

The 2024 annual conference is going to be held Oct. 25 and 26 at the Prairie Meadows Conference Center Hotel and Casino in Altoona with the board meeting and move-in Oct. 24.

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Meet your new 2024 lowa Honey Queen! Page 6





Did you remember to renew your IHPA Membership? Page 16

The Buzz

The Buzz is a monthly publication printed by the lowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA). This is one of the many perks of being a member of the IHPA!



You may opt to receive an electronic version of The Buzz, as a donation to the IHPA. Please contact the editor at: ihpaeditor@gmail.com

Ramblings from the Russian Bee Guy President, Jason Foley

Welcome to the January issue of *The Buzz* and another of my ramblings. I love January; it's the start of a new year, I leave for California for last-minute almond prep, and it's my birthday month! It's at the end of the month, so no, I wasn't one of those kids who got jipped by having their birthday so close to x-mas lol.

In speaking with my annual conference committee, it is sounding like this year's conference will be moving back to the Des Moines area. Our conference last November was such a hit that word got round to different metropolitan tourism boards and we actually had cities reaching out to us to try and attract our business. This is really fantastic because that means they are in a bidding war to get us, and our dollars will stretch a lot further. Our strongest lead so far is in Altoona with Prairie Meadows offering a bonanza of perks and deals. For those of you who are against a race track and casino, know that the conference center and activities of conference are in their own sectioned-off areas. For those of you who like to play some black jack or take in a concert, you can walk on over to that part of the facility and have at it. To me, it's a win-win. We have a great conference and now we have made it super easy for you to be entertained outside of conference hours.

IHPA's next event on the horizon is Honey Bee Day at the Capitol on March 27th. That's a Wednesday morning that it is happening on. I know... most of you have jobs and can't make it, but it's pivotal in our efforts to be recognized by all of the representatives of our state WHILE THEY ARE AT WORK! If we held it in the evening or on a weekend, sure, it would be fun for us, but we wouldn't actually have an impact on educating the public and our government. The event starts when the building opens up in the morning and goes until usually 10 or 11 am. This year we are again fighting to get honey bees added to the mile long list of agricultural tax exempt items. We are one of like 3 states that still charges sales tax on honey bees while viewing them as livestock in all other areas of government. Last year we came so close! We had unanimous support through every stage it passed, but then we were informed that since it was submitted in January, there were just too many bills ahead of it. Basically there was no way it would get addressed before they wrapped up for the year. This year we got it submitted here in November when they first started accepting bills. Given the mountain of support we had in 2023, I'm exceptionally hopeful that it passes this year.











So what has Mr. Foley been up to here in December? In the last few days I have been making batches of venison jerky and slow smoking venison ring bologna with my good friend Andrew Joseph. I didn't go deer hunting this year, but Andy did and offered to split his haul if I helped him butcher it and process it into delicious treats. On the days that I was literally waiting on the dehydrator, I finally started working on the monster queen rearing class I've mentioned in the past. If you don't know, all summer long I shot video of my queen rearing process at every stage and am video editing it into an indepth training class that people can watch for free. Yes, I said free. I never had to pay for any of my bee education, so why should you lol? I also collected some video while out in California at one of the mega bee producers so one can also see how it's done when you have a slew of employees working the bees for you. Before deer season, my life was filled with Soooo many days of pouring candles or making batches of creamed honey. The demand from our retailers has been monumental this year. I'm hoping now that we are into mid-December that things will quiet down. Most years as we get into this time, people have already completed their holiday shopping and thus the world of being a small business owner quiets down. Besides all the honey and wax items, I'm now starting up my season of woodworking. So for the rest of December and on until the first of March, most everyday will be spent in the barn woodshop making bee hives and equipment. Just me and my wood burning stove in a toasty woodshop. Some people think that sounds heavenly, and maybe it would be if I was doing an arts and craft type project. However, by the time I've fed board number one thousand through the radial arm saw, my brain is mush and I'm questioning my sanity for ordering so many bundles of boards. That and I really come to despise the smell of pine after 2 to 3 months of breathing it in daily lol. Eh, it pays the bills and I sure am happy to have those boxes come spring. I'm probably gonna add yet another 100 hives to the operation here in 2024.

