

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

THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



ISSUE: Summer 2021

Editor: Laura Miller

CIBA MEMBER MEETING ON ZOOM

Saturday, May 15 6-8:30 p.m.

**Westercamps & Roy Kraft, All About Comb:
Ross Rounds & Cut Comb**

Business meeting at 6 p.m., speakers at 6:30 p.m.,
general Q&A from 8-8:30 p.m. Find Zoom
connection info on **page 3**.

CIBA SUMMER FIELD DAY & SOCIAL

Saturday, July 17 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., Locations TBA

We hope to visit several apiaries with state experts
and a social event for the whole family, including
lunch. Details to come!

Questions? Call Program Chair Jeremiah Kusel,
(515) 447-3203

SPECIAL ZOOM TALK WITH STATE FAIR APIARY JUDGE GINNY MITCHELL

Saturday, May 29 6:30-9 p.m.

More details and how to connect on Zoom in Andy's
column on **page 9**.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER:

August 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

Since our last issue of the BEELINE, I have started a new
communication exclusively for CIBA members called Bee
Bits. It is a monthly email from me with "new" or not
commonly shared information about beekeeping.

This will go only to our email members; those who prefer to
get CIBA news via the U.S. Postal Service can read Bee
Bits when they are posted on our website a few months
from now.

I have had a good response about this added membership
benefit. I am looking for bee-related information that is
unique and different related to keeping honey bees. It does
not have to be a lot of information, nor "new;" I want helpful
hints that are not commonly shared. So if you have
something, send me a note; you will get credit if I use it.

By now, most of us had gone through our hives and have
either done splits and/or reversed brood boxes to help
reduce swarming. Last year I was late in doing my splits,
and almost all swarmed. We are constantly learning and
last year taught me to be more timely in splitting.

Speaking of being timely, I have been thinking that this
aspect of beekeeping is not stressed enough in our
discussions. It is critical to feed supplemental sugar syrup
at the right time. It also is critical to treat your bees for mites
at the right time. If done too late in the fall, you miss the
window for production of winter (fat) bees that have not
been parasitized by mites. You also need to be on time
when adding honey supers so that bees have space. If not
done on time, the bees will backfill brood area with honey,
giving them even more reason to swarm. You will not get
the honey production you could have if they had been given
space.

Timing is everything for these things and probably others as
well. For beeks who have a job with set hours, this
becomes more difficult. You hope the weather is good
enough on your days off to do these tasks in a timely
manner. That can be a problem, as many well know!

Good luck balancing your time with what is necessary to
being timely for your bees. I know I screwed up last
year. Oh well, I learned.

— Your President, Jamie

Find us on the web: <https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/>

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

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

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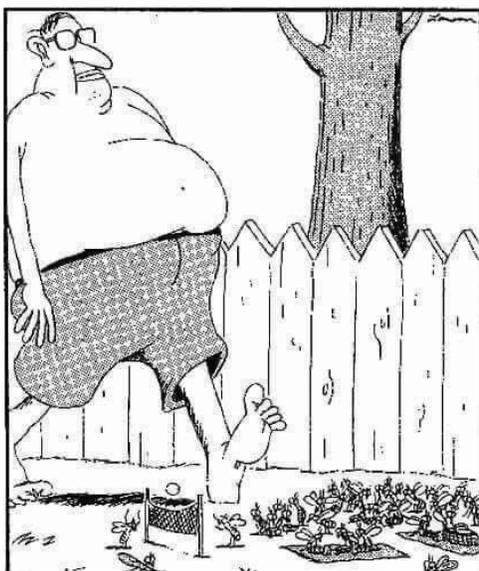
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Unwittingly, Raymond wanders into the hive's company picnic.

Editor's Document Navigation Tips

Table of Contents: Hover over any section of the Table of Contents, then hold the CTRL button down on your keyboard. This action will create a pointing finger image - press the left button on your mouse on any section of the Table of Contents to go directly to that section.

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

Learn about Comb Honey in May

Date: Saturday, May 15

Time: 6-8:30 p.m.

Schedule: Business meeting from 6-6:30 p.m.; first speaker at 6:30 p.m.; second speaker at 7:10 p.m.; Q&A from 8-8:30 p.m.



Are you ready for a great May meeting? We will again meet via Zoom for the program, *It's All About Comb: Ross Rounds & Cut Comb*.

For the Ross rounds, we'll hear from a member of the Westercamp family who operate the Honey War Bee Company apiary near Farmington. Joy Westercamp was the 2018 Iowa Honey Queen for the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA). Talking about comb honey will be IHPA President Roy Kraft of Goldfield. Both the Westercamps and Roy have won blue ribbons at the Iowa State Fair for their products.

What a great way to learn about comb honey! The timing couldn't be better, so maybe they will provide a few secrets not only on how to produce comb honey but also on how to prepare your comb honey for the fair. If you are interested or have tried but failed with comb honey, this will *bee* the meeting for you!

We will also be doing something new at this meeting. Following the program, we will host a 30-minute Q&A when members can ask questions and talk about anything related to beekeeping.

