



2019 Speakers



Mel Disselkoen

Mel was born on a big farm in South Dakota and has been studying bee behavior for 47 years. He is very passionate about honeybees and has operated hundreds of hives commercially, one would say he knows all aspects of beekeeping. Mel continually teaches both hobbyist and novice beekeepers how to farm honeybees and treat them like livestock to ensure there will be offspring for the following year. He will be speaking about his method of queen rearing as well as his method for overwintering his bees using sugar blocks.

Kirsten Traynor

An avid beekeeper, scientist, and writer, Kirsten has travelled the globe in a beeline, seeking out the best beekeepers, bee breeders and scientists. In 2006-2007, Kirsten received a German Chancellor Fellowship and drove over 50,000 miles throughout Western Europe to study the differences between European and American Beekeeping.

Fascinated with the social complexity of a honeybee hive, she earned her Phd. in biology from Arizona State University with Dr. Robert Page. While a grad student, she spent almost a year in Avignon, France in the lab of Dr. Yves LeConte as a Fullbright Fellow. As a post-doc, Kirsten investigated how pesticides impact honeybee health with Dr. Dennis Van Engelsdorp. She served as editor of American Bee Journal and is the author of “Two Million Blossoms– Discovering the Medicinal Benefits of Honey” and “Simple, Smart Beekeeping”

She manages a small, sustainable apiary– Flickerwood Apiary– where she produces top quality nucs and Maryland reared queens. By using the biology of the bee against the biology of the varroa mite, she keeps her colonies healthy without synthetic chemicals.





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Bill Allinder

Bill is a beekeeper and pollinator habitat conservationist. He is also an enthusiastic foodie and wine collector. Bill is a graduate of the Kansas City Culinary Center's Professional Culinary Arts Program, Series I and II. He has taught honey cooking classes at the Culinary Center, Missouri State Beekeepers Association conferences and Missouri local beekeeper clubs. Bill is an ANSI-Conference for Food Protection certified Food Protection Manager.

Bill operates East of Paradise Honey Farm near Paradise, Missouri. He has converted several acres on his property to pollinator habitat, with locally-sourced, certified native Missouri tall-grass prairie wildflowers. He was the 2001 Clay County Soil and Water Conservation District

Conservationist of the year, and his pollinator habitat is certified as Monarch Watch Waystation #15019.

Bill co-founded the Northland Queen Rearing Program which strives to provide members of the Northland Beekeepers Club in Smithville, Missouri with well-mated, locally adapted bee stock. He is passionate about sustainable beekeeping, and he enjoys hunting wild bee colonies in Vermont as a pastime. Bill is a past Vice President of the Missouri State Beekeepers Association.

He will be giving an informative presentation on cooking with honey as well as hunting wild hives in Vermont. Bill will also serve as a guest expert judge for our cooking contest.



Steve and Becky Tipton

Master Beekeepers, Steve and Becky Tipton, have been keeping bees in Northeastern Kansas for over 30 years. Serious sideliners, Steve and Becky produce honey and make a selection of value-added products including; soaps, lotions, balms, and creamed honey. Steve also makes mead for their own enjoyment.

Their greatest pleasure comes from teaching other beekeepers throughout various outlets such as; the NE/KS Beekeeping Association, Kansas Honey Producers, the Nebraska Beekeepers Association, Mother Earth News and the American Beekeeping Federation.

Steve and Becky have also taught a beginning beekeeping class for 6 years at the local community center as well as mentor many area beekeepers. Both Steve and Becky have been active in local associations, holding a variety of offices. They don't just want to make more beekeepers, they want to help people be great beekeepers!

Becky will be giving a couple live demos on making soaps and wax products like lotions and salves as well as a presentation on hive communication. Steve will be sharing his knowledge of Varroa management and tips and tricks on managing your hives throughout winter and early spring.



