and has mentored two Honey Queens in being selected and crowned as American Honey Queens.

Auction Preparation Reminder

Contributed by Julie Sander

Each spring as a service to our membership and a fundraiser for CIBA we organize and host an auction for the sale of beekeeping equipment and supplies. Historically, we have had a great variety of equipment, decorations and supplies.

We wanted to remind you to keep auction-focused as you begin to finalize beekeeping work this fall, and organize for the upcoming year. Consider the supplies and equipment that you could consign to the CIBA auction, and set aside anything you would like to sell. The spring is a busy time of year; prepare this fall to avoid scrambling in the spring!!

First Annual Mite-A-Thon

Pollinator.org, Contributed by Mike Sander

The first annual [Mite-A-Thon](#) will take place **Saturday, September 9 to Saturday, September 16, 2017 and we invite you to participate!**

The Mite-A-Thon is a national effort to collect mite infestation data and to visualize varroa infestations in honey bee colonies across North America within a one week window. All beekeepers will be asked to participate, creating a rich distribution of sampling sites in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Their varroa monitoring data will be uploaded to www.mitecheck.com.

OBJECTIVE: 1) Raise awareness about honey bee colony varroa infestations in North America through effective

monitoring methods. 2) Management strategies will be made available for discussion within bee organizations utilizing Mite-A-Thon partner developed information and outreach materials.

PARTICIPANTS: All beekeepers are welcome to participate – we need bee associations to help lead this effort!

DATA COLLECTION: Participants will monitor the level of mites (number of mites per 100 bees) using a standardized protocol utilizing two common methods of assessment (powdered sugar roll or alcohol wash) and then enter data, including location, total number of hives, number of hives tested, local habitat, and the number of *varroa* mites counted from each hive. The published information will not identify individual participants.

TO DO: Determine your preferred method of testing for mites and commit to a day for testing and report your data (see above).

COST: There is no cost. You can create your own test materials or kits can be purchased online. Some scholarships are available (js@pollinator.org).

CONTACT: Miteathon@pollinator.org or [415-362-1137](tel:415-362-1137)

RECEIVE UPDATES: Learn more and stay up to date at www.pollinator.org/miteathon! If you want to receive updates, you can complete an on-line form, located at the bottom of the page, using the link in this paragraph.

DID YOU KNOW...

Wackiest Iowa Law

Reader's Digest, July/August 2017 edition, Page 70

Any person who attempts to pass off margarine, oleo, or oleo-margarine as real butter is guilty of a simple misdemeanor, punishable by up to 30 days in jail or a fine of up to \$625. (And yes, I'm aware this isn't bee-related – just protecting you regarding livestock product law!)

Cooking with Honey

Resource: American Beekeeping Federation

- Lower baking temperature by 25°. Honey makes baked goods brown faster.
- Measure honey easily by coating cup or spoons with oil or non-stick spray.
- Substitute 2/3 to 3/4 cup of honey per cup of sugar (depending on taste.)
- Decrease the amount of liquids by 1/4 cup per cup of honey used.

Fruit Drizzle Recipe

Contributed by Valerie Just

¼ c honey
2-3 T Lime Juice

Whisk together and drizzle over fresh fruit.

I can attest that this drizzle over blueberries and strawberries is yummy!

Through the Eyes of a Honey Bee

As with other types of bees, honey bees have 5 eyes: 3 simple eyes on top of its head, and 2 compound eyes, with numerous hexagonal facets.

King of the Colony?

Resource: <http://www.buzzaboutbees.net/honey-bee-facts.html>

It wasn't until 1586 that it was recognized that the head of the honey bee colony is a female queen. This news was popularized by Charles Butler (the 'Father of English Beekeeping') in his book 'The Feminine Monarchie' in 1609. Prior to that, it was assumed the head of the colony must be a male – a 'king'. Even William Shakespeare, in Henry V, refers to honey bees living in a kingdom, with a king as ruler.