Two ways to connect:

1. Go to this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83592937189?pwd=UnlSQk04TGZTK0paY1psQnNVbEh6Zz09>
2. Open the Zoom app on your laptop or smart device:
Meeting ID: 835 9293 7189
Passcode: CombHoney

We offer condolences to the family of Rev. Grant Gillard on his recent death. A Presbyterian minister and beekeeper in southeast Missouri, Rev. Gillard had been scheduled to present the May program.

Social & Field Day Planned for July!

Save the date of Saturday, July 17 for our annual "field day" summer meeting. The Program Committee is exploring ways to have this event outside as a face-to-face meeting. We'll visit several apiaries beginning at 9 a.m. to hear critiques of each apiary by Andy Joseph, who directs Iowa's bee program, and another knowledgeable expert, Austin Miller. There will be lunch and a social event for the whole family, with everything concluding by 4 p.m.

Stay tuned for more information in the President's monthly update and on the CIBA website!

CIBA Board Meeting

The next meeting of the CIBA Board will be Tuesday, May 11 at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to attend, please contact a director or officer for more information.

Just for Grins ...

What's black and yellow and flies at 30,000 feet? A bee on an airplane.
The only thing more dangerous than being with a fool is fooling with a bee.
The talkative bee earned a reputation as being blab-bee.
What's bee's favorite kind of candy? Bumble gum.
The bee bank robber said to the tellers, "Your honey or your life."



March 27 Member Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Jim Crandell

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 6:30 p.m. by President Jamie Beyer.

Newsletter: April 10th is the deadline for the next newsletter.

Website: We are in phase 2 now, with extra pages still under construction.

ZOOM Online Auction: 60 buyers and 8 sellers have registered but we need more items for the auction. People can inspect items April 8-9.

Queen/Ambassador: They are reaching out to various Girl and Boy Scout troops, 4-H clubs and various libraries to do programs, such as cooking with honey, and offering to go through their hives.

Nonprofit Status: This is a work in progress.

A motion was made and passed to increase annual membership dues by \$5.00 for 2022. Also passed to add a \$5.00 fee for those who want to receive materials via the U.S. Postal Service.

Elections were held. Results: Jamie Beyer, President; Jeremiah Kusel, Vice-President; Linn Wilbur, Secretary/Treasurer. Directors were elected to these terms: Jim Crandell and Mark Moberly, 3 years; Ray Knapp and Val Just, 2 years; and Sue Kelly, 1 year.

Ellen Bell presented the program, Spring Management in Beekeeping. The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Other CIBA Business

CIBA Membership Dues to Increase in 2022

At the March 27 business meeting, the CIBA board recommended and members voted to approve two changes in 2022 membership dues. It has been at least five years since dues have been discussed, and then it was to add the option for a family membership. This is the first increase in dues in many years. The new schedule for dues (below) will go into effect January 1, 2022.:

2022	Email delivery	USPS	USPS & email
Individual	\$15	\$20	\$20
Family	\$20	\$25	\$25

- Single and family membership will be \$15 and \$20, respectively. This is an increase in \$5 for each membership category and reflects the increasing costs incurred by CIBA.
- An additional charge of \$5 will be added to dues for those who want CIBA communications delivered by the U.S. Postal Service (rather than email). CIBA's cost to provide USPS mailings includes copying and postage, ranging from \$6 to over \$8 per membership per year. This includes a minimum of four BEELINE newsletters (one of which is mailed in a manila envelope with information about the Winter Seminar, requiring more postage than our normal folded newsletter) and 2 postcards with meeting notifications during months when no BEELINE is published. The \$5 additional charge only partially covers actual mailing costs for members who choose the USPS option.

The CIBA Board did not take lightly recommending increased dues for 2022, but felt it was necessary to maintain the quality of our programs and communications. As you know, CIBA officers, directors and volunteers serve without compensation; 100 percent of your dues support meetings, speakers, programs and other benefits of CIBA membership.

Currently, CIBA has 124 members – 64 single memberships and 31 family memberships. Of those, 40 people have selected the USPS option for CIBA communications. About 40 percent of our members are new beekeepers who have recently finished their first beekeeping classes.

2021 CIBA Membership Directory to Come Soon

The CIBA Membership Directory will be available shortly! In early May, if you signed up for email receipt of CIBA communications, you will receive the 2021 CIBA Membership Directory in a separate email. The directory contains contact information and some apiary information for all CIBA members who consented to share their information.

Please use this directory to contact other CIBA members, but do not share it with people outside our organization. We have members who elected to not have their information published, and we are committed to keeping distribution only within CIBA.

If you are not on the email list (you selected USPS delivery on your 2021 CIBA membership form) and wish to have a directory, contact Linn Wilbur, CIBA Secretary/Treasurer. We'll figure out how to get you a copy. Linn's contact info is on the back page of the BEELINE.

