

# THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



## ISSUE: Summer 2024

Editor: Laura Miller

### CIBA MEMBER MEETING

**Saturday, May 18** 5 p.m.

**Northridge Baptist Church**

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

Our own Marlon Mormann will share how he uses Google Business for marketing. He calls this "Chapter 2, Book of Mormann." See **page 3**.

### CIBA SUMMER FIELD DAY

**Saturday, July 20** 8:30 a.m.-3:10 p.m.

**Iowa Arboretum & Gardens**

**1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid**

A full day of learning, both hands-on demonstrations and a keynote address. Bring your bee suit. Register to attend this free event (lunch included!) See **page 3**..

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

### DEADLINE FOR FALL NEWSLETTER:

**August 10, 2024**

**Email submissions and comments to:**

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

We encourage you to receive the newsletter via email; however, we understand if electronic delivery is not for you! You may update your subscription by contacting Linn Wilbur, [lwilbur50201@gmail.com](mailto:lwilbur50201@gmail.com)

**Beekeeper (noun):** a person who owns and raises bees, especially for their honey

**Beekeeper (noun):** a person who looks at bees, especially in their garden, for pleasure

**Do you identify as one or both?**

Courtesy: University of Minnesota Bee Lab

## FROM THE PRESIDENT, JAMIE BEYER

For those of you who were able to come to the State Capitol in Des Moines on March 27 for Iowa Honey Bee Day, it was a fabulous day to showcase the importance of honey bees to our state legislators. We had many displays that explained most aspects of how honey bees contribute to Iowa's economy. Our own **Arvin Foell** brought an observation hive (owned by CIBA vice-president **Don Moody**) and stock with his bees for the event. Thanks, Arvin and Don!!

We had many food items made with honey prepared by **Julie Swett**. Yummy! Legislators gathered around the food tables and seemed to enjoy them.

Governor Reynolds signed a proclamation designating March 27 as Iowa Honey Bee Day. First Gentleman Kevin Reynolds delivered the proclamation in person and, of course, lots of pictures were taken (see some on page 5). Kevin has attended this event the past seven years, when it was initiated by the Iowa Honey Producers Association. It was perhaps five years ago when he became interested in honey bees and one of our members, **Doyle Kincy**, placed two hives on Terrace Hill, the Governor's residence. The hives are still there. One of the hives is doing great but we suspect the second one did not survive winter. Doyle is a fantastic beekeeper so even the best lose hives.

I already have reserved the Capitol Rotunda for next year's Iowa Honey Bee Day. It will be March 26, 2025, so mark your calendars to attend. Believe me, it is worth the trip!

Now to talk briefly about honey bee survival this year. State apiarist Andy Joseph has been getting reports of fairly good survival rates of bees in Iowa after this mild winter. This is great news!! I lost a few but do not know exact losses as I have not opened my hives yet. Most of you may have already gone into your hives to feed or check them. We're all anxious to know if our hives survived and to provide extra resources (sugar) if needed. In my case, I made sure last fall they had all the resources they needed to go through a winter, so I do not need to worry about them in early spring. I am expecting a lot of swarms this year, so I am getting my swarm traps up in the trees early.

Your President, *Jamie*

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## Editor’s Document Navigation Tips

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**Document navigation:** No matter where you are in this document, if you press the CTRL + Home buttons on your keyboard concurrently, you will go to the top of the BEELINE.

