



# The Buzz

*Newsletter of the Iowa Honey Producers Association*



October 2014



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November 14th-15th—IHPA Annual Meeting—Marshalltown, IA



**For Sale:** Medium and Deep boxes with frames (no foundations) \$35.00 each. Also have Bottoms, Lids, and other misc. for sale. Also have Top Bars at 30 bars large, very nice, \$375.

Andrew Jenkins  
Tipton, Iowa  
Call 563-889-2632

**For Sale:** 4 drums of honey. Also several buckets @ \$2.10/lb. Contact Jeremy Van Donselaar Cedar, Iowa, 641-672-9598 or [jkctlb17@hotmail.com](mailto:jkctlb17@hotmail.com)

**For Sale:** 8 beehives reconditioned; some new parts, 90% complete, new paint, state inspected.  
3 bee smokers  
1 honey extractor

Call Dave at 319-331-6590

**FOR SALE:** Beekeeping Equipment and supplies - Goodell IA  
Offering reasonably priced new and some used beekeeping supplies and equipment.  
For more information, please call Pat @ 515-293-2601

**For sale:** Plastic uncapping tank, complete with honey gate and pivot bar \$85.

Contact [fieldstonefarms@netins.net](mailto:fieldstonefarms@netins.net).

**FOR SALE:** 1 yr old Dadant Water Jacketed Mini Melter for \$800.

Call: 641-477-8521.

**Wanted:** 55 gal drums in good condition for honey.

Call Curtis at 319 480-2915

**For sale:** Bees in 9 5/8 in 10 frame hive body with 9 frames.

\$130.00 each.

Call Curtis at 319 480-4209

**FOR SALE:** screen bottom boards, telescopic covers and 1 gallon frame feeders. For pricing on used equipment, call 641-477-8521.

**FOR SALE:** Bee Blower with new hoses. Same as shown in Dadant catalog page (M00780 - MRP \$529), has Tecumseh engine. \$225.  
Call: 641-477-8521.

### Annual Meeting Contest Judges

If you are interested in being a judge or helping out at the annual meeting in Marshalltown on November 14 & 15, please contact Eli for more details.

Tel 641-512-4728 or email [fieldstonefarmsbiz@gmail.com](mailto:fieldstonefarmsbiz@gmail.com).

Look forward to hearing from you.  
Eli  
IHPA vp

### Explore Honeybees!

I am writing a book for kids titled Explore Honeybees. The finished product will be 96 pages long and include 25 activities to help kids understand more about honeybees.

The book will be sold nationwide with a strong push in the educational market. Nomad Press, the publisher, is looking for the names and email addresses of people to preview the book and provide a short review or quote that could be used on the back cover. If you are an educator or work with kids, even better.

I estimate the edited manuscript with art will be available for review some time this winter. It would be sent electronically. I do not personally select the previewers, I only send a list to the publisher and they make the contacts. If are interested or want more information about this book or my previous books, please contact me.

Cindy Blobaum  
[cindybb@juno.com](mailto:cindybb@juno.com)  
(wife of beekeeper and IHPA member Philip).



### The Buzz Newsletter Article Submissions

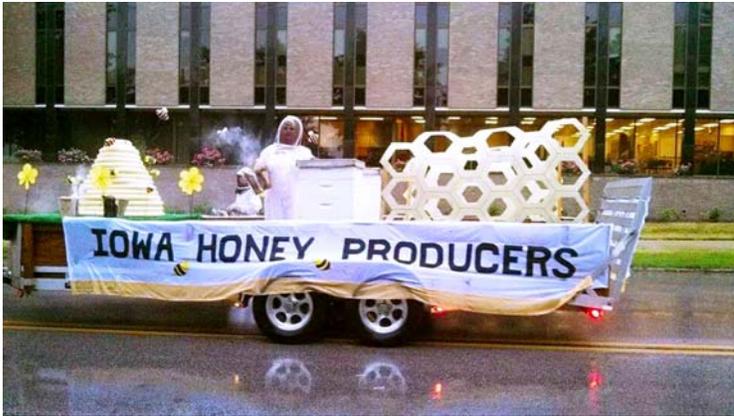
Please send submissions, classified ads, and photos to Alex` Ebert by email to [TheBuzz@ABuzzAboutBees.com](mailto:TheBuzz@ABuzzAboutBees.com) (also alex.ebert@eberthoney.com) or by mail to The Buzz, c/o Phil Ebert, 14808 S. 102<sup>nd</sup> Ave. E., Lynnville, IA 50153. **The deadline for submissions is the 10th 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.