If there are errors in your basic information (name, address, contact info), contact Linn, who will correct it for future years. If there are errors in apiary numbers or those need updating, please make those changes on next year's membership form. We will not be able to reissue the directory this year. We make every effort to keep correct information about our members, but errors can occur.



Calling All Volunteers!

ATTENTION MEMBERS: On behalf of our board of directors, we would love for you to join us as a volunteer on one of our committees. Whether you have one day of experience or 30 years of experience, we want to grow as a club and the best way to do that is with our committees and the help of our great members.

We have plenty of committees to choose from, and we would love to have your support in any way. New and fresh ideas help us reach the goal of making CIBA the best beekeeping club around!

Here's a brief look at CIBA committees:

- **Program:** Planning quarterly meetings and the Winter Seminar. This includes finding speakers and locations for meetings. Time commitment: monthly meetings with some additional as needed. (Chair: Jeremiah Kusel)
- **By-laws/Articles of Incorporation 501c3:** Manages annual revisions of CIBA By-laws and works with volunteers to help gain nonprofit status for our organization. (Chair: Jamie Beyer)
- **Newsletter/Website:** Oversees and provides content for CIBA website; also provides content for the quarterly BEELINE newsletter that is distributed to CIBA membership and Iowa beekeeping clubs. Meetings as needed. (Co-Chairs: Val Just, Laura Miller)
- **CIBA Mentorship:** This is new! Members will define program parameters, working closely with the Bee Yard chair because the Bee Yard will be a resource for beekeeper education. This committee will engage with club members to determine mentoring needs and work with new beekeepers each year. Time commitment: Monthly meetings with some additional at times. (Chair: Val Just)
- **Marketing:** Manages how CIBA markets its programs in various media outlets. Requires collaboration with most committee chairs to ensure needs are met. Time commitment: daily checks and posts to keep all informed via social media and any outlets. (Chair: Jeremiah Kusel)

- **Bee Yard:** Also a new program that will be a learning resource for CIBA members and public education. This program will depend on the nonprofit 501c3 status for CIBA because this program chair will obtain liability insurance to cover the bee yard. (Chair: Ray Knapp)
- **Queen/Ambassador:** Interview potential candidates and assist current queen/ambassador throughout the year providing resources and guidance. Time commitment: 30 minutes per month with some months additional. (Chair: Susan Kelly)
- **Food:** Provides food and/or snacks and drink choices at quarterly meetings and the Winter Seminar. Time commitment: depends on needs of program committee. (Chair Ann Wilbur)
- **Auction:** Planning and carrying out the annual auction, which includes finding locations along with set-up and other logistics. Time commitment: Monthly meetings with some additional at times. (Chair Mark Moberly)\



Thanks for Your Service!

A beehive wouldn't survive without its worker bees and CIBA wouldn't continue without dedicated volunteers. Many thanks go to worker bees **Margaret Hala, Steve Hanlin** and **Trisha Hedges**, outgoing members of the CIBA board of directors. We appreciate their contributions and many years of service!

Serving on the board will be new members Mark Moberly, Ray Knapp, Val Just and Susan Kelly, who were elected at the March 27 member meeting. Jim Crandell, Sr., will serve another term and appointed assistant secretary, Jamie Beyer will continue as president; Jeremiah Kusel was elected vice-president and Linn Wilbur was elected secretary/treasurer.

Here's to a good year for CIBA!

Let's Celebrate Pollinator Week

If you're looking for something to celebrate this year, why not host a Pollinator Party? Pollinator Week is **Monday, June 21 through Saturday, June 26**. Pollinator Week began 14 years ago, initiated by the Pollinator Partnership to address "the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations." Pollinator Week has grown into an international celebration, promoting the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles. In 2020, the Pollinator Partnership collaborated with the Electric Power Research Institute to host a Pollinator Power Party that reached 1.2 million people. This year they are planning even more virtual activities including party boxes, scientific lectures, celebrity cooking demonstrations, pollinator art and culture, habitat management and gardening tips. The Pollinator Partnership also has tremendous resources on their website – ideas for celebrations (local and otherwise), educational materials, a Bee Smart School Garden Kit, fun games, puzzles and other materials. Check it out: <https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator-week/activities>



CIBA's First Online Auction: Success!

Written by Laura Miller

It was an experiment, to be sure. But after postponing and then cancelling this annual fundraiser in 2020 due to the pandemic, CIBA board members were ready to try it – an online auction of beekeeping equipment.

Previous CIBA auctions were social events as well as great fundraisers for the organization. People gathered the third Saturday in April to look over equipment that other beekeepers wanted to sell (with a small commission going to CIBA), or donate items and give all proceeds to CIBA. There was something for everyone – lots of beekeeping equipment, friendly conversation, the song of an auctioneer, and delicious food to buy in support of CIBA's queen and ambassador program. Sometimes nearly 100 people came and went during the day.



Here's Jeremiah, with the stacks of equipment brought to his house for the successful auction.

So it was a leap of faith in March when the CIBA board decided to explore an online option for the auction. After much discussion, the board decided to proceed with a virtual event that would keep buyers, sellers and CIBA volunteers socially distanced and safe from coronavirus concerns.

