



Illinois State Beekeepers Association Bulletin

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Letter from the President

Mike Mason

I would like to start this letter by introducing myself for those who do not know me. My name is Mike Mason, and I have been keeping bees for about 15 years and reading about them for much longer. I have been active in Lincoln Land Beekeepers Association holding positions of secretary and president. I also served as treasurer of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association and currently sit on the board of the American Bee Federation. I, and several others, help teach a four evening introduction to beekeeping class every spring initiated by Rich Ramsey, and I assist in mentoring those students throughout the year.

I became interested in beekeeping while living in Tucson working for the University of Arizona's Campbell Avenue Farm which was across the road from the Carl Hayden Bee Research Center. It was there that I knew there would be bees in my future.

This past year has been a year full of surprises, twists, turns, and excitement, and I am looking forward to this next year with a new board and new ideas to continue the improvement of the ISBA. In addition to a new board, we have many new associations that have become affiliated with ISBA. I am looking forward to the input of these new associations. I'm optimistic to see what direction they take us.

I would like to encourage everyone to become involved and work with your regional directors on your ideas for our future. Think about what role you can play in the future of ISBA. With our great growth, it might be time to re-focus and evaluate our needs rather than focus on continued growth.

I mentioned new Board members and would like to welcome Rose Leedle to the Board as our treasurer. Rose has experience as an accountant and is a great addition to the ISBA board. Also, new to the Board but not new to ISBA is Steve Petrilli. Steve has taken the position as Membership Director of which he assumed the role when Sue Kivikko needed to step back this summer. As I write this letter, we are currently soliciting recommendations from associations in the central region to fill the regional director position vacated by Janet Hart. Those that have moved on will be missed, but the new members are great additions with new ideas and I look forward to working with them.

When the previous board was installed, ISBA had a

membership of around 400 people. That has grown over the last few years to over 1200 members. This is a sign that something is going right. There are many factors that led to this increase and along with it, many new people with great talents and skills have joined the membership. It is my goal this first year as President to try and harness some of this talent in the membership to address some of the challenges that come with growth and changes, as well as taking on the challenges we face as beekeepers.

Ultimately, our role is to help each other to become better beekeepers and educate each other on the latest threats, treatment options and methods of colony and hive management. "What are the latest genetics and will they work for me in my area?" "Can Sue Kobe's genetic work impact my apiary?" "What is the best way to manage Varroa?" "If I don't treat for Varroa, what will my losses be and how long until 'resistance' develops using this natural selection?" The list of questions goes on and on.

Another role that we should take seriously is teaching. Our local associations are our educators of the new beekeepers. ISBA is good at getting great speakers at our annual meeting and working with the regional association(s) on getting speakers for the summer meetings, but it is *our* associations that educate the new beekeepers and from what I have seen, they do it very well. What can ISBA do to assist the associations? Can we set up a mentoring program for new beekeepers or is that better left to the associations themselves?

There are other ways to get involved and enhance what the ISBA offers in terms of education. Those that are hungry for up-to-the-minute bee knowledge, and enjoy sharing new insights can take advantage of other educational opportunities around us. The Heartland Apicultural Society has an annual conference that is well worth the time and effort to attend. This is a regional organization here in the Midwest. They do not have a membership or dues and their only event is the annual summer conference. The speakers represent researchers,



A Look at Regression and Natural Cell Beekeeping

Jim Truesdale with input from Anthony Varriano

According to what you might read and hear, our honey bees around the country are collapsing, and the 2013 season is shaping up to be another rough year. If you follow the press, the cause is “a mystery”, stemming from a combination of pesticides, diseases, pests, poor hive management and/or climate change.

There is, however, a group of beekeepers that have studied a certain area of bee changes occurring in the last 120 years and their resulting methods show a high level of success. Their approach is to reduce the size of the bee to its natural size by regression, feeding the bee its own honey and pollen, avoiding treatments, and allowing the hive to have an unlimited brood nest. This method produces for backyard and commercial beekeepers long living colonies – by working *with* nature and not against it.

Why is this method such a well-kept secret? Is it because it's independent of chemical companies? Is it because so many of us beekeepers are used to always doing things the way we're used to? Or is it because we want the maximum amount of honey we can get, not minding that the bees we kill might have been stronger than the bees we buy the next spring? Or finally, are we scared off, thinking these methods are only for advanced beekeepers?

Regression

Getting the bee back to its natural size is key to this method. Those who practice regression believe that the bees have been artificially upsized by 30% since 1890's by increasing the size of the foundation cells with the thought of getting more honey from a bigger bee. We also believe that this artificial increase in size left the honey bee more vulnerable to diseases and pests as it seems that honey bee health is ever in decline.