## Iowa Honey Queen

Hello Everyone!

The Iowa State Fair is over for the year, and I had a wonderful time attending it. While at the fair, I gave presentations, cooking demonstrations, and hosted kid's activities. I was also interviewed on various radio stations, and appeared on TV several times! It was an exciting experience I won't ever forget, and I'm going to use this article to tell you all about my highlights from each day I spent at the fair.

August 6<sup>th</sup> I was a judge in the Foods Made With Honey competition. It was my first time being a judge, and the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> I had a crash course on the finer points of judging food. The competition was based off taste, presentation, texture, and use of honey. Before the judging began, I was incredibly nervous I wouldn't know what to do. It didn't help that judging took place in front of many of the people who entered the foods. However, I quickly adapted to the environment, and in the end I had a great time.



That night, the IHPA entered a float in the State Fair Parade. The float, which was designed by the marvelous Julie Swett, won first place as the Most Creative Commercial Float. It was even shown on television.



August 7<sup>th</sup> was the official first day of the fair. In the morning, I met up with Bill Northey, the Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. He loved the honey lemonade served at the IHPA booth. If you've never had honey lemonade, you're missing out. I admittedly drank about 5 to 6 glasses of the tasty treat every day.



August 8<sup>th</sup> I learned how to run the Honey Lemonade cash register. I also spent more time with Ciera and Starlette, my two short, teenage body guards who guided me around the fair.



I became a professional candle roller on August 9<sup>th</sup>. Candle rolling is a fundraiser for the Iowa Honey Queen Program. Fair goers can pay a dollar to roll a sheet of wax and a wick into their very own candle. Kids and adults alike love the activity.



August 10<sup>th</sup> was all about presentations. Throughout the entire fair, I gave a daily presentation in the Animal Learning Center. It was a lot of fun to get up on stage and educate the public. Afterwards, I had a question and answer session, followed by photos with the public. In those moments I felt like a true celebrity.





August 11<sup>th</sup> I put temporary IHPA bee tattoos on everyone who would let me. I would conservatively guess I applied several hundred tattoos over the course of the fair.



In addition, I had the opportunity to take a photo with my favorite childhood cartoon character, Arthur.



I presented a cooking demonstration on August 12<sup>th</sup>. I made no-bake energy bites in front of an audience, and they all had the opportunity to sample the delicious treat. For each demonstration, I had a kid from the audience come up and help me out. They loved being involved.



I spoke on the Van and Bonnie show on August 14<sup>th</sup>. While on the air, we discussed the IHPA's booth at the fair and ways citizens can help take care of the honeybee population.



The same day, I talked on STAR 102.5 about the importance of honeybees to our food supply.



August 13<sup>th</sup> I enjoyed meeting people outside the Agriculture building. I also had the pleasure of spending some time with Jeralyn Westercamp, the Iowa Honey Princess, when she stopped by the fair for a couple hours.

August 15<sup>th</sup> was very similar to my other days because I gave presentations, rolled candles, and sold lemonade. However, it was different because I met a very young princess who was thrilled to meet a queen. I always love taking pictures with kids, and this little girl was all smiles.



## Newsletter



The Kid and Bee expo was held on August 16<sup>th</sup>. I presented fun facts, taught kids how to make seed bombs, and posed for pictures. In addition, the IHPA set up a bean bag toss game, provided coloring sheets, and took turns wearing the bee costume.