Board member Jeremiah Kusel researched the idea and interviewed online auction manager Jeff Capp of Mitchellville who had conducted a number of virtual auctions. Jeremiah also offered to host and promote the event on CIBA's Facebook page.

The response was enthusiastic, to say the least! Within a month, the empty lot next to Jeremiah's house in Slater was filled with beekeeping equipment. A stack of bee quilts, bee boxes of all sizes, complete hive setups, inner covers, excluders, extractors, a bee jacket, even a machete (for cutting burr comb and cleaning weeds around a hive).

Eleven people registered as sellers. One seller had lost 20 hives and decided to take a break from beekeeping by selling extra equipment. Another seller was switching to 8-frame boxes, so he brought his 10-frame equipment to sell. Several sellers donated items to support the queen program. Longtime beekeeper Mike Sanders donated a day of his expertise as an auction item, and Jamie Beyer donated a new top-bar hive.

Jeremiah photographed all items, separating them into 127 different lots for viewing and bidding on a special Facebook page. People also could set up an appointment to inspect items at Jeremiah's house prior to the start of the auction. Then the auction went live for seven days as a special page on Facebook called CIBA's First Annual Online Auction.

We had 117 people register as buyers and many more viewers on the Facebook page. At midnight on Friday, April 16, no additional buyers could join the Facebook group (to prevent last-minute takeovers) and the soft-close began at noon the next day. The highest bid by lot was accepted in order. If a new bid was placed during the last 2 minutes, bidding was extended and would continue as long as bidders increased the amount. The entire closing lasted more than 8 hours and 30 minutes.

"This went way better than I expected," said Jeremiah. "I was hoping to pocket enough money to say we paid our expenses but we well exceeded that."

Total sales from the auction exceeded \$6,000, comparable if not better than the past several years. After paying a commission to the online auction manager, and with the donated items, CIBA will pocket an estimated \$1,800. The board will discuss the auction and make recommendations for next year. Meanwhile, mark another CIBA auction for the books and send a queen-sized thank-you to the Auction Committee led by Jeremiah and Jim Crandall with Val Just's expertise on getting all the instructions online – great job!

Meet Our New Board Member, Ray Knapp

My name is Raymond Knapp. I have been beekeeping in Perry for nine years. Last year I had 14 hives located in five apiaries in northern Dallas County and southern Boone County. I enjoy woodworking so I have used my skills to produce hive components in my shop.

It's been four years since I joined CIBA (at least I think so). I always have enjoyed meeting other beekeepers and sharing information so that I can be a better beekeeper. One of the most rewarding activities with CIBA has been working as mentor to teen beekeepers. I have enjoyed working with youth to spread beekeeping knowledge, answer questions and solve problems. As a member of the CIBA's board, I want to listen to members to come up with solutions that can expand our outreach and solve issues as they arise.

I enjoy CIBA activities because they give me opportunities to meet and share information with other beekeepers, both new and seasoned. Through this organization and visiting other local bee groups, I have made many new friends and have learned more about our great little bees. My association with CIBA allowed me to participate in the 2020 American Beekeeping Federation Conference in Chicago.

My biggest challenge is winterizing my hives so they make it through winter. I have had years where I have lost all my hives, but this year I have five that made it through the winter. It's the best I have done!

As I write this, all five hives have brood in them. I am working with electronic hive monitors that tell me weight, temperature and humidity of the hive. I keep listening to the girls and exploring methods to support them through the season.

My advice to new beekeepers; join a local bee club, take classes before investing in the hobby, ask questions and be open to suggestions and new ideas, expand your knowledge by talking to other beekeepers, reading books and watching videos. But most importantly, HAVE FUN.

The Queen/Ambassador's Corner

Hello, central Iowa beekeepers! Your honey queen and ambassador here, and we have an exciting update for you!

First, we have wonderful news that all three hives tended by the Ames High Bee Club came out of the winter strong and looking healthy. We have been busy taking care of those and recently had a photoshoot with the hives for *Fresh Pickings* magazine. There will be an article in their summer issue about us, and we are excited about it.

Coming up we will be doing a program with a local 4-H group in Madrid about cooking with honey, the life cycle of bees, and what to look for in a hive. This will be our first "real" program and we hope the kids love what we share with them.

Aside from this we have been reaching out to local Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops to do outdoor hive visits for the newly-offered beekeeping badge. This gives Scouts the opportunity to get involved with bees at a young age and to keep up their interest so that they could end up where we are!

There is excitement in the air as we look forward to upcoming events, especially as warm weather allows outdoor programs with hives. Please contact Susan Kelly if you want to reach us (CIBAQeenChair@gmail.com), and happy beekeeping!



Ray Knapp at his Happy Hunting Grounds Apiary



News from Our State Apiarist Andy Joseph

Looking Ahead to the Iowa State Fair



EDITOR'S NOTE: CIBA is pleased to offer the use of our club's Zoom account to host this event, which was initiated by the CIBA Program Committee from a CIBA member's suggestion. Tune in!

