

# THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association

Issue: Dec. 2014

## **NEXT MEETING**

Date: Jan. 31, 2015

Time: Winter Hours

12:00 pm Lunch on your own

1:00 pm Business meeting

Where: Bonanza Steakhouse

5029 N.E. 14<sup>th</sup> St.

Des Moines, IA 50313

Speaker: Lex Horan, PANNA

## **SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR NEXT N-EWSLETTER IS: Feb. 1, 2015**

To submit an item by email:  
[jcammcguire@yahoo.com](mailto:jcammcguire@yahoo.com)

To submit an item by U.S. Postal  
Service:

Julia McGuire  
919 45<sup>th</sup> St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265

To add an email subscription, receive  
updates between newsletters, or  
replace your print newsletter with an  
email newsletter, send your email  
address to Julia:

[jcammcguire@yahoo.com](mailto:jcammcguire@yahoo.com)

## **Julia's Note**

With Arvin out of state with a new granddaughter, I would like to invite all CIBA members and friends to our next meeting on Jan. 31, 2015 at Bonanza Family Steak House, 5029 NE 14<sup>th</sup> St. in Des Moines. Our speaker will be **Lex Horan** from the Pesticide Action Network North America (also called PAN or PANNA).

Lex is a community organizer for PAN, and was introduced to me (virtually) as PANNA's resident Midwest neonicotinoid expert. To learn more about Lex, you can go online and read his blog:  
<http://www.panna.org/blog>

Or read his Twitter feed: <https://twitter.com/LexAtPAN>

I know that I've witnessed a neonic conversation or three while among CIBA members, so I believe this program will be relevant and interesting for us as beekeepers. Lex said he was excited to meet our group, and I hope that we can give him a warm welcome.

This issue of the Beeline is different than those in years past – I have included a survey and membership renewal form (soon to be on the website). For the survey: As we enter 2015, I invite everyone to dream up some goals for the club. We can discuss these like we did at our summer meeting, and maybe finalize them at our next meeting. We'll then try to measure those goals and tally the results to see how we did when next December rolls around. For the membership form: The biggest change is adding an email address, which will get the QuickNotes to you. Bring the form to the meeting on Jan. 31!

Thank you for reading,

**Julia**

Editor

## **Review: IHPA Annual Meeting**

By Bill Van Roekel

I have always enjoyed the IHPA annual meeting. I think my first one was in 1983. The 2014 meeting was another good one.

It has always been my intention to arrive early because I do not pre-register. This allows time for registration and I get a chance to visit vendors, which is important for me so that I can see any new equipment, check out prices, and look at the books that are available. I also take advantage of making purchases at this time of anything that I really want before they are sold out. Purchasing at the annual meeting helps encourage vendors to come back, and it saves me shipping costs. Plus you never know who you will see in the vendor room. Often it is the only place I see some old acquaintances. I also like to get to the meeting early so that I am in the room for door prizes.

This year's meeting had a very good and diverse group of speakers, and the ones I saw were interesting. The State Apiarist report is always informative and gives the opportunity to learn of experiences throughout the state, including how the honey crop was for other beekeepers as well as other issues of importance. Andy is very sharp, and I particularly enjoy listening to him speak.

We had several speakers who presented interesting research on the science of bees. Keith Delaplane, Marla Spivak, Amy Toth, Mary Harris, and Mike Goblirsch presented interesting research findings on the work they have been doing.

I did not do well in genetics class, and with Keith Delaplane's presentations, it became more apparent why. It can be complicated. Honey bee genetics are different because of the reproduction methods they have. He did nice understandable presentations of some of the issues with trying to breed a better bee, as well as explaining advantages of the honey bee reproduction system.

Marla Spivak detailed some of the research being done at U of Minnesota, focusing on finding what makes some colonies better at resistance or tolerance to disease and pests. Propolis appears to serve as more than glue. She also invited us to come up to see the new facilities that have been approved and will be built in the next year or so. (One does not have to listen to her for very long to know that the "Genius" award she received was well deserved).