Have you moved? Are you getting ready to move? Will you be a snow bird this winter by going somewhere warm? If you answered yes to any of these questions, please contact Rhonda Heston to give her your new address or when you will be back to the address on file.

When the Buzz Newsletter is mailed from the printer, the association pays bulk rate postage. If a newsletter is returned to Rhonda for a bad address or temporarily away, the association pays \$.70 per newsletter. When the newsletter is mailed to the corrected address, we pay an additional \$.70 in postage.

Currently there are three members that we cannot send the Buzz out to because of the address and we don't have a phone number to call. Douglas Mencl, Bobbi Finarty and Brad Jacobs please contact Rhonda with your correct address. [R.Heston@yahoo.com](mailto:R.Heston@yahoo.com) or 515-724-2124.

Please help keep our membership list current. Thank you.

August 17<sup>th</sup> I had to say goodbye to everyone I spent the week with. I was very sad because I had grown close to many people I now miss. I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who supported and cared for me throughout the fair. Pat Ennis, Heidi Godwin, Steve and Rhonda Heston, and my fair mom, Connie Bronnenberg were constantly around to guide me. The fair would not have been the same without them. I would also like to thank all the other volunteers who worked at the IHPA's booth. It is amazing how smoothly the whole process runs with all the yellow-shirted people working together. If you didn't get the chance to help out this year, I encourage you to sign up for a shift in 2015. I know I'll be going back for more!



This year, I found out for myself it is true "Nothing Compares" to the Iowa State Fair. I had a wonderful time representing the IHPA, and I look forward to working at the booth in the years to come.

Best wishes to all of you,  
Gabrielle Hemesath



Jeralyn Westercamp promoting Iowa Honey in Paris, France in August 2014



## IHPA Awards

If you know of somebody the IHPA should recognize please contact Curt Bronnenberg at (515) 465-5939. A brief written description of the nominees involvement in beekeeping/ IHPA would be appreciated. These awards are given out during the Annual Meeting so please send in your nominees as soon as possible.

- **Life Time Membership Award**
- **Pioneer Award** for having been involved in beekeeping for 50 years or more and still active in beekeeping.
- **Distinguished Service Award** for assisting other beekeepers, willing to share information, and/or serving the state association.
- **Education Award** for teaching beekeeping classes, speaking at service clubs, giving presentations to school children or speaking about beekeeping on radio or T.V.
- **Promotions Award** for promoting honey and beekeeping, promotions for the state association or promoting their own product.
- **Friendship Award** for being a friend of the association. This could be someone who has displayed at the annual IHPA trade show, a state official who has assisted or encouraged beekeeping. They do not need to be a of our beekeeping community.
- **Youth Award** for a youth person who has shown commendable involvement in such things as helping at the state or county fair, successfully keeping bees for at least one season including wintering, writing, making a float for a parade, speaking, etc.

## New cash registers

At the State Fair our existing cash registers were replaced with registers that had scanners attached and accepted credit cards on the registers. The registers seemed to make the checkout process easier this year. There were a few hiccups at first, but that happens when processes change.

Comments from our volunteers were positive. If you have any suggestions to improve the process, please contact Rhonda Heston at [R.Heston@yahoo.com](mailto:R.Heston@yahoo.com) or 515-245-6123.

## WORKING FOR BEEKEEPERS!

Glen L. Stanley,  
President, Apiary Inspectors Of  
America, emeritus,  
Huxley, Iowa 50124.

As it becomes common knowledge that I recently had an opportunity to contact the Bayer, bee Research Organization in North Carolina with information about the bee losses throughout the Midwest , most beekeepers will feel I am against beekeepers. Quite the opposite is the case and people in industry from coast to coast, border to border know that all these years I have always worked to better beekeeping.