Club Buzz

Arvin Foell / Car Accident

Arvin Foell, our past CIBA President, was in a car accident on Thursday, August 17, 2017. If you have access to Facebook, search Arvin's name, and you can see a picture of his demolished truck. After looking at the wreckage, it's hard to believe that Arvin only had broken ribs and a concussion. He was released from the hospital on Wednesday, August 23rd. He has 8 weeks of outpatient therapy to assist him regain his stamina and recover from the after-effects of a concussion.

His family is estimating that he will not be performing any further inspections for 2017, and Arvin has been connecting with beekeepers to advise the same; he can consult on the telephone when there are needs, but he will refer inspection needs to Andy Joseph.

Arvin is concerned with the well-being of his own bee colonies. His colonies need to be brought home, honey extracted and the colonies prepped for the winter months. **If you have assistance to offer with Arvin's colonies, please give him a call at (515) 509-9630.**

CIBAlist

Defining CIBAlist

You've heard of Craigslist, the website that provides classified advertisements with sections devoted to items for sale and items wanted; we are introducing CIBAlist to provide the same service for our CIBA beekeepers! If you have something beekeeping-related to sell, or are looking to purchase a specific beekeeping-related item, you can email The Beeline editor, Valerie Just, at justiowahoney@gmail.com, or call (515) 278-4835. Here are the guidelines:

- CIBA members can place 2 free ads per calendar year for beekeeping-related items.
- Ads are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Ads **MUST** be submitted by the BEELINE submission deadline
 - The deadline is found on the first page of the BEELINE.
- Ads are limited to 4 lines including the title.
- CIBA is not responsible for errors or misprints. All ads are subject to board acceptability; the Board reserves the right to decline ads based on content and/or space availability.
 - At this time, we are not accepting non-member ads or paid ads--but may consider those in the future.

Beekeeping Banter

Signs you are becoming a BEEK...

Excerpts from <http://www.hobbyfarms.com/12-signs-youre-becoming-a-beek/>

- ♣ You're starting to think that oversized, heavy white clothing is pretty sexy.
- ♣ The Mann Lake and/or Dadant catalog has replaced that novel you were reading. Who cares about some dumb love story when there is a sale on bottom boards on page 33?
- ♣ You mistake the glazed look on your friends' faces for fascination as you talk about neonicotinoid insecticides. Also, the word "glazed" reminds you of honey.
- ♣ You think of powdered sugar primarily as a treatment for Varroa mites instead of as a delicious topping for Bundt cake.
- ♣ You fully understand the pros and cons of Langstroth, top bar and Warré hives, but you have trouble telling Jennifer Anniston and Gwyneth Paltrow apart.
- ♣ Since you learned that [bassist Flea is now a beekeeper](#), you have become a rabid Red Hot Chili Peppers fan. Morgan Freeman is a beekeeper too, but *everyone* knows that.
- ♣ Thinking that *everyone* knows Morgan Freeman is a beekeeper.



Ponder This...

Quote by Margaret Mead

Remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.

Get to Know Your Club Leadership



Valerie Just, Treasurer and Beeline Editor

I have been an environmentalist for as long as I can remember. John and I endeavored to be role models for our three sons, demonstrating that each person had an obligation to protect our natural resources, and that decisions that we make during our lifetime have a direct correlation to the health of our eco-system.

In the 1980's, when my sons were young, we would go to a neighboring prairie field, find common milkweed that were supporting Monarch caterpillars, and take some of the caterpillars home. The caterpillars were plentiful during this time of our lives; zoom ahead to 2014 - there was a petition filed to protect the Monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act – a decision is due in 2019. Anyway, we would put the milkweed and caterpillars in a Ball canning jar, and replace the milkweed as needed. This provided my sons the opportunity to see the glorious transformation (and life cycle) from caterpillar to our beloved Monarch butterfly.

In 2015, I realized for the last ten years or so, I had been reading articles that the pollinators were in trouble - that pollinator populations were declining. It was time for me to give back to the environment, and do my small part in protecting one of our natural resources, the honey bees. In January 2015, John and I took a beginner

beekeeping class from Andy Joseph, and we were enamored. We ordered two bee packages from a commercial beekeeper in Iowa and the packages were delivered in April 2015.

