

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

THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



ISSUE: Spring 2021

Editor: Laura Miller

ZOOM MEMBER MEETING

Saturday, March 27 6:30 p.m. (NOTE NEW DATE)

Ellen Bell, Spring Management in Beekeeping

This will be our annual election of officers and directors. Program to begin at 7:30 p.m. Find Zoom connection info on **page 3**.

CIBA 2021 ONLINE AUCTION

Bidding Saturday, April 10 to Saturday, April 17

More details on how and when to consign items, view items online and in-person, and more are inside this newsletter on **page 4**. You will not want to miss this event!

UPCOMING ZOOM MEMBER MEETING

Saturday, May 15 Time TBA

Rev. Grant Gillard, Comb Honey

More details and how to connect on Zoom in the next BEELINE newsletter.

Questions? Call Program Chair Linn Wilbur,
(515) 291-6204

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER:

April 10, 2021

Email submissions and comments to:

Laura Miller, 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, wilbur50201@gmail.com

FROM THE PRESIDENT, JAMIE BEYER

The brutal cold weather can be a bee killer, especially since it has been occurring over an extended period of time. I hope everyone prepared their bees and hives last fall/early winter for the colder temperatures. When it is so cold, there is not much you can do other than just hope that you did everything you could have done earlier. It will be an interesting spring to determine losses. Believe me, there will be losses.

Because of COVID-19, we have decided to not celebrate Iowa Honey Bee Day at the Capitol this year. We are not allowed to reserve a room at the Capitol to meet with Legislators like we have in the past. At one point, we thought that we could schedule a virtual meeting with legislators via Zoom so that beekeepers could connect with their representatives. We discussed the idea with a few legislators, and they did not think very many of their colleagues would connect with us. I think that we would have had a few beekeepers who would have connected, but who knows.

Hopefully next year things will be somewhat back to normal!

I am looking forward to Ellen Bell's presentation at our CIBA member meeting March 27, and then to buy and sell at our online auction in April. I also am pleased that we have both a honey queen and a honey ambassador representing CIBA this year. You'll find a lot more information in this issue of the BEELINE.

Just as a reminder: If you have not already mailed your CIBA membership dues for 2021, please do so before the meeting on March 27. Only current members are eligible to vote in our Officer and Director elections; the BEELINE and President's monthly email Newscast will only go to 2021 members beginning in April. More info and membership forms are in this newsletter.

Thanks for being a member. Please reach out to us for any assistance or comments that you may have.

-- Jamie

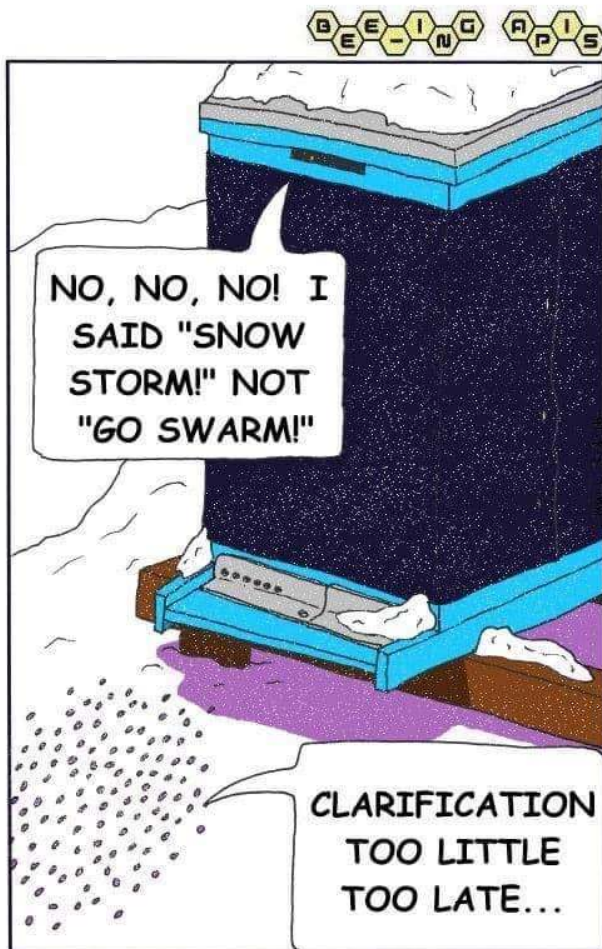
Find us on the web: centralliowabeekeepersassoc.org

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/CentrallowaBeekeepersAssociation

Join our CIBA Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/353306835159561/

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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, the action will take you to the top of the BEELINE. You can then scroll to page 2 to gain access to the Table of Contents to navigate the entire document using guidance in bullet number 1.

CIBA Program Updates

March 27 Member Meeting, Online via Zoom moderated by Abigail Kelly, former CIBA Honey Queen and 2021 Iowa Honey Producers Association Honey Queen. **NOTE:** This is the 4th Saturday in March (a change from CIBA's usual 3rd Saturday schedule).

Business meeting starting at 6:30 p.m.

Welcome by President Jamie Beyer, including CIBA's year-to-date. The business meeting will include a treasurer's report, CIBA queen and ambassador updates and information on future meetings, followed by nomination and election of 2021 officers and directors.

Presentation at 7:30 p.m.

Ellen Bell: *Spring Management in Beekeeping*

Join us for a one-hour presentation on *Spring Management in Beekeeping* with Ellen Bell of Bell Farm. Topics will include spring feeding practices, mite control, how to split a hive, re-queening an existing hive or providing queens to your queenless splits and managing for swarm prevention. Recommended for beekeepers of all skill levels, but especially those with hives coming out of winter in their first several years of beekeeping. We hope you will join us!