As you examine the situation closely it becomes evident most the loss is from starvation. The extensive losses of colonies during the Winter months is common knowledge and the Scientists at the Bayer Research are adding that knowledge with whatever else they may develop.

That Research Center has many Scientists and hundreds of employees. They are researching many products. The Commissioner of Agriculture in N. Carolina is behind their effort as he recognizes the importance of bees to agriculture. That is a plus to the entire situation which few states have.

All the Scientists in the world cannot change what is happening in the Midwest , only beekeepers can fix it.

## Honeybees Endure the Sting of Colony Collapse Disorder

posted on September 17, 2014

*The western honeybee is the world's premier managed species of pollinators. More than 100 crops are highly dependent on the insects, and bee pollination's value to the U.S. agricultural industry is valued \$15 billion annually. Between 1947 and 2005, the number of bee colonies in the United States declined more than 40 percent. The plunge accelerated in the 1980s, when parasitic mites were accidentally brought into America.*

*But in Iowa, apiarists have been busy as the bees themselves trying to protect the essential labor force. David Miller explains.*

It's early spring and nearly 60 people have gathered for the Central Iowa Honey Producers' annual auction. The sale, with its reconditioned and specially-made wares – caters to small-scale beekeepers that own or work with just a few colonies of honeybees. The exchange of tools of the trade carries on for a few hours but the more pressing matter for these apiarists is the battle to restore the U.S. honeybee population. They are in a fight to stop what is commonly called colony collapse disorder or CCD. Arvinn Foell, president of the Central Iowa Honey Producers Association, considers himself to be on the front lines.

Arvin Foell - Kelly, Iowa, Central Iowa Honey Producers Association: "Colony collapse; there's no magic bullet. All beekeepers are looking for a magic bullet but I'm afraid it's not there. I think beekeepers have to be very contentious about their job and watch their bees. And that's what we're gonna have to do. We're just gonna have to be more proactive with that."."

While experts believe there's no single cause for CCD, they do say it's a combination of harsh weather, deadly disease, toxic chemicals and a parasite known as the Varroa Mite.



of commercial honey-  
bee colonies poses a  
threat to the economic  
stability of commercial  
beekeeping and pollina-  
tion operations in the  
United States, which could have pro-  
found implications for agriculture and  
food.”

New federal guidelines notwithstanding,  
work has already begun at Spring Valley  
Honey Farms in Iowa. Besides selling  
raw honey by the 55-gallon drum, as  
well as products like beeswax candles  
and creamed honey, the 3-decade old  
operation supports 3,600 honeybee colo-  
nies and is selling bees to help resupply  
those who are in the fight against CCD  
shop.

In Iowa, for instance, the coldest  
winter in 35 years decimated  
honeybee populations in 2013.  
State officials estimate between  
60 and 65 percent of the state’s  
honeybees didn’t survive. Be-  
cause some of the bees were  
unable to get enough food—  
what humans prefer to call hon-  
ey – they simply starved.

According to some scientists,  
pesticides and other chemicals  
also have done considerable  
damage to bee colonies. Jason  
Foley, an urban beekeeper, rais-  
es Russian queen bees for sale to hobby-  
ists and professional producers. Foley  
believes one way to help reduce the ef-  
fects of CCD is proper placement of the  
hives.  
Jason Foley, Des Moines, Iowa: “Year  
one: the bees come back with pollen that  
builds up a concentration in the wax.  
Year two: that wax gets more concen-  
trated. Year three, four, five, etc. 'til it  
gets to a tipping point that these young  
bees are being raised in wax that is just  
saturated with these systemic pesticides.  
And the systemics affect the bees nerv-  
ous system and that's the main thing  
with the neonicatoids with the honey-  
bee. The nervous system is affected in a  
way that when it hits that tipping point  
they have a hard time navigating back to  
the hive and they get lost.”