We are celebrating our third year of beekeeping this year, and we continue to love this work - bees are awe-inspiring creatures. We are gradually growing our apiaries each year – we started out as an urban apiary with three colonies in the city of Des Moines. Last year we added colonies and ventured out to a friend's farm, which enabled us to elevate our business name to a plurality – Just Apiaries! This year, we have eleven colonies; in addition, we are nurturing several nucs.

I was the instigator of this journey, but I am so grateful that John agreed to support and contribute to this endeavor - it would have been difficult without such a responsive partner. I broke my arm in February, which ultimately has been a slow recovery – I have not been able to assist in the apiaries this year. Thankfully, John has been able to manage all our colonies on his own – although know that I did contribute by assisting in building hive stands!

Everyone has the unique opportunity to determine his/her passion, and decide how best to serve society and make a difference during their lifetime. One of my primary focal points is engaging in conservation efforts for all pollinators. During 2015, I renovated my landscape gardens, doubled my flower garden areas and registered my gardens with the Monarch Watch society as a Monarch waystation – a habitat that supports the conservation efforts of the Monarch butterfly. I converted my gardens to mostly native prairie plants; plants that are identified as pollinator-friendly plants that provide ample pollen and nectar for most pollinators. While my garden-space is minuscule in comparison to farmstead conservation efforts, I took my urban gardens to the next level, and feel energized in the effort. I started a website this spring, with the objective to educate others on the plight of the pollinators, and provide information to assist interested parties to make a difference by preserving and creating gardens and landscapes that revive the health of bees, butterflies and other pollinators across the United States. If all my dreams could come true, I would hope to inspire others to get involved – if your interest is piqued, you can visit my website at JustIowaHoney.com. Know that the website is a work-in-progress, but eventually it will represent my vision!

I am grateful to belong to our organization, and have the occasion to get to know others that truly care about honey bees. We have a passionate leadership team – a team of tenured leaders with years of experience not only in beekeeping, but people that represent years of dedication to this organization, with a couple of neophytes that bring new energy and perspective sprinkled in amongst the group. Together, with your help, I believe this team will maintain the principles that have kept this organization alive and well for decades, while bringing growth opportunities to all the club members.

I hope to get an opportunity to get to know each of you, and the catalyst that led you to beekeeping and your desire to make a difference for our honey bees!



Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship News

News from our State Apiarist, Andy Joseph

By Andy Joseph

Hello!

Quite a season. Haven't seen any major bee health issues for a little while. Bees seem to do so well in years of a more wet spring followed by a hotter, dry summer. Lots of pollen still coming in this late August. Must be at least a little nectar still coming as well. I've been pulling honey and extracting in my "free time" this past week, and the bees have really been pretty well behaved. No crazy robbing or fighting me yet. The crop is good – this is true for most people I've talked to around the state. Boxes are full and heavy. Moisture content is fine to fairly low.

Frames of foundation were drawn into nice combs well through July. Nearly every year, that last round of supers comes back in light or even empty, especially boxes without drawn combs. Beekeepers' optimism... this year most of that final round of supers got drawn and filled. Very happy about this, though the greedy side of me wonders if I could've gotten lucky with adding even another box to some.

The fair was great. Tons of fun. Glad it's over. See you all back there in 11.5 months. Thank you to everyone that worked there in the booth and to everyone who brought such quality entries. I met a lot of "new" people there this year. Had the opportunity to meet and work with several of the IHPA scholarship youth – impressive bunch all around. Thank you to Connie and Heidi and Rhonda and Doyle and all the incredible Vannoys – Carly, Carole, Scott - and the newly Mr.-and-Mrs. (congrats!) Foley and Maia and to the unstoppable Brandon Raasch. These are people who seemingly never stopped working from before it started until after it was over.

Many of you have heard that Arvin Foell (longtime beekeeper, IDALS Apiary Inspector, and many years of service as CIBA President) was in a terrible auto accident. Pictures of his smashed truck are horrific. Arvin is a lot tougher than he lets on. He hasn't had an easy couple of years, but just keeps charging on. I just heard today that he has escaped the hospital and is at home to continue recovery. I'm ridiculously happy for this news. Hopefully by the time you read this he'll be back into his hobbies of pole vaulting and hot yoga. Get healed Arvin. You have a state full of beekeepers thinking about you.