Ellen Bell owns Bell Farm, a 10-acre farm outside Des Moines in Runnells. She has been keeping honeybees since 2014, beginning with two colonies, and now running more than 100 hives. In addition to selling honey and beeswax products, Ellen raises queen bees and has become a bee supplier to many hobbyists and sideliners in Iowa. She discussed queen-rearing at the Iowa Honey Producers Association's annual meeting in 2018. Ellen also is administrator for the Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers club, teaches beginning beekeeping classes in the Des Moines area, and has been a guest speaker at various bee club meetings around Iowa.



Two ways to connect:

1. Go to this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81950412495?pwd=c01OTVo1cllzWFE5bTZYYnExYXhEUT09>
2. Open the Zoom app on your laptop or smart device:
Meeting ID: 819 5041 2495
Passcode: HoneyBees

The Zoom connection opens at 6:15 p.m.; business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. Additional info may be posted to the CIBA website as it becomes available: www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org Or contact Linn Wilbur with questions: lwilbur50201@gmail.com or 515.291.6204.

May 15 Member Meeting, Online via Zoom

Additional details, including time and Zoom connection for the May meeting, will be in the May BEELINE newsletter and on the CIBA website as the meeting approaches.

Rev. Grant Gillard will talk about producing, harvesting and selling comb honey. Grant is a Presbyterian minister serving First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Missouri, and longtime beekeeper. He has written several beekeeping books available on the web, presently keeping around 200 hives in southeast Missouri. He has been an invited speaker at local and state beekeeper meetings.



CIBA 2021 April Auction

The Central Iowa Beekeeping Association (CIBA) will have the auction in April and it will be online. We apologize for the need to cancel last year, and we have decided that a live auction is not an option for us this year either. More details of how it will work will be in the President's newscast and on the CIBA website. **NOW** is the time to think about what you want to sell as well as what you want to purchase.

This is an auction by beekeepers for beekeepers.



The auction will be on a Facebook group conducted by a professional auctioneer. The seller consignment fee is 15%. The Online Auction is for 7 days, **April 10 to April 17**, with bidding closing at noon April 17. **A whole week of auction viewing.**

Consignment will be from Saturday, March 27 to Friday, April 2 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with drop-off in Slater. Consignment forms are available at the CIBA website: www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/auction-2021

Please consider donating items with the proceeds benefitting CIBA. You may designate any CIBA special project, such as the queen/ambassador program or the future CIBA bee yard.

Dates for physical inspection of lots by bidders before bidding starts are Thursday, April 8 and Friday, April 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment only. Close of bidding starts at noon April 17 with lot 1; bidding for each lot will close when no bids are received in the previous 2 minutes and then go on to the next lot. If you cannot be present at closing, maximum bids or off-line bids will be accepted by the auctioneer.

Pick-up dates are Monday, April 19 through Friday, April 23 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Slater by appointment. Payment is by check, money order or exact change at time of pick-up.

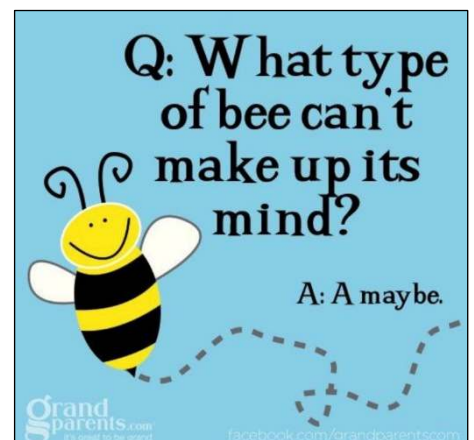
To find the auction page on Facebook, go to: www.facebook.com/groups/122482776436215
More details on the auction are on our website: www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/auction-2021. Please keep checking the website for new and updated information.

If there are questions not answered on the website, contact any member of the CIBA Auction Committee:

- Jeremiah Kusel, co-chair, 12beeshoney@gmail.com 515.447.3203
- Jim Crandell, co-chair, cranjccm@iowatelecom.net 641.781.2935
- Val Just, justowahoney@gmail.com 515.306.3234
- Linn Wilbur, lwilbur50201@gmail.com 515.291.6204

Did you know ...

Iowa had one of the earliest and most well-known female beekeepers. Ellen S. Tupper (1822-1888). She lived in on the East coast before moving with her husband to Brighton, Iowa in 1851. When her husband's health began to fail, she began to raise bees to supplement their income. In 1863, the Iowa State Agricultural Society awarded her first prize for her essay on bees, which started her writing career and a regular column on bees for the *Burlington Hawk Eye*. By the 1860s, she was widely known as a leading bee expert and she owned the Iowa Italian Bee Company with women's rights activist Annie Savery. Tupper edited the *American Bee Journal* from 1874-1876, but left in disgrace after being arrested for forgery related to a fundraising scheme. She was acquitted but left for the Dakota territory where she died. Peter L. Borst tells her fascinating story in the December 2020 *American Bee Journal*, "Ellen Tupper, the Iowa Bee Queen."



CIBA Crowns New Royalty

The Central Iowa Beekeepers Association is steeped in royalty. At a small gathering at a Story County church on January 12, CIBA President Jamie Beyer anointed Ellie Nusbaum of Nevada as 2021 CIBA Honey Queen and Jason Vernon of Ames as 2021 CIBA Honey Ambassador.

Jason is CIBA's first ambassador and the first honey ambassador in Iowa. Both are active in the Ames High Bee Club, which is supported by several CIBA members who are serving as mentors.

"These two young beekeepers are so anxious to fulfill their new roles and to share their enthusiasm for helping honeybees," Beyer said during the ceremony.