The industrial approach of treating diseases with various chemicals and antibiotics, in our opinion, pollutes the hive, has a negative impact on the hive ecology, and stresses the bees, leaving them more vulnerable and unstable. Rather than run along a treadmill of treating bees, and making them more dependent on treatments to survive (if they do), while breeding more resistant pests, we would rather go back to the natural cell size (in the 4.9mm range), which kept colonies in a healthy balance before humans tampered with them.

Keeping small, natural-sized, healthy bees, I find that they co-exist with pests like mites and beetles, and if need be, the colony will dispatch them if they see fit. If you go this route then you work with the bees with proper field management, provide proper nutrition (real honey and real pollen), and breed from your survivor stock to propagate acclimated bees for your area.

I was tired of dead colonies, weak queens, putting chemicals in hives, and feeding sugar and other artificial food. Then I discovered the Organic Beekeepers Yahoo Group founded by Dee Lusby and supported by Michael Bush and others. Dee and Michael are commercial beekeepers, helping beekeepers all over the world.

“It is time for beekeepers to re-learn their traditions and history, and to undo and retool that which is wrong for our honey bees' survival. We must follow the long hard way back to biological beekeeping to overcome our problems. It's not hard, but it must be done. Chemicals, essential oils, drugs, artificial feed, size, and to some degree inbreeding, are killing our nations industry and it must be reversed.” – Dee Lusby, *The Way Back To Biological Beekeeping*

Dee has written many articles on the subject which can be found in the Ed and Dee Lusby archives on beesource.com or as one document called “Dee's Book” in the file section of the Organic Beekeepers Yahoo Group. Michael's writings are on his website at bushfarms.com.

The organic group raises their bees on small cell foundation (4.9mm). This smaller cell size greatly reduces the varroa and tracheal mite problem and allows more bees per frame, therefore more honey. A smaller bee visits all flowers where the large cell bee is more limited by flower size. Smaller cell bees also fly better, live longer and work longer. This is something you can do as a beekeeper, and what have you got to lose – even if you've already paid for your 2014 packages. The best and easiest time to regress is when you get a new package of bees. Feed honey (securely, inside the hive) until pollen is coming in, then go natural.

Just How Far Do Your Bees Travel?

by Steve Petrilli

In beekeeping classes, one of the items of information conveyed is the fact bees will travel up to 3 miles (and sometimes farther depending on weather conditions and available forage) from their hive to gather pollen, nectar, water and plant resins.

Do not forget, the distance is measured as the crow flies (sorry – as the bee flies) and it is farther than and encompasses a much larger area than most people realize.

A 1 mile radius around a hive equates to a 6.2 mile circumference and 2,012.2 acres.

A 2 mile radius around a hive equates to a 12.5 mile circumference and 8,049.2 acres.

A 3 mile radius around a hive equates to a 18.8 mile circumference and 18,110.2 acres.

As you can see, the forage area for your colony is quite large and most likely will overlap many other managed and feral colonies in your “area”.

If you are interested in ascertaining what a 1, 2 or 3 mile radius around your hive looks like, there is a free tool for doing so.

It is called Free Map Tools which is web based (no software to download or install) and it can be found at the below url:

<http://www.freemaptools.com/>

Once you are on the home page of the freemaptools.com site,

- 1) Click on “Radius Around a Point”
- 2) Scroll down the page Radius Distance and change the miles to 3.
- 3) Scroll back up to Search for Location and enter the desired address or location name in the Search Box and click search
- 4) The map should zoom to the location or address searched for
- 5) Position your mouse pointer (which will be a cross hair) to the location you want to be the center of the radius and then left click your mouse.
- 6) A 3 mile radius will be drawn around the point you clicked on.

The freemaptools site may not be the most user friendly or easy to use site you have encountered, but

once you learn to navigate and use it, the site is quite useful. My comments are "It is free and it was developed in the United Kingdom (enough said)."

If you are questioning the acreage within the circumference of the radius, please note the Illinois State Fairgrounds is approximately 365 acres in size. If you do a 3 mile radius from the approximate center of the Fairgrounds, you will find the 365 acres is essentially a minuscule part of the acreage within a 3 mile radius.