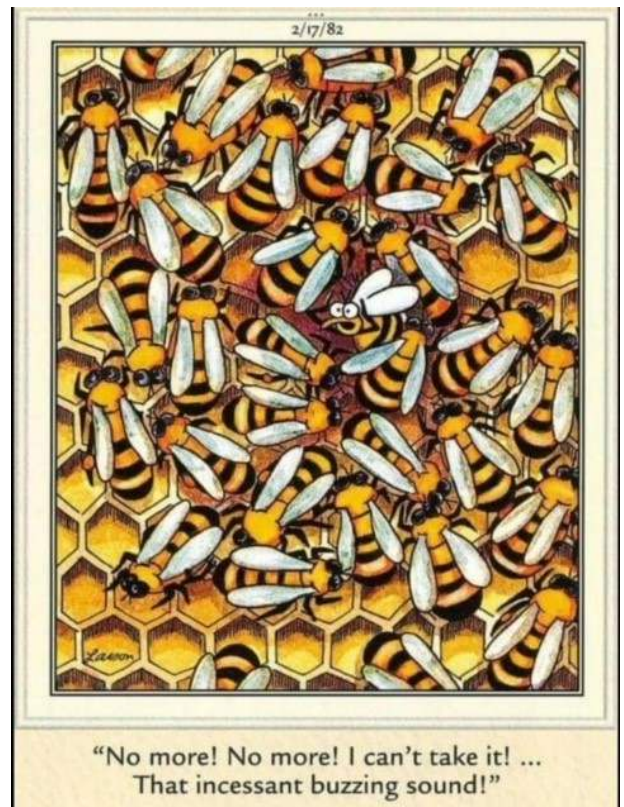
## CIBA Club Meetings/Communications

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)



## Our May Meeting: Let Google Help You Get the Word Out

**Date:** Saturday, May 18

**Time:** 5 p.m.

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

**Schedule:** We'll have a business meeting and snacks (of course) followed by a program on marketing presented by our own Marlon Mormann.



You will want to hear the lessons that **Marlon Mormann** will be sharing with us as he set up his law business. His presentation, Using Google Business to Promote Your Small Business at No Cost, is billed as "Chapter 2, The Book of Mormann." And he offers this advice: "My son, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste." -- Proverbs 24:13.

Marlon was instrumental in the rewriting of CIBA's bylaws as we sought Iowa incorporation and federal nonprofit status. He joined the board as director in 2023, and at that time he had been keeping bees for more than five years. He manages seven hives at his home in Des Moines and on property he owns in northeast Nebraska.

## Plan to Attend Our Summer Field Day

Please mark **Saturday July 20** on your calendars for the CIBA 2024 Field Day. We will be at the Iowa Arboretum & Gardens, 1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid. The day will kick off with registration at 8:30 a.m. followed by a welcome and info from 9-9:10 a.m. The time between 9:30 a.m. and noon will be filled with hands-on demonstrations. We will break for good food and great conversation for lunch, starting back up at 1 p.m. with a keynote presentation inside the building. All will wrap up by 3:10 p.m.



Some highlights this year:

- Mike Sanders will do live demonstrations of honey extraction.
- We will have live hands-on demonstrations of the various mite control options we have heard about.
- Our younger members will have demonstrations on honey-based snack preparation (likely the tastiest demonstration we have ever offered!).

**AND THE BEST PART:** this field day again will be offered at no cost! You **MUST** register ahead of time, however, so we can plan for food, and we'll have a good will donation for lunch.

Stay tuned for details, the agenda, and a link to register on the CIBA website:

[www.CentrallowaBeekeepersAssoc.org](http://www.CentrallowaBeekeepersAssoc.org)

*Submitted by Program committee chair Don Moody and program coordinator Cheri Van Sickle*

## The Call Remains: CIBA Needs a Treasurer!

At the May 18 CIBA meeting, members will be asked to split the present Secretary/Treasurer position into separate duties of membership secretary and of treasurer. An election will be held to name a membership secretary. CIBA member **Cindy Spiker** has volunteered to be membership secretary.

We are still looking for a treasurer to take over that vacant CIBA officer position. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to any board member to learn more about the duties. This is a position that has been vacant for 18 months, operating with **Linn Wilbur** serving as interim acting secretary-treasurer. Both the secretary and treasurer, as well as the other officer and director slots, are important to the continued operation of the association. CIBA officers and directors are all nonpaying volunteer positions. Without members stepping forward, CIBA cannot continue to operate to meet our membership's expectations.