CIBA has a strong royalty program, designed to give young people the opportunity to gain leadership skills and public speaking experience as they talk to others about beekeeping, the value of honeybees, honey, beeswax and other products of the hive. The queen and ambassador are the public image of CIBA during their one-year term.

Ellie and Jason were introduced at CIBA's Winter Seminar on January 16. They will report on their activities both on their Facebook web page (search for CIBA Honey Queen/Ambassador Program) and in the BEELINE. To schedule a presentation, contact Susan Kelly, who chairs the CIBA Queen/Ambassador Committee at cibaqueenchair@gmail.com.

By way of introduction, they provided the following information so we could get to know them better.

Honey Queen Ellie Nusbaum

Ellie is the daughter of Michael and Amber Nusbaum and has two brothers also involved in beekeeping. She is a junior at Ames High School and is very involved in Bee Club. She has introduced many students to beekeeping, honey production and pollinators. One of her favorite things in beekeeping is searching for the queen.

Aside from bees Ellie is involved with Key Club on the school and district level. She loves to volunteer through this organization, especially at Food at First. One of Ellie's goals as CIBA Honey Queen is to introduce beekeeping to high schools in her area. She cannot wait to start her work this year alongside her great friend Jason.

Honey Ambassador Jason Vernon

Jason is the son of Mike and Susan Vernon. His interest in beekeeping began when he was young and saw his grandfather caring for honeybees. His interest grew recently when he joined the Ames High Bee Club. Jason loves to care for the club's hives and teaches his friends about honeybees by sharing the magic of beekeeping with them.

Outside of beekeeping, he is involved in his church youth group, theater and dance. He especially enjoys helping in elementary classes in theater and at his dance studio. Jason will be graduating from Ames High in May 2022. He plans to attend college to pursue a degree in the performing arts.

They'll report on their activities in the BEELINE, but you also can visit their Facebook page (CIBA Honey /Queen/Honey Ambassador Program) and their page on the CIBA website, www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/queen-s-corner.



Jason and Ellie (center) with Iowa Honey Queen Abigail Kelly and CIBA President Jamie Beyer.

Other CIBA Business

It's Time to Update Your CIBA Membership!

It is time to update your CIBA membership, which runs on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31. If you have not done so already, 2021 memberships are now due. We've included a membership form with this newsletter (**see pages 13-14**), or you can download electronic versions, including a fillable PDF at the CIBA website: www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org

Dues are as follows:

- \$10 for a Single Membership
- \$15 for a Family Membership whereby members are residing at the same address
- Waived for a new beekeeper taking a central Iowa beekeeping class this year

As a reminder, you must be a current member to participate in the election of officers and directors at the March Zoom meeting. Please send your payment (checks should be made payable to CIBA), with a completed membership application form, to:

Linn Wilbur, Acting Treasurer
64626 170th St.
Nevada, IA 50201

If you have questions, contact Linn at 515.291.6204 or lwilbur50201@gmail.com



CIBA Winter Seminar Gets Good Reviews; How to Get Recordings

Submitted by CIBA Program Committee

The half-day Winter Seminar, *A Better Year to Survive and Thrive Winter*, sponsored by the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association (CIBA) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bee Lab on January 16 over Zoom, was well attended and received good reviews. As many as 230 people were online at one time and never fell below 200 during any of the talks.

Most participants were from Iowa, but we noted Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska listeners, too. Presentations included information on selecting the race of queens, problems with introduction of packages and queens, how to keep bees alive, and how to examine hives for causes of loss when you do have dead outs. We also heard updates from the Iowa Honey Producers Association, our State Apiarist and from the Great Plains Master Beekeeping program.

In addition, CIBA had the opportunity to introduce Ellie Nusbaum and Jason Vernon, two outgoing youth as our 2021 CIBA Queen and Ambassador. For CIBA royalty, having an Ambassador is a first.

As much as CIBA would have liked to have this as an in-person event, the Zoom meeting provided a good format for educating beekeepers, kept people safe and allowed us to bring in outside speakers effectively. Hopefully, in future years we can meet in person.

The program was recorded and CIBA is working on offering it to Iowa-associated bee clubs for a nominal fee to cover distribution costs. CIBA asks these recordings be limited to use at club meetings in order to meet restrictions requested by the speakers. For CIBA members, we will provide access to the recordings through our Dropbox site. If you haven't received an email with the link and password, you will shortly. If you do not have an Internet connection, we can provide a thumb drive with the recordings (we request a \$10 fee to cover our distribution costs). Contact Linn Wilbur at lwilbur50201@gmail.com or 515.291.6204 for more information about the thumb drive or if you have issues accessing the Dropbox site.

The CIBA board budgeted \$1,500 for the event, of which about half was needed. To date, more than \$200 was received as donations. The CIBA Program Committee, which included Abigail Kelly, Arvin Foell, Jeremiah Kusel, Steve Hanlin, Jamie Beyer and Linn Wilbur, did a good job planning this event.

In general, the online Winter Seminar was a great success. Dr. Judy Wu-Smart moderated the event expertly and kept speakers on schedule. Our royalty, including former CIBA Honey Queen and present Iowa Honey Producers Association Honey Queen Abigail Kelly, did a great job introducing speakers. A special thanks goes to the UNL Bee Lab for co-sponsoring this event, and to our expert speakers – Dr. Larry Connor, Ray Olivarez, Dr. Judy Wu-Smart, Sheldon Brummel and Andy Joseph. **All deserve a big kudo** for agreeing to present in this format!