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Jeannie Saum—BEEpothecary

Jeannie Saum— B.S.Ed, M.Ed, is a retired educator of 36 years, a beekeeper and co-owner of BEEpothecary, a small business that produces dietary supplements, skincare and shaving products made with beehive resources. Jeannie is an avid crafter, gardener, and writer, providing magazine articles about beekeeping and hive resources. She speaks at bee clubs, bee conferences, and festivals about the amazing health benefits of beehive resources and the many value-added products that can be made. She is excited to have the opportunity to share BEEpothecary's passion for beehive resources and teach others about Health-Powered by BEES!!

Jeannie will be presenting on the less popular hive resources; pollen, propolis, and bee venom. She will discuss how to harvest, clean and the various uses and health benefits of these products. Jeannie will also be giving a two part informative presentation on how to start up your own products of the hive business. She will discuss the ins and outs of what you need to get started, label, sell and market your products.

Rebecca Masterman— UMN Bee Squad Associate Program Director

Rebecca Masterman first worked for the UMN Bee Lab as an undergraduate in 1992, and returned in 2012 as the Bee Squad's Associate Program Director and Coordinator.

Becky graduated from UMN Twin Cities with a B.A. (major in history, minor in biology) and then obtained a Ph.D. in Entomology studying the neuroethology of honey bee hygienic behavior under the direction of Dr. Marla Spivak.



Bridget Mendel— UMN Bee Squad Program Manager and Grant Writer



Bridget takes care of bees, teaches classes for beekeepers and the public, and manages interdisciplinary, pollinator– focused programs including Bee Arts and the HMR Pollinator Project. She also writes grants and communications for Bee Squad's programs and research projects. Outside of Bee Squad, she teaches creative writing to college students. Her own work has appeared in DUSIE, NOO Journal, Beekeeper's Quarterly, and Nous Zot Press. She is the recipient of a Minnesota Emerging Writers Grant, and holds a B.A. from Northwestern University and a MFA in Creative Nonfiction from UMN.



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Brooke Sommerfeldt—Bee Research Technician and Outreach Coordinator



Brooke Sommerfeldt manages bees and serves as the Program Coordinator for Bee Squad's Pollinator Ambassadors Program. She also gives pollinator talks to groups throughout the Twin Cities. Brooke first discovered her interest in bees while doing research at the University of Wisconsin-Stout when she completed her undergraduate degree in Applied Science with a concentration in Biotechnology.

Jenny Warner - UMN Bee Squad Team Leader and Beekeeper

Jenny Warner has been a valued member of the UMN Bee Lab since 1997 and is a founding member of the UMN Bee Squad. She graduated with a B.S. in Horticultural Food Production and a minor in Soil Science from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.



Jessica Helgen - UMN Bee Squad Team Leader and Mentoring Apiary Coordinator

Jessica Helgen is a founding member of the Bee Squad, and she loves meeting beekeepers from Minnesota and around the world! She fell in love with beekeeping on a study abroad trip to Southern India in college. After graduating from St. Olaf College in 2006 with a B.A in Biology, she started working for the UMN Bee Lab, then returned to India for a Fullbright fellowship to study Asian honey bees (*Apis Cerana*). In 2013 she traveled to Yunnan, China to teach beekeeping to farmers. Jessica currently coordinates the Mentoring Apiary Program, which provides hands-on training to hobby beekeepers. She is most proud of convincing new beekeepers to try gloveless beekeeping!



Peggy Ennis

I have been married to Pat, my beekeeper husband for 15 years. Pat has been beekeeping since the 1980's. Beekeeping was totally foreign to me at that time, but wow, amazed at the fantastic products the hive produces!

Pat is very passionate about honey bees and beekeeping, and one of our 'first dates' was to one of his bee yards, and I thought, "This is interesting"..... Shortly after our marriage, he took me to my first IHPA's annual meeting, back then it was held in Marshalltown IA, and there, I meet some of the most friendly, interesting and quirky people all sharing their passion of beekeeping. That was my introduction to the world of beekeeping, and I've been enjoying it ever since.

We teach a beginning beekeeping class in Mason City @ NIACC. and are members of the Iowa Honey Producers Association, the North Iowa Beekeepers club and Boone River Beekeepers Club.

Together we own and operate P & P Honey and Bee Supply, Inc., located in north central Iowa in Goodell, offering and producing honey, beeswax, queens, nucs, packages and equipment.