It's getting late and I must get up and out early tomorrow to head over to Sioux City to meet with a great group of beekeepers. Can't quit yet though – I haven't harped about mites. This time last year, mite counts were awful for way too many beekeepers, including myself. Numbers that seemed acceptable mid-season turned ugly by the time honey supers were pulled. Colonies were crashing due to mite pressure and all the associated viruses. Happy to report that, at least for the beekeepers I've recently visited, the mite counts haven't been quite so foul this year. They're still too high – nearly all requiring treatment, but generally not as bad as the numbers last year. Don't get comfortable. Check your hives and kill the mites. Make sure you have good, laying queens. Make sure they're healthy by every knowable measure. I encourage you to feed them pollen sub and syrup into the fall to help boost their nutrition, extend healthy brood rearing, and ensure adequate food stores for wintering.

Take care everyone. See you!

CIBA Member Contributions



Winter Hive Preparation

By Margaret Hala

Editor's Note: This topic was requested on a 2017 membership form.

We pull our honey after the State Fair, but whenever you decide to do so, there are several things you should know and do to prepare your hives for the upcoming winter.

1. You will first need to determine the laying pattern of the queen. If the pattern is spotty, and not uniform, she is running out of sperm to fertilize her eggs. I recommend that you REPLACE HER IMMEDIATELY!
2. Determine how much honey the colony has stored for the winter by opening the hive boxes, and looking at the frames. HONEY, not pollen and honey combined. They do need pollen, but not an excessive amount. [Brood production is halted early in the winter and doesn't start again until February, when Maple, Willow and Evergreen trees soon start producing pollen.] Weigh the colonies to make sure they're heavy enough to survive a typical Iowa winter. ABSOLUTE MINIMUM is 80 pounds of honey, that's 160 pounds for 2 deep bodies, and I highly recommend at least 100 pounds. This equates to 160 pounds of honey plus the weight of the boxes, bees and frames; a full deep brood chamber or 8-9 frames in the

upper chamber and 2-4 in the lower chamber. If the bodies are lighter than recommended, feed a 1:1 mix of sugar water until the bees can't/won't take any more.

3. If you're moving your hives to a 'winter location' I would not do so until it gets COLD; the temperature should be in the 40's at least, as the bees will fly back 'home', or the original location, if not moved more than 2 miles. Leave them at the present location to collect all the food they can before you move them, unless there is absolutely nothing for them to get.
4. Make sure they have at least north and west wind protection; but, if you can provide easterly wind protection, I highly recommend it. You know from personal experience an open window in windy conditions draws heat from your home; the same transpires in the hive bodies, as well. A large hay bale, sheets of ply-wood, a building, anything that will block the wind. (We used a combine shed after the roof was gone on the east side of a corn crib and overwintered single-story colonies in it. Anything that will supply WIND PROTECTION!)
5. INSULATE between the inner and outer cover! Attic insulation is as or more important than wall insulation. Cut Styrofoam to fit the top of the inner cover with a groove cut to allow the bees access to the outside – this will also provide air circulation. The bees will 'eat' white bead board; if that is the product you are using, cover it with aluminum foil or plastic wrap. Colonies can be wrapped in several ways: tar paper cut to fit around the hive with an opening cut to accommodate the upper entrance is probably one of the easier means, but any winter wrap works. You can use Styrofoam sheets cut to size - the list of products used to insulate is numerous.
6. Provide entrance reducers to reduce the hive opening to prevent mice from entering the hive bodies. You should also cover all holes in hive bodies that are not intended as entrances. You can utilize window screen to reduce the entrance - then let the bees propolize it up. This is best done earlier in the season.
 - We also install a middle entrance because as bees die in the winter/spring they can easily clog the bottom entrance. A middle entrance gives the colony another entrance to use instead of being confined to a hive if the only entrance is a bottom entry. A middle entrance also guarantees winter air circulation. It helps reduce an excessive amount of moisture in the hive during winter when the bees are confined to the hive. I can almost guarantee the bees will not be using the bottom entrance in the spring if they have a middle one.
7. You can monitor your hives to see if you have insulated appropriately. If snow builds up on top of the hive, you have insulated them well. If snow melts off soon after a snow fall, you should determine how better to protect your colonies. Snow drifted around and on top of a hive is fine. It's a good insulator to the wind.
8. During January and February, when the temperature gets up around 55 or 60 degrees for a couple of days, get out to check to see how many colonies are still alive. It is during this time that you should start feeding the bees corn syrup or sugar water. **MORE COLONIES STARVE TO DEATH BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND APRIL THAN FROM NOVEMBER TO FEBRUARY!**