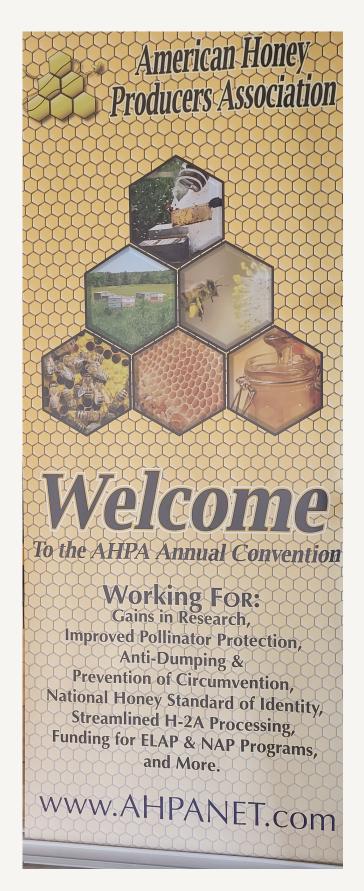
Wishing you all a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year
-Jason Foley-

IHPA Ambassador Report - Tyler Holton

The 55th annual American Honey Producers
Association Conference was held in San Diego
California this year. This is one of the more serious
meetings, with many talks and presentations focused
on the honey industry and the current issues it faces.

The presentations covered:

- The ever looming Tropilaelaps mite, and how opening the border to Canada for package sales could prevent the spread of the mite to North America.
- The honey market, and why the price has dropped. Reasons include the continued battle of cheap foreign honey, interest rates, and larger than anticipated honey crops in parts of the country.
- A few talks on updating the progress of the Anti Dumping Lawsuit, and the Alliance for Authenticity. Both dealing with adulterated honey, and flooding the market with prices domestic honey producers cannot come close to.
- The economic impact Tallow Honey has on the country. The tallow tree is an invasive, but an important forage for honey bees. There have been talks of releasing bugs to try and eradicate the tree. This would have a massive impact on the beekeeping industry if it were to happen.
- Mite bites and virus transmission. Bees bitten by infected mites show signs within 24-36 hours, and dying shortly after that. Mites move from bee to bee to feed. Using a colored virus to track the spread in the lab we notice that adult bees cannibalize brood they become infectious. Not all mites are infectious, but can be infectious from feeding on adult bees. Bee-to-bee mouth transfer is most prolific mode of spread. What does this mean? Even without mites, the virus is being spread. Keeping the mite levels as low as possible is the only way to keep viral levels low. Only a few diseases in history are vectored and host-to-host. Historical black plague (50% of Europe died), West Nile, and Salmon isavirus





While they do have a vendor area, it was very small, and used more as a gathering room. Although, a lot of big deals were made with the bee supply vendors at these meetings already in preparation for spring. There are a lot of tech companies coming into the bee market. Some are smart sensors, smart hives, apps for notes, and some for mapping out locations and organizing the chaos that is pollination.

All-in-all I feel like this was a very informative conference. It really leans towards the commercial beekeeping side of things and really has the whole honey industry in mind.

In January will be the American Beekeeping Federation Conference. They are an older group and encompassed a little more broad sense of the industry, pollination, queens, bee sales, etc. I am excited to see what they have in store.

Until next time, Stay Sweet

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Bee viruses named for associated symptoms but most infections in adults are asymptomatic adults may have a 10th virused and the form of the defendal virus with a symptomatic adults may have a 10th virused with virused with a 10th virused with viru

Iowa Honey Queen Program



Connie Bronnenberg

2024 Honey Queen

We only had one queen candidate this year! Congratulations to Britta McCollum for becoming the 2024 lowa Honey Queen. She has already been posting to the lowa Honey Queen Program Facebook page so please follow her posts and encourage her on her journey over the next year. We also want to thank Rachel Vakulich, our 2023 lowa Honey Queen, for all of her accomplishments this last year!