On May 29, you can enjoy an evening with Ginny Mitchell, who will judge apiary entries at the Iowa State Fair this year. She will share with us the kinds of things she is looking for and offer her tips and tricks for preparing perfect apiary entries.

Ginny is a knowledgeable beekeeper, entomologist and lover of all-things-BEE. She coordinates the ISU Insect Zoo, sharing her knowledge of insects to people of all ages throughout the state. We've been very lucky to have Ginny as our State Fair apiary contests judge for several years now. This is a big job, and one that requires her unique skill set and her passion for poring over the details of each and every exhibit.

If you have ever wondered what in the world a judge looks for in an observation hive, how to get that blue ribbon for your honey, beeswax art, or a photo class, or if you've ever had an idea for assembling one of those awesome window display cases, but didn't know how to start ... this is your chance. Ginny will show us how she judges each class of entry, item by item.

Roy Kraft, president of the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) and a dedicated fair exhibitor, will talk about volunteering at the IHPA booth in the Agriculture Building at the fair, which is always a great time. I will briefly discuss the "superintendency" nuts and bolts of obtaining your entry tags, delivering exhibits prior to the fair, and earning points, ribbons and awards. And I'll try to answer any other questions you may have.

What I'm REALLY excited about is the addition of four new classes to our apiary exhibits at the fair. This means there are now 28 ways to enter and compete! Below is a description of each; for more details put "Iowa State Fair Apiary Premium Book" in your Internet search engine.

- The Best Honey in Iowa!
Submit one small (2-8 ounce) jar of your best liquid honey extracted as part of the 2021 crop. The jar must be "blacked out" to hide the appearance, color and clarity of the honey. Only one 1st place ribbon will be awarded.
- Youth Class – Three 12-oz Plastic Bears
- Youth Class – One Frame of Honey (sealed, ready for extracting, wrapped in clear plastic wrap)
- Youth Class – One frame of empty extracting comb wrapped in clear plastic wrap

These new classes are offered as "ribbon-only awards," meaning the fair will not be paying monetary awards as in all the other classes. We'll keep our fingers crossed that they'll add premiums next year.

Zoom with Iowa State Fair Apiary Judge, Ginny Mitchell

Saturday, May 29, 6:30 to 9 p.m. Please log into Zoom by 6:20 p.m.

Click this link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87614248250?pwd=QlZpd21jQ3ppK1hJdVZvUU1taEJOUT09>

Meeting ID: 876 1424 8250 Passcode: Apiary

That said, these classes and a few of the existing classes have outside sponsorships. The IHPA has generously pledged a \$100 prize to the winner of the Best Honey in Iowa class. We are getting outside sponsorships for prizes in all the youth classes as well.

Entries must be submitted online, at www.iowastatefair.org, or postmarked on or before July 14. Each participant shall pay a \$2 fee per entry, which applies in all classes except window displays, which is \$4. The July 14 deadline is for purchasing entry tags. You do not have to declare which classes of competition you will enter. Many people will purchase a handful of entry tags and then prepare as many entry exhibits as their time and resources allow. **I am looking forward to a great showing!** -- Andy

A Word from ISU Extension Bee Specialist, Randall Cass

ISU Bee Program Research Update



Summer is prime season for honey bee research at Iowa State University. In the past our team has explored ways in which the Iowa landscape affects overall colony health. Our research demonstrated that honey bees face a dearth of flowering resources in late summer and early fall in Iowa. Although we found that prairie can provide some rescue effect through established late-blooming plants, the research highlighted this time of year as critical for ensuring bees have enough food resources to get through winter in our state.

This year's research will look at honey bee productivity on sites with prairie strips. The ISU Bee Team, which is part of a lab operated by ISU professor Amy Toth, will try to quantify the impact that honey bees may have on native bee diversity and abundance at those sites.

Prairie strips are a conservation practice pioneered by ISU in which permanent strips of prairie are planted in crop fields to increase biodiversity and decrease erosion and nutrient loss. Twenty research hives will be placed at each prairie strips site and monitored throughout the summer for colony health and honey production. Concurrently, our team will monitor native bees in the area to better understand whether the presence of 20 honey bee colonies negatively impacts the diverse group of non-honey bee species at these sites.

This project is led by Katherine Borchardt, a PhD student in the Toth Lab. Our team will be assisted by undergraduate students who are participating in the new Bee Squad internship program. This program was created to provide students from historically excluded and underrepresented populations with opportunities for in-depth, paid research experiences. The program also will build a supporting relationship to the pollinator research community at ISU.

In another new initiative, honey samples from the prairie strips research hives will be submitted for lab analysis to determine whether bees are visiting plants in the prairie strips. Finding out what makes the honey unique is part of a student project designed to explore the potential to market honey from prairie strips. Our team plans to harvest this honey and sell it as Iowa Prairie Strips Honey along with our harvest from the ISU Apiary.