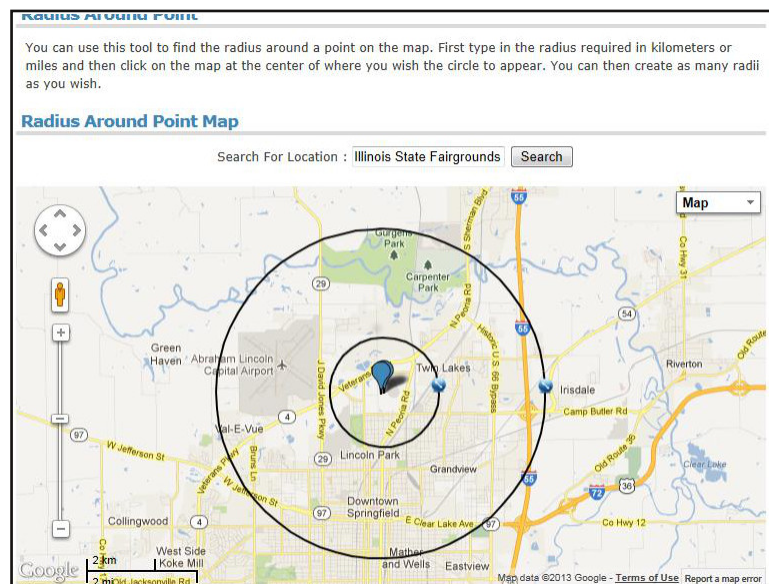
The following picture is a 1 mile radius within a 3 mile radius of the Fairgrounds and even the 1 mile radius far exceeds the boundaries of the center of the 365 acres.

If you use the Hive Tracks web based software (www.hivetracks.com) to keep track of your bee yards and colonies, you may already be aware of the map feature of this software which will automatically do the same thing (draw a 1, 2 and 3 mile radius) around your bee yards.

If you are not already using hive tracks (which is free), you can create an account and start using it in less time than it took you to read this article.

A 3 mile radius is a lot farther than a person may realize. With this in mind, you can easily see how pests, parasites and diseases can be spread from one colony to another if your “strong” colony is robbing a weaker colony in the “area” or if your colony is being robbed.

The pests, parasites and diseases will be discussed in another article.



Brood Chamber Holiday Honey Recipes

The Holidays are here! First we have Christmas and very soon New Years Eve. Here are some simple and quick holiday honey recipes that are sure to please!

Happy Christmas and a
Happy New Year! ~ Astrid Sabo

Credit to:

~Fancy Pantry by Helen Witty

~Sweetened with Honey The Natural Way
by the National Honey Board

Honey Jelly

This is a must have for breads - you will not be able to just eat 1 slice! Mom use to make it for my Grandpa. It's perfect for those who have a hard time getting honey out of the jar without a mess.

3 cups honey, preferably one of delicate flavor.

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup water.

3 tablespoons lemon juice.

1 package or bottle (3 ounces) of pectin.

1. Stir the honey, water and lemon juice together thoroughly in a persevering pan. Set over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. As soon as there are vigorous bubbles all over the surface, stir in the pectin. Start timing when the mixture begins to boil hard (a boil that cannot be stirred down); boil the jelly for exactly 1 minute. Remove from heat.

2. Set the jelly aside for 1 minute, or just until the foam on the top coalesces into a film. Quickly skim off the film and pour the hot jelly into hot, sterilized jelly jars, or straight-sided half-pint canning jars, leaving $\frac{1}{8}$ inch head space in the jars or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in the glasses. Seal the jelly in glasses with melted paraffin. Seal the canning jars with sterilized new two piece lids according to manufacturer's directions. Cool, label, and store the jars. Try putting a ribbon or a bow on the jars for a perfect Christmas gift!

Honey Shortbread

This is one of the best Honey cookies you will every taste, and the pecans compliment the Honey perfectly.

1 cup butter.

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey.

1 teaspoon vanilla.

2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour.

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of finely chopped pecans (or any other nuts).

Beat butter, honey and vanilla in large bowl until light and fluffy. Add flour 1 cup at a time, beating well. If dough becomes to stiff to stir, knead in remaining flour by hand. Work in nuts. Pat dough into shortbread mold, or pat out and cut with cookie cutters. Prick the shortbread. Place on greased cookie pan or shortbread mold in 300 F preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Cut into wedges.

Honey Fried Chicken

If you're a fan of fried chicken try Honey Fried Chicken, a tangy and sweet twist on a classic recipe.

3 pounds cut up chicken

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup honey

$\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup buttermilk baking mix

2 teaspoons dry mustard

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon paprika

Salt and pepper to taste

Vegetable oil

Coat chicken with honey; set aside. Combine buttermilk baking mix, mustard, paprika, salt and pepper in shallow dish; dredge chicken in mixture. Heat $\frac{1}{2}$ inch oil to 375 deg in 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Carefully place chicken in hot oil and cook about 5 minutes or until underside of chicken is golden; turn chicken pieces and cook for another 5 minutes. Reduce heat to low and cook 15-20 minutes more or until chicken juices run clear. Remove chicken; drain on paper towels. Repeat with remaining chicken pieces. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

There is so much happening in beekeeping today and there are a lot of ways to look at it. Many of us beekeepers are struggling to keep our bees alive, and to get a decent crop of honey. Some of us have to replenish our numbers year after year with packages, and others of us are ever trying new methods of boosting the health of our bees with new Varroa treatments, feeding, and immunity boosting. Meanwhile, big things are happening all around us and in our own backyard – things that have never happened before.

