

"Promoting the Craft, Science and Future of Beekeeping since 1947"

# THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



**ISSUE: Fall 2023**

Editor: Laura Miller

## **CIBA MEMBER MEETINGS**

**Saturday, September 16** 5 p.m.

**Northridge Baptist Church**  
**3700 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Des Moines**

### **Speaker:**

Honey Sommelier Katie Flinn, Milk & Honey Orchard, Indianola, IA, will talk about Iowa's Honey Terroir. She'll have samples; you are invited to bring your own honey to taste and share. See **page 3**.

**Saturday, November 18** 1 p.m.

**Northridge Baptist Church**  
**3700 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Des Moines**

### **Speaker:**

Phil Westra, Westra Apiaries, Sanborn, IA, will present on *Raising Varroa Sensitive Hygienic (VSH) Bees*.

**Questions?** Call Don Moody (515) 770-5754, or [ds.moody1@hotmail.com](mailto:ds.moody1@hotmail.com)

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## **DEADLINE FOR WINTER NEWSLETTER:**

**December 10, 2023** (*published January 1, 2024*)

### **Email submissions and comments to:**

Laura Miller, [Beeline\\_editor@yahoo.com](mailto:Beeline_editor@yahoo.com)

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## **FROM THE PRESIDENT, JAMIE BEYER**

Every year is different when it comes to keeping bees. Even though you have the same apiaries where you keep bees and about the same number of hives, it will be different. One year a particular apiary produced a lot of honey and then the next year not much honey. Even the hives themselves will be different but this makes more sense since queens may be failing, or some kind of virus may be present or whatever.

The apiary location would seem to be stable as long as the habitat is the same. However, I am learning that habitat does not stay the same. It is constantly changing due to the weather or use of chemicals in the area, or the type of crops may change.

So what's going on this year or has happened? Some apiaries really produced a lot of honey, then some hardly any. In talking with fellow CIBA members I hear about bumper crops while others report hardly any crop.

It is always good advice to have more than one hive. If you have two colonies and one dies, but the other is doing great, you know you are doing something right. If you have only one hive and it dies, you may question yourself. The same goes for having more than one apiary.

I have eight apiaries that are doing great with a good crop of honey, but two others have not done much. Why? In previous years those two did well – again, why? It goes to show that every year is different – different bees, different queens, different apiaries, different habitat, different weather. When you have bees in only one location and your bees fare poorly, it's easy to question yourself when really, that's just beekeeping in a nutshell.

Finally, we have a super program lined up for our Saturday, September 16 meeting. Very unique. Please check it out.

Thanks for being a member,

Jamie  
[beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)

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Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CentrallowaBeekeepersAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/CentrallowaBeekeepersAssociation)

Join our CIBA Facebook group: [www.facebook.com/groups/353306835159561/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/353306835159561/)

## FALL 2023 BEELINE

### CIBA Club Meetings/Communications

2

2

### CIBA Business Updates

3

CIBA Member Meeting: *Get a Taste for Iowa Honey*

3

Mark Your Calendars: November 18 Member Meeting

3

Where Do You Fit In with CIBA?

4

September through December CIBA Board Meetings

4

It's Time to Think About Renewing Your CIBA Membership!

4

Who Are CIBA Members?

5

The Queen's Corner

6

What You Missed at CIBA's Summer Field Day ... Lots!

6

Beekeeping: 'The Best Choice in My Life'

7

The Perfect Gift: What to Get the Beekeeper in Your Life

8

Wintering Bees in Central Iowa

9

### Winter Bees: Raising Survivors

10

### Native is Best

10

### Looking for Another Field Day This Year?

10

### Central Iowa Timeline of Beekeeping Tasks

11

### A Look at 2023 CIBA Summer Field Day

12

### From the Editor: Sharing Our Expertise, It's What We Do

13

### CIBA Leadership and State Organizations

14

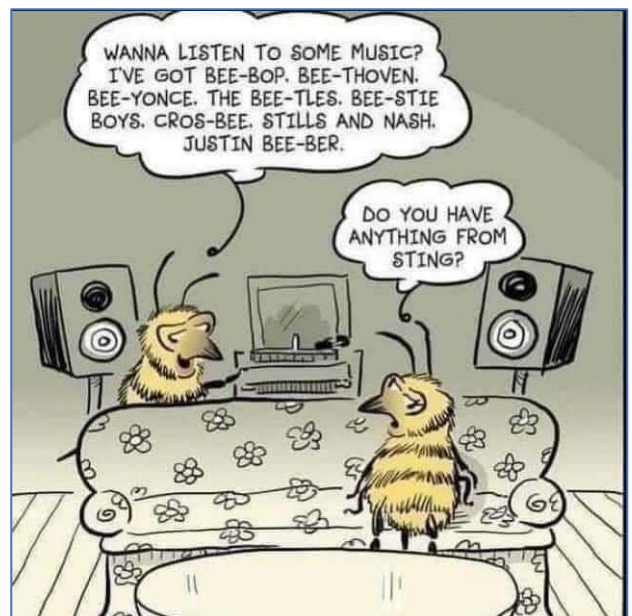
## CIBA Club Meetings/Communications

CIBA meets 6 times annually, the third Saturday every other month. During active beekeeping season (May and September), they are late afternoon or early evening; in off-season (November and January) they are early afternoon. The March winter seminar and July field day are full-day events.

The official CIBA newsletter, the **BEELINE**, is published four times a year on the first day of January (Winter); March (Spring); May (Summer) and September (Fall). A special Student Edition is published each January for people enrolled in central Iowa beekeeping classes.

