



The Buzz



Newsletter of the Iowa Honey Producers Association

Greetings from the President of the IHPA

Dear Honey Producers,

What is this nice warm weather doing to our honey bees? I suggest that the hives are checked often to see if the girls need some food. This is wonderful weather for us, but it doesn't provide much nourishment for the honey bees. I have noticed that our honey bees are making a beeline to the water in the back yard whenever they fly. Keep a close eye on the weight of the hive and feed them as needed. Let's hope there is a good survival rate when it really does warm up for good.

Phil outlined some of the projects that the IHPA board is working on in an article last month. This is a very energetic and active group of individuals. We are working on some new programs specifically targeted toward new beekeepers. We have some great ideas and plans in the works. We will keep you posted. If you have suggestions for the board to work on, please contact a board member or officer.

The new beekeeping classes are being well attended and we need to thank the education committee for the work that has been done to make sure that these classes are being held. Thank you to the presenters for taking time out of your busy schedule to make this happen.

The new hive registration program is being outlined in another article in this issue. If you have any questions, please contact Becky at IDALS (Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship). Make sure that you register your hives to protect you in the instance that chemical spraying is done in your area. If you are not registered, you are not going to get any help in the event that your bee yard is sprayed and it causes damages. It is a simple thing to do to ensure that every precaution will be taken to avoid a disaster for you and the chemical applicator.

Chuck Eckermann in the pesticide bureau at IDALS contacted me to say that the section 18 needed for API LIFE VAR and

Checkmite + has been applied for. The EPA has to approve this, so now we wait.

Mike and I attended the International Meadfest held in Boulder, CO over Valentine's Day weekend. We attended some workshops and got to taste some great Meads from all over the world. Dr. Marion Ellis was also there and we were able to speak to him. He entered some of his mead in the Home Mead Maker Competition and is anxiously awaiting the judges comments. The Home Mead Maker Competition was a new competition this year. Dr. Ellis stated that there were 63 entries in the class he entered.

The membership is always down this time of year. Some members don't remember to renew their membership. If you know of someone who hasn't done so, remind them that a lot of our future endeavors might reflect the number of beekeepers in the state and if we can't substantiate the numbers, we don't look like a viable organization. A new directory is being worked on and if the beekeepers aren't in the database, they won't be included in the directory. It is hard to get an accurate directory without everyone's help.

As you are planning your coming year, don't forget to block out some time to help at the Iowa State Fair. The IHPA State Fair sales booth is the only money making project of our organization so a lot rests on the shoulders of the membership to help make the stand a success. The Iowa State Fair is August 10th through the 20th this year. Please consider helping.

Hope to see a lot of you on March 3rd and 4th for the joint meeting to be held in Overland Park, Kansas. I hope March comes in like a lamb, but also goes out like a lamb. I am being spoiled by our nice "winter" weather.

Sincerely,
Donna Brahms, IHPA President



Please send submissions, classified ads, and photos to Alex W. Ebert by email to TheBuzz@ABuzzAboutBees.com or by mail to The Buzz, c/o Phil Ebert, 14808 S. 102nd Ave. E., Lynnville, IA 50153. **The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month to be included in the following month's newsletter.** The Buzz is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Honey Producers Association which is an affiliate of the Iowa State Horticultural Society. IHPA Membership is only \$10 annually. To join IHPA and receive your complimentary member subscription to The Buzz Newsletter, please contact Gordon Powell, IHPA Treasurer, 4012 54th St., Des Moines, IA 50310 Phone : (515) 278-1762

Dates to BEE Remembered:

March 25, 2006

North Iowa Bee club field days, March 25 Helping new beekeepers put bee equipment together. From bottom board to cover, and where to find good used equipment. Class will be from 1pm to 4pm. We will even have a smoker starting contest, COME AND HAVE FUN AND LEARN.

April 29, 2006

North Iowa Bee Club field day, April 29 from 1pm to 4pm. We will be working with the bees (weather permitting) to help new beekeepers learn to find the queen, workers, drones, pollen and any thing we can think of that will help them. Bring bee suit and any protective cloths you want, not responsible for stings.

July 23-28, 2006

The 9th International Pollination Symposium. Scheman Building, Iowa State University.
www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/plantbee/home.html

Aug. 10-20, 2006

Iowa State Fair

To add an important date to the list, contact the Buzz by email at thebuzz@abuzzaboutbees.com Or by mail at the address listed on the front cover.

Beekeeping Classes are a Big Hit

Classes at Winterset and DMACC have been completed. We wound up with 20 students in the DMACC class and 9 at Winterset. The class in Washington will be completed by the time this is printed. Ron Wehr wound up with six in that class. The class in Marshalltown is in its third week (Feb 15th). Margaret Hala and I have 11 in that class. The Mason City class is March 3rd and 4th. We don't know yet what the enrollment will be. We have served 46 students so far. I'm pleased with the outcome.

Beekeeping History

Doris Ramsey is collecting items for a folder or scrapbook on beekeeping history. If anyone has thing they would like to contribute, you should contact Doris. You can contact her at 641-498-4355 or e-mail Vdramsey@netins.net The mailing address is 22781 Route J-16, Birmingham, Ia 52535

For Sale: John Foster Queens out of CA. at \$16.00 each, to arrive on April 25 or so. Queens are for pickup only.