The other presenters also gave interesting talks. One note, Michele Colopy nearly convinced me to tear up my lawn and plant native flowers. I'm not quite ready to do that, but I may try to get some Dutch white clover and seed some of my yard.

I missed one speaker and the business meeting. I would encourage members to attend the business meeting to keep track of where the association spends its (our) money, as well as choosing who you would like to run the IHPA.

I did attend the cheese and wine reception the chamber of commerce provided. It is a very good opportunity to meet people. I got to know a little about one of the speakers and his wife and son, as well as catch up with the pollinator technician from the Plant Introduction Station in Ames.

The banquet is frequently informative and entertaining. The food was good, and I got to meet and talk to some beekeepers from another part of the state. The youth scholarship recipients were introduced, and other awards were also presented. I was privileged to cry the auction for the queen program. I have always enjoyed that.

There were more presentations on Saturday -- some presenters had already spoken, while others gave informative talks. Two of them that interested me were about monitoring the interior of the hive using a computer and in hive sensors. The other was a very basic introduction to mead making. Both were very interesting, and something I may look into in the future.

In addition to speakers and the banquet activities, other portions of the weekend included tables of brochures, catalogs and booklets, including information on our Honey Queen program, and recipes. A new addition that I really think is a good idea, were sheets with contact information on many of the local bee meetings. I was particularly interested since I moved recently and am now wishing to make new contacts in my area.

The other activities of note included the silent auction, where you could pick up interesting bee-related or bee-themed items. There was also a cooking and photography contest, which provided us with some very tasty treats made with honey as the only sweetener.

As I said, I always enjoy the weekend at the IHPA meeting. There was one downside for me. I did not win a single door prize, the quilt raffle, or the beehive. Bummer. In all, it was a great weekend.

## **Letter to the Editor**

*Editor's note: The letter below is reprinted verbatim and was read aloud at CIBA's most recent meeting on Sept. 20, and a discussion was held. Mr. Stanley was acknowledged as a respectable pioneer of our state's apicultural history.*

Hi Margaret,

You may be surprised to hear from me but the Presidents remarks in the letter, of invitation, prompts me to comment.

Arvin is still going along with trying to recommend to others how to keep bees. He has never had any good luck himself.

**Digital newsletters are a new addition to your membership benefits.**

Emailed newsletters arrive quicker than traditional U.S. Postal Service, and will always be available for you to view and/or print if you lose your copy, share with a friend via email, etc. Just visit the website for the archive: [centraliowabeekeepers.org](http://centraliowabeekeepers.org).

**Be sure to mark your membership form for digital or paper newsletter.**

He is recommending feeding sugar syrup in the Fall in an attempt to get the bees through the Winter. We know that 95 percent of colonies lost during the winter is from starvation. Scientists are still looking for more causes and there a few. They don't realize that here in the Midwest it is starvation ALL because in the 190's beekeepers decided to take all honey possible from their bees and feed them Sugar syrup. It is impossible for any colony of bees to carry in enough syrup. Convert it to Invert Sugar and store it for the months ahead.

He also talks about if it is a good practice to wrap the hives in Felt for Winter. This has been proven in many ways that it saves honey as well as the bees.

It seems beekeepers will never learn. Even though the price of honey is \$2.50 in bulk it takes a lot of honey to buy \$90 packages.

Arranging the honey in the hives in the Fall or Winter there should be sufficient honey BUT the last thing is to place three combs of open cells in the center of the upper brood chamber (because that's where the bees prefer to cluster) and will begin brood rearing much earlier in the Spring than if they were in the lower chamber.

You will not hear any of this mentioned at your meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. I'm not sure I will be there but you can bring up my theories if you like.

Arvin knows that My Brother and I were successful beekeepers and Partners for 58 years. From 1950 until we sold the business in 1996 we never bought a pound of sugar and no bees. Just queens. Our colonies regularly produce surplus well above the States average. Think about it.

Glen

N.B. Glen called Margaret on the 20<sup>th</sup> saying that he'd received a letter from the director of Bayer Research Lab in SC. They are very interested in his method of preparing colonies for the winter, loss of bees, pasture, diseases, etc.