Volunteers Needed: That Means You

Submitted by CIBA Nomination Committee

CIBA is an organization run by and for the benefit of its members. All officers and directors serve as volunteers without any compensation. The quality of the association, its organization and programs are only as good as the level of dedication of our volunteers.

There are many ways to volunteer to help for CIBA. Don't think your help isn't needed because you aren't a master beekeeper. There are many skills needed to keep CIBA running and multiple roles in which you can help. These range from organizing, feeding people (at least in normal years), supporting our youth program, writing for the BEELINE, presenting, volunteering to help at the winter seminar or the annual auction, just to name a few.

Right now, we need volunteers to serve on the CIBA Board of Directors. The board consists of 5 directors who serve 3-year terms and officers (president, vice president, secretary and treasurer) who serve 1-year terms. The director terms overlap so that approximately 1/3 of these terms expire each year.

This year we have 3-4 director positions open, and all officer positions. This is an unusual year with so many vacancies, but the present board has been serving the past year on a continuing basis because we were unable to have an in-person membership meeting where we could vote.

At the March 27, 2021 meeting online via Zoom, we will hold a business meeting starting at 6:30 p.m., and we will introduce those who have volunteered for Board positions. Each position starting with the president, will be open for additional nominations from those participating, followed by a vote. You must be a current 2021 CIBA member to vote. We encourage you, if you have not already done so, to pay your 2021 membership before the meeting. Because this meeting will be online, we will not be able to take memberships at the meeting as we have done in the past.

If you want to volunteer, or simply want more information before stepping forward, please contact members of the nominating committee or any other board member listed on the back page of the BEELINE. They can explain more about the positions and answer questions.

2021 CIBA Nomination Committee:

- Jim Crandell: cranjccm@iowatelecom.net 641.791.9612
- Mark Moberly: mkmobe@gmail.com 515.835-9851
- Linn Wilbur, chair: lwilbur50201@gmail.com 515.291.8204

On the Lighter Side ...

We always buy our natural honey from the same bees because they always give us their swarm wishes.

A bee that's been put under a spell has been bee-witched!

That bee certainly deserved the promotion at work, he was always so buzzy on the job.

What did the bee say to his girlfriend? "I can't help pollen in love with you."

What did the bee girlfriend say in return? "Hive never felt this way bee-fore."

What did the teach say to the bad bee? "Bee-hive yourself."

News from Our State Apiarist Andy Joseph

Hoping This Finds You Well

It's snowing a little this afternoon as I'm typing this with my dog snoring next to me. As I understand it, the almonds are coming into bloom now. That's quite a contrast. I've heard mixed reports of how bees are coming through winter. Some are reporting great success so far. Others not so much. Lots of dwindling and crashing out. I'll give you one guess as to what the biggest factor is ... Mite Control!

I'm personally going to do my best to get an additional Varroa treatment in my hives this summer. Maybe a formic acid product (be careful about the heat), but I'd much rather go with OA/gly – MAYBE.

It would be nice to see if there's anything to all the oxalic acid/glycerin hype, and it would be even nicer for the EPA to approve it for use with honey supers on. I am almost convinced that the oxalic glycerin/shop towel treatment is not nearly as effective as any of us would like it to be. There has been a lot of discussion about Randy Oliver's recent writings (see www.scientificbeekeeping.com) about the much higher dosage of oxalic/glycerin delivered on sponges over an extended period of time. I'm sure we'll see soon enough if it might provide some much-needed mid-season help in knocking back our mite numbers.

A common winter task is building new woodenware and fixing up the existing stored equipment. This is something I just never seem to get around to doing. I was looking through some summer photos the other day, and good god, my bee hives could use some sprucing up. A sane person would have come to this conclusion years ago (ha! ha!) but I like to ... squeeze the most out of my investments.

It's been a long, long time since I've paid more than \$3 per box. What used to be a junky, old \$2 or \$3 used "shell" has, I suppose, become a junky old \$5 or \$8 shell. A real eye-opener/shocker is the new catalog prices of woodenware! At least beekeeping is super easy and we're all getting rich quick! (ha again!). Sometimes it seems we are all gluttons for punishment, but I just can't imagine doing anything else and finding a similar level of interest, pleasure and pride. I'm guessing anyone reading this will agree.

In exactly six months, we'll all be at the Iowa State Fair, right? I sure hope so, anyway. Plans are in full swing. On one hand, it's a long way off, and on the other, not at all far off, especially since we're on a quarterly schedule with these newsletters. I figured I better raise the subject now.

Please consider getting involved in the bee stuff at the fair this year. It would be great to have a huge showing there. I know the Iowa Honey Producers Association could use all the help they can get in the fair booth to make up for their nearly nonexistent past year. And I would love to see lots and lots of apiary exhibits. I've suggested adding a couple extra youth-specific classes for entries, obviously in hopes of getting more younger beekeepers involved, and getting them all acknowledged and rewarded for their hard work.

Additionally, I've requested a new class of competition, largely on Ginny Mitchell's great suggestion: an entry would be a single small jar, blacked out so that color and clarity aren't a factor, with 100 points awarded for best-tasting honey. Only one prize awarded, Blue Ribbon for the Best Honey in Iowa. I'm pretty stoked about that. I really hope these new class requests are approved. You'll know when you check the fair entry "premium book," hopefully seeing them there. It would be great to have a huge pile of entries of all sorts to show off to the parade of people coming by each day.

Alright, that's about enough from me. Get your bees through winter with strength. Get them treated well for varroa. Get them fed up and get them split so you do not lose them to swarming. And be prepared for another good honey crop.

The inspectors and I are planning on being fully available this season, so put us to work. Do not hesitate to have us come by and look at anything (bee-related!) that you are questioning. I am looking forward to getting back on the road as things warm up and come alive.