Contact Pat Ennis 1040 Union Ave Goodell, Iowa 50439
(641) 444-4767
flat_lander@lycos.com

Queens For Sale:

Queens from B. Weaver Apiaries of Navasota, Texas. Pickup/delivery at the CIBA Auction on April 22, 2006 at Harry Hunter's---2781 S.E. 70th St. Pleasant Hill. Or by other arrangement. Buckfast, Bee Weaver All Stars or Beesmart queens---\$18.00 each.

I've told several people that they are \$17.00 each, it was my mistake. I forgot to add on shipping costs when I quoted the lower price. I need order and payment by March 18.

Margaret Hala
1988 Vine Ave.
Marshalltown, IA 50158
641-752-2981

A Year With Honeybees

This video has proven to be popular available on either VHS tape or DVD. It follows beekeeper Dick Blake through an entire production season. It starts with spring feeding and ends with the barrels of honey being loaded on the truck.

There is good information here for beekeepers of every level. Available form the Iowa Honey Producers for

Wanted: Honeybees hives on our land acreage 6 miles north of Fairfield, Iowa. Contact Dr. Mike Mc Coneghey at (641) 472-0799.

Wanted: Winter cartons- approximately 200. Contact Phil Ebert 641-527-2639 or e-mail ehoney37@netins.net

For Sale: FOUR FRAME NUCS with no frame exchange. We will have a limited number of nucs available again this year. They will be from overwintered bees and will have 2006 Carniolan queens.

Call for price and availability. Phil Ebert 641-527-2639 or e-mail ehoney37@netins.net

For Sale: PACKAGE BEES At this point we are selling only 2# packages with Carniolan queens. You will be able to book throughout the month of March and possibly into early April.

Contact Phil Ebert 641-527-2639 or e-mail ehoney37@netins.net

For Sale: CORN SYRUP BY THE BUCKET OR BY THE BARREL We will be getting a new load in late March or early April. Quoted price may vary slightly depending on the cost of the syrup from Archer Daniels.

Contact Phil Ebert 641-527-2639 or e-mail ehoney37@netins.net

\$20. That includes shipping within Iowa. It may be slightly higher elsewhere. Make checks payable to the Iowa Honey Producers.

Contact "The Buzz" for your copy.

The Buzz
c/o Phil Ebert
14808 102nd Ave. E.
Lynnville, IA 50153

Submitted by Phil Ebert

Featured Beekeeper of the Month

This month our featured beekeeper is Arvin Foell. He and his wife, Jeanne, live in Kelley, Iowa. Arvin started keeping bees in 1977, currently keeps from 20 to 50 colonies, and sells liquid honey and a few Ross Rounds. His business name is Ballard Creek Honey.

Future plans include developing his own queens, to improving over wintering and increasing honey production. Arvin says the best part of beekeeping is getting out into nature, working and just watching the bees come and go.

Arvin belongs to the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association and has served as past president as well as on several committees. It seems Arvin is the "unofficial taster" at the concession stand at the CIBA auction where they run a tab for him. They have about 50 members and meet on the third Saturday evening of the months of March, June, September, December, or January at Bonanza in Marshalltown. The groups major activity is their annual auction of used beekeeping equipment on the fourth Saturday of April. All you new beekeepers take note. The group also sponsors or co-sponsors a summer field day. As a member of IHPA, Arvin has served as vice president and on several committees. While on the board as VP under John John-

son, it was decided to split the board of directors into six districts, which brought representation from all parts of Iowa, and everyone was given an opportunity to bid on honey sold at the Iowa State Fair.

Arvin writes his story telling me, "I began my beekeeping experience when I needed three credits to fulfill my biology requirement for my Ag degree at ISU. My advisor suggested I look into this beekeeping course offered by the Entomology Dept. which would satisfy my biology credits. So I signed up for the beekeeping class taught by Richard Trump and John Jesup. During the section of the class studying diseases, I got to meet Glenn Stanley, former state apiarist, who gave a presentation on diseases and bee anatomy, we also worked with the bees. It was during this class that I came down with the beekeeping bug. I have had this condition for nearly thirty years and don't know of a cure.

I was so fascinated with honey bees that in the spring of 1977 I bought 3 colonies of bees and equipment from Glenn & Lloyd Stanley. I have been a *beehaver* ever since. Every year has been different with some years like 1988, a bumper crop and some times



We had to store all our belongings, because our new home was not available until September.

not enough honey to get the bees through the winter. Mites have been a real annoying problem and beekeeping isn't as fun as it was when I first started.