## Meet This Super CIBA Volunteer: Cindy Spiker

**Cindy Spider** of Urbandale has volunteered to handle CIBA membership (an officer position that will be discussed at the May meeting). Cindy has been active in CIBA the past two years, preparing and serving delicious goodies as part of the CIBA Food Committee. She was born and raised in the Kansas City area but has lived in Iowa since 1997. Thanks for all your work, Cindy!

### How long have you been a beekeeper?

This spring starts my seventh year.

### What got you interested in keeping bees?

A friend of mine was interested and I had the perfect spot for them on my small acreage, so we started with two hives in spring 2017. After one season my friend had other priorities and I continued on my own.

### How many hives do you have and where are they located?

I keep 4-5 hives located just east of Truro.

### When did you join CIBA and what drew you to this organization?

I joined in 2017 through the free membership for new beekeepers who took a class. I continue to attend meetings, field days and the winter conference for the educational opportunities and to meet other beekeepers and learn from them.

### What do you hope to contribute to CIBA as a board member?

Help is needed and after six years of membership alone, I figure it's time to step up and fill the need.

### What's your biggest challenge in beekeeping?

Working full-time and living 38 miles from my hives.

### What do you most enjoy about beekeeping?

The bees are absolutely amazing creatures, the honey is yummy, and it's fun to share what I know about bees and hive products with others.

### What's your advice to new beekeepers?

Take an in-person class before you start and join a beekeeping club.



## Getting Off to a Great Start

It was a beautiful spring day, the perfect time for a new beekeeper to put in her first package of bees. As CIBA's 2024 Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship student, **Noelle Dittman** has already attended a beginning beekeeping course given by Iowa apiarist **Andy Joseph** and receives a hive, equipment, bees and a mentor during her first year of beekeeping. Noelle's mentor is **Jamie Beyer**.

Noelle had this to say about her big day: "Got the package installed today! It was a super fun experience, and I'm excited to see how the hives grow and thrive. Thank you to all who have helped me with this process. I'm really grateful for this opportunity."

## May through August CIBA Board Meetings

The CIBA officers and directors have regularly scheduled board 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.

Here are the Zoom links for connecting via the internet or by phone:

### May 13

us02web.zoom.us/j/84220304361?pwd=MG5nVCtyQ2ZXdGJnSmVIUWxpN3Y3QT09

Meeting ID: 842 2030 4361 Passcode: 114200

Find your local number: us02web.zoom.us/j/kc3JevnqJO

### June 10

us02web.zoom.us/j/89875121856?pwd=ZETiSU4yeDIPRWV6VkFMc3N5L1RzUT09

Meeting ID: 898 7512 1856 Passcode: 650182

Find your local number: us02web.zoom.us/j/kdy47IfXYu

### July 8, 2024

us02web.zoom.us/j/85218166954?pwd=S2xIWVZDVTVGcy9IbE1BRkNSL1VNQT09

Meeting ID: 852 1816 6954 Passcode: 880043

Find your local number: us02web.zoom.us/j/kcdedNI5ok

### August 12

us02web.zoom.us/j/89719832166?pwd=TGw5UGxUWGNQMWRKajJaUTUrZ1F5QT09

Meeting ID: 897 1983 2166 Passcode: 677157

Find your local number: us02web.zoom.us/j/kdMBIWbOeR

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.

## Creating a Buzz for Bees



On March 27, the Iowa Capitol was abuzz with beekeepers from around the state who met with legislators during Iowa Honey Bee Day. Thanks to CIBA member **Arvin Foell**, an observation hive attracted attention, including Jefferson Fink (above), who lobbies for the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) and host for the event. Above right, Senators Nate Boulton from Polk County and Bill Botzler from Black Hawk County inspect the raffle table with a honey basket of donated bee products from across Iowa. This was the 7<sup>th</sup> annual IHPA-sponsored event developed in 2018 by CIBA members **Jamie Beyer** and **Linn Wilbur**. *(Photos submitted by Jim Obradovich)*



## CIBA's Annual Auction



Chilly temperatures and breezy conditions didn't hamper CIBA's spring auction April 20 at the Washington Township school. More than 50 bidders registered to buy old and new bee items in more than a dozen lots. Auctioneers were Roy Kraft, Jody McCaskey and Harold Phipps. CIBA's Royalty program also benefited from donations for food and drinks inside the building. And thanks also to our loyal volunteers!