See you, *Andy*



A Word from ISU Extension Bee Specialist, Randall Cass

Great Plains Master Beekeeper Virtual Fun Day a Success



This I was pleased to help the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bee Lab, led by Dr. Judy Wu-Smart, with an online regional beekeeping conference on February 13.

The Great Plains Master Beekeeper (GPMB) Virtual Fun Day offered beekeepers across the Midwest an array of expert speakers as well as the opportunity to connect with other beekeepers and extension specialists in their area. More than 200 people attended from Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and more. Following a successful Virtual Fun Day last June, the GPMB program wanted to sponsor another event that could be an alternative to an in-person field day for beekeepers in our region.

The event's keynote was Mike Palmer of French Hill Apiaries in Vermont. He is widely recognized for his experience using nucleus colonies to improve overall hive success and honey production. Dr. Robyn Underwood of Pennsylvania State University discussed her research comparing the economic returns of treatment-free hives, organic hives and conventionally treated hives.

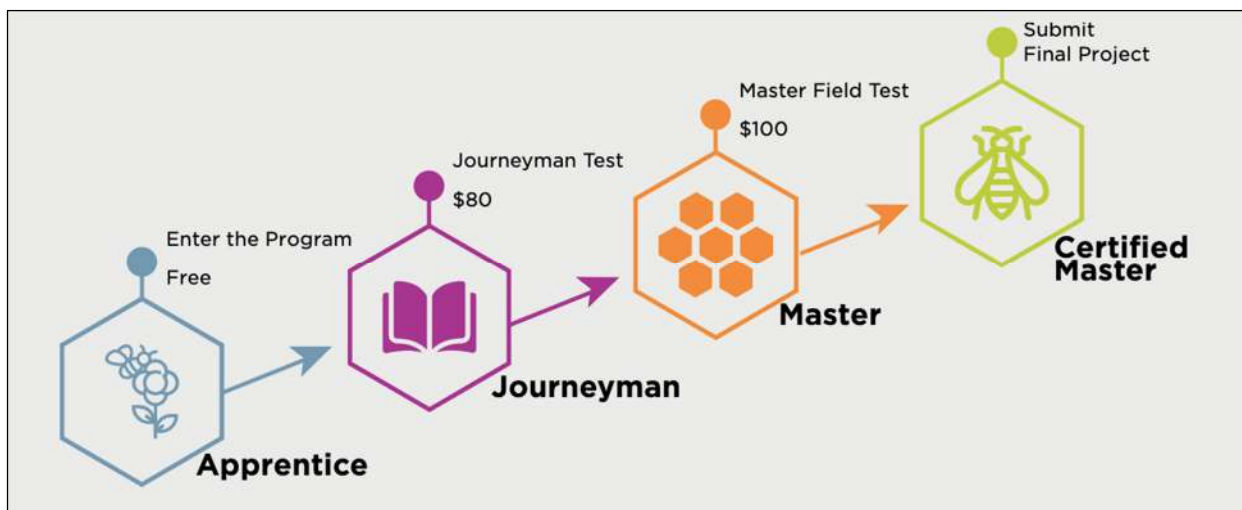
Other highlights included Dr. Matt O'Neal of Iowa State University on the benefits of prairie strips for bees, Dr. Ashley St. Clair of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign summarizing her research on the effectiveness of different overwintering strategies in Iowa and Illinois, and Joli Winer of Heartland Honey in Spring Hill, Kansas, explaining how to produce and market creamed honey.

The GPMB program plans to offer similar virtual field days in the future. Recordings of the February 13 talks will be available online for event attendees on the GPMB website for a limited time.

For those unable to attend, the GPMB website has many other extension videos and learning modules for members (membership is free). In addition to educational resources, the GPMB site is a hub for information about classes for beekeepers of all experience levels. Members log their classes and earn credits that count toward achieving a Master Beekeeper certification.

The GPMB path to become a Master Beekeeper has four tiers: Apprentice, Journeyman, Master and Certified Master. Experienced beekeepers can test out of the beginning trainings; in addition to education credits, the program requires some volunteer hours with other beekeepers. Overall, it is an exciting resource for continuing education in beekeeping in the Midwest.

Visit the GPMB website and sign up to be a member to find out about future events. <https://gpmb.unl.edu/>



Four tiers of the Great Plains Master Beekeeper Program

CIBA Member Contributions

Beekeeping with the Pros Conference

Contributed by Arvin Foell, CIBA member and State Bee Inspector

EDITOR'S NOTE: Conference host Kamon Reynolds operates Tennessee's Bees in Harrison, Tennessee northeast of Chattanooga. He probably is best known for hundreds of videos generating more than 4.8 million views on his YouTube channel, Kamon Reynolds – Tennessee's Bees. Speaker Randy Oliver is a commercial beekeeper and entomologist who hosts the non-for-profit ScientificBeekeeping.com.

CIBA member Ted Reaves and I attended a conference January 8-9 in Lebanon, Tennessee, hosted by commercial beekeeper Kamon Reynolds. Actually, I didn't know that Ted was there until he sought me out during a lunch break.

All speakers for this conference are successful commercial beekeepers: Randy Oliver, who joined us via Zoom from California; Canadian Ian Stepler, who also joined via Zoom because the Canadian government does not allow travel to the U.S.; Bob Binnie from Georgia; and Kent Williams from Graves County, Kentucky.

Every talk had the same theme: If you want to keep your bees alive, control the mites, and by controlling mites, you will control many viruses. I plan to test for mites once a week on a different hive in every bee yard.