Life's Lessons: A Humbling Experience

Contribution by Arvin Foell, written by Valerie Just

The varroa mite was detected in the United States in 1987. During the 1990's, while the varroa mite was present in our colonies, the real problem was American Foulbrood (AFB). I recently discovered an inspection report email that had been sent to me in October 1998 – inspections had been completed in my Cambridge and Stanley apiaries.

The inspection indicated that while I had varroa mites in my colonies, the devastating problem was AFB. The treatment for AFB is burning the entire hive. The following is an excerpt from the inspection email:

The Cambridge bee yard has 3 colonies heavily infected with AFB and need to be destroyed. Whatever you did last year did not work. One of them is almost dead already. The AFB is not resistant to Terramycin, but you

can't leave comb that is full of AFB scale in the hive and expect the antibiotic to take care of it. The brood comb in the hives was just rotten with scale. You also had a varroa mite level that requires treatment on the colonies that are not diseased.

In the Stanley yard 2 colonies were infected with AFB and must be destroyed because the combs are full of AFB scale. Additionally, 2 colonies are drone layers. The colonies also had a high varroa mite level (44 mites/ 300 bee ether roll test) and require treatment with Apistan strips. Please take care of these problems in a timely manner.



While this was a humbling experience, I think it is important to share my life's lessons with new beekeepers. This situation displays the important role that the Department of Agriculture plays in managing our apiaries. With the advancement in communication technology, inspectors can get to a beekeeper with a beekeeping problem, and assist the beekeeper expeditiously!



Margaret's FAQs

By Margaret Hala

Question	Margaret Says
<p>Q1. A while ago I was told about a colony that had nested in the wall of a house and the homeowner had sprayed liquid Sevin on the colony. It killed the bees, but would the honey and wax have been salvageable? How would our recent dry weather affect honey bees if Sevin or other insecticide was sprayed on plants or trees?</p>	<p>Sevin is listed as a non-residual insecticide to be used on vegetables and fruit trees. It is highly toxic to bees. The bees can and do carry the residue powder that remains on the plants back to the hive, where they die. If the bees are sprayed or contact the wet leaves they will die before returning to the hive, and if they take the dry residue back to the hive they will also die, so I don't know why it can be classified as non-residual. If you must use insect control use liquid spray at a time the bees will not be working the plants to collect nectar or pollen. Powder is much more likely to be taken back to the hive as pollen.</p> <p>In the case of an insecticide being sprayed into a hive of any sort, I definitely would not try to re-use the wax nor would I eat the honey or feed it back to the bees. Because of the extremely dry spell we had in July I would hope any spraying done was used early or late in the day.</p> <p>Information from someone who works in this field was that dusts, wet-able powders, flowable liquids and emulsifiable liquids are the most dangerous to bees, in that order, during a dry period.</p>

Question	Margaret Says
Q2. I'm an avid ice-fisherman. Can I use old beeswax to raise and feed wax worms? Can I do this in my home?	Wax worms prefer brood comb because they eat the cocoon left behind in the cell after the bee hatches. They do not eat the wax, but they do damage it tunneling through to get to pollen and emerged bee cocoons. They do better in cornmeal with grated beeswax, but you can also use glycerin in place of beeswax. Bran cereal flakes can also take the place of cornmeal. I see no reason why you can't do this in your home, if you so wish.
Q3. I had some brood in my super when I pulled it off the hive. Should I leave the bees to hatch or extract the frames before the bees hatch? Does extracting cause the bees to die before hatching?	Either method will work. If you choose to extract leaving the larvae in the frame, the extraction spinning does cause the bees to die in the cell and the death of the larvae can cause the frame to stink. I would not uncap the brood cells before extraction if you choose to go this route. If you choose to let the brood hatch first, you can attempt to let them out of the extracting house without letting more in or kill them instead of releasing them out. They should join your house-yard hive if you have one or another colony nearby. In some cultures, the brood is eaten. It has a nutty flavor, so that's another option.