Never before have we had the opportunity to screen our Illinois honey bees for such a wide spectrum of diseases as we do today. Over the past 3 years, random beekeepers throughout Illinois have opened their hives to the National Honey Bee Survey. We are waiting for the 2013 results, however, the 2011 and the 2012 results have given us a complete picture of which viruses are affecting our bees. These results also come with Nosema spore counts, Varroa mite counts, and some of the sampling included pollen screening for a vast spectrum of agricultural chemicals that could have been out in the field. Illinois has been lucky to participate in this program, and hopefully we will be invited back to participate in 2014.

In my neck of the woods, here in Southern Illinois, the Marathon Petroleum Company expanded their 40 acre wild bird habitat to an 80 acre pollinator's habitat, and beekeepers who work at Marathon keep a few hives on site. The Wabash Valley Beekeepers Association holds its summer meetings at their beautiful pavilion. Marathon purchased bee suits of all sizes, from adult, all the way down to children's sizes for the purpose of education. Lucky me, I got to attend a Wabash Valley/Illiana Beekeepers meeting there this past summer in Palestine, IL, and look inside the Marathon hives. It was very inspiring and encouraging, seeing corporate resources being put to work in the name of "Ecological Stewardship."

Across the Mississippi River, we have Monsanto, and Beelogs. What an incredible amount of resources are being pumped into honey bee research there! It seems that anytime someone says "Monsanto", you will always have another person hissing and booing – and with good reason! This corporation has accumulated a negative image – something to the scale of Godzilla, capable of burning an entire city with it's breath. But there is another way to look at Monsanto, and there are plenty of examples of positive contributions they continuously make, and have committed themselves to.

Now all of the Big Ag companies have their own bee research departments. Syngenta has created "Operation

Pollinator", which promotes multifunctional landscapes to increase forage for bees and habitat for pollinators. Bayer just opened their Clayton Bee Care Center on 278 acres of land in North Carolina last month, and is testing a lubricant for corn seeds that will stop pesticide laden dust from drifting out of corn planters and into bee forage. But Monsanto is far in the lead of this new corporate movement of deep, focused research and development of products designed with bees in mind. One of their greatest gifts to the beekeeping public so far is the Honey Bee Health Summit that they hosted at their Chesterfield research facility this past June. Three solid days of presentations and tours were given among beekeepers, scientists, researchers, economists and almond growers. All 31 of the fantastic presentations are available in high quality video for viewing by the general public. Visit www.beeologics.com. Anyone with an internet connection can begin to do their part to help honey bees in crisis by viewing and learning about the depths of all of the honey bee problems existing right now, as told by long time, big name bee scientists like Dr. Jeff Pettis, Dr. Eric Mussen, and Dr. Dennis van Engelsdorp, and invested beekeepers like George Hansen, the president of the American Bee Federation and Zak Browning, board member of both the National Honey Producers and Project Apis m. The videos of these presentations are fascinating and will bring your understanding of the current state of honey bee health right up to the minute.

There is a good reason to feel proud to be a member of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association, because we were there at the Honey Bee Health Summit. Our past president Jim Belli and our new president Mike Mason attended the Summit, presenting a recognition award to Monsanto for their commitment to developing non-chemical, non-gmo treatments for some of the diseases affecting our bees. I am proud, because this recognition award went from our hands, the hands of concerned, struggling beekeepers, to the hands of scientists developing tomorrow's agricultural means, the hands of people who are also concerned, and are making headway in creating safe products.

Good work has been done by those who raised awareness about CCD and the disappearing honey bee. We don't know for certain if neonicotinoids are to blame for colony collapse, because several of the studies contradict each other. However, if neonicotinoids were banned tomorrow, would Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus suddenly vanish? Would the Varroa mite and all of the viruses it spread suddenly be gone without a trace? Would we never see a case of Foulbrood again? Does

The ISBA Bulletin Interviews Jerry Hayes

If you read the American Bee Journal, you know Jerry Hayes from his monthly “Classroom” Section where, for years, he has answered questions posed by beekeepers from all around the country. When he began his work as the Commercial Director for Monsanto's Beelogsics, some beekeepers were excited by what this meant for potential honey bee research. Other beekeepers were caught off guard. “Why is Monsanto getting into the bee business?” This was question of concern in many beekeepers' minds.

For a while in 2012, it seemed every time you came across Jerry Hayes, he was explaining how he came to Monsanto, and why Monsanto would bother with bees. This year, now that he's finished the chore of that explanation, a talk with Jerry yields a mind-blowing picture of the fast track of developments