Randy Oliver had some beautiful graphs, which I had to study carefully to understand. He taught about controlling mites during the summer with honey supers, which I had never considered, but I bet it will work this summer. Randy did tests on oxalic acid gel, which still needs EPA approval, and formic acid that is approved for use with supers, but neither method worked well (go to ScientificBeekeeping.com for more information).

Ian Stepler manages 1,000-1,500 hives in Manitoba. He overwinters about 1,000 hives in singles indoors. I tried this method years ago, and even when you move them in March there is no brood because they have not had sunlight. He also puts two hives to a pallet, and he talked about time utilization for himself and his crew.

Bob Binne operates Blue Ridge Honey in the mountains of northeast Georgia. In addition to producing Georgia's finest honey, he sells singles, nucs and queens, and offered many ideas for backyard beekeepers. In Georgia, you need to keep an eye on mites all year long because beekeepers do not get a brood break over winter, and small hive beetles are a constant problem.

Kent Williams of Kentucky also breeds queen bees. Most queen breeders pull queens every 14 days, but Kent thinks this is too early. He prefers to let queens mature a few more days because he believes they will last longer and be more productive. He also talked about his mite program to test all breeder hives, searching for those with most resistance to mites as well as those with the least tolerance.

In addition to all the good speakers, I met many Southern beekeepers. Frankly, I would not like to keep bees in the South. Their honey flow is from end of March to around the first of June. After that, you get to feed them the rest of the year AND fight mites and small hive beetles.

For more information, go to YouTube.com and search by the speakers' names; all have presented at bee conferences and other venues.

Beehive Registrations Expire April 30

If you have registered your beehives on the DriftWatch™ or BeeCheck™ registries, it is time to renew! These registries require all beekeepers to renew their information annually to confirm hives are active and to verify location and number of hives. This helps companies who apply chemicals to have accurate information when they work in your area. Registrations expire April 30, 2021.

You should have received an email from the registries about the renewal. If you have questions, contact FieldWatch customer service by sending a note to info@fieldwatch.com. A new app for smart phones also is available. Field signs and beehive flags also be purchased when you log into your BeeCheck account.

Learning from Your Bees: Bee Behavior

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was written by the late John Johnson, CIBA and IHPA past president. John used these articles with his mentees through the years. Information has been reviewed and updated as needed.

1. Bees respond to the natural conditions in the environment.
 - On a cold morning they are cross — so don't bother them then.
 - On a warm afternoon or evening — they are gentle and docile, so do your work with them then.
 - Bees flourish and work well when the weather is pleasant (70 to 90oF) and calm. They do little work and seem agitated by cool, rainy weather.
2. Bees vary greatly due primarily to inherited characteristics such as:
 - Aggressiveness.
 - Fast or slow buildup in the spring.
 - Use of winter stores.
 - So, find queens that have characteristics you want.
 - Some winter better than others.
 - Some produce workers that gather more nectar than others.
 - Some lay more eggs.
 - Some start work earlier in the morning and continue later into the evening.
 - Some have what is called hygienic behavior and thus show some resistance to disease and parasites.
 - Some more readily swarm than others.
 - Some require less feed during winter and thus survive winter better.
3. Bees remain essentially creatures of the wild. That means beekeepers can manipulate them only so much.
4. Bees respond best when they are bothered infrequently by beekeepers or other creatures.
5. The queen varies the number of eggs she lays. She will reduce the number of eggs or stop entirely if there is not enough feed to nurture the eggs, not enough worker bees to care for them, if the colony is preparing to swarm or if there are no open cells, etc.
6. Worker bees will protect their queen from other bees and creatures if they are able.

Getting to Know: Arvin Foell

Submitted by Laura Miller, BEELINE Editor

No one wants an end to the pandemic more than longtime CIBA member Arvin Foell of Kelly. He relishes the day that he'll be able to visit Iowa apiaries to inspect hives again without worrying about the coronavirus.

Arvin has been an inspector since 2014 in the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship's Apiary Program. Due to the pandemic, however, bee inspections were not as numerous and Arvin did not have the opportunity to enjoy his favorite part of the job: visiting with the beekeeper after the hive is closed. In Iowa, inspections to certify hives are free of disease are required when bees are sold or travel out of state. However, Iowa's program also has a large education component. Inspectors do mite counts, help teach beekeeping classes, and help beekeepers learn to better care for their bees.

"You spend 15 minutes on the inspection and an hour talking afterwards," Arvin said. "I always like it when the owner is there and I can teach as we go along."



Arvin has more than 40 years of beekeeping experience under his belt. At 72, he still has a few hives of his own, but has cut back in recent years. At one point he managed 42 colonies and sold honey in Slater, Pammel Grocery in Ames and a few other stores.

Arvin got interested in bees in 1977 as a student at Iowa State University. He needed a biology course to complete his degree program and his advisor suggested a three-credit beekeeping course. “I was fascinated with the bees,” he recalled. “We actually got to work with the bees. That spring I bought three colonies from the Stanley brothers in Gilbert.”

Lloyd Stanley and his brother Glen, who also was the state apiarist in Des Moines, took Arvin under their wings. They managed a large apiary in Gilbert, and were among those who organized meetings for beekeepers that eventually would become the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association.

“I was kind of a pest,” Arvin said. “Every week I would call them and ask what was going on. I was in my hives all the time. Finally, Lloyd said to me, ‘Those bees know what they’re doing, just leave them alone.’ I guess they were right!”

Arvin tells the story of when bees were in an isolated pasture after they were used to pollinate trees at Black’s Apple Orchard. An October snowstorm prevented him from moving the colonies back to Slater, where he was living at the time. In January, he hiked through the snow only to find happy bees – far from the 30 to 50 percent overwintering losses that beekeepers now face.