After living in Slater for eighteen years, we built a home on an acreage and I had the opportunity to design and build a new honey house, 20x30ft. The move was a real challenge because any one who has been in beekeeping very long knows how much stuff you accumulate. I sold a whole bunch of beekeeping equipment at the CIBA auction, but still had a lot to move. And to put more pressure on me, our home in Slater sold in two days after we put it on the market and we had to move everything out in thirty days. My wife, Jeanne, did great, but I was still moving beekeeping stuff the last day of possession. We had to store all our belongings, because our new home was not available until September. So we were homeless for a couple of months. Consequently, I did not get the honey house finished until the end of October and didn't finish extracting honey until November 25th. This year was one of my worst honey crops. Beekeepers always say that the next year will be better. May your hives be full of bees this spring and may you have a long nectar flow."

Arvin enclosed some pictures of his new home and honey house. Thanks for the story.

Submitted by Ron Wehr



I did not get the honey house finished until the end of October and didn't finish extracting honey until November 25th.

APIARY REGISTRATION UPDATE

The new registration process is targeted to be on line by March 15, 2006. The instructions will be user friendly and available with the new application process. You can always contact me if you have any problems or questions with the registration process.

Your registration is only as good as the information you provide. You will need to have the complete and correct: County, Township, Range, Section and Quarter section information. You can get this at your local USDA-FSA county office.

The Apiary Inspection Program (in the Iowa Dept. of Ag & Land Stewardship – Ag Diversification & Market Development Bureau) is developing a web-enabled database and ArcIMS technology for beekeeper registration. The advantage of using a web-based data entry and retrieval system is that it ensures that the initial data collection and synthesis activities can be maintained for future years. For chemical applicators, this is the tool desired to query/search data that will tell them where **not** to spray. For apiaries, this will provide added protection and enable better communication.

This technology will be helpful to update registrations at anytime during the year, making information retrieval in “real time” and therefore aid in preventing accidental pesticide application/drift throughout the year. If you registered last year (2005), you should be receiving a PIN in the mail from IDALS in mid-March 2006. If you did not register in 2005, you will need to contact me to receive your PIN. If you contact me by e-mail, I can send the PIN to you via e-mail.

The web-enabled registration will decrease erroneous data from being entered. The data will be exactly as the producer entered, therefore the degree of error will be less than that of someone transcribing from a hard copy, and from there to another database to

the web person who will enter it on the IDALS website. This is a new process, so please be patient while the program is in this transition. And as always, if you have questions, feel free to contact me at any time.

I know, some may be asking “what if I do not have internet access?” For those of you who do not have Internet capabilities, you can go to your local Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA) office. Our Apiary Inspection Program has partnered with FSA over the past years to assist with the apiary registration. There is an FSA office in every county. In addition to accessing the registration on line, FSA can assist you in the legal description of your apiary site (county, township, range, section, and quarter section). The **correct** legal description will be necessary for registering your bee hives. In the past I have received several registrations with incorrect location descriptions, this inhibits the usefulness of the program. In addition, if you take your information to the FSA office, they will assist you in logging onto the IDALS website to register at their office. If neither of these options are conducive to your situation, or you do not have a PIN, you may contact me at the Iowa Department of Ag & Land Stewardship – Diversified Agriculture & Market Development Bureau: (515-281-7657). Registration is not due until April, so there is no rush! Your local beekeeping club may be able to assist its members with accessing and registration at the web site. Another good reason to join a Honey Producers Association !

Submitted by:

Rebecca Ohrtman, Iowa Apiary
Inspection Program
IDALS

(515)281-7657

Becky.Ohrtman@idals.state.ia.us



From the Iowa Honey Queen

Who is the bees' favorite singer? Answer: Sting. How about this one, what do you call a bee born in May? Answer: A maybe. Okay, so maybe these weren't the best jokes but I am sure that we have all heard a few bee jokes. Or perhaps you even have a clever nickname that your friends gave you. If I hear someone going “Lizzzzzz” then I know they are trying to get my attention and I can't help but stop and laugh. After tossing around a chuckle or two, they usually end up wondering what in the world got me interested in bee keeping. After telling them a little bit of the basic information, most keep the questions coming. Some of the questions asked seem so obvious but to the everyday person, the world of bee keeping is miles away.

The bees' social society is a complex system like no other organism. Where else is a female the top dog with thousands of workers at her feet tending to her every need? Not only that, but the workers are actually underdeveloped females while those big drones are docile and can't even sting. Since their only purpose is to service the queen, they get the boot when winter comes.

Have problems finding your way through a big city even with the help of a map, well bees also have their own mapping system. Field bees dance in various formations telling other exactly where and how far a food source is. They travel miles to and from the hive just to collect a small portion of the nectar and pollen needed to survive.

These are just some of the things I inform people of. By doing this, I hope to spark an interest among not only the old but the young. The only way to keep this passion alive is by sharing it with those of the future generation. So next time you hear a bee joke or something of that nature, show them there is more to bee keeping then just the sweet reward of honey.

Sincerely,
2006 Iowa Honey Queen
Elizabeth Macken

From the American Honey Princess

Greetings Iowa Beekeepers!

The semester here at ISU is quickly flying by, and I am looking forward to the excitement of the spring and summer months. The shock has not yet completely worn off from the ABF convention. Whenever I think about the wonderful promotions that the next year will bring, I almost feel like I need to check to make sure the crown is still there.

