BEGINNER BEEKEEPING COURSES SCHEDULED

The Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) and several other beekeeping groups will conduct beekeeping courses in several locations across the state to help those interested in beekeeping get started. For 2012, course locations and details are listed as follows:

Winterset Library – Classes to begin in March.  Pat Randol, Instructor. Contact Pat at 515-210-7445 or pdrandol@gmail.com for details.

Ankeny, Iowa Lab Facility – Classes begin Thursday, January 19th and will meet for seven consecutive Thursdays, 6:00 – 8:00 PM.  Instructors: John Johnson & Andy Joseph. To enroll, contact Andy at 515-725-1481 or Andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov . Course fee is $30.

Chariton -- Classes to begin January 20th at the Lucas County Extension Office.  Meetings will begin at 6:30PM for seven consecutive Fridays.  Instructor: Craig Greene. Contact Craig at 641-842-2112 for details.

Marshalltown -- Classes held at Iowa Valley Jan 18 through Feb 29.  This course will be divided into two parts: The first four weeks will be Beginning Beekeeping (Beekeeping I). The final three weeks will be "Advanced Beekeeping" (Beekeeping II), dealing with the 2nd year and beyond. Course fees = $40 for enrollment in both sections, or $25 for those who only want to take one part. Requirements for Beekeeping II are Beekeeping I or one year of beekeeping experience. Contact Sandy Supianoski at Iowa Valley to enroll: 800-284-4823 .  Instructors: Phil Ebert and Margaret Hala.

Washington, Kirkwood Center -- Classes to begin February 6th and will meet for four consecutive Mondays, 6:00 – 8:00.  Instructor: Ron Wehr. Contact Ron at 319-698-7542.

Spencer – Classes to begin in March.  Contact Larry or Marlene Boernsen at 712-735-4205 for details.

Mason City – Classes held at NIACC, four consecutive Saturdays beginning February 4th.  Course fee = $39.00.  Instructors: Pat & Peggy Ennis.  To register, contact NIACC Continuing Ed at 641-422-4358 or at 888-GONIACC ext. 4358.

Knoxville -- Classes to begin January 17th at the Marion County Extension Office.  Meetings will begin at 6:30PM for seven consecutive Tuesdays. Cost is $30.00.  Instructor: Craig Greene. Contact Craig at 641-842-2112 for details.

Oskaloosa -- Classes to begin January 19th at the Mahaska County Extension Office.  Meetings will begin at 6:30PM for seven consecutive Thursdays. Cost is $30.00.  Instructor: Craig Greene. Contact Craig at 641-842-2112 for details.

Indian Creek Nature Center -- Classes to begin Thursday, January 19th at the nature center.  Course meets for eight sessions throughout the year. Instructor: Bob Wolfe. Series Fee: $55/Member $85/Nonmember $10/partner.  For details and registration, view the website: http://www.indiancreeknaturecenter.org/basic-beekeeping?month=jan&yr=2012 or call 319-363-0664.

Glenwood -- Classes to begin January 25th, 6PM to 8PM, meeting 4-6 consecutive Wednesday evenings.  Course held at the Mills County Engineer’s Office.  Instructor: Clarence Seale.  Contact Clarence for details and registry at 712-310-7410.

Peosta -- Classes held at Northeast Iowa Community College.  Classes to begin January 24th, 6:00PM – 9:00PM, meeting for 6 consecutive Tuesdays.  Instructors: Louise and Bill Johnston.  Contact NICC Continuing Ed for details & registration at www.nicc.edu (click on continuing education), or by phone at 563-557-0354.

Early enrollment for many of these courses is important so courses can meet minimum enrollment numbers. Fees will vary by location and are expected to range from $30 to $60. For more information, please refer to the IHPA website and online monthly newsletter at www.abuzzaboutbees.com or contact Andrew Joseph, State Apiarist, Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship at (515) 725-1481 or andrew.joseph@iowaagriculture.gov .

The Buzz Newsletter Article Submissions and IHPA Memberships

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 Melanie Bower, IHPA Treasurer, 207 S.E. Diehl, Des Moines, IA 50315, Phone: (515) 287-6542

January 1st, 2012 Happy New Year!  The 100th Anniversary of the IHPA!