In addition to summer research and honey production, the ISU Bee Program will expand extension efforts this year. Our team is developing new materials related to honey bee integrated pest management, as well as resources for beekeeping as an economic enterprise. Both will be available free later this year on the ISU Bee Program's new website, <https://bees.cals.iastate.edu> (site may not be ready until May). We also hope to offer new resources and programs in Spanish for the first time.

Beekeeping groups interested in extension presentations on research or beginning beekeeping can contact Randall Cass at randall@iastate.edu.

At right, students will be collecting data from beehives in conservation strips at ISU test plots.



Monarch Migration Falls to Record Lows

If you follow the numbers, you know that 2020 was a bad one for migrating monarchs. The Xerces Society in January announced that only 1,914 monarch butterflies were recorded overwintering on the southern California coast this year, compared to 30,000 recorded during previous low years. The Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count is a volunteer-driven community science project that includes 246 overwintering sites. Several sites such as Pacific Grove (known as Butterfly City USA) had no monarchs. The numbers represent a 99.9 percent drop from counts done in the 1980s. Low numbers are attributed to loss of overwintering, breeding and migratory habitat, and pesticide use.

CIBA Member Contributions

Essential Tasks for Keeping Honey Bee Colonies Productive

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.

Avoid bee starvation

Bees can starve any time during the year, but it is most likely during late winter (March) or early spring (April or May). Bees have just come through the cold weather period and there is increased brood rearing. This takes more feed. Feed bees honey or sugar water. Bees also require pollen for brood-rearing and their own health. If needed, provide a pollen substitute in late March and April. It is best not to let bees get even close to starvation. Be sure bees have ample feed before they are wrapped for winter.

Provide ample space for bees and honey

Bees need space to house a large population and store pollen and honey. If they are not provided space when needed, they will frequently swarm. When they swarm the beekeeper loses the queen, many of the worker bees and hope of a honey crop that season. If one reduces an overwintered colony to a single hive body in April or is starting a package or nuc, the second hive body should be added by the time bees in the single hive body noticeably grow in numbers and there are several frames of brood. When in doubt, put the second hive body on a little too soon rather than too late.

Put the first super on when there is a strong bee population and several frames of brood in the second hive body. In central Iowa this usually, but not always happens in mid to late May for colonies overwintered from the previous year. It will be later for packages and nucs. Put the second super on when the first one is half to two-thirds full of nectar and so on.

Remove the entrance reducer entirely about the time cool weather of May changes to warmer weather of late May or early June. If in doubt, remove the entrance reducer a little early rather than late.

Keep colony queenright

Without a queen the colony dies out and the combs may be destroyed by wax moth larvae. Ensure that each colony stays queenright. Especially during April, May and June, check about once per week to ensure the bee population appears to be steady or eggs are growing in number, that there are newly laid eggs in the brood combs. If so, the colony is queenright. You do not need to see the queen.

If the unit is queenless and it is mid-June or earlier in the season, the best corrective action is to unite the queenless colony with a queenright unit if available. The next best choice is to get another queen and introduce her to the queenless colony in the usual manner. This needs to be done as soon as possible. The longer one waits, the less likely it is that the queenless unit will accept the new queen. Obtaining another queen in a timely fashion from a faraway queen breeder may be difficult, but it is an option if it can be done.

If it is past mid-June but before August 20, another option is to give the queenless colony a frame of newly laid eggs from another strong colony. This is nature's own way of rearing queens.

Protect bees from diseases and parasites

Protect bees from American Foulbrood by managing so as to ensure they are not exposed to foulbrood organisms by infected equipment, by not feeding honey or giving them combs of unknown origin. And, while not always possible it is preferred to separate them from other honey bees by two miles or more. If foulbrood is



John Johnson leads one of his many hands-on meetings with mentees.

suspected, call a state bee inspector, and ask for an inspection and advice on the best remedy for the situation.

Bees must be protected from Varroa mites. Read and follow the directions in Keith Delaplane's book *First Lessons in Beekeeping*, chapter 8 entitled Honey Bee Disorders. Remember, if bees do require chemical treatment, the mites may be resistant to the material that was effective last year or the year before. Call the state apiarist to determine what currently is effective.

Protect bees from winter weather

There are proven methods to keep bees alive through most winters. Here is what to do: locate colonies in an area protected from northwest winds, such as south side of a grove, buildings or south slope of a hill. Treat for foulbrood and mite control as needed.

Ensure the bees have enough feed for the winter. It is easier to feed them in October than it will be in March. Enough feed means six or seven nearly full frames in the upper brood chamber must be full of honey, and four or five full frames of honey in the lower brood chamber. A couple frames of pollen also are needed. If there is not enough feed on a colony, it must be fed, united with another colony or the bees discarded. Do not try to winter weak (in numbers of bees) or light (not enough feed) colonies, as they seldom survive. The honey they consumed is wasted and the combs damaged. Instead, save the valuable honey and combs for next spring.

Next step is to wrap the bees – preferably in late October. Do this: cut a 1- or 2-inch-thick sheet of Styrofoam and place it over the top of the inner cover. Make a second entrance between the upper and lower hive bodies. Place a wrapping of black tar paper around and over the colony. If you have two colonies on one hive stand, move them close together and wrap them as if they were one. Bees wintered as described above usually will overwinter well.