Speaking of those promotions, back in January I had the opportunity to join Polly Carver-Kim from 93.3 KIOA on her Sunday morning show called "Information Iowa." We spent about 15 minutes talking about the wonderful things that bees do for people, and even shared a couple recipes on the air. I was also able to submit recipes for her monthly newsletter.

On March 3rd and 4th I will be in Overland Park, Kansas for the joint meeting of the Kansas Honey Producers and the Missouri State Beekeepers. There are many wonderful speakers planned. Furthermore, I will be helping in the selection of the new Kansas Honey Queen as well as doing some training with both the Kansas and Missouri Queens.

Something that I have been working on intensively this past month is a new program that is in the works for the IHPA. It is called the IHPA Youth Beekeeping Partnership Program, and it is a program designed to help get new youth involved in the industry. More information will be printed in The Buzz next month, but begin thinking about possibly helping out. The whole purpose is to bring young people into the organization, strengthening both the IHPA and the industry. The backbone of the program will be YOU, the members, and we will need people who are willing to serve as mentors to the young people. Be thinking about the option, and watch for more information next month.

Until then, please do not hesitate to contact me for anything. I can be reached at (712) 779-0321 or tjurchen@iastate.edu.

God Bless,
Teresa Jurchen
2006 American Honey Princess

The Beeyard Report

We had looked at about 275 hives in 17 yards as of the 15th of February. There were 14 dead ones and 38 that I rated as weak. That means they have less than four frames of visible bees. 127 were excellent. That means they have a box full of bees. Everything in between is rated as good. Some of the colonies I rated as weak will have bees in the bottom that I didn't know about. By the same token, some of the good ones will dwindle down to almost nothing. It evens out.

It's too early to predict actual death loss but things look promising at this point. If I had to put a number on it, I would estimate our death loss will be around 20%. I was concerned about the early end to brood rearing last fall. The young bees that go through the winter have higher protein content in their bodies. They need it because they have to live until spring without any pollen coming in. Most of the colonies looked like they had plenty of bees but we put the pollen supplement to them anyway. I find making patties a real pain. We mix the supplement with three parts syrup. It's just stiff enough to hold together when we dump it on the top bars. It has to be pretty wet or it will dry out and get hard before the bees take it down. We used to put it in with a big spoon but the supplement always stuck to the spoon. It got to be real inconvenient. We found this year that an ice cream scoop works real well. We get as much as we can on the scoop. The ejection mechanism on the scoop dumps the supplement out nicely.

I went up to Orange City to visit Anthony last November. I stopped at

Storm Lake on the way home to visit Bob Guntren. Bob is out of the bee business but he had some odds and ends left. Among the things I picked up were 50 winter cartons. I had never used them before. This spring, the best bees I have seen so far are the ones in the cartons. I don't know if the cartons are better or if it's just the luck of the draw. We have used colony quilt to wrap the last few years. It's pretty good but seems to stretch over the winter. It looks tight when we put it on. When we go back in the spring, it's real baggy. This really cuts down on the heat retention.

In other new developments, we bought a Swinger. I had been thinking about a Swinger or Bobcat for some time. In early January, I was driving past the skid loader dealer in Sully. I was really surprised to see a Swinger with a bucket sitting in his lot. We dickered on it for a month before I decided to buy it. I can't think of anything I like about having bees on pallets except that they are easy to move.

I don't think we will ever get all of our bees on pallets. Some of our best yards are hard to get into. Pulling a trailer into them is out of the question. Others are not level enough for pallets. I want to get around 200 colonies on pallets this year. This should be enough to show if this is a workable system for us. The up side of pallets is that it gives us the option of going to California for almond pollination. There will be a lot of new acres coming into production in 2008.

It makes me nervous to start tinkering with a system that has worked well for us. The hope is that it will make us more efficient and give us more options on the things we can do. We'll see if it stands the test of time.

Submitted by Phil Ebert



Master Beekeeping Scholarship

We have had one application for the Master Beekeeper scholarship, so far. Applications are due by May 1st. Take advantage of this opportunity and apply today. Include your name, address, phone number and/or e-mail along with a one or two paragraph bio about yourself. The following outlines the various workshops being offered including the Master Beekeeping Workshop (June 22-24) that the scholarship is for.

Send to :

Phil Ebert

c/o The Buzz

14808 S. 102nd Ave. E.

Lynnville, IA 50153

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension



2006 Beekeeping Workshops

Everything You Need to Know to Succeed in Apiculture

Beginning Beekeeping Workshops

Lincoln, NE – February 18, 2006

Norfolk, NE – February 25, 2006

Mead, NE – April 8, 2006

Master Beekeeping Workshop

Mead, NE – June 22-24, 2006



2006 Beginning Beekeeping Workshops

Beginning Beekeeping Workshops have been scheduled for 2006 at the following sites:

February 18 – Lincoln 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

February 25 – Norfolk 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

April 8 – Mead 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Registration fee for the Lincoln and Norfolk workshops is \$20 per person or \$20 per family plus \$8 for each family member accompanying the registered participant. Registration includes refreshments, lunch, and a workbook for new beekeepers. Pre-registration is required for both workshops. The Mead Workshop is a hands-on session for participants in both the Lincoln and Norfolk workshops. If you have questions about the workshops or need further information, contact: Marion Ellis at (402) 472-8696 or

MELLIS3@unl.edu.