Put on your thinking cap and be sure to let the IHPA board members know what great ideas you have for celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the IHPA. This is a unique opportunity to promote beekeeping and the IHPA throughout 2012 and during the Iowa State Fair. Let us know what you think!
Greetings from the President
The 2011 season is officially over now. For me, when the last pallet gets loaded and the load netted and strapped and finally, the phone call to let me know the bees have made the 1900 mile trip to California and passed successfully through the CA border inspections and are on the ground, that is when I consider the year officially over. The last load left the 2nd week of December and now I get to take a deep breath and relax for a few days and then start thinking about the next year. My bees have held their strength very well this year and approximately 85% of the colonies that were going in June actually were sent to California. From everything I have been hearing, Nationwide, the bee health generally seems to be fairly good this year. That fact seems to be kind of out of the ordinary given the fact that the overall U.S. honey crop is one of the worst ever. Normally it is expected with poor honey production, poor bee health will follow because the bees are unable to thrive because of whatever conditions cause the poor honey production, normally poor honey production is caused by poor weather, too hot, too cold, or too dry. The list goes on and on for the reasons why a beekeeper might see poor honey production but if bees are unable to forage properly, they normally FAIL TO THRIVE. I highlighted that term because it is a phrase I use a lot and will probably use a lot. I feel the phrase is very descriptive of a problem I have seen in the past and it comes to mind as I hear others describe what is going on in their hives. I still see hives that FAIL TO THRIVE (FTT) but it can usually be blamed on a specific and recognizable cause. High Varroa Mite levels, an injured or poorly mated queen, or some other reason that is recognized by an experienced beekeeper. A beekeeper with numerous hives in one location is better able to gauge colony strength abnormalities because if all the colonies are doing poorly, then it is likely that Mother Nature is just not cooperating. That is kind of the point I was trying to get to. I think that many commercial beekeepers are supplementing their bees through poor foraging conditions in the spring and keeping the supplement going right up until honey supers are put on. I can tell you for sure that supplemental feeding continues to be a huge expense but I sincerely feel it is the reason for better colony strength and payoff in the end. From last January until December I have fed an average of 100 pounds of corn syrup and 6 pounds of protein supplement per hive. Yes, 100 pounds of corn syrup per hive per year! No, I’m not feeding corn syrup to the colonies with honey supers on. Those figures surprise me because I knew I was buying a lot of corn syrup, but I had never figured out an average per hive. Wow! I’ve convinced myself—if a hive of bees can’t thrive after 100 pounds of corn syrup and 6 pounds of protein supplement, then we’ve got problems! We have had a very mild December and hopefully that trend will continue for the rest of the winter. I had one hive left that didn’t go to California so I will be able to see if I can keep a hive alive through an Iowa winter. Hopefully everybody had plenty of time to prepare their hives for winter. Because of the mild fall we had plenty of time to get feed in the hives and get them protected from the wind. Hopefully I can focus a little more time on IHPA business now so I can be prepared and get a lot accomplished at the current boards first meeting toward the end of January. I hope to have all of the committee chair people named and contacted before then because its 2012 already and there is no time to waste. If you would like to participate or if you have any ideas or questions I am happy to point you towards the appropriate chair person or try to answer your questions. I would like to thank the outgoing board members; John Johnson, Larry Boerensen, and Jack Trowbridge for their services. I really hate to see familiar faces of people who have provided good support and leadership rotate off the board, but along with that, it is good to see new faces step in to provide new ideas and new perspectives. Live Happy, Work Hard, and Enjoy your bees!
Curt Bronnenberg

2012 IHPA Membership and The Buzz
The Iowa Honey Producers Association will be publishing a 100th anniversary membership directory in February 2012. Dues are still $10 for the primary member and $5 for each additional family member at the same address. To ensure that your name is included in this issue of the directory, please send your dues to: IHPA, Melanie Bower, 207 S.E. Diehl, Des Moines, Iowa 50315-5227.

Melanie Bower
Treasurer

FOR SALE: 2 or 3 pound packages of Italian bees with queen. Picked up in Cedar Rapids or Aurora, Iowa in mid-April. Bees from Hill-Ward Apiary in California.

All orders must be received by February 28. Contact Douglas Child 319-634-3682.

FOR SALE: Package bees We will have 2#, 3# and 4# pkgs with your choice of Carniolan or Italian queens. The 4# can come with either one or two queens. Available in April. Check our web site for dates and current pricing. www.eberthoney.com Call 641-527-2639 or e-mail ehoney37@netins.net

Curt Bronnenberg

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Curt Bronnenberg
The Central Iowa Beekeepers Association

The Central Iowa Beekeepers Association will hold a winter seminar, Saturday, January 14 at Bonanza Family Steakhouse, 5029 NE 14St, and Des Moines, IA

We are inviting all beekeepers to attend this timely seminar. You may join us for lunch from 12: pm with the seminar beginning at 1:30pm Our featured speaker will be Gary Reuter from the University of Minn. Gary will be presenting information on research work he and Dr. Marla Spivak are involved in the U of MN. We will have plenty of time for questions after Gary’s presentation.