The first year he had a good honey crop, selling honey for 50 cents a pound. A complete hive cost between \$30 and \$35. American Foul Brood was the biggest challenge, with most beekeepers needing to use an antibiotic routinely to keep the disease at bay.

Early on, the Stanley brothers invited Arvin to attend a CIBA meeting. It was 1978, and the late John Johnson was president. Arvin recalls a lot of good discussions about beekeeping. Most meetings involved a meal, which allowed even more time to visit with others and “talk bees.”

“Information is key for us,” he said. “Newsletters are fine and a website is good, but personal conversations are valuable. Field days used to be a huge part of CIBA, going to someone else’s bee yard. You learn from others and try new things to find out what works for you.”

Arvin values his CIBA membership and was president for a number of years. “I am proud of the leadership in our club,” he said. “It always has been good and remains that way. Our current leaders have done a great job just keeping things going during the pandemic. And when it’s done, we’ll be able to connect once again.”

From the Editor, Laura Miller

We May Be Facing an ‘Insect Apocalypse’

The COVID-19 pandemic has given me time to learn and consider many things – concerns about public health, social injustice and the environment, to name a few. But I heard the clarion call in January when I attended an online conference hosted by Practical Farmers of Iowa. Scott Hoffman Black, who directs the Xerces Society of Invertebrate Conservation, presented a session on “Global Threats to Pollinators.”

Black described a crisis that is on par –perhaps more serious than – the loss of tropical forests and coral reefs, and mass extinctions of birds, amphibians and mammals such as polar bears. It’s not just the darlings of the insect world (honeybees and Monarchs) but a massive decline in the abundance and diversity of insects.

Why should we be concerned? The insect (or invertebrate) kingdom is the most diverse of all living things. So far, 1.4 million insects of 45,000 species have been identified, with an estimated 70 million species waiting to be cataloged. With diversity comes the ability to occupy niches and play a role in every ecosystem.

See [Insect apocalypse](#) continued on page 15

Central Iowa Beekeepers Association (CIBA) 2021 Membership

Membership Dues Information

- ✓ Membership dues run on a yearly calendar schedule of January 1 through December 31.
- ✓ Dues are payable at the beginning of each new calendar year.
- ✓ **Make checks payable to CIBA.**

SELECT ONE

- New membership
- Renewal of membership from 2020
- Yes No N/A: For a renewal, has any of your personal information changed?

SELECT ONE

- \$10 for a **Single** Membership
- \$15 for a **Family** Membership whereby members are residing at the same address
- Waived** for a **New Student Beekeeper** taking a beekeeping class this year.

You must provide an email address, as you will receive the newsletter & notifications only via email.

Where are you taking your class? _____

PLEASE PRINT FOR LEGIBILITY

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Home phone (_____) _____ - _____ Cell phone (_____) _____ - _____

Email _____

Additional name _____

Cell phone (_____) _____ - _____ Email _____

Additional name _____

Cell phone (_____) _____ - _____ Email _____

Additional name _____

Cell phone (_____) _____ - _____ Email _____

Newsletter/Communication Delivery: Electronic or Mailed

Choose between receiving the quarterly newsletter and club communications via electronic delivery (email) or United States Postal Service (USPS) mail delivery. We encourage electronic delivery for the following reasons:

- ✓ Selecting electronic delivery saves CIBA the cost of postage.
- ✓ We can provide more information to you electronically. Review the table below.

While we encourage electronic delivery, you need to make a delivery option that serves your needs.

| Communication Type | What you will receive with: | | Details |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| | Electronic Delivery | Mailed Delivery | |
| BEELINE quarterly newsletter | Yes | Yes | Quarterly club newsletter |
| Meeting reminders | Yes | No | Mailed reminder postcards have been discontinued |
| Special information | Yes | No | CIBA organizational updates |
| Forwarded electronic information | Yes | No | IHPA news, upcoming events, etc. |
| By-Law changes | Yes | Yes | Infrequent club By-Law updates |
| Annual Membership Directory | Yes | No | Published in June. Provides a list of all members, and contact information. |

Family Memberships: With **Mailed** delivery, **Family memberships** receive ONE mailed newsletter. With **Electronic** delivery, all members providing an email address will receive emailed newsletters/notices/membership directories/meeting reminders, etc

New Student Beekeeper: **Ensure you provide an email address.** You will receive all communications via electronic mail (email) only.

SELECT ONE

- Mail via USPS
- Email electronic delivery
- Both

Membership Directory

We publish an annual membership directory in June each year, which is shared only with club members.

SELECT ONE

- Yes, the club can publish my/all family member's information in the Membership Directory
- No, the club may NOT publish my/all family member's information in the Membership Directory

Additional information (optional):

1. How many hives and where are your hives located (# of hives/location)? EXAMPLE: 9 urban; 2 rural
 _____ Urban _____ Rural
2. How many apiaries (bee yards) do you have? _____
3. How long have you been beekeeping? _____

Ideas for Meeting Presenters or Newsletter Topics

What is your profession? _____

Would you consider assisting CIBA with your skills, if requested? _____

Mail completed form with payment to:

Linn Wilbur
 CIBA Acting Secretary/Treasurer
 64626 170th Street
 Nevada, IA 50201