Thank You from the Queen Program

"A Huge Thank You" to all of you who donated items for our silent and live auctions for the queen program, we couldn't do it without the support from all of you!" The live auction raised \$9,590, the silent auctions raised \$903, and the quilt raffle brought in \$840 for a total of \$11,333! The money raised will help with expenses to get the Honey Queen to your events! If you would like to have the Queen help you out at an event, you can contact me at 515-480-6076.

Thank you, Jodi Kraft for all that you do to make our quilts every year! Thank you, Roy Kraft, for being our auctioneer again this year!

Allison Hagar is just finishing up a full year of traveling fulfilling her duties as the American Honey Princess. Thank you Allison for everything you have done and for representing Iowa well!



Outgoing Queen Rachel Vakulich and incoming Queen Britta McCollum.

Youth Scholarship Raffle Winner

Congratulations to Chres Westergaard, the winner of the Youth Scholarship Christmas Quilt Bundle Raffle.

Thank you to all who supported the Youth Scholarship Program this year. Your support does not go unnoticed!



Iowa Honey Royalty

Charles -

Britta McCollum - 2024 Iowa Honey Queen

I am so honored to be the 2024 lowa Honey Queen. For those who don't already know me, my name is Britta McCollum. I'm a 19-year-old psychology student at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge. Someday I hope to be a criminal psychologist or own a coffee shop. But on top of anything else, I hope to have a long life of beekeeping. My adventure with beekeeping started with the 2018 Iowa Youth Scholarship, and I have beekeeping since. I've been talking about honeybees since then as well. Although I used to be a shy and quiet kid; being the bee girl you get a lot of questions in school, from neighbors, and anyone else that knows you're a beekeeper. You get to educate people and help them understand how a hive comes together to live in one colony, how honey is produced, and the different parts of the hive. I also have gotten to advocate

for my honey bees in the city of Fort Dodge when I advocated for an ordinance to be in place. I couldn't imagine where I would be without receiving the youth scholarship in 2018. I want to take this opportunity as Honey Queen to help promote our lowa beekeepers all over the state. Throughout this year I will be highlighting the importance of buying from local beekeepers and how many different products and recipes can be made with our honey. I'm am excited to spend the year representing lowas beekeepers and using up all of my honey. I hope to see you around. From, Queen Britta







Honey Bee Day!

Honey Bee Day returns to the Iowa State Capitol on March 27

What has turned into a very important day for IHPA members and Iowa Beekeeping returns to the state capitol rotunda March 27. Honey Bee Day is an opportunity for IHPA members and others interested in honeybees to help inform our legislators of the importance of honeybees to Iowa, our economy, and our agriculture. This year more than ever we are asking for our members' assistance in two ways. You can help us on March 27 to set up, talk to our state legislators and mingle with those who control our laws and regulations regarding beekeeping. You can also help by simply writing to your local city, township or county officials asking to declare March 27th "Honey Bee Day" in your area. We will be forwarding a basic letter that you simply put your name or club on and deliver to your officials. IHPA has seen an increase in the number of Iowa beekeepers who simply saw that their community dedicated a day to these wonderful pollinators and wanted to find out more. You can contact Jaimie Beyers at beyersbog@aol.com or H.R. Cook at stagemaster35@gmail.com for more information.

There are several bills in the 2023-24 lowa Legislative session that require our members to pay attention to. The biggest is House File 676, eliminating the sales tax for honeybees sold in lowa and recognizing honeybees as a livestock. Last session we were able to get the bill out of committee to the house floor. This year we hope to push this to the finish line with a vote in the full house. If you know your state representative, please ask them to support HF676. Contact H.R. Cook for more information and a list of your representatives.