Send Lincoln Registrations to:

Dr. Barbara Ogg

Lancaster Co. Extension Office

444 Cherrycreek Rd.

Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

Email: BOGG1@unl.edu

Phone: (402) 441-6744

Make check payable to:

University of Nebraska

Send Norfolk Registrations to:

Dr. Tom Hunt

UNL Haskell Agricultural Lab

57905 866 Rd.

Concord, NE 68528-2828

Email: THUNT2@unl.edu

Phone: (402) 584-3863

Make check payable to:

University of Nebraska

2006 Master Beekeeping Workshop

A Master Beekeeping Workshop will be offered in Mead, Nebraska at the Agricultural Research and Development Center Headquarters Building on June 22-24. This workshop will provide detailed instruction in the biology and management of honey bees. Training will include both classroom and hands-on sessions. Beekeepers should have at least one year of experience managing honey bees before registering for this workshop. A distinguished team of experts has been assembled to make this an outstanding educational opportunity. Registration for the workshop is \$100 and includes five meals, refreshments, a cap, and a workbook.

Send Master Beekeeping Registrations to:

Dr. Marion Ellis

Department of Entomology

202 Plant Industry Bldg.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lincoln, NE 68583-0816

Email: MELLIS3@unl.edu

Phone: (402) 472-8696

Make check payable to:

University of Nebraska



Lincoln Workshop

Lancaster Co. Cooperative Extension Office

Suite A

444 Cherrycreek Road

Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Norfolk Workshop

Northeast Lifelong Learning Center

Suite 104

601 East Benjamin Avenue

Norfolk, Nebraska 68701-0810

Mead Workshops

Agricultural Research and Development Center

Headquarters Building

University of Nebraska

Ithaca, Nebraska 68033-2234

Directions to ARDC Education Center

From Lincoln, take Highway 77 North to Highway 63. Turn right or east on Highway 63 and go 6.25 miles. The Headquarters Building is on the right or south side of the road. There is a sign at the entrance directing visitors to the parking lot. The phone number for the ARDC Research & Education Center is (402) 624-8000. Maps to the ARDC Education Center and Apiculture Lab can be found on the Internet at: http://entomology.unl.edu/beekpg/apilab_directions.htm

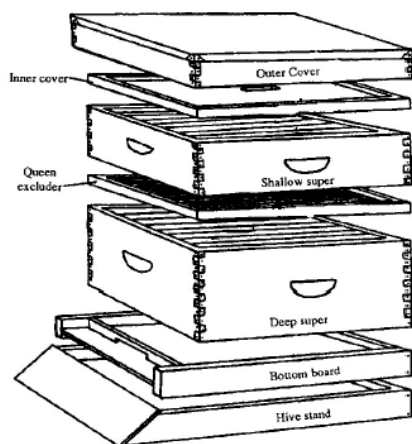
Directions to Apiculture Laboratory

From the Research and Education Building, take Road 10 north and follow the signs directing you to the turfgrass research area. The Apiculture Lab is adjacent to the turfgrass research plots. There is a sign that says "Apiculture Laboratory" located in front of the building

There are Many Reasons to Keep Honey Bees

The honey from each hive is a unique blend of the floral resources that surround an apiary, and honey is a delightful source of floral flavors. Many crops grown in orchards, gardens, and on farms benefit from bee pollination. Keeping bees will raise your understanding of the natural world and the interrelatedness of all living things.

Beekeeping with a young person can be especially rewarding. Last, but not least, it is impossible to be surrounded by thousands of bees busily going about their work and think about your troubles. Honey bees have fascinated mankind throughout history. They will fascinate you too if you let them.



You Can Learn a Lot From Bees

"Place yourself before a hive, and see the indefatigable energy of these industrious veterans, toiling along with their heavy burdens, side by side with their more youthful compeers, and then judge if, while qualified for useful labor, you ought ever to surrender yourself to slothful indulgence." **Lorenzo Langstroth** "For so work the honey bees, creatures that by a rule in nature, teach the art of order to a peopled kingdom." **William Shakespeare** "Honey bees are superb teachers when trying to instill an environmental awareness and conservation ethic in young people. In learning about the importance of honey bee pollination, they realize how living things depend on other living things and that, while a few insects are pests, many are essential to our survival. Honey bees teach young people to be patient and gentle. Hastiness and carelessness have painful consequences, a lesson honey bees can teach you at a young age if you keep them. Honey bees are superb teachers." **Marion Ellis**

Beekeeping Memories

This essay was sent to use by Jeff Slaymaker of Clarinda, Iowa. His youngest daughter Josie submitted the essay as part of her application to the pharmacy program at Drake University. She had struggled over what to write so Jeff suggested beekeeping. She was accepted to the program and got to talk about what the beekeeping experience had meant to her. Thanks Jeff and Josie.