Honeybees also must battle various  
mites that threaten to destroy entire col-

onies. The Varroa Mite, a parasite that

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attaches itself to bees and infiltrates  
their hives, can devastate bee popula-  
tions in a few short months.  
The combined effect has been a decline  
in honeybee populations of up to 50 per-  
cent annually in some regions. That’s a  
major concern for Iowa beekeepers and  
it’s even drawn the attention of the  
White House.

In June, President Obama called for a  
federal strategy to promote the health of  
honeybees and other pollinators. The  
Agriculture Department has made \$8  
million available to farmers and ranch-  
ers in five states to establish new and  
improved honeybee habitats.

In a proclamation, Obama cited USDA  
data indicating that, “Honeybee pollina-  
tion alone adds more than \$15 billion in  
value to agricultural crops each year in  
the United States.” “The continued loss

Pat Ennis, Spring Valley Honey  
Farms: “Basically with the win-  
ter die-off here in Iowa, a lot of  
beekeepers need new bees,  
there's not enough beekeepers  
here in Iowa to produce all  
these. There's probably six or  
seven producers in Iowa that sell  
packaged bees to the hobbyist  
beekeeper so they can get new  
bees to start out the next year.”  
Spring Valley also does a brisk  
business renting its hives to fruit  
and nut tree producers. After

helping pollinate Iowa’s orchards in the  
summer, the bees are shipped to the  
west coast for winter work on Califor-  
nia’s \$4 billion almond crop.

But without conservation efforts taken  
on the front lines by keepers like Foell,  
Foley, Ennis and other apiarists around  
the country, bee populations will likely  
continue to decline due to parasites, pes-  
ticides and other perils.

For Market to Market, I’m David  
Miller.

Thanks to Arvin and Jeanne Foell for  
letting us know about the article.



**102<sup>nd</sup> Annual meeting of the  
Iowa Honey Producers Association  
November 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Best Western Regency Inn, Marshalltown, Iowa**

It's meeting time again!! The annual meeting of the Iowa Honey Producers Association will be held Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> in Marshalltown, Iowa at the Best Western Regency Inn (641-752-6321), located at 3303 South center Street.

**Room rates are:** The Best Western Regency Inn for double occupancy is \$73.00 plus tax.  
The Super 8 is \$60.00 plus tax.

**To get the above convention special rate, these rooms need to be reserved by October 30<sup>th</sup>, also please mention the Iowa Honey Producers when reserving the rooms.**

Telephone numbers are: Best Western (641) 752-6321 and Super 8 (641) 753-3333.  
For best availability, advisable to book early.



Keynote speakers this year are: **Dr Keith Delaplane**, entomology professor at the University of Georgia, author, and well known columnist in the American Bee Journal. **Dr Marla Spivak** entomology professor at University of Minnesota, author, researcher, instrumental in forming Bee Informed Tech-Transfer Team. Additional speakers will be **Mary Harris**, assistant Professor, *Iowa State University, Department of Entomology; Natural Resource Ecology & Management*, **Amy Toth**, assistant Professor, *Iowa State University, Departments of Ecology, Evolution & Organismal Biology and Entomology*.

Please think about entering our photo contest, cooking with honey contest, mead contest, hive body paint design (**NEW category**) or bringing items for the queen and silent auction! Consider attending the banquet, enjoying fellowship with your fellow beekeepers.



**Entry information for the photo contest, cooking with honey contest, mead contest, and hive body paint design contest are printed on page 10.**



**IOWA HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION  
102<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
BEST WESTERN REGENCY INN,  
MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA on NOVEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> & 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NO. OF COLONIES: \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS BEEKEEPING: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL MEETING PRE-REGISTRATION IS OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup> (NO EXCEPTIONS).  
 If you can only attend one day, no discounts can be given. No refunds will be given after November 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Annual Meeting Fee:**

Individual:

Registration after October 31<sup>st</sup> will be \$30.00 / Before Oct 31<sup>st</sup> \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Couple/Family Rate:

Registration after October 31<sup>st</sup> will be \$45.00 / Before Oct 31<sup>st</sup> \$40.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Queen Luncheon - Friday noon (pre-registration required by October 31<sup>st</sup>, per new hotel management)**