2024 Annual Conference Oct 25th & 26th!

Your activity committee has already been hard at work getting some details sorted out for next year's annual conference & trade show. We pushed to give you a conference with more big speakers, more free food, free coffee, accommodate scientific talks happening at the same time as fun beginner courses for added options, more benefits for our members, more vendors, but yet we were able to drop our prices! So for this next year the bar is really HIGH! Just this week H.R. Cook signed the contract for us to be at Prairie Meadows Event Center and Hotel that is part of the race track and casino there in Altoona. So now you will also have that entertainment open to you as well. We're very proud of HR and Kelsey. Our 2023 conference made such an impact that we had cities reaching out to us in a bidding war to land us for the next 2 years! Stay tuned for more details as we solidify our plans.





Tales from a Migratory Beekeeper





Written by Tyler Holton

Sorry it's been a while, while there is really no slow time in my beekeeping year, it's been pretty busy for me lately.

Once the honey season was done its full speed ahead in getting the bees in proper shape for their migration west to almond pollination. As you read in Jason's previous articles we almost always ship bees on, or close to my birthday, November 18th. The last truck left the 23rd. The day after Thanksgiving, I hit the road headed South. I loaded up some equipment I'll need in the spring for splitting. 6 frame nucs on specialized pallets that match my 4 way migratory pallets, empty boxes, and foundation. I sent some bees to south Mississippi this fall as a comparison to how well they winter there, versus the California winter I typical have my bees in. They get an early jump start of spring pollen flow in January and can build up fast. They will get loaded on a semi to California end of January, first of February to pollinate almonds. Then all the bees will ship back to Mississippi post pollination to be split. Some bees will be left in Mississippi and used as cell builders to start producing queen cells from

The timing and the weather of this area allows to get a much greater head start on producing nucs and making splits. Being able to produce high quality queens with the honey and pollen flow going on at that time is worth the extra trip. Staying in California to split is extremely difficult. Once the almonds are finished the bees struggle to find anything naturally to eat, and with the extreme dense bee population the robbing can make it extremely difficult to make splits, or get good queen acceptance.

Freeway cars and trucks

I lead the parade

Stars beginning to fade, and

-Tom Waits, "OL' 55"

Until next time, Stay Sweet

Some bees will be left in Mississippi and used as cell builders to start producing queen cells from the breeder queens.

From the Beeyard

A collection of information from those with direct, personal knowledge about beekeeping

Written by Phil Ebert

I always write this a day or two before the deadline to make it as current as possible. Last month, the start of the IHPA convention came at the same time as the deadline. I didn't realize this until the last minute. I literally had a truckload of equipment to take to the meeting. Writing an article got put on the back burner.

The meeting was quite good but the only two speakers I got to were Ian Steppler and Marla Spivak. Ian talked about indoor wintering. This is not a new concept. Jim Kuehl was doing it successfully in Nebraska in the 80's. Old time beekeepers used to put their bees in cellars. C C Miller talked about it in his book. It was a fairly standard practice. The main difference today is that technology is better. The elements can be controlled better. Ian was doing it without refrigeration. That's doable in Manitoba. I don't know that it would work here. The thing that surprised me was how many dead bees were on the floor. He had a slide showing piles of dead bees along with a wheelbarrow full they had scooped up. I would not have expected so many to be ejected until they went outside.

Marla talked about selecting for mite resistance. The basic concept was to find colonies with low mite counts and not treat them. There was a wildcard in this. She had found some colonies that had high spring counts but were low in the fall. Go figure! As mite counts built in colonies, they would be treated and removed from the study. She had some control over her drone pool. She had five yards in a circle that were a mile apart within a preserve. However, there was a commercial beekeeper located just to the south of the preserve so that was a bit of a wild card. Ryan Lamb is doing the same thing but his gueens are all open mated with whatever is out there. He is located in East Texas. There are a lot of other beekeepers around him. Still, they are seeing some positive results. This is a simple concept. I thought, "We could do that." Then I thought "How can we do that on top of everything else we are doing?" It would require a lot more testing than we are doing now and we already do quite a bit. We would probably have to reduce our numbers to not lose sight of our primary job which is to KILL MITES, KILL MITES, KILL MITES. The ideal thing is for the bees to help with this job but I think we are a long way from getting there.