Beekeeping

As a kid, I was what most would call a tomboy, from playing baseball with the boys to climbing every tree in the nearby park. Being the younger of two girls, I did "girlie things" also; I held my fair share of tea parties and stuffed animal weddings, but I always preferred playing in the mud and collecting rocks in my pockets. I suppose my inner tomboy is part of the reason why I enjoy beekeeping.

When I was little I would ride with my dad out to where he kept his bees. I'd sit in the truck and watch him in awe while he would open box after box. Every once in a while he'd bring over a frame of honeycomb covered in little dancing bees and hold it up to the window. It would always make me smile and think "when I grow up I want to be just like my daddy and keep bees!"

My dad is a CPA, and while he is very good at what he does, he was an important part of the company he was with and worked long hours. Sometimes he wouldn't come home until after my sister and I were already in bed. After going a couple weeks without seeing much of my dad, I began to look forward to our bee outings. Soon my mom and dad realized that my dad would have to find a new job with regular hours, so we moved.

A few years ago my dad surprised me with a helmet, gloves, and a veil of my very own. After years of watching him open boxes, I finally got to help him! I was so excited, which made the drive

out to the bees seem longer than ever. It was fun to see all the bees up close and have them flying all around me. I was scared at first when they would swarm up, but I got used to it. Luckily, I didn't even get stung on my first time out! So for the past couple years I've been helping him, and I've even had a few hives of my own to look after.

Every spring the bees start to build up the honeycomb. We check on them every couple weeks over the summer and watch them grow in number, occasionally having to add on another box. By the end of the summer we'd have several little white towers all in a row, and that's when its time to start extracting the honey. When my dad was about 16 he built an extractor out of an old washing machine motor and a garbage can. It's not pretty, but, after almost 30 years of use, it still works perfectly!

At the beginning of every fall we go collect the frames. This is the toughest part of beekeeping in my opinion because I always get stung at least three times while collecting the frames. Then we take them all down to our basement and spend a couple hours extracting, which involves spinning the honey out of the comb and into a bucket. We sell some of the honey to cover part of the expenses, but we do it more for the enjoyment.

I don't know if this would classify as something that was life-changing, but to me it has been a very meaningful experience and I really enjoy spending so much quality time with my dad.



EVALUATING BEEKEEPING PRACTICES

By: Glenn Stanley
(Iowa State Apiarist Emeritus)
3835 Merced Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50310

As I write this on the 27th day of January, the temperature here in Central Iowa is 60 degrees with a very warm sun. It is logical to believe that during a mild winter such as we have had so far, colonies consume more honey stored as opposed to a very severe winter. That could well be the case as during a mild winter colonies often start early brood rearing.

I do not recommend opening hives and disturbing colonies anytime during the winter months. However, I did just that today and found the amount of brood within the colony would equal a full comb of brood. That is a beautiful sight as it means a good strong colony to come in April. There is still plenty of honey left in the hives so there is no need to bother them again until colony management begins in April. The picture shows the colonies progress.

This is not the first time I have found brood within colonies in mid to late January. Some 45 years ago, as I was doing some research on wintering colonies that was the case. Having half dozen thermometers within the upper brood chamber was of extreme interest. With any sunlight at all, it was generally 30 degrees warmer between the paper and the outer walls of the hive than the outside temperature. As one of the thermometers extended through the inner cover reached 92 degrees, it was an indication that there was brood in that area of the brood chamber. Having a closer look, I found that was the case.

Even though we are not yet half way through the winter, I am hearing of significant to tremendous losses already which seems to be mostly due to starvation. Beekeepers who let this happen only create more hardship on themselves and it amounts to a major loss.

In the late 1930's and early 1940's when we operated 1300 colonies nearly every year we would lose about 25% of our colonies simply because

we were doing a poor job of preparing our colonies for winter. After I returned from the service in 1946, my brother, Lloyd, and I were determined to do a better job of beekeeping and our first endeavor was to do a better job of wintering colonies. After a few years we accomplished that as well as improving our beekeeping in many other ways. The late 30's and early 40's were excellent years for beekeeping in Iowa. In spite of our poor beekeeping our colonies would average about 300 pounds. Everything was favorable

for beekeeping and producing honey in those years.

As we revised our practices, we realized it was of extreme importance to know exactly how much honey was within each hive as the colonies were readied for winter. We found here in Central Iowa, that the weight of colonies with a double brood chamber should be 115 to 120 pounds, and must be weighed to make sure. It is easy to get that amount of honey within the hive, even though there may still be some brood present. If, in Minnesota the weight may need to be increased by 10 lbs. In warmer climates, maybe less honey. Colonies should be brought up to the desired weight sometime before the weather becomes too cool. If bringing colonies up to weight on sugar or Isomerase make sure the bees have it stored before snow falls. Getting colonies up to desired weight with a supplemental food is more difficult than with honey. Colonies that weighed 90 pounds or less were not acceptable for wintering. The honey they did have was used to bring other colonies up to the desired weight. If the queen excluders are used to prevent the queen from laying eggs in the surplus honey supers, you will find the bees keep a better brood chamber and by the same token if the queen gets into the surplus honey supers, the colony is completely disorganized. By taking hints from other beekeepers and using our own discoveries we managed to cut our winter losses to less than two percent.