Please join us for a great time of information, fellowship and good food.

THE BEEYARD REPORT

It’s November 15 and the temp is sixty degrees. The bees are flying. Any flying time in November really shortens the winter for the bees. It gives them a chance to dump their load. That lowers their stress level. The bees look good. Most of the time, when we make our last round of feeding in the fall, we see some colonies starting to fail. The indication of this is lots of dead bees in the division board feeders.

We haven’t seen that this year so I am hopeful. We have picked up a few colonies but not a significant number. The rest look good. Even in good years we have a 25% death loss. I consider that manageable. Years ago, a 10% loss was considered horrendous.

For us, a 25% loss represents 175 colonies. That would leave us with 515 colonies. If 300 of those are splittable, we will have bees for sale or to make increase. I’m not sure what our loss was last winter. As I have stated earlier, I quit counting after it hit 35%. The mite load got away from us in October. I knew losses would be bad. We were more vigilant this year. When you check your mite load, bear in mind that if you have a 3% load in late August, it may be 10% to 12% two weeks down the line and 20% to 30% two weeks after that. If it gets that high, “Katy bar the door”. We were still able to make up our death loss with splits. I did keep 25 pkgs but I split those and sold them as nucs.

I hate to say how many times the mites have whipped me. Several times we have moved through the fall thinking we were going to get by without a mite treatment only to have the load explode right at the end of the year. Now, if we see a 3% to 5% load we are going to treat. The mite population doesn’t develop at the same rate every year. The only way to know what you have is to test. Are there resistant bees? Maybe. Even if you have bees that show some resistance, you need to incorporate this with some sort of IPM strategy. I don’t believe there are any bees that can get by without some sort of help controlling mites. Sometimes people tell me they have bees that chew the legs off the mites. That may be but I don’t know how they can tell without a magnifying glass. I have to look closely just to see any legs at all let alone if any of them are gone.

Now that all the bees are in bed for the winter, it’s time to think about winter activities. I did my first sampling demo. I didn’t have very high expectations but it proved to be fun. I sold some honey and had some fun people next to me that made the time go quickly. Our Marshalltown class is set up. It is split into two parts. The first four weeks are beginning beekeeping. The last three are “advanced beekeeping” or year two and onward. People can take either part or both. Class starts Jan 18. We have a mountain of boxes to repair or burn. A lot of them fall into the “not good enough to use but too good to burn” category. Often times in the spring, I will start nucs in the bad boxes. Not all of these get sold. The bees develop and they are still in the bum boxes as we prepare for winter. This always proves to be a point of irritation for me.

I always look forward to winter. It takes longer to get anything done but it provides mental down time. I make out a list of things to do but not all of it will happen. Happy Holidays to all!!!

Submitted by Phil Ebert

The Iowa Primary…

I just attended the 99th Annual meeting of the Iowa Honey Producer’s Association. They meet in Marshalltown every year at a motel large enough to handle the 150+ people attending. The Association has about 400 members state wide so 40% of their members attending was outstanding.

Though not nearly as contentious, dramatic, or as well covered by the media as the more politically charged primary elections going on at the moment…especially in Iowa…the results of the annual elections held at the meeting are no less significant to the beekeepers there. With only a single candidate for both president and vice president, who were both incumbents, the results were predictable and overwhelming. Both are commercial beekeepers…two of the few left in that state…and they are dedicated, passionate, and good at what they do. Like many groups the VP is the program and meeting chair, getting things organized and finding speakers. He does, by the way, work with a very engaged and dedicated wife…which is a Godsend to most of us guys. Meanwhile, the president sort of oversees the whole, and is the point man (or woman) for bigger pictures. The president doesn’t get as involved in the meeting plans, but there’s input and opinion all around. And besides, there’s other folks to take care of the details. Roberts, of course, was in the room, but pretty much nobody paid close attention. There were motions and seconds and campaign speeches and secret ballots, kind of. And it was, as it was supposed to be, a lot of fun.

The contest for treasurer was interest-
ing. The current treasurer has steered the IHP through a complete revamp of their bookkeeping, obtaining the Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP) title, obtaining for the group a 501(3)(C) status, bringing in outside investment analysis…doing it right it seems, with qualifications to die for. But Lo, there was another candidate…a banker who was a former treasurer for several groups running in the thousands of members…qualifications it seems, also to die for. They both gave a campaign speech outlining their accomplishments and attributes. The incumbent won, but I heard it was close. But what a backup to have!