The other thing Marla talked about was recapping brood. Some years back either Bob Danka and/or John Harbo had videos of bees uncapping brood and then resealing it. It was thought at the time that the bees were looking for mites. Everyone was excited about this. Unfortunately, this proved not to be the case. You can tell which cells have been recapped. Marla had her students remove the pupae

remove the pupae from those cells. They found beaucoup mites. Often, there were multiple foundress mites in a worker cell. The colonies had low mite counts on the adult bees. I am guessing this was in the fall or close to it. The mite explosion was about to happen. This is why things go to pot so quickly in the fall. You can go from a 2% load to 10-15% in a matter of a couple of weeks.

Sometimes I don't realize what I know. I was talking to Ray Olivarez. He said that after the mite load peaks it is three weeks before the viruses decimate the bees. Then I thought about all the times that I had seen this. It is EXTREMELY important to keep the mite load low all the time to keep your bees healthy.

Our honey crop turned out a little better than I anticipated. We are going to have about 110 barrels plus we got around 3000# of comb honey. That may sound like a lot but it is a very poor per colony average. We were close to 2000 colonies at our peak during the early part of the summer. Almost as soon as the yards are full, we start picking them up and/or combining them as queens fail. We are probably down 300 colonies from what we started with. I count the average yield from the colonies we started with. We have money in them. It is not realistic to not base the average on the total number we started with. That puts our average yield for this year somewhere between 35# and 40#.

I hope your colonies are heavy for winter. If you have not already done it, I recommend a final mite cleanup when the bees are broodless. Oxaiic vapor or dribble are two possible ways to do this. If you are doing vapor, remember that one gram is not enough. People that use this tell me that three grams works best. Entrance blocks should be in and you should have a piece of insulation under the lid. Wrapping is optional.

The Lynnville colonies have been shipped. They looked good. Andy got zero on four mite tests when he inspected them. I am hearing stories about big loses already. I hope our bees hold up. My delivery guy quit after five years. We are really going to miss him. I hired a new guy but it remains to be seen how he is going to work out. We are still liquidating equipment for a 500 colony operation that belonged to a friend. It has been a much bigger project than I anticipated. I think we are about 70% done. We still have quite a few boxes and I am guessing around 200 colonies of bees.

Winter is here. Think about what you want to do in the spring. Are you going to need equipment? Are you going to add or subtract colonies? We all need a plan but in the end some or it will be made upon the fly. You will be reading this after the Holidays. I hope everyone had happy ones!!

Happy January! Usually I attempt to find something more healthy and less sweet for January to help encourage those diets and get a fresh start on the year. This time, I just found something that made me smile. I hope these tasty treats make you smile, too!

Salted Honey Rice Krispie Treats (Pg. 90)

- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 9 ounces marshmallows (about 4 cups)
- 6 Cups Rice Krispies cereal

Grease and line an 8-inch pan. Melt butter in large sauce pan over low heat. Add in honey, salt, and marshmallows and stir continuously over low heat until marshmallows are completely melted. Add cereal and remove from heat, stirring until combined. Spread into prepared pan. Set aside to cool and cut.

Emma's Notes: So sticky! The flavor reminded me of a salted caramel but the honey absorbed. Next time I make this, I plan to add more cereal to attempt to decrease the stickiness. The flavor was fantastic, it was just a little sticky.

Honey Acorn Squash (Pg. 134)

3 Acorn squash
5 Tablespoons margarine melted
1/3 cup honey
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 teaspoon cinnamon 1
/4 teaspoon ginger



Cut squash in half, remove seeds and fiber. Put in shallow baking ban, cut side down, add 1/2-inch water and bake 30 minutes in 375 degree oven. Turn squash upright and drain liquid.