Many beekeepers in Minnesota winter their colonies in three standard brood chambers. Our finding is that it is possible to have too much honey in stores as the colonies enter winter. A beekeeper friend of mine in Minnesota has wintered numerous colonies in a single brood chamber. That requires some colony management plus feeding practices with which I am not acquainted. If you would attempt such a practice then you should contact Dennis Lind, of Rochester, MN for details.



With a relatively mild winter and unseasonably warm temperatures, it is possible to find brood as early as middle to late January.

To sum it all up as to preparedness, if you did not get all colonies fully prepared for winter then maybe you have too many colonies. As a professor at Iowa State once said, "you are not keeping bees to the best of your ability".

As of about 15 years ago the Iowa Inspection Service turned their attention to mites and overlooked the possibilities of incidence of American Foul Brood that just might be waiting to be spread. That is just what has happened and the amount of disease among bees is on the rise. Over the 40 years that I was with the Iowa Department of Agriculture, I found it amazing that so many beekeepers throughout the country did not recognize the various stages of AFB, and there are different stages of the disease. At that time less than 10% of the beekeepers could detect American Foul Brood and European Foul Brood. There has been too little instruction and attention paid to bee disease among beginning beekeepers and long time beekeepers as well. To be successful in beekeeping knowing bee diseases is a necessity. There are some slides available that show the diseases very well and everyone should make use of them. Some stages of American Foul Brood are quite difficult to detect. When it gets to the stage where the pupae has dried to a scale (which lays on the bottom side of the cell) it is difficult to see. When AFB develops into that stage it has generally weakened the colony to the point where other colonies have robbed the honey so all colonies in the area will likely be infected. To prevent such a tragedy all beekeepers should inspect their colonies for disease two or three times in the Spring before the surplus honey supers are added and certainly before, or, as the surplus honey is removed. This little extra work could save the spread of disease and great losses.

For many years the control for the disease was burning of all the equipment. Then, along came the use of Terramycin. It worked well. I have worked

with other beekeepers in eradicating the disease and eliminated it in a few colonies of my own. In 1960, out of 25 colonies within one of our apiaries we found five colonies with the first stages of Foul Brood. Terramycin was just becoming into being so we gave it a try. After four treatments that Spring there was no more sign of the disease. Those colonies were inspected five times during the summer but no signs of the AFB was found present. So for two years following that, the colonies were not treated, but the disease never returned. Following that we treated all colonies, spring and fall with a proper treatment of Terramycin and the following more than 35 years we had not one cell of American Foul Brood among our 250 to 300 colonies.

Later Dr. Bill Wilson prescribed the Extender Patty with TM, which many used, we found in some cases the bees

didn't clean out the disease, but built up an immunity to TM.

If two sheets of foundation are palced in every brood chamber every Spring it would keep the combs in better shape to control all disease and even the mites. Give it a try. At least it helps to eliminate Nosema disease.

I am celebrating my 80th year among the honeybees!

Submitted by Glenn Stanley

WEAVER'S famous QUEENS and Package Bees

★ Buckfast

★ All-American

The R Weaver Apiaries, Inc.
16495 CR 319, Navasota, TX 77868

Phone: 936-825-2333

Fax: 936-825-3642

Email: rweaver@tca.net www.rweaver.com



The Iowa Honey Producers Beekeeping class held at Kirkwood School in Washington, Iowa had 6 students. At our last session we were lucky to have Tim Wilbanks (back row left) speak to us about his family's business, Wilbanks Apiaries Inc. in Claxton, Georgia. He told us about growing up with honeybees and raising and packaging bees in Georgia.
Submitted by Ron Wehr

**For All Your Packaging Containers
For Packing Honey**

(No Order Too Large or Small)

BL Plastic Containers



**"We Built Our Business on
Service, Quality, and
Dependability."**

**Elmer C. Lynn
405 Kimberly Lane
Des Moines, IA 50327**

**Phone : 515-266-6112
Fax : 515-266-1112**

**28 YEARS SERVING USA BEEKEEPERS
MAKE US YOUR SOURCE
BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT
CANDLEMAKING EQUIPMENT
SOAPMAKING EQUIPMENT
PACKAGE BEES
QUEENS
UNIQUE CONTAINERS
EXPERT INFORMATION**

HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP

FREE CATALOG ON REQUEST

B & B Honey Farm

**5917 Hop Hollow Road
Houston, Minn. 55943**



**Information 1-507-896-3955
Order Line 1-800-342-4811
Fax 1-507-896-4134
Email bbhoney@acegroup.cc**

**LAPPS BEE SUPPLY
CENTER**

**500 SOUTH MAIN STREET
REESEVILLE, WISCONSIN 53579**

**Beekeeping & Candlemaking
Supplies**

**FREE CATALOG
1-800-321-1960**

Our 20th year serving you.

Mann Lake Ltd.