CIBA members also receive the **CIBA Newscast** email from the president on months when the BEELINE is not published (not available for members who choose to receive CIBA info only via USPS).

**CIBA Bee Bits**, an email newsletter with helpful hints about beekeeping, comes out the 15th of each month (not posted on the CIBA website and available only for CIBA members who receive CIBA info electronically).



## CIBA Business Updates

### CIBA Member Meeting: *Get a Taste for Iowa Honey*

**Date:** Saturday, September 16

**Time:** 5 p.m.

**Where:** Northridge Baptist Church, 3700 Sixth Avenue, Des Moines

**Schedule:** We'll have a business meeting, a light supper provided by the CIBA Food Committee, then Honey Sommelier Katie Flinn, owner of Milk & Honey Orchard Apiary, Indianola, will present "Iowa's Honey Terroir"



You will NOT want to miss this sweet meeting where we'll be learning (and tasting) all kinds of honey! Katie will briefly cover some of the primary nectar flows in Iowa and review the tasting descriptors of these flows. She will bring various honeys to sample – black locust, dandelion and golden rod – as well as some cheese pairings. **Bring your own honey for sampling** and Katie will have her tasting wheel to help describe the taste of each honey.

**Katie** grew up in a southeastern Iowa river town focused on railroad and industry. But she yearned to travel and had a passion for food, so she joined the U.S. Air Force. This took her around the world, eventually leading to her bee and honey adventure. Halfway through her Air Force tenure, Katie realized she wanted to keep bees because she was fascinated with honey. Every tour of duty would end up with a unique jar of honey from that location. From the bush of Australia, the desert of Saudi Arabia, the oceans of Hawaii ... each honey had the unique taste of the terroir.

After she finished her Air Force career, Katie swiftly enrolled in the Heroes to Hives program, gaining her apprenticeship in beekeeping through Michigan State University. She founded her bee business and runs approximately 60 hives in six locations, practicing nomadic beekeeping. She pays close attention to the nectar flows and practices of the land keepers.

As Katie started working her hives, she noticed the different smell and taste of the honey coming in. This was so intriguing that during her research she came across Italy's study of honey sensory. She enrolled in the Honey Sensory Education conducted by Italian Registry of Honey Sensory and Beesources. She has completed the introductory and advanced course work and will test in December 2023. She also volunteers with the American Honey Tasting Society assisting with the Italian-accredited Intro to Honey Sensory Courses in Connecticut.

Katie holds honey tastings, honey pairings and assists with identification of honey in Iowa. She explains honey-tasting descriptors, nectar flow and plant identification. She also participates as a honey judge nationally and is part of a honey tasting panel that identifies, gratifies and recognizes differing honeys in the United States.

Follow Katie on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/MHOrchardApiary/](https://www.facebook.com/MHOrchardApiary/)

### Mark Your Calendars: November 18 Member Meeting

Just a quick note to mark November 18 on your calendar for the next CIBA meeting. We'll be at the same place, Northridge Baptist Church in Des Moines, but gathering at 1 p.m. We'll have a short business meeting and 2024 elections, followed by a program presented by Phil Westra, Westra Apiaries, Sanborn, IA. Phil will talk about his breeding experience in raising mite resistant bees, *Raising Varroa Sensitive Hygienic (VSH) Bees*, as well as provide advice on varroa treatment, detection and other topics on how to address mite issues.

Phil Westra is a pastor in Sanborn, IA and a sideline beekeeper who runs Westra Apiaries. He learned the art and science of beekeeping in Vermont, where he lived from 2012 to 2020, and considers himself a disciple of Michael Palmer's model for sustainable apiaries. A non-migratory beekeeper who raises queens, overwinters nucleus colony, and sells honey, Phil has been steadily increasing VSH traits and decreasing the need for Varroa treatments in his colonies. His apiary website is [westrabees.com](https://westrabees.com).

## Where Do You Fit In with CIBA?

Few organizations exist without leaders. And even fewer exist without dedicated volunteers. CIBA is looking for both. Please consider putting your name on the ballot to serve in one of the open positions on the CIBA board: president, vice president, secretary/treasurer and two 3-year directors. Our election has moved from March to January so the time to think about this is now. If you might be interested, please contact any board member (names listed on the back page of this newsletter). This is one of the most important things we do – electing our leadership so that CIBA continues to bring quality programs to you!

## September through December CIBA Board Meetings

CIBA officers and directors have regularly scheduled meetings on the second Monday of each month starting at 7 p.m. (the Zoom link opens at 6:30 p.m.). These meetings are open to CIBA members and you are encouraged to participate. Use the following info to join us for these upcoming meetings:

### September 11:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88215547670?pwd=VVdoS3BuQ0RwMW9iUWFKLzJBQkxOUT09>

Meeting ID: 882 1554 7670 Passcode: 248158

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88215547670?pwd=VVdoS3BuQ0RwMW9iUWFKLzJBQkxOUT09>

### October 9:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85631580584?pwd=bWtDS0ZtaTI3M1F1NG9VVMkxTGdSdz09>

Meeting ID: 856 3158 0584 Passcode: 337110

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85631580584?pwd=bWtDS0ZtaTI3M1F1NG9VVMkxTGdSdz09>

### November 13:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89777256280?pwd=T05DbVdjRIZxNIJWWEJJeERPTCtPdZ09>

Meeting ID: 897 7725 6280 Passcode: 330815

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89777256280?pwd=T05DbVdjRIZxNIJWWEJJeERPTCtPdZ09>

### December 11:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83392935270?pwd=MDZnemISNU9XdjN5a0dobHZXdXlZZz09>

Meeting ID: 833 9293 5270 Passcode: 652143

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83392935270?pwd=MDZnemISNU9XdjN5a0dobHZXdXlZZz09>

To connect via phone, find a local number at the link under each month's meeting information or use Chicago number (312) 626-6799 and then the meeting ID and passcode for that month's meeting.