Combine remaining ingredients and pour into squash halves. Bake 15 minutes or until tender, basting frequently with sauce. Serves 6.

Emma's Notes: This is a perfect treat for the end of fall squash you are wanting to use up. It took longer to bake than I expected but the flavor was worth the wait!



From the Editor

Sara Sleyster, IHPA Editor sarasleyster@gmail.com



Hello, everyone!

I'm Sara Sleyster, your new editor for *The Buzz*. While I am definitely a novice when it comes to bees, I do have over 25 years of experience writing and editing. I grew up in Osceola where I started my journalism career with the student newspaper. From there I got a bachelor's degree in journalism from Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville. I worked at The Des Moines Register and its sister paper The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune for 10 years. I went back to school and got my Masters in Education from Drake University. I taught high school English and journalism at Martensdale-St. Marys Schools for two years. In 2017, I left there to homeschool my children. Ella is now a junior and Ben is a freshman. Along with editing The Buzz, I am writing again for the Indianola newspaper as well as working for the social media marketing company That Digital Rush. Please forgive me if I occasionally mix up the newspaper and non-newspaper writing rules!

I'm looking forward to learning more about bees and honey production. Thankfully, I should be able to get some hands-on experiences with my grandpa's and stepdad's bees. This summer my son, Ben, was able to spin honey for the first time with his grandpa, Jeff Norman, down in Creston. Each month I hope to share what I'm learning about honey and bees with you. I love researching and learning about new things. Please feel welcome to share your traditions, legends, and interesting facts with me at ihpaeditor@gmail.com.

Bye for now! Sara

You are still welcome and encouraged to send stories to ihpaeditor@gmail.com



IHPA is on the hunt!

The IHPA is looking for a **Summer Field Day Chair!**

If interested, or if you have questions, please contact President Jason Foley at russianbeeguy@gmail.com





Pre order your queens, packages, and nucs for the 2024 season! We begin taking orders on all our Russian products starting January 1st at 10am via our website www.russianbee.com. Carniolan packages are available to order just as soon as pricing for the year has been set (typically January 15th).

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If you would like to place an advertisement in The Buzz please send information to: ihpaeditor@gmail.com