Number of tickets (per person) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets (per child 4-12 yrs) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$12.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Banquet - Friday night 6:30 PM**

Number of tickets (per adult) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets (per child 4-12 yrs) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$19.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Pre-registrations received by October 31<sup>st</sup>, will enter drawing for 2 free banquet meals! \**

**2014 MEMBERSHIP DUES:**

IHPA membership dues (includes subscription to "The Buzz" newsletter) \$20.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Family membership with same address Name: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 5.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Family membership with same address Name: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 5.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**\*\* NOTE: Paid 2014 membership is required to vote at the business meeting.\*\***

**Return this completed form, together with your payment to:**

Rhonda Heston, IHPA Treasury, 52735 187<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Chariton, Iowa 50049

**Please make checks payable to: Iowa Honey Producers Association**

Any questions about the annual meeting, please contact Eli Kalke (IHPA VP) at  
[fieldstonefarms@netins.net](mailto:fieldstonefarms@netins.net) or call 641-477-8521.



# 2014 Iowa Honey Producers Association Conference and Tradeshow

## Schedule at a Glance *(subject to change)*

<b>Thursday, November 13</b>	Board Meeting
<b>Friday, November 14</b>	TBA - <i>Dr. Keith Delaplane MBE</i> Bee Health and Pesticide Research, plus update on new Bee Lab - <i>Dr. Marla Spivak</i> Youth Program - <i>Mike Swett</i> * Queen Luncheon State Apiarist Report - <i>Andy Joseph</i> State Fair Honey Booth - <i>bid and exhibit process explained</i> Contest results BEE Inspired - <i>Kelly Boon</i> Business Meeting
<b>Morning &amp; afternoon</b>	
<b>Evening:</b>	Cheese & Wine Social ** IHPA Annual Banquet, awards, live auction, queen coronation
<b>Saturday, November 15</b>	Making Mead - <i>Andy Hemken</i> TBA - <i>Dr. Keith Delaplane MBE</i> Protect Pollinators and Beekeepers - <i>Michelle Colopy (Pollinator Defense Council)</i> Planter Corn Dust (research and update) - <i>Dr. Mary Harris</i> Lunch on your own Beehive Bioserver - <i>Robert Lelewski</i> What Beekeepers Need to do to Help Bees Through Winter and How Bees Regulate Temperatures - <i>Dr. Mike Goblirsch (Marla Spivak PhD graduate)</i> Honey Bee Research at IA State University: Nutrition, Viruses, Genes & Behavior - <i>Dr. Amy Toth/Dr. Adam Dolezal</i> Complete bee hive raffle winner announced
<b>Morning &amp; afternoon</b>	

\* Registration deadline is October 31st

\*\* Pre-registrations received by October 31st enter drawing for two banquet meals

Full agenda showing times is planned in the November Buzz Newsletter, which can be viewed sooner by visiting [www.abuzzaboutbees.com](http://www.abuzzaboutbees.com)  
Any questions please contact Eli Kalke at [fieldstonefarmsbiz@gmail.com](mailto:fieldstonefarmsbiz@gmail.com) or 641-512-4728.



### ***Rules for the Photo Contest:***

- Photo must be matted but not framed
- Any size photo will be accepted for this competition
- Your name needs to be on the backside of the photo

### **Categories to be submitted will include:**

1. Bee on Flower
2. General beekeeping
3. Marketing or Promotion
4. Extracting Honey or Specific Photos pertaining to Honey

### ***Rules for the Cooking Contest:***

- Honey is to be the only sweetener
- Please submit your recipe with your entry
- Judges will keep recipes to be included in the "Buzz"
- Your name needs to be on the back of the recipe card