**See us first for all your supply needs, big or small.
Our knowledgeable staff is ready to serve you!
We offer fast, courteous service at the most
competitive price. Let us give you a quote today.**

**The Only Source You Need
For Beekeeping & Candle
Making Supplies**

**Mann Lake Ltd.
501 S. 1st Street
Hackensack, MN 56452-2001**

**Phone : 800-880-7694
Fax : 218-675-6156
Email beekeeper@mannlakeltd.com**



The natural way to healthy bees

A NEW E.P.A. REGISTERED TREATMENT AGAINST VARROA IN THE USA

Varroa is still "enemy N°1"
for our bees, but it has
become resistant in some
areas to other active ingredients
that were once very effective.
Faced with this situation it is
time to take a new approach...

Varroa: Wake up to the natural efficacy of Apiguard®

A slow release thymol gel, a new and effective treatment

- A natural and non toxic treatment
- Good efficacy against varroa proven with hundreds of trials
- It respects both the hive products and the consumer
- Encourages the hygienic behaviour of the honeybee preventing a number of related problems
- Resistance is controlled and unlikely to occur with Apiguard
- Ease of use: 2 x 50gm treatments trays per hive, with an interval of 14 days, in summer just after the honey flow

Apiguard has a Section 3 general registration in the United States. Check with your nearest Dadant branch for updates on Apiguard registration in your state. We will also post state registrations on our website: www.dadant.com



Vita (Europe) Limited
Investors in Beekeeping
www.vita-europe.com

Available in the U.S. from
Dadant

Dadant & Sons, Inc.
1318 11th Street, P.O. Box 1735
Sioux City, IA 51102
1-877-732-3268 www.dadant.com



The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association
4012 54th St.
Des Moines, IA 50310

ISSUE 3 – March 2006

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DES MOINES, IA
PERMIT NO.
5307



Officers

President: Donna Brahms
65071 720th St.
Cumberland, IA 50843-8125
(712) 774-5878
Mbrahms@netins.net

Vice President: Pat Ennis
1040 Union Ave.
Goodell, IA 50439
(641) 444-4767
Flat_Lander@mailcity.com

Secretary: Mary Ebert
705 Hwy. #1 West
Iowa City, IA 52246
(319) 354-6696
Mebert@netins.net

Treasurer: Gordon Powell
4012 54th St.
Des Moines, IA 50310
(515) 278-1762
labekeepr@earthlink.net

Historian: Doris Ramsey
22781 Route J16
Birmingham, IA 52535
(319) 498-4355
Vdramsey@netins.net

Past President: Curt Bronnenberg
1433 Hull Ave.
Perry, IA 50220
(515) 465-5939
CBronny823@aol.com

District Directors

District #1 Vernie Ramsey
22781 Route J16
Birmingham, IA 52535
(319) 498-4355
Vdramsey@netins.net

District #2 Louise Johnson
34147 310th St.
Guttenberg, IA 52052
(563) 252-2340
LouiseJ@alpinecom.net

District #3 Margaret Hala
1988 Vine Ave.
Marshalltown, IA 50158
(641) 752-2981
Mhala@marshallnet.com

District #4 Phil Ebert
14808 S. 102nd Ave. E.
Lynnville, IA 50153
(641) 527-2639
Ehoney37@netins.net

District #5 Mike Brahms
65071 720th St.
Cumberland, IA 50843-8125
(712) 774-5878
mbrahms@netins.net

District #6 John Humke
2454 30th St.
Ackley, IA 50601
(641) 847-2020
Jane_humke@yahoo.com

Iowa Beekeeper Clubs

Back-to-Basics Beekeeping Club
Contact: Joan Boer
2435 Osburn Ave.
Oskaloosa, IA 52577
(641) 673-9486

Central Iowa Beekeepers
Contact: Pat Randol
2505 Carriage Trail
Winterset, IA 50273
(515) 462-4768
Prandol@fbx.com

Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers
Contact: Frank Pering
210 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50315

East Central Iowa Beekeepers
Contact: Terry Dahms
3086 Sycamore Trail NE
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 338-5919
Terry.dahms@gmail.com

North Iowa Bee Club
Contact: Pat Ennis
1040 Union Ave.
Goodell, IA 50439
(641) 444-4767
Flat_Lander@lycos.com

Additional Links and Emails

Becky Ohrtman
Becky.Ohrtman@idals.state.ia.us

IDALS website
www.agriculture.state.ia.us

National Honey Board
www.NHB.org

Northeast Iowa Beekeepers
Contact: Louise Johnson
34147 310th St.
Guttenberg, IA 52052
(563) 252-2340
LouiseJ@alpinecom.net

Northwest Beekeepers Association
Contact: Jeanne Rust
3155 480th St.
Webb, IA 51366
(712) 838-4458

Southeast Iowa Beekeepers
Contact: Dave Oliver
1603 200th St.
Fairfield, IA 52556
(641) 472-3916

Southwest Iowa Honey Producers
Contact: Mike & Donna Brahms
65071 720th St.
Cumberland, IA 50843
(712) 774-5878

**Robert Haxton, Food Processing Plants,
Iowa Dept. of Inspections and Appeals**
rhaxton@dia.state.ia.us

American Beekeeping Federation website
www.ABFnet.org