## In Case You Missed It ... 2024 CIBA Winter Seminar

Information was abundant, food was yummy and the audience was all ears at CIBA's popular and well-attended Winter Seminar. Once again the event was held at the beautiful Iowa Arboretum & Gardens, this time with activities in two buildings, including a vendor fair. Registration topped out at 95 people. A silent auction of handy bee items – many donated by club members and bee businesses – generated more than \$600 for CIBA's Royalty Program.

Thanks to these vendors who offered products, conversation and advice during the event:

- Lance Honey Farms, **Matt Lance**, Kearney, Nebraska
- Spring Valley Honey Farms, **Connie Bronnenberg**, Cara Espinoza and Chelsa Zager, Perry
- HillCo LLC, **John Hill**, Minonk, Illinois
- Van Sickle Bees, **Cheri and Gabe Van Sickle**, Council Bluffs
- Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium, **Keith Bidne**, Story City

Thanks to our excellent speakers

- **Andy Joseph**, State Apiarist, Ankeny
- **Bob Fassbinder**, Fassbinder Apiaries, Elgin
- **Steve and Becky Tipton**, Country Creek Honey, Meriden, Kansas
- **Matt Lance**, Lance Honey Farms, Kearney, Nebraska
- **John Hill**, HillCo LLC, Minonk, Illinois
- **Phil Ebert**, Ebert Honey Co. LLC, Lynnville (also for bringing container preorders to members)

Most of all, thanks to those who planned this successful day of fun and learning. We may have forgotten someone, but if you helped, please let us know and we'll recognize you for your contribution: **Don Moody**, program committee chair and **Cheri Van Sickle**, program coordinator; **Linn and Ann Wilbur**; **Gabe Van Sickle**; **Keri Kenoyer**; and **Jamie Beyer**.



## Scenes from the 2024 CIBA Winter Seminar



Above, vendor tables were welcomed this year; Gabe Van Sickle helps his grandmother, Cheri, sell items.



Above left: Presenter Matt Lance also had a table; John Hill presents his session.



At left: Becky Tipton shows how this box is used to de-crystallize honey. Above right: Steve Tipton easily can move hives using this cart he built. (Photos submitted by Cheri Van Sickle)

## Researchers Use Algae to Protect Honey Bees

Scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Agricultural Research Service (ARS) developed an edible antiviral treatment that can be used to protect honey bees against Deformed Wing Virus (DWV) and other viruses, according to a recent study published in *Sustainable Agriculture*.

Honey bees are important agricultural pollinators. However, viruses, including DWV, are linked to the deaths of millions of colonies worldwide. DWV, like other viruses, is most often spread by Varroa mites who carry the disease inside them and infect bee colonies. Infection typically causes deformity and death in bees, especially in the pupae and brood. These colony losses devastate beekeeping industries and pose a major risk to agriculture and the global food supply.



*Honey bees feed on a pollen patty containing microalgae.*

While there are medicines for other bee diseases and parasites, there is currently no treatment available to help beekeepers reduce viruses in their colonies. Nearly all colonies have DWV and can often be infected with multiple viruses at any given time. Effective antiviral treatments could help to improve colony health and survival as well as crop pollination efficiency.

“We found that engineered algae diets suppressed DWV infection and improved survival in honey bees,” said Vincent Ricigliano, research scientist at the ARS Honey Bee Laboratory in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. “When mixed into bee food, the engineered algae boost the bee’s immune system to fight off the targeted virus.”