## It's Time to Think About Renewing Your CIBA Membership!

The weather's still warm but it's time to think about renewing your CIBA membership. Membership runs on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31, and only current members will be able to participate in the election of CIBA officers and directors, which will take place at our January 20 meeting. This also is the time when we update your contact and apiary information. You will receive a packet in the mail in early December with a membership form to update and instructions on how to renew by mail or online. If you miss the mailing, don't worry--download a new form on the CIBA website ([www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/membership](http://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/membership)).



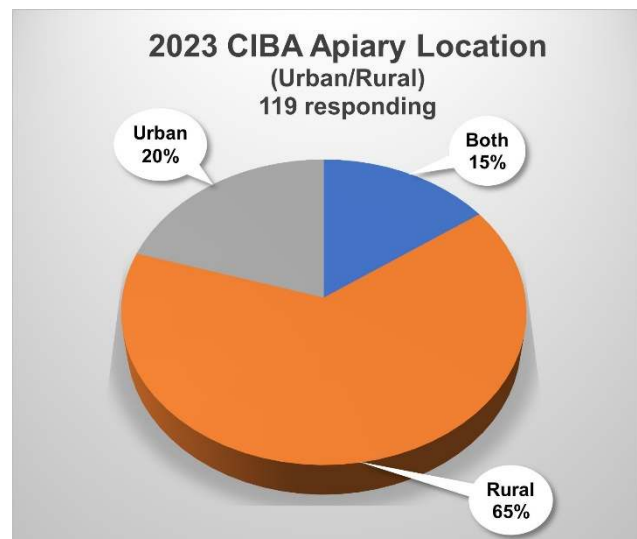
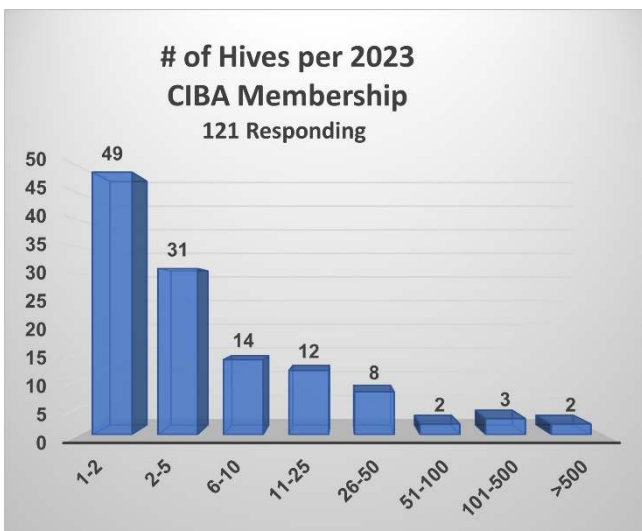
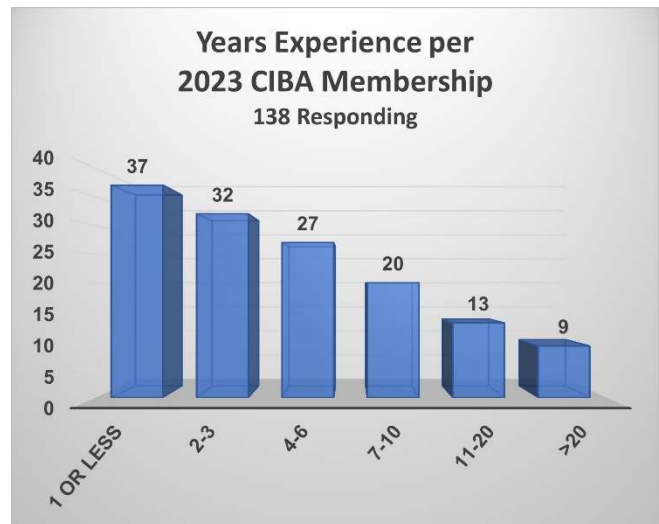
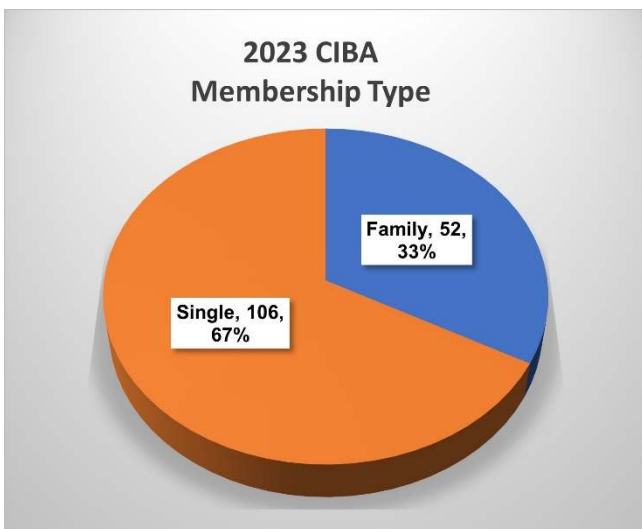
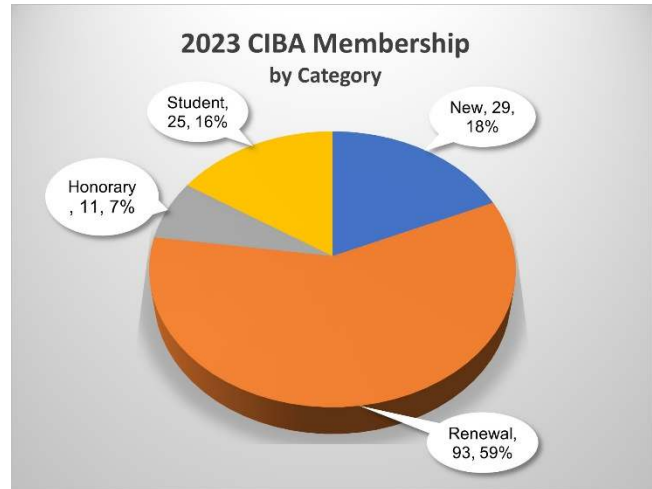
## Bees As Artists?