### **Categories to be submitted will include:**

1. Desserts
2. Bars or Cookies
3. Drinks
4. Cakes
5. Breads
6. Appetizers or Snacks

### **Entries could be judged on:**

- Presentation of entry
- Best use of honey
- Amount of honey used (compared to other entries in category)
- Flavor of entry
- Overall appearance of entry

*(Judges reserve the right to determine how to best judge the entries)*

### ***Rules for Mead Judging Contest:***

- Supply at least two bottles of Mead
- Mead will be judged on the rules of the State Fair
- Mead will be judged on alcohol strength, sweetness, carbonation, temperature, taste, and presentation
- Your name needs to be written on paper provided in the contest room

### **Categories to be submitted will include:**

1. Traditional Meads
2. Molemel (Fruit Meads)
3. Metheglyn (Spiced Meads)

*Bring extra bottles of Mead to share at the "Wine and Cheese" party by the pool Friday night.*

### ***Rules for Hive Body Paint Design Contest:***

- Two categories:
  - adult (16 years of age or older)
  - youth (15 years of age or younger)
- Your name needs to be on written on paper provided in the contest room
- The use of stenciling not allowed
- Hand painted design to cover a minimum of one side of the hive body

### **Categories to be submitted will include:**

1. Theme of your choice

## **University of Maryland kicks off Sentinel Hive project! Donate TODAY!**

Sentinel Hives monitor honey bee health in real-time using hive scales, monthly disease assessments, and pollen traps to determine available plant forage. The scale data is automatically transmitted to the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) database and the patterns of nectar flow mapped. Our UMD diagnostic team turns around the varroa mite and disease analysis quickly, so that beekeepers can take action. The goal of the Sentinel Hives is that they become early warning systems. We can then alert beekeepers of potential problems due to increases in disease or lack of nutritional resources. The campaign page includes a video that explains our project in greater detail:

<https://www.launch.umd.edu/honeybees>

We have launched our Sentinel Hive program, but we need your help in spreading the word. The vanEngelsdorp bee research lab was selected by the U of Maryland's crowdfunding program LAUNCH. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 by Oct. 22 to fund a pilot program of 10 Sentinel Hives with pollen and disease monitoring. Money raised above our goal will fund extra Sentinel Hives.

Any \$2,000 donation receives a talk by Dr. Dennis vanEngelsdorp to your group. He will travel out-of-state, so long as his travel expenses are covered. Or if your club would like to be included in the Sentinel Hive program, a \$2,000 donation will fund a dual hive system and two years of monitoring.

Bee Culture Magazine and The Medina County Beekeepers are kicking in \$2,000.00. Now's your chance to get

involved. Check out the web page and make a donation today.

Courtesy of Kim Flottum/Bee Culture magazine



## Buzz Quilts

The 2014 Buzz Quilts have been completed. If you worked at the Iowa State Fair, you might have noticed the Quilts as part of the Booth décor. With two quilts this year, the plan is to raffle one quilt and put one in the live auction at the Annual Meeting in Marshalltown on Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>. Raffle tickets will be \$5 each or 5 for \$20 again this year. Buzz Quilt #1 will be auctioned on Friday night. The Raffle winner of Buzz Quilt #2 will be drawn at the close of the Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact Rhonda Heston 515-724-2124



## EUROPEAN BEES OVERWINTERING LOSSES OF COLONIES SINK TO RECORD LOW

(Don't miss reading these important reports, URLs given in the article)

European bees are much healthier than many recent publications appear to suggest. New field data from nearly 400,000 bee colonies from 21 countries in Europe and the Mediterranean show that overwintering losses of honey bee colonies – a leading indicator of general bee health – are at their lowest level in years.

The non-profit honey bee research association COLOSS (prevention of honey bee COlony LOSSes - <http://www.coloss.org>), which comprises more than 360 scientific professionals from 60 countries, has published new data ([www.coloss.org/announcements/losses-of-honey-bee-colonies-over-the-2013-14-winter](http://www.coloss.org/announcements/losses-of-honey-bee-colonies-over-the-2013-14-winter)) showing that the overall mortality rate of bees in the 2013/2014 winter was nine percent – in Europe, losses below 10 percent are considered to be normal\*. This compares with losses between 30 and 34 percent in the UK and Belgium during the 2012/2013 winter season.