According to Ricigliano, blue-green algae is the “bee’s knees” of bee food additives. Ricigliano and other ARS researchers previously studied blue-green microscopic algae, also known as microalgae, as a potential food source for honey bees. The algae showed promise since it has a nutritional profile that resembles pollen and is scalable to the level of commercial beekeeping.

“In addition to the nutritional benefits and immune-boosting effects, engineered algae strains have the potential to protect bees against a wide variety of pathogens,” said Ricigliano.

The researchers filed a patent application for the technology and plan to use variations of it to target additional bee viruses and other pathogens in future studies.

*Source: USDA Agricultural Research Services,*



### Just for Grins

- The only thing more dangerous than being with a fool is fooling with a bee.
- The teacher kept telling the naughty bee to bee-hive himself or she would call in his parents.
- Bee puns aren't that great. I don't get what all the buzz is about.
- Who's a bee's favorite painter? Pablo Bee-casso
- I know that I have never seen a humming bird, but I certainly did see a spelling bee.
- When a bee is in your hand, what's in your eye? Beauty. Because beauty is in the eye of the bee-holder.
- All bees love the honey-moon part of their relationships more than anything else.
- What's a bee's favorite Spice Girls song? Wanna-bee!



## From the Editor: Sharing the Pollinator Story

By *BEELINE* Editor Laura Miller

April was a fun month for this beekeeper and friend/CIBA member **Val Just**. We partnered to talk to several classes of second graders in Des Moines and Ames. Several years ago, schools adopted a new science curriculum that includes a unit on pollinators in the second grade. I think this is a perfect age to share the story about the importance of pollinators because we need bees for the foods we love. Seven- and eight-year-olds also are an enthusiastic audience, wanting to know all about honey bees, how they grow and the amazing things they do.

We talked about the life cycle of a honey bee and the different types of bees in a hive. Val even brought in an observation hive, which was a hit in the classroom, even among those students who were terrified of bees.

It was a multi-sensory experience, too. There were items to touch – delicate comb, smooth wax. Many things to see -- bee veils, bee gloves, frames. Things to smell – an empty smoker. And something to taste – each received a honey stick. A video of Val's husband John in the hive even gave them the buzz of busy bees to hear.

After our presentation we played a game of Jeopardy with questions about many of the facts we had talked about. That was a popular activity!

Invariably, we're asked what they can do to help the bees? I'm sure you're asked the same thing – everyone has heard that bees (and other pollinators) "are in trouble" but what they don't hear as much about is how they can make a difference.

Val's last slide says it all. It's based on a powerpoint slide set developed at the University of Minnesota Bee Lab, Make a Difference. I hope this helps you when you get that inevitable question: What can we do?



### How Can You Make A Difference?

- Plant a pollinator garden – use **native** plants.
- Plant **trees** – they provide much more nectar than flowering plants.
- Encourage people to not use **pesticides** in gardens.
- Tell others why pollinators are **important**.
- Provide a **water source** for bees - a salt lick for butterflies.
- Pull mulch away from soil – **native** bees make nests in the ground.
- Plant **milkweed** or **butterfly weed** for Monarch butterflies.



## National Pollinator Week

National Pollinator Week is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what you can do to protect them. This year it is June 17-23.

In 2008, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved a week in June as "National Pollinator Week," a necessary step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. Pollinator Week has now grown into an international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles.



# 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

Scott Fiene (2024-2027)  
913 NE Canterbury Drive  
Ankeny, IA 50021  
(515) 865-5814  
[fienescott@gmail.com](mailto:fienescott@gmail.com)

Jim Crandell, Sr. (2024-2027)  
1417 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Ave Pl. E  
Newton, IA 50208  
(641) 791-9612  
[cranjccm@iowatelecom.net](mailto:cranjccm@iowatelecom.net)

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

## 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](mailto:randall@iastate)

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