Iowa beekeepers divide their state into six geographical districts, each with a board representative that is elected annually. This year several of those districts had more than one candidate who wanted to be on the board. Really. And each of those candidates gave a campaign speech…really. They came from families long in the business and the association, newbies who wanted to get involved, old timers who had been around but finally were interested, and some in between … what a trip! I haven’t been to a beekeeper’s meeting that had the enthusiasm, involvement or drive like this group in a long time – maybe the Essex group in Massachusetts, or the Backyarders in Connecticut … but what a breath of fresh Midwest air.

Like some state groups the IHP have a strong presence at their state fair, selling enough honey lemonade to float a battleship, and enough honey at their booth to pay down the national debt. Of course they sell honey sticks, too, but only clover honey sticks…none of that flavored stuff for these purists. The income from all this allows them to accomplish a lot of things otherwise not possible for most groups. But still, sometimes volunteers are scarce…even in the best of groups it seems bodies can sometimes be hard to find.

One of the things they get to do to show they have their heads on straight is that they voted to send their State Apiary Inspector to the AIA meeting in Beltsville this winter…because the State Dept of Ag won’t. How’s that for common sense? But for a dose of ‘just like everybody else’, they spent just 10 minutes debating to spend the $2000.00 needed to send him there, but later, they took the better part of an hour to raise the dues from $15.00 to $20.00 a year. Sound familiar?

My hat’s off to this group. They do a good job and I hope the members appreciate the work involved to make all this happen…the fair, the meetings, the historian, the vendors, the Honey Queen program, the legislative work…all of it, and probably a lot that I missed.

Your group could learn a lot from them. I did.

Thanks Iowa, for setting a great example, a good time, and a lot of fun.

http://blog.beeculture.com/?p=80
Preparing Colonies For Winter.

Glen Stanley

It has been an ideal Fall for getting colonies prepared and adjusted for Winter. Several days were perfect for feeding colonies that needed some extra stores. Some needed a lot of feeding if they are going to even survive.

Colonies that finally had sufficient stores and combs of brood the first of October will do just fine. Those that had neither a good supply of honey and brood will likely be Winter casualties.

Next Spring will tell the story of whether beekeepers in general gave their colonies full attention and did the proper thing for the benefit of each colony. It has been proven once again that even in Iowa, colonies prepared properly not just merely survive but at least 95 percent will be in good, to excellent condition come April.

Good Luck!

THE WEATHER & BEEKEEPING

By Glen Stanley, State Apiarist Emeritus.

So far this late Fall and early Winter the weather has given honey bee colonies a break, with a few hours of favorable temperatures for short flights. That is sufficient for cleansing and carrying out the bees that have died of old age. If bees are confined to the hives for as long as five to six weeks they are in trouble and generally develop dysentery. That is also accompanied by the spread of Nosema disease.

Other than that IF colonies were treated for mites when it was determined necessary and with an adequate supply of honey and with all other Winter preparations all should winter well.

Making a decision about the amount of honey each colony has by late October can be a problem. This is not a time for guess work. One can come close by actually counting full combs of honey and if there is the equivalent of the upper chamber completely full that is likely enough. It is possible that some colonies will have too much honey in Late October but such cases are unusual. Ending up with the upper chamber full of honey is good but not the way to put the colony into winter. A last operation should be to bring three combs of open cells from the lower chamber and put three combs of the honey in the lower chamber. The quickest and surest way to know about actual honey stores is by using a scale, which can be designed, used and save a lot of time. The only way to possibly miss is IF some colonies have an excessive amount of pollen. I can count on one hand the number of beekeepers that have convinced themselves that weighing is the way to go.

As years go by you will know just how much each colony should weigh with two brood chambers bottom and inner cover. In central Iowa we determined that each should weigh 115 to 120 pounds.

By weighing each side and adding the total you will have the actual weigh by a pound or two.

REASON: Bees prefer to cluster on combs with open cells, so they will move up into the upper chamber all the way to the inner cover with Styrofoam fitted in the rim of the inner cover. Being up there where it the warm part of the hive the bees may start brood rearing as early as February because that is the warm part of the hive. Those young bees will be the start of the development of excellent colonies come April. April 1st will tell the story. Good luck.

Glen Stanley
2615 Aspen Road # 1
Ames, Iowa  50014

THE 2012 100TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF THE IHPA

I think it would be nice to have a Beekeeping Question and Answer section in the Buzz, so if you would like to submit a Question please email to cbronny823@aol.com and use the Subject line Buzz Question and Answer. It will help me with ideas for subjects to write about for my Presidents Column.