Final note:

The practices outlined above must be done in the correct way and especially on time.

CIBA Member Researches Field Guide

CIBA member Julia McGuire has received a farmer-rancher grant from the North Central Region of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program to produce a phenology field guide for Iowa. She invites beekeepers throughout Iowa to submit information about natural phenomena in their area that are important to honey bees (such as bloom times, etc.). Contact her at (515) 988-1828 or wdmjulia@gmail.com for more information.

Did You Know ... ?

Scientists are looking at using bees to apply fungicide to strawberries? It's called bee vectoring, according to Dr. Sue Willi Chan, manager of a research project at the University of Guelph in Canada.

Chan explains: "Bees pick up small particles that contain biocontrol agents as they leave their hive and disseminate them to flowering crops. It works for strawberries, raspberries, apples, coffee, cucumbers, and potentially sunflowers and some canola too. Essentially, it can be used with any flowering crop that uses bees for pollination."

The chemical is diluted in powder form and placed in dispensers placed in bee hives. The bees pass through them as they leave the hive and the powder clings to their body hairs and is carried to plants. Once it rubs off on the flower, the chemical will protect the blossom from pathogens like grey mold. Currently one company based in Ontario has EPA approval to use in America's primary berry-growing regions. Only a few growers used it in 2020, but access is expected to increase in 2021.

Source: February 2021 issue of The Furrow, published by John Deere.

CIBA Royalty is Something to Celebrate

Submitted by Jamie Beyer, Past Chair, CIBA Queen Committee

Historically, CIBA has been a leader among local bee groups in having a honey queen. Not only have we supported fine young women to serve as queen, they have continued to display leadership qualities well beyond their CIBA tenure.

Now CIBA can claim another bright spot: we are the first local bee group in recent memory to sponsor a honey ambassador, a young man who will represent CIBA and educate others about the importance of honeybees and beekeeping. We can be so proud of these young people and what CIBA is doing to help them become leaders!

In 2014, Belle Hemesath was CIBA honey queen. The following year she was named queen for the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA), only to become the American Honey Queen in 2016! I personally did not know Belle, but I have heard that she was a very engaging person and a delight to be around.

Then in 2018 Cameron Vannoy served as CIBA honey queen. She already was attending Iowa State University and was extremely busy but she represented us well. She is now graduating from ISU with a double major in chemistry and genetics and recently received the Wallace E. Barron Award from the ISU Alumni Association. This award goes to only a few seniors (seven this year) who display high character, community activities and promise for continuing these exemplary qualities as alumni. We are honored that CIBA was part of her community involvement.

In 2019 we were delighted to have Abigail Kelly as our honey queen. We all know Abigail and have gotten to know her outstanding family over the last two to three years. She became IHPA honey queen in 2020, and is still serving in that capacity. Many of you know how gifted she is and how she keeps CIBA meetings organized and well run.

Also in 2019, CIBA also supported a honey princess, Makayla Ansel. An outgoing person with a bubbly personality, she wanted to become CIBA's honey queen in 2020 Queen. She interviewed for the position, but unfortunately her family moved to Nebraska in the midst of the process.

This year CIBA is supporting Ellie Nusbaum as honey queen and Jason Vernon as honey ambassador. It will be an even better year with these two very engaging high school students. I am looking forward to seeing them mature in their roles and CIBA is committed to helping them at every step of their journey.

CIBA members: think about young people in your life who might be interested in applying for the 2022 queen or ambassador positions. Candidates do not need to be CIBA members. This program presents young people the opportunity to further their knowledge of beekeeping, build leadership skills and mature into young adults capable of representing Central Iowa beekeepers.

Check out the application process at: <https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/queen-ambassador>

Contact chair of the Queen/Ambassador Committee, Susan Kelly, if you have questions.



Cameron Vannoy and Abigail Kelly

Fun Honey Bee Facts



- Honey bees have hair on their eyes to help keep their eyeballs clean.
- Honey bees fly 55,000 miles to bring us 1 lb. of honey.
- Honey bees stroke their wings 11,400 times per minute and fly up to 15 mph.
- It takes approximately 3,500 honey bees to weigh 1 lb.
- Honey bees have two stomachs — one for food and another for nectar.