Mite infestations impact overwintering

In winter, honey bees are generally not active

outside the hive; they are very busy inside taking steps to ensure the colony's survival. They continue to access stored food – honey and pollen – and generate heat within the hive to protect the queen. If adequate provisions have not been made during the summer and fall, e.g. by the bee keeper, then a colony is likely to collapse by the following spring because of starvation. Another major factor affecting honey bee colonies in the winter is mite infestation – the greatest threat is from the Varroa mite.

The coordinator of the COLOSS Working Group, Dr Romée van der Zee from the Dutch Centre for Bee Research, explains, “The contributions of many factors which are correlated to colony losses seem to be very dependent on weather conditions. Colonies built their brood nests late because of the relatively cold spring in 2013. This may have decreased the number of reproductive cycles of the parasitic Varroa mite, producing fewer mites. Good weather in the summer then provided excellent foraging opportunities.”

Neonicotinoids do not cause harm to bee health in farming practice

Restrictions on neonicotinoids came into force in Europe in December 2013 as a result of the European Commission's concerns that this group of crop protection products, which is

used to control pests that damage field crops such as corn and oilseed rape, might pose a risk to bees. Many scientific studies, field monitoring data and risk assessments, however, have shown neonicotinoids do not cause harm to bees under real-life field conditions when they are used responsibly and properly, according to label instructions.

“It seems that everyone is looking for just one culprit of reduced bee health and colony losses, but you can't point the finger of blame at a single factor. Bees are facing multiple challenges around pests and pathogens, loss of habitat, and poor farming and beekeeping practices. Pollination matters to agriculture, hence safe-

guarding the health of bees is a shared responsibility of all the partners involved: farmers, beekeepers and industry,” says Annette Schürmann, Head of the Bayer Bee Care Center in Monheim, Germany.

This is underscored by a landmark study published in May 2014 in the Proceedings of the Royal Society (<http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/281/1786/20140558.full>). A group of international scientists led by Professor Charles Godfray and Professor Angela McLean, University of Oxford, analyzed the natural science evidence base relevant to neonicotinoid insecticides and insect pollinators. They concluded that “there is poor geographical correlation between neonicotinoid use and honeybee decline”.

Australia and New Zealand: bee industry in good shape

This is supported by findings outside Europe. A parliamentary report ([http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/50DBSCH\\_SCR56864\\_1/34a0a5f2526c4db590c2b0330083d8af2313b150](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/50DBSCH_SCR56864_1/34a0a5f2526c4db590c2b0330083d8af2313b150)) on bee health published by the Primary Production Committee in New Zealand in July 2014 confirms, “There is currently no evidence of the disorder [Colony Collapse] in New Zealand, although these pesticides [neonicotinoids] are commonly used here as a seed dressing and as foliar sprays. We heard that when anecdotal evidence of losses is investigated, the causes seem to be mainly Varroa or starvation rather than pesticides.” The report notes that honey production and exports are rising.

The regulatory authorities in Australia also investigated the potential effect of neonicotinoid seed treatments on bee health. Their report “Neonicotinoids and the health of honey bees in Australia,” ([http://archive.apvma.gov.au/news\\_media/chemicals/bee\\_and\\_neonicotinoids.php](http://archive.apvma.gov.au/news_media/chemicals/bee_and_neonicotinoids.php)) published in March 2014, confirms that the introduction of the neonicotinoids in Australia has brought a number of benefits such as healthy crops and more productivity, noting also that they are considerably more favorable for humans (and other mammals) than the older products they have replaced.

\*Historical losses in the U.S. range between 10 - 15 percent. According to the USDA report released in May of this year, overwintering losses in the U.S. also improved significantly compared to previous years.



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# The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association  
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