*Toronto artist Ava Roth has worked with bee colonies to complete her work. She starts with a wooden frame like embroidery hoops and stitches a motif with beaded embellishments. Then she inserts the works into a bee colony. The results are a beautiful surprise. Sometimes the bees build bridge combs over the wooden elements. Her website: <http://www.avaroth.ca/>*



## Who Are CIBA Members?

CIBA is nothing without you, the membership. As you will see in graphs below, members of our organization vary in beekeeping experience, the number of hives they tend and their needs and expectations of the organization. This information comes from membership forms of current CIBA members (members should have received a PDF to the 2023 CIBA Membership Directory via email in July). The graphs below may help you understand who CIBA members are and who CIBA needs to serve to advance the science and craft of beekeeping.



## The Queen's Corner

Submitted by 2023 CIBA Queen Bethany Kelly

This summer has been a busy one for me as CIBA Honey Queen! I was able to attend both the CIBA and Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) field days. I was able to help announce speakers at both events as well as help with food and drinks. In between I enjoyed listening to the speakers and learning more about bees. I have given quite a few presentations in the last few months. I even got the privilege of having a summer camp group at my apiary on the very last day of their camp.

On the first day of the Iowa State Fair I had a blast talking to fairgoers about bees. It also was incredible to see what everyone entered in the apiary division at the fair. Amazing entries! I could hardly wait to go back to help at the IHPA booth in the Ag Building.

I also had the privilege of talking about bees at the observation hive station during the fair. People loved to spot the queen bee and asked many questions about the hive. Throughout the fair, I spotted bees everywhere! It was amazing to see the bee-related projects in the 4-H building as well as the sewing projects. There was even a bee hive in the food building (a cake).



*You couldn't miss CIBA Honey Queen Bethany Kelly (right) at the Iowa State Fair! She helped at the Iowa Honey Producers Association booth, seen here at the observation hive (top) and with Britta McCollum (bottom). At left is CIBA Honey Princess Leah Casey with Iowa Honey Queen Rachel Vakulich.*



## What You Missed at CIBA's Summer Field Day ... Lots!

Submitted by Laura Miller, BEELINE Editor

See photos on page 12!

About 100 beekeepers turned out for CIBA's annual summer field day July 22 at the Iowa Arboretum & Gardens near Madrid and this year it was a free event with lunch provided. The weather was perfect (sunny but hot!), the food excellent (Smokin' Big Dawgs BBQ, HyVee and additional goodies from CIBA Food Committee members), the speakers outstanding and the fellowship one-of-a-kind.

And if you didn't learn something during the day of hands-on demos and presentations, then you must have been napping. Commercial beekeepers Curt Bronnenberg of Spring Valley Honey Farms in Perry and experienced beekeeper Eric Kenoyer of Kenoyer Farms of Van Meter showed just how to do a proper hive inspection. Longtime commercial beekeeper and educator Pat Ennis (P&P Honey and Bee Supply) of Goodell did a step-by-step hive split, while his spouse, Peggy, presented tips on processing beeswax.

Special guest Dr. Becky Masterman offered her beekeeping experience and knowledge both inside the hive and at two afternoon programs inside the arboretum. She studied bee hygienic behavior under Dr. Maria Spivak at the University of Minnesota (UMN) Bee Lab and worked with the UMN Bee Squad for several years. She now manages her own apiaries and co-writes the monthly "Minding Your Bees and Cues" for Bee Culture Magazine.

The event attracted plenty of new beekeepers (including several still looking into this fascinating hobby) as well as veterans. And we had a few multi-generation beekeepers – keeping honey bees is a family affair!

Many people left the event saying it was one of the best field days they had ever attended. If you agree, please give your thanks to the CIBA program committee headed by Don Moody, Linn Wilbur for setting up the demonstration hives, and the CIBA food committee led by Keri Kenoyer.

## Beekeeping: 'The Best Choice in My Life'

Submitted by Morgan Spaulding, CIBA's 2023 Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship Recipient

*EDITOR'S NOTE: CIBA members Mike and Julie Sander keep bees on the farm where Morgan lives. During the past year, Mike and Julie have been mentoring Morgan as she completes her first year of beekeeping, thanks to the Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship.*

About a year ago, my parents decided they wanted bees on our farm. They contacted Mike and Julie Sander, who liked our farm as a location for their hives. Whenever those two came out to do their bee inspections, I would come along with the rest of the family. I had never realized how interesting and cool bees were. I hadn't really thought about bees before.