Margaret's FAQs

Prepared by Margaret Hala, longtime CIBA member, past officer & director. Find more on the CIBA website, <https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/> under Resources

Question	Margaret Says
<p>I've had long-time beekeepers tell me that with experience you will know when you open the hive if the hive is in good shape or has problems. Is this true and how long will it take?</p>	<p>I don't remember how long, but it may well be 2-3 years or more. One day you'll open a hive, hear a definite 'whirr', and then you'll think "oh, now I understand". It's definitely a different reaction and sound when you open the hive. Another beekeeper contacted me to say that they finally recognized the sound of a hive with problems. "It only took 5 years, but I finally got it," they reported.</p>
<p>Had a hive swarm last spring. Caught and hived the swarm and set it up in the yard. They left and went back home. Why?</p>	<p>The bees may have left without a queen and thus returned home. Or maybe the field force returned home leaving many fewer bees with the queen. We have hived a swarm in the yard where they swarmed without trouble, but we usually hive it and take it to the next bee yard. This eliminates the field force from returning home. We also take frames of brood with bees with us to the next yard when making splits. This keeps bees adhering to the brood from returning home.</p>
<p>Last spring, I was late getting my splits made. When I did do it, there were lots of swarm cells. I scraped the small cells and removed the larger ones. The hive swarmed anyway and then the colony became a drone-laying colony. Obviously, I shouldn't have removed all the large cells. How many should I have left it, and why?</p>	<p>I would remove all but one or two of the best-looking cells to restrict how many queens will hatch and leave to start new colonies. Unless you can find the existing queen and remove her with only a frame of two of brood to make the colony think they have swarmed, they will do so. Every frame with capped queen cells poses a possibility of a new colony, so make use of them if it's warm enough for a small hive to survive the nights. (Late May and June are wonderful for this type of starting new hives.) If you find queen cells BEFORE they are capped, you can remove them with a frame or more of brood (depending on how many frames of brood are present) and replace with empty frames in the parent hive. This relieves crowding and gives the feeling of swarming to the colony. If you have a colony with LOTS of bees that hasn't started throwing swarm cells yet, you can take a frame from them and put with a cell removed from another colony to form a new colony. It's all a part of the splitting process.</p>
<p>My bees didn't completely draw some frames out last year. Can I get them to finish them?</p>	<p>Yes. Put those frames back in the center of a super with frames of foundation surrounding them this year.</p>
<p>Why replace brood comb on such a regular basis?</p>	<p>Even if you don't, farmers or gardeners in your area probably use herbicides, pesticides and fungicides on their crops. Residues of these chemicals are brought into the hive in nectar and pollen and get into the wax. It's a good idea to replace brood comb every 3 years and no more than 5 years to reduce the amount of those chemicals your bees are exposed to on a regular basis. Many beekeepers date their new frames on the top cross bar as they first put them into the hives to be drawn. This way they can keep track of the age of the frames.</p>
<p>From where do I pull a frame to check for eggs and larvae: middle or side?</p>	<p>I'd suggest pulling frame 2 or 3 from one side. The queen is less likely to be that far to the side unless it's mid-season, so you're less likely to roll her and possibly kill her.</p>
<p>What other recommendations do you have?</p>	<p>I recommend that you track when the honey flow starts in your area for a couple of years. That sets an average time for the upcoming years, and you can anticipate the honey flow to start around the same time. Also track the end of the honey flow as it nears September, so you know when to remove your crop of gold.</p>

From the Editor, Laura Miller

Let's Start the Two-Way Conversation!

I was telling someone the other day about this newsletter that I put together with help from lots of CIBA folks. It's something that I really enjoy, probably because I feel a connection to the readers. I look forward every issue to what people are contributing, and I hope you do, too.

I always have loved newsletters, this being the 10th organization that I have worked with to publish a newsletter or some kind of column on a regular basis. It's included volunteer as well as paid work, online as well as printed, cut-and-paste on paper as well as digital.

Some newsletters went to parents of children with spina bifida or members of an elementary school PTA, others to safety professionals, and even people elected to county extension councils. Some were published every week, some every month and some when we had a baseball game or there was something to report.

The common denominator: connecting with others via a shared interest.

That's why I want to hear from you! I want to know what you like and what you don't like about the BEELINE, what you'd like to see, what would be nice to see (if we had more time or volunteers).

I know spring is a busy time for all beeks, but I hope you can take a few minutes to think about — and then answer — my questions below.

You can simply copy the questions and send me an email, Beeline_Editor@yahoo.com. If you do not want me to know who you are, you also can send your comments to our generic email, CentralIowabeekeepersassoc@gmail.com, and they will be forwarded to me.

I've also put the questions in a Word document and included it as an attachment with the email you receive with the newsletter.

However you prefer, please participate. This is YOUR newsletter!

1. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least important and 5 being most important, please rate the importance of each type of newsletter content:

- President's column
- Info on upcoming meetings
- Member meeting minutes
- News from the Queen/ambassador
- Member contributions
- Lessons from John Johnson
- Margaret's Q&A
- from the State Apiarist
- News from Extension Bee Specialist
- Editor's column
- Table of contents

2. What kind of information would you like to see more of in the newsletter?
3. Do you save the newsletter for later reference? Why?
4. How do you like to receive the newsletter (select one)
 - By email as an attached PDF
 - By email with a link to the CIBA website to view
 - Either way is okay with me.
5. The Board wants to increase the benefits of CIBA membership, and one way is to delay by several months posting the BEELINE on the CIBA website where it can be viewed by the general public. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least important and 5 being most important, how important is that benefit to you?
6. What other comments do you have about the BEELINE?



Enjoy your bees!

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