Absconding, The Mysterious Disappearance of Colonies

By Robert Weast, Contributed by Jolene Eriksen

The following, reprinted with the permission of the American Bee Journal, contains excerpts of an article printed in the May 2017 edition of the American Bee Journal. Please refer to the May issue for the full article. The author is a contributor and decades-long beekeeper from central Iowa. Mr. Weast resides in Johnston, with his wife, Janice. We thank the American Bee Journal for their permission and encourage everyone to look at this publication.

“Abscond: to leave and secretly hide oneself, esp. from the law.” - Webster’s dictionary. Beekeepers have their own, special definition that is based primarily on another, single criterion: All the bees suddenly leave their hive and depart for places unknown. This happens when the threshold of tolerance for an undesirable condition goes over the top. How shocked the beekeepers are when they examine their hives to find one – sometimes several of them – completely empty, disappeared, vanished, with all the bees and queen gone!

Bees can and will abscond at any time of the year, spring through fall. Anything that aggravates a colony may precipitate absconding. These intrusions and or disturbances include a lack of honey or nectar, rampant disease, uncontrollable ambient temperature, varroa, the small hive beetle, putrid combs, inadequate housing and increasing attacks by birds, insects or animals. Simply stated, when bees find conditions unsuitable or unlivable, for whatever reason, they hightail it out of their surroundings.

Many times, absconding remains a mystery and the answer may be through the roll of the dice – it could be this or that. At other times, the precipitating condition is crystal clear.

There are three modes of bees leaving their hives: Absconding, Colony Collapse Disorder and Natural, Reproductive Swarming.

The difference between an absconding colony and a colony that collapses. With the former, entire hives are vacated, leaving nothing behind. Colony Collapse Disorder leaves a remnant behind usually the queen, a small number of young workers some brood and sometimes lots of honey.

The difference between swarming and absconding. A colony that absconds departs because of unfavorable conditions. A colony swarms to perpetuate the species. Only a portion of the colony swarms, leaving brood, a

queen or queen cells, honey and a substantial number of bees behind. Colonies that are preparing to swarm frequently send scouts out looking for places to nest. Swarms usually gather and cluster near their mother hives before departing to distant cavities. Absconders simply fly away, *en masse*. On occasion, some absconders cluster outside on the bottom board before departing. When preparing to swarm, the queen may stop laying, which lightens her for the flight she will soon take. This occasionally happens with absconders.

Suggestions to prevent absconding.

1. Don't install packages or swarms on newly painted hives. Especially, don't paint the interior walls.
2. When installing bees provide some older combs or a frame of unsealed brood when possible. When only foundation is provided to a new hive, it may help to confine the queen on her cage until some combs have been built, then release her.
3. Keep colonies strong, even those in nuclei and in observation hives. Keep the varroa mite and small hive beetle populations low.
4. The pressure is on to either swarm or abscond when there is no room for expansion. Caution: Do not provide empty combs or supers that cannot be protected against wax moths or small hive beetles. Bees must always be able to patrol empty combs. Unattended combs are an invitation to predation.
5. See to it that there is always honey available, and if not, provide sugar water.
6. At temperatures over 100 degrees F, be sure to provide shade and water.
7. Don't apply medications or miticides above the recommended dosage or at temperatures above those indicated on directions.
8. Avoid constant disturbances, noise or vibrations.
9. Protect hives from varmints of all types, ants, skunks, bears, and others.

Not all colonies in a given apiary abscond to the same aggravating condition. Some are prone to abandon their hives, while others in the same row of hives tough it out, "grin and bear it". No one wants their hives to abscond, so maybe this article might be of help.