## **Minutes for September 2014 meeting**

Submitted by Margaret Hala, CIBA Secretary

None submitted.

## **Program Notes for September 20, 2014**

by Julia McGuire

Beekeeper Craig Greene spoke to the club about the advantages he has seen by using only medium frames and boxes. Flexibility is a given when all your woodenware is the same size. He also fielded questions from those attending, including winter prep and care.

Any suggestions for future speakers can be sent to Arvin at [ajfoell@huxcomm.net](mailto:ajfoell@huxcomm.net) or 515-450-9494.

## **News Around the Region**

### **Friendly Beekeepers of Iowa Meetings**

Contact: Judy Spence (515)988-8397 [jespencejr44@gmail.com](mailto:jespencejr44@gmail.com)

Friendly Beekeepers of Iowa "FBI" is a club in Indianola, IA, organized by the spring class of 2010, which was taught by Mike Wyatt in Indianola. The name FBI was inspired by Mike, who after retiring from the FBI, had to find a hobby. And what started as a hobby has become a passion. He is now teaching beekeeping to others.

As old and new beekeepers know, one can never have too much information or support. That's what the FBI's are all about. Whether you're just curious or a new or experienced beekeeper we'd like to have you join us. Our group is very informal with no rules or regulations.

The FBI will meet the Fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30-8:00 pm, starting March 26, 2015, with a speaker or a roundtable discussion. We currently meet at Calvary Baptist Church, 2708 N Jefferson Way, Indianola, IA 50125. (Note - in June and August we meet at a different location and time so please check with us.) There are no meetings in November thru February.

Our club teaches beginning beekeeping and classes start in February. Andy Joseph, State Apiarist, has written a PowerPoint that we follow. More info on the class is given in this newsletter.

All Are Welcome!! Please come join us!!

Chair Persons,

Judy Spence and Rhonda Heston

### **Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers Meetings**

Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers (DMBB) is an active Facebook group that also holds meetings on the first Thursday of every month. Interested? Join us at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/408704132571829/> or check our website for event details: <http://www.desmoinesbackyardbeekeepers.org/wp/upcoming-events/>

### **Central Iowa Beginning Beekeeping Course**

When: Tuesday evenings, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Feb. 3 through March 10 (6 weeks)

Location: the DCI conference room in the Iowa Laboratory Facility, Ankeny – adjacent to the DMACC campus

Instructor: Andy Joseph, State Apiarist

Price: \$30/person, \$15 each additional family member, and includes everything: tuition, book, handouts, field day expenses, etc. Cash or check made out to "IHPA."

Need more info? Send email to Andy at [andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov)

## **FBI Club Beekeeping Classes Start Feb 5, 2015**

When: Thursdays 6:30-8:30pm, Feb 5 thru March 26, 2015 (8 weeks)

Location: Calvary Baptist Church, 2708 N Jefferson Way, Indianola, IA 50125

Instructor: FBI members, slated by the week

Price: Free for veteran beeks; first time beekeepers are required to purchase [First Lessons in Beekeeping](#) by Keith Delaplane, which will be available for \$8.00. A power point presentation provided by Andy Joseph, State Apiarist, follows the book.

More info: Our club welcomes all levels of beekeepers. Most of us continue to attend the course after the first year, as there is always something new to learn! We are of all ages and willing to help and support all. Please email Judy at [jespencejr44@gmail.com](mailto:jespencejr44@gmail.com) with questions.

## **HOW TO CLEAN BEESWAX**

Here's a couple of articles I found that may be of interest to anyone who is thinking of making candles, beeswax lotion, or something that needs cleaned beeswax and needs to measure the beeswax and convert solid to liquid measurements. It seems like this issue would be a good one to have this info in as the winter is usually when we work on this stuff. -- Margaret

NEEDED----

2 kettles, one larger than the other

stir sticks

metal trivet (canning jar rings work well)

clean plastic tub

hand held screen sieve

paint scraper or similar tool

VIVA BRAND PAPER TOWELS

soft water

old oven mitts and towels are also handy to have

DAY 1----

Fill the larger kettle about 1/2 full of soft water then add well-drained cappings. Heat the water and cappings until they just start to boil, while stirring occasionally. Turn heat down and using the small hand-held sieve, scoop out as much floating debris as possible. Turn off heat and stir gently a few more times then leave till tomorrow.