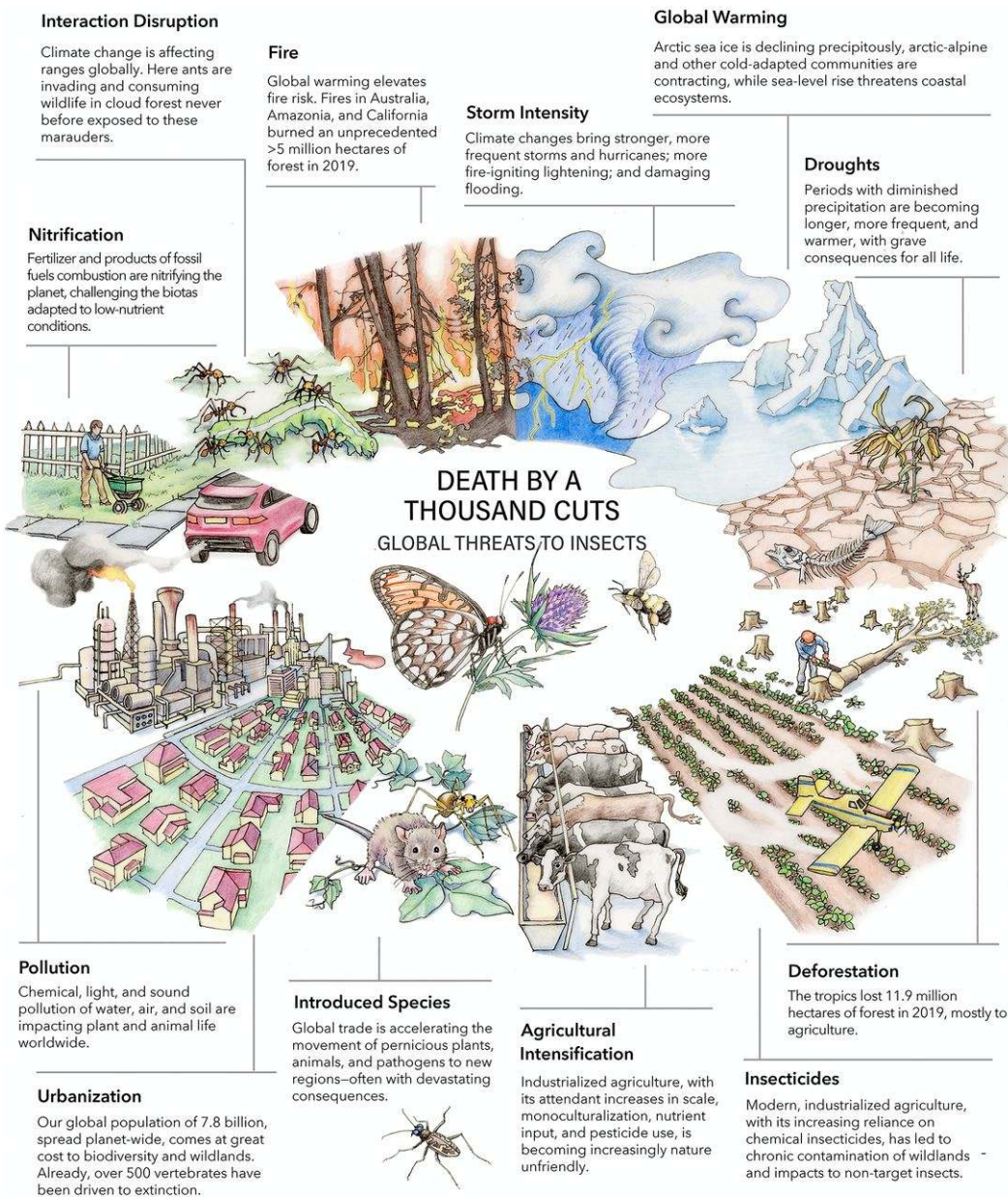
Insect apocalypse [continued from page 12]

For example, insects are what Black terms “heavyweights of the planet.” In Costa Rica, he explained, they make up more than 90 percent of terrestrial animal biomass of the forest. They are the basis of almost every food web: 96 percent of songbirds raise their young on insects, and large mammals such as bears rely on insects. Additionally, 90 percent of all decomposition on earth is done by invertebrates and 85 percent of flowering plants require pollination, also done mostly by insects.

Last November in St. Louis, the Entomological Society of America hosted a symposium to assemble world experts on insect biodiversity and conservation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS) devoted a special issue to this topic, published January 2021. In that report, scientists call the insect population decline an “insect apocalypse.”

“Time is not on our side, and urgent action is needed on behalf of nature,” the report concludes.

One of the most stunning illustrations from the PNAS summary report (shown below) outlines the many threats to invertebrates. Even its title, *Death by a Thousand Cuts*, says a lot about the fate of the world’s insects.



But we cannot lose hope. There are many ways to address the problem, Black said. He pointed to nature-based solutions that increase habitat and biodiversity for insects, as well as help in mitigating climate change. They include:

- Protect and better manage our natural areas,
- Bring insects back to towns and cities where 80 percent of the population lives,
- Increase insects in corridors such as roadsides and ditches and field borders,
- Restore and build new habitat in agricultural landscapes by using cover crops, flower-rich pastures and hedgerows,
- Reduce major stressors such as use of pesticides, in both agricultural and urban areas.

I hope this can be a clarion call for us, too, as beekeepers. We know about “death by a thousand cuts” every time we open a hive to find another dead out. We know honeybees need all the help we can give them. It’s time for us to bring the same passion to the rest of the insect world.

CAPTION: Death by a thousand cuts: Global threats to insect diversity. Stressors from 10 o’clock to 3 o’clock anchor to climate change. Featured insects: Regal fritillary (*Speyeria idalia*) (Center), rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*) (Center Right), and Puritan tiger beetle (*Cicindela puritana*) (Bottom). Each is an imperiled insect that represents a larger lineage that includes many International Union for Conservation of Nature “red list” species (i.e., globally extinct, endangered, and threatened species). Illustration: Virginia R. Wagner (artist).

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