Then a couple months later they told my parents that I could get a scholarship for beekeeping. Originally, I didn't think I could take on such a responsibility. I mean bees, a whole hive of bees, keeping them fed, alive, free of parasites, make sure they like their home, accept their queen, and so much more. I didn't think I was ready for it.

My parents, especially my dad, were on board from the beginning and encouraged me to do it. I wasn't so ecstatic. I had my doubts, even when I finally made my choice and applied for the IHPA (Iowa Honey Producers Association) scholarship.

Then Mike and Julie told me that I could apply for a CIBA (Central Iowa Beekeepers Association) scholarship. It was a new program for CIBA, and I was offered the first scholarship. I was excited and my parents were very pleased, which to me was the big thing.

My parents and mentors decided that getting two hives would be best. This way it would provide a comparison for if I had a good hive and a not so good one. But it didn't work that way.

My mentors brought me the hive parts and my dad helped me build them with wood glue, a staple gun, and the good old hammer. Afterwards I took my sweet time painting my hives with a bunch of fabulous art. On April 27, my mom and I went to pick up two packages of Carniolan bees from Spring Valley Honey Farms – one that came with my scholarship and one my parents bought. I was really excited when I got my package bees (more than I thought I would be).

My mentors came out and helped me set up my hives and shake my colonies in. I was really proud of myself, and I knew I was going to have fun beekeeping.

Two weeks later on May 17, my colonies had grown enough, with their accepted queens, to put on their second deep. On June 13, I set on my first super as they needed it to prevent backfilling.

A couple days before I wrote this, I put a second super on both hives. My mentors say that I am extremely blessed, that putting on a second super by June 28 is practically unheard of for first-year hives.

Doing inspections were the highlights of my weeks this summer. Working with bees is so satisfying and rewarding. I enjoy keeping them in line and just learning about them. I love studying my bees and how they work. I am very thankful for everyone who has given me this chance and beekeeping is the best choice I've probably made in my life.



*Morgan with her mentor Julie Sander with Morgan's decorated hives..*



# The Perfect Gift: What to Get the Beekeeper in Your Life

Compiled by Laura Miller, BEELINE Editor



Wondering what to get that favorite beekeeper on your Christmas list? Or cool things to put on your own list? I asked that question of those who attended CIBA's summer field day in July. I got lots of ideas, and no two the same! Enjoy the list, whether you're gifting or dreaming of the "perfect gift."

- Lora Socia, Ames: Mission brand cooling towel or neck gater
- Todd Roberts, Maxwell: Bladeless neck fan (great for hot field days!)
- Anaoki Ellis (age 9): I think your family should get you a bee car or a bee water bottle or a huge book about bees.
- Diane Clayton, Greenfield: Bee decorations for my yard
- Chris Crandall, Newton: Kitchen towels with bees on them
- Becky Masterman (our speaker from Minnesota): Seeds to plant bee habitat (she told us how expensive they are!)
- Jacinda Shafer, Knoxville: Subscription to a bee magazine, inexpensive bee equipment such as a hive tool, queen clip, that are low in cost but very useful (a great idea for the kids to buy)
- Beth Morman, Perry: Layens hive (horizontal hive with extra-deep frames originating in Europe)
- Peggy Ennis, Goodell: Hive body that is hand-painted with pretty designs

Here are a few anonymous tips:

- Clean jars with lids that fit! (I'll second that one!)
- Coupon for a package of bees (or a nuc) for spring or kits to build honey super boxes
- A great bee book (here are some favorites: *Bee Dance* by Rick Chrustowski; *Honeybee: The Busy Life of Apis Mellifera* by Candace Fleming; *Little Bee* by Edward Gibbs; and *Beeswax Alchemy* by Petra Ahnert)
- Bee notebooks and pens; bee leggings, or just cash
- Subscription to *American Bee Journal* or *Bee Culture* magazine
- Lighthouse candle molds
- Metal hive tool holder (modeled by Pat Ennis)

I also asked each of our CIBA board members to weigh in, and got a variety of answers.

- Lynn Hammel, Des Moines: Frame hangers for when I go into our hives
- Val Just, Des Moines, had her list ready:
  - A gift card to the beekeeper's favorite vendor (mine would be Hilco or Premier Foundation)
  - Coupons that I can use to call on someone for help such as when we have something heavy to lift in the beeyard (supers to get ready for extraction, or a colony that needs to be moved)
  - Help when we are extracting
  - Honey from other regions, or from around the world, from a reputable honey producer (I have had sourwood honey from the Appalachians, tupelo honey from Florida and Georgia, meadowfoam honey from Oregon, orange blossom honey from Florida; I haven't tried manuka honey from Australia)
  - Books on hive products that I haven't thought of, or tried yet
  - Enrollment in an advanced beekeeping class (such as from the very progressive University of Minnesota)
- Jim Crandall Sr., Newton, also had a nice list even though "I have most everything I need."
  - A nice solar melter
  - A two-person hive lifter
  - Hive tools (I misplace mine all the time!)
  - Another pair of bee gloves (mine get sticky and I need to clean them, but never take the time)
  - Extra honey gates, so I can make more buckets for extracted honey
  - I always need more white food-grade buckets with lids to store honey
  - Candle molds
  - A portable aluminum work platform (like the one that Linn Wilbur brought for our field day hives)
  - The one thing I use all the time that is soooo handy: I splurged and bought myself a trigger-start hand torch. It makes starting my smoker very easy and no burnt fingers.
- Don Moody, Collins: Knowledge about bees, although Turkish wildflower honey is pretty special



# Wintering Bees in Central Iowa

By John Johnson

The *EDITOR'S NOTE*: This article was written by the late John Johnson, past president of CIBA and the Iowa Honey Producers Association. John used these articles with his mentees through the years. Information has been reviewed and updated as needed. This was last printed in the Fall 2019 *BEELINE*. Other articles can be found on the CIBA website, [www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org](http://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org)



## 1. Location

Best locations for wintering bees have protection on the north and west from the wind and cold. Access to the sun is also preferable.