DAY 2---

Take kettle outside and remove wax from kettle as the remaining bits of wax and debris will plug the plumbing lines. Scrape the slumgum from the bottom of the wax. Rinse well and leave to dry.

DAY 3---

Put the metal trivets and water the large kettle. Put the wax in the small kettle and place it inside the large kettle. Heat the water and keep it to a slow boil. Continue heating even after the wax melts. (The hotter the wax is the thinner it becomes and the easier it flows through the paper towels.)

Line the sieve with a Viva paper towel, set sieve on the plastic tub and pour the VERY hot wax through the lined sieve. Change the paper towel as it clogs with debris.

These clogged paper towels make excellent fire starters for bon fires, etc.

## MEASURING BEESWAX

Usually there is a great difference between liquid volume of an ingredient and its dry weight. This is not true of beeswax.

### **MELTED BEESWAX OR LIQUID MEASURE==EQUALS==SOLID WAX OR DRY WEIGHT**

1 ounce of solid beeswax is equal to 1 ounce liquid measurement of melted beeswax

## LIQUID DISPLACEMENT

Solid beeswax can be measured by displacing liquid. For example to measure 1 TB of beeswax use the following method.

4 TB of liquid equals 1/4 cup, so put 3 TB water into a measuring cup and add lumps of solid beeswax until the water reaches the 1/4 line. Pour off the water and the remaining beeswax is 1 TB. Set the wax aside to dry before using in any formula.

1 TB	1/2 ounce
2 TB or 1 ounce	1 ounce
1/4 cup or 4 TB	2 ounces
1/2 cup or 8 TB	4 ounces or 1/4 pound
1 cup or 16 TB	8 ounces or 1/2 pound
2 cups or 16 ounces	1 pound or 16 ounces

## **Closing Note**

I have a few housekeeping items to discuss, beginning with your membership. Since Iowa weather is so “Iowa,” we may not see each other for a while. If you skim over the by-laws, note

**that membership should be paid by the “opening of the business in March meeting.”**

A few of us have already paid for 2015. Margaret spent time with me to keep our records current and I am writing your membership status here:

Please let Margaret or me know if I need to make a correction to your membership.

Did you notice that I said “skim over the by-laws” up above? If you visit our **new website** <http://centraliowabeekeepers.org>, you will find the by-laws and much more! We can always put more information or different information online —just need to tell Jean ([jean.marie.rhodes@gmail.com](mailto:jean.marie.rhodes@gmail.com)) or Jenny ([jbarrylisw@hotmail.com](mailto:jbarrylisw@hotmail.com)). They sit on our club’s communications committee with me.

Peace to all, Julia

## **CIBA Leadership**

President  
Arvin Foell  
30930 530<sup>th</sup> St.  
Kelley, IA 50134  
515-450-9494

Vice-President  
Mike Brahms  
14922 535<sup>th</sup> St.  
Griswold, IA 51535

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

## **Board of Directors**

Mark Eimers (3 yrs remaining)  
29931 560<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Cambridge, IA 50046

Roy Kraft (2 yrs remaining)  
Box 1  
Goldfield, IA 50542

Tim Weese (1 yr remaining)  
1621 E. Lacona Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50320

## **Membership Committee**

Tiff Ingersoll  
scottandtiff@hotmail.com

## **State Organizations**

Iowa Honey Producers Assn.  
Curt Bronnenberg, President  
1433 Hull Ave.  
Perry, IA 502205  
515-465-5939  
CBronny823@aol.com

Iowa Dept. of Ag and Land  
Stewardship  
Wallace Bdg.  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
515-281-5736

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