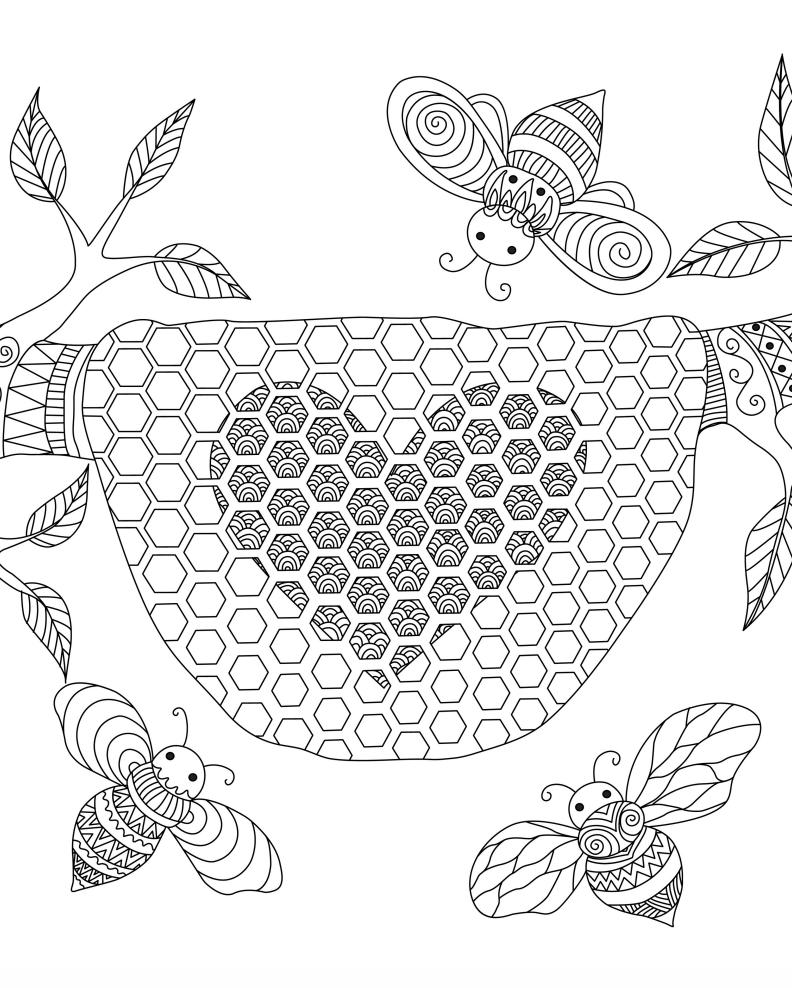


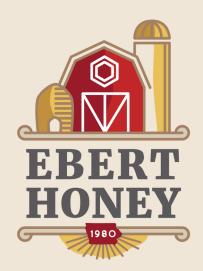
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All contact information can be found online at: https://www.iowahoneyproducers.org/officers-directors-now

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If you would like to become more involved in the IHPA, we could certainly use your help!!!



Iowa Honey Producers Association Annual Membership Form 2024

Our membership year runs from January 1 through December 31.

The expiration date will be above your mailing address on "The Buzz"

One copy of "The Buzz" will be sent per	household address		
Please print legibly.			
Primary Member (First and Last Name)		\$30.00	\$
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Phone Number:		-	
additional Members (Please list first and last names separated by co	mmas)	\$5 each	
Name(s):			_
Email Address:			_
Phone Number:	# of Members	at \$5 each	n \$
Additional Years of Membership		_	
Primary-Additional Years of Membership (\$30/person/year)	# of years	\$30/year	\$
Additional Member(s)-Additional Years of Membership (\$5/person/year)	# of years	\$5/year	\$
Oonations			
Fairbooth Renovation Fund - Funds to be used for improvements			\$
General Fund - Funds to be used for day to day expenses			\$
Queen Fund - Funds to be used to help the Queen in her travels			\$
Youth Program - Funds to be used to provide students with needs	ed supplies		\$
Memorial Scholarship-Funds to be used to provide scholarship to	students		\$
		Sub-total	\$
		TOTAL	\$
Please mark this box if you would like your information to be <u>left out</u>	of the IHPA Directo	nrv	
icuse mark tins box ii you would like your information to be <u>left out</u>	or the mire birecte	, , ,	
would like to be contacted about ideas I have for the IHPA, and to le	earn more about ser	ving on c	ommittees
, ,	YES	NO	
would like to be a Mentor for the Youth Scholarship Program	YES	NO	
you would like to pay via credit/debit card, please send an e-mail with yo	our registration form t	o: ihpatrea	surer@gmai
to receive a <u>link</u> to pay online vi		•	
Please make checks payble to: Iowa Honey Produce	rs Association or IHI	PA	



Renew IHPA Membership

Many membership expire 12/31/2023 https://www.ihpamembership2024

Register Apiary Site(s)

beecheck.org/signup#beekeeper

Honey Bee Day (HBD)

Mark your calendar and plan to join other IHPA members at HBD March 27, 2024

Lend a Hand

Check out the different ways to be involved in the IHPA!

- Summer Field Day Coordinator
- Iowa State Fair
- Have an idea? Share it!

The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association c/o Editor, Sara Sleyster 1255 Virginia Avenue Renwick, IA 50577



The Buzz is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Honey Producers Association which is an affiliate of the Iowa State Horticultural Society



Deadline for submissions to *The Buzz* is always the 10th of the month at 11:59 p.m. the month prior to when you would like to see information published.

If writing an article for *The Buzz*, submissions must be 800 words or less. Pictures are encouraged!

Deadline to submit information for the February Edition of The Buzz

January 10th at 11:59 p.m.

Please submit materials to: ihpaeditor@gmail.com



Time to Renew your IHPA Membership!