## 2. Disease and Mite Control

In early September when all supers have been removed, treat for Varroa mite and foulbrood control.

## 3. Queenright and Strong

Ensure colony is queenright and moderately strong with numbers of bees. An approximate definition of moderately strong means enough bees to cover five or six full depth frames on both sides. In September and October there will usually be some capped brood which will emerge and add to colony strength. Do not try to winter weak colonies. It seldom succeeds. Save the honey and combs for next spring. They are valuable. Unite weak colonies with other units or shake them out on the ground.

## 4. Adequate Feed

Ensure there is enough feed to supply the bees through the winter. Also ensure there are three open combs with little or no honey adjacent to each other in the middle of the upper and lower hive bodies. Bees will then cluster on the open combs in the middle of the hive body. They do not cluster well on combs of honey. In central Iowa, bees usually need approximately 7 full-depth frames of honey in the upper and 4 frames in the lower hive body. If they do not have the quantity, supply additional honey from another source or feed sugar syrup. If it is necessary to feed sugar syrup, begin the feeding no later than late September. It frequently takes some time for the bees to deposit a sufficient supply of syrup into the combs.

## 5. Weather Protection

Weather protection increases chances the colony will survive the winter. The following practices work well in Iowa:

- Install the entrance reducer in September after Varroa mite control treatment is concluded. This protects against mice and cold.
- After October 20th, do the following:
  - Make a second entrance between the upper and lower hive bodies. This provides for some ventilation and a place for bees to come and go if the lower entrance becomes blocked. (NOTE: The present recommendation is to provide a single upper entrance above the top box for ventilation)
  - Put Styrofoam over the inner cover. This provides insulation and helps reduce moisture build up in the colony.
  - Using tar paper, wrap around and over the colony so that it is entirely covered by the tar paper and thus protection from the wind and provides important heat on sunny days. Bee supply houses sell treated cardboard which neatly fits over the colony for winter protection. This is convenient to use and provides good protection for the colony.
  - Remember to cut a hole through the winter wrapping so the bees can utilize the opening between the upper and lower hive bodies. NOTE: Some beekeepers may contend it is not necessary to provide winter protection in the form of wrapping and Styrofoam over the inner cover. Most successful beekeepers know from experience, the winter protection practices described in this paper are well worth the time and cost.

## Winter Bees: Raising Survivors

Late summer to early fall is a critical time for bee colonies. That's when your colony produces winter bees, also known as fat bees or "diutinius" (long-lived) bees. Here is one explanation about winter bees from an August 10 blog post written by Dr. Vera Strogolova for Strong Microbials based in Milwaukee:



Winter bees are the unsung heroes of the hive, hatching as eggs around August and thriving through the cold winter months. Unlike their summer counterparts, winter bees focus less on foraging and more on tasks that ensure the survival of the colony. They form tight clusters to generate warmth, fly out only during mild spells, and play a crucial role in rearing brood come spring.

Recent research underscores the **importance of nutrition** in shaping a honey bee's life trajectory. As tiny larvae, the nourishment they receive influences their eventual longevity. Early in life, nutrient-rich diets impact fat body gene expression and lipid gain. However, in older worker bees, diet becomes unimportant in regulating fat body gene expression.

Winter bees don't become foragers. Hormones regulate the transition to foraging. The worker bee's transition from nursing to foraging is regulated by the fat body in the abdomen, vitellogenin, and juvenile hormone. A high level of vitellogenin is found in the youngest bees, nurse bees. Nurse bees feed the larvae. Interestingly, bees mature later in the absence of brood. Brood pheromone stimulates foraging, and honey bees that consume pollen have higher vitellogenin levels.

The lesson here is that nutrition – as well as control of varroa mites – are key to producing healthy winter bees.

Source: [www.strongmicrobials.com/post/winter-bees-beekeepers-secret-to-winter-survival](http://www.strongmicrobials.com/post/winter-bees-beekeepers-secret-to-winter-survival)

## Native is Best

Looking for an Iowa source for seeds of native plants? Here are two sources suggested at CIBA's summer field day:

- Iowa Cover Crops, [iowacovercrop.com](http://iowacovercrop.com), of Jefferson
- Allendan Seed Company, [allendanseed.com](http://allendanseed.com), of Winterset.



## Looking for Another Field Day This Year?

You are in luck! Iowa State University is hosting two more Open Apiary Days in partnership with the Great Plains Master Beekeeper Program. Come to Iowa State's honey apiary at the ISU Horticulture Research Station north of Ames to join these monthly hive inspections. Beekeepers can sharpen skills, discuss best management practices, and log volunteer hours if they are participating in the Great Plains Master Beekeeper program.

Final field days of the year will be 5:30-7 p.m. on September 21 and October 5. The Hort Station is located at 55519 170 Street, Ames. More information is available on the web:

[bees.cals.iastate.edu/open-apiary-days](http://bees.cals.iastate.edu/open-apiary-days).