Thank You.
Have Fun, Work Hard, and Bee Involved.
Curt Bronnenberg

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New IHPA Cookbook!
The cookbook is becoming a reality! I have received several recipes from members, so keep them coming. We will be accepting recipes until the end of January. Ideally this is a “slower” time for beekeepers, so we decided to extend our deadline to accommodate everyone having time to gather them, print them out and send them to us. The recipe form is on the website [www.abuzzaboutbees.com] for your convenience. Please submit lots of recipes so we will have the best cookbook ever to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Iowa Honey Producers Association. Send recipes to Donna Brahms, Peggy Ennis, Julie Swett, Regina Hoy, Louise Johnson or Deb Nielson.
WINTER SQUASH WITH APPLES

Printed from COOKS.COM

2 winter squash, halved and seeded
Boiling water
3 tart apples (Granny Smith), peeled, cored, and diced
1/4 c. raisins (optional)
1/4 c. plus several spoonfuls melted butter
1/3 c. maple syrup or honey
Salt to taste

Set squash half, cut side down, in a shallow oven-proof dish and pour in 1/2 inch of boiling water. Bake, uncovered, in 400 degree oven for 20 minutes.

In meantime: Mix apples and raisins with 1/4 cup of butter and syrup or honey.

Turn squash right side up. Break surface with a few spoonfuls of butter. Sprinkle lightly with salt and fill centers with apple-honey mixture.

Cover the pan with foil; return to oven and bake 30 minutes more or until apples and squash are tender. Serves 4.

Featured Beekeeper of the Month

This month our featured beekeeper is one of our participants in the mentor program, Elizabeth Pautsch. She lives with her parents, Kurt and Amy and three younger sisters at Galva, Iowa. Her father is a trucker and her mother is the homeschool teacher at their house. Elizabeth is a sophomore in high school and an active member of The Pilgrims of the Holy Family. She helps with Vacation Bible School and the Summer Theatre Camp. Some of her interests are caring for her bottle calves, journaling, writing poetry, cooking and reading.

Elizabeth found out about the Iowa Honey Producers Association’s mentor program when Shiliah Spaulding was the Iowa Honey Queen and gave a presentation to their homeschool group. Elizabeth became excited about beekeeping. She read the books, Beekeeping for Dummies and Backyard Beekeeping at least two times each. She also learned many useful techniques from her mentor Cecelia Patterson who Elizabeth says is "awesome help". Elizabeth says, "I've had nothing but good experiences with my bees. They are super gentle and have done really well considering the odds". She also says her queen bee died during aerial spraying season and she thought her hive was kind of isolated from other hives. She didn't think it would be possible for any new queens to get mated. She was pleasantly surprised after a whole month to find a new queen and a half comb of brood while inspecting her hive with her mentor. Cecelia had visited to see if there was a way to save the hive. Elizabeth was very happy and relieved.

Submitted by Ron Wehr

In the future Elizabeth plans to continue beekeeping as a hobby for as long as she is able. Thanks for your story and good luck next year with your bees.
### Iowa Honey Producers Association Financial Report for 2011

I would like to thank Mary Ebert, Margaret Shada, and Louise Johnson for their help with the merchandise table at the Annual Meeting of the Iowa Honey Producers Association on November 4 and 5, 2011 at the Best Western Regency Inn in Marshalltown, IA. The following information is the financial report for the fiscal year 2011.

#### IOWA HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

**BALANCE SHEET**

**YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2011**

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#### IOWA HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

**INCOME STATEMENT**

**YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2011**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$52,942.00</td>
<td>$49,272.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income/Loss</strong></td>
<td>$3,712.00</td>
<td>$8,558.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An audit of the finances was done by the Finance Review Committee consisting of Pat Ennis, John Johnson, and Elaine Johnson on October 26, 2011.

Melanie Bower
Treasurer, Iowa Honey Producers Association
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Oskaloosa, IA 52577
(641) 673-3993
weic@kdsi.net

Central Iowa Beekeepers Association
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30930 530th Ave.
Kelley, IA 50134
Home phone 515/597-3060
Cell phone 515/450-9494
afool@huxcomm.net

Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers
Contact: Julia McGuire
jcammguire@yahoo.com

IDALS website
www.agriculture.state.ia.us
National Honey Board
www.honey.com

Iowa Honey Queen Program
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cbronny823@aol.com

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Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals
Mark Speltz
(515) 669-3266
mark.speltz@dia.iowa.gov.

Additional Links and Emails
American Beekeeping Federation website
www.ABFnet.org

IDALS website
www.agriculture.state.ia.us
National Honey Board
www.honey.com

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