For questions, contact ISU extension bee specialist Randall Cass, [randall@iastate.edu](mailto:randall@iastate.edu).

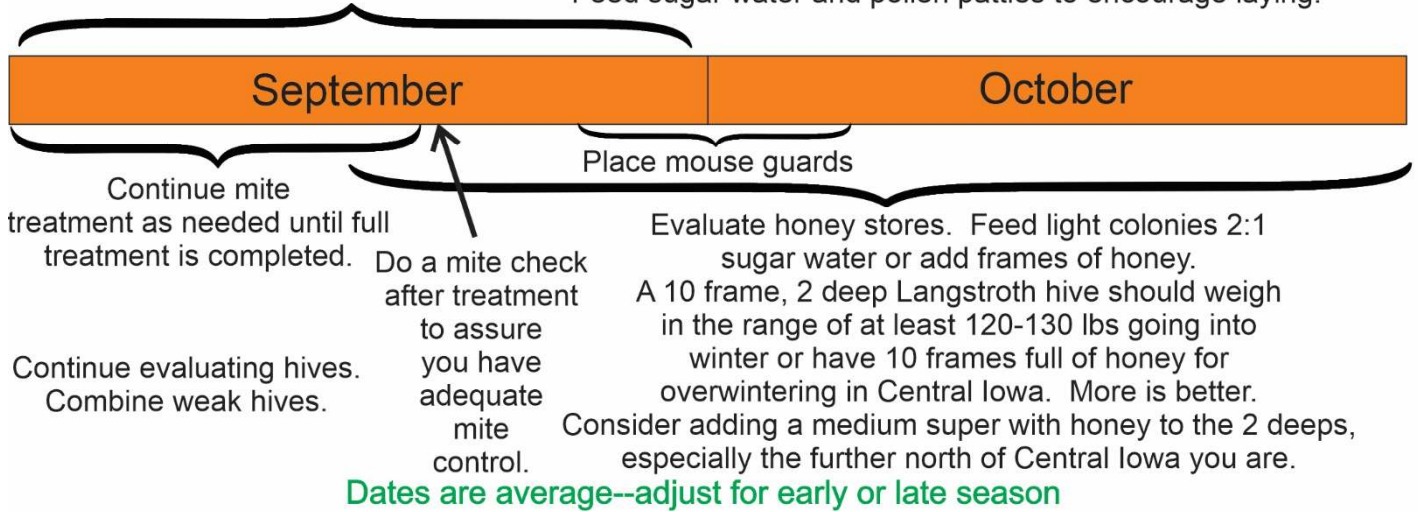
# Central Iowa Timeline of Beekeeping Tasks

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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Queen is starting to taper off laying starting in October. Queen needs to continue to lay for at least 2 cycles past end of mite treatment:

- those are “fat bees” that will be overwintering
- bees are relative free of mites/viruses the mites transmit. Feed sugar water and pollen patties to encourage laying.

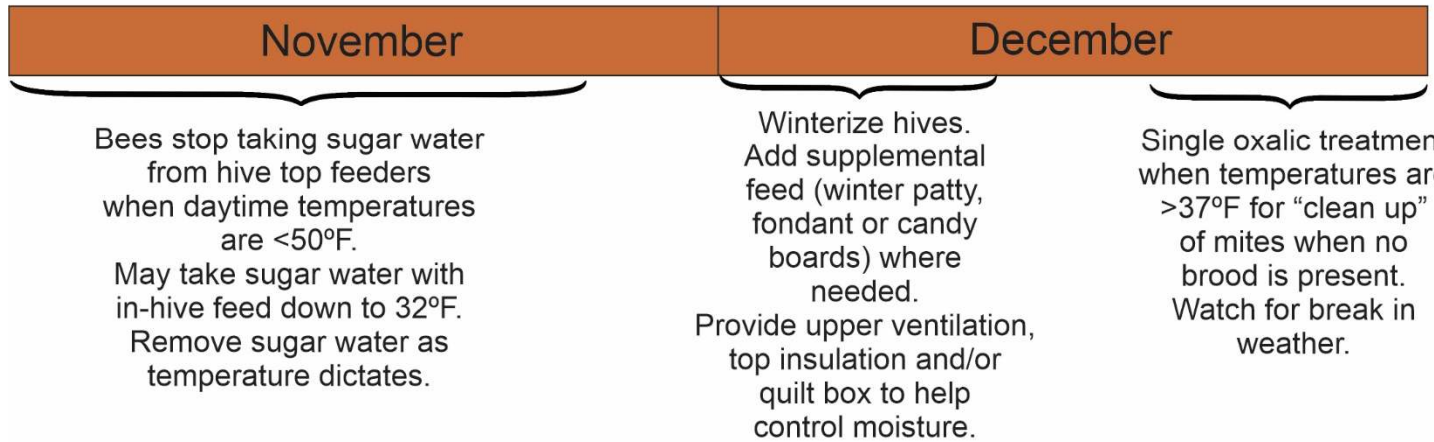
Ragweed and aster bloom.



Dates are average--adjust for early or late season

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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Brood production tapering and usually stops early December.



Dates are average--adjust for early or late season

**Note:** This framework was developed by CIBA member Linn Wilbur and reviewed by CIBA directors prior to publication here. It covers the months until the next BEELINE is published to give members a better idea for planning time and tasks related to their bee operation, based on average temperatures in central Iowa. Copyright 2023 Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



# A Look at 2023 CIBA Summer Field Day



*From top left: Food Committee members did a fantastic job. Becky Masterman offered many tips about bee behavior and hive inspections. Eric Kenoyer leads a small group for a hive inspection. The field day attracted this three-generation family of beekeepers. Pat Ennis did a step-by-step colony split, while his spouse Peggy shared the many ways to process wax. CIBA president Jamie Beyer introduced CIBA's 2023 Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship recipient, Morgan Spaulding.*

## From the Editor: Sharing Our Expertise, It's What We Do

By *BEELINE* Editor Laura Miller

I always look forward to Honey Extraction Day at our place. It's become a family tradition and celebration of our bees. But it's a LOT of hot work: shaking bees off the honey frames and hiding the boxes from the bees until extraction time, setting up the garage for the day's activities, cleaning buckets and equipment, baking corn bread and zucchini muffins (you need something to eat with the honey), and making sure our family knows about (and can attend) this event. We tell our kids and grandkids that we couldn't do this job by ourselves. The word is: It takes a village to get your honey supply for the year.

Usually we invite a neighbor or friend to stop by, just to learn more about honey bees and watch (and help) with the extraction process. Different people come every August and we enjoy sharing this experience with friends and family members who haven't seen it before.

This year a long-time friend from our Kansas days joined us with her husband. They've had two colonies the past two years but haven't harvested any honey yet. "We didn't know how to do it," Lesle told me. "We'd like to see what you do."

Lesle and Doug came on Friday afternoon with their bee suits. We harvested the last of our four hives together, explaining what we do step-by-step. It was so much fun showing them around and talking about bees. I warned them that I could go on talking for hours on this subject (does anyone else know the feeling?).

On Saturday morning they arrived bright and early, ready to help. Our son and his family of three teenagers joined us, too, and we had a regular assembly line. Learning how to use the hot knife was a hit, and it's always amazing to open that honey gate. By day's end we had about 400 pounds in buckets sitting in our utility room off the garage. I think everyone had a good time and were satisfied with the sweet results. The entire weekend really inspired Lesle and Doug about beekeeping.

I share this because that's the way beekeepers operate. They are always willing to share their experiences and what they've learned about these fascinating creatures. I am thankful for the late John Johnson for his mentoring as I got started with bees. I had so many questions but CIBA members were always patient and generous with their time to answer them. I'm not putting in names here because I surely would leave someone out – there were so **many!**

Sharing information is just what beekeepers do. This also is at the heart of CIBA's mission: "To advance the art and science of beekeeping and honey production, and to promote close coordination, cooperation and fellowship among members."

If you haven't discovered this yet, honey bees are addictive. The more I learn about them, the more I want to learn about them. That's called being a beek (bee geek). But it's also fun to pay it forward. Please consider serving in some capacity with CIBA. You will get as much out of it as you put into it, and maybe more.

I hope that most of you are done with extraction and had success this season with your bees. Now it's time to get them ready to survive another Iowa winter. Happy beekeeping!



*Here's our honey extraction crew – a wonderful group!*



# CIBA Leadership and State Organizations

## Officers

Jamie Beyer, President  
269 U Avenue  
Boone, IA 50036  
(515) 433-0194  
[beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)

Don Moody, Vice President  
70064 320<sup>th</sup> St.  
Collins, IA 50055  
(515) 770-5754  
[ds.moody1@hotmail.com](mailto:ds.moody1@hotmail.com)

Vacant, Secretary/Treasurer  
Acting: Linn Wilbur  
64626 170<sup>th</sup> Street  
Nevada, IA 50201  
(515) 382-4882  
[lwilbur50201@gmail.com](mailto:lwilbur50201@gmail.com)

Mike Sander, Past President  
1104 Scenic View  
Altoona, IA 50009  
(515) 957-8730  
[masander3@gmail.com](mailto:masander3@gmail.com)

## Directors

Marlon Mormann (2023-2026)  
3320 Kinsey Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50317  
(515) 710-0902  
[aljimormann@gmail.com](mailto:aljimormann@gmail.com)

Richard Link (2023-2026)  
4265 NE 28<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50317  
(515) 264-1311  
[harnesstwo@hotmail.com](mailto:harnesstwo@hotmail.com)

Valerie Just (2023-2025)  
4609 Crestmoor Drive  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
(515) 278-4835  
[justiowahoney@gmail.com](mailto:justiowahoney@gmail.com)

Jim Crandell, Sr. (2021-2024)  
1417 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Ave Pl. E  
Newton, IA 50208  
(641) 791-9612  
[cranjccm@iowatelecom.net](mailto:cranjccm@iowatelecom.net)

Mark Moberly (2021-2024)  
1028 Bluff St.  
Webster City, IA 50595  
(515) 835-9851  
[mkmobe@gmail.com](mailto:mkmobe@gmail.com)

## State Organizations

Iowa Honey Producers Association  
Jason Foley, President  
13778 Summerset Rd.  
Indianola, IA 50125  
(515) 664-6072  
[russianbeeguy@gmail.com](mailto:russianbeeguy@gmail.com)

State Apiarist  
Andrew Joseph  
(515) 725-1481  
[andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov)

Iowa State Extension Bee Specialist  
Randall P. Cass  
(515) 294-2507  
[randall@iastate.edu](mailto:randall@iastate.edu)

The BEELINE  
Official CIBA Newsletter  
Jamie Beyer, President  
269 U Avenue  
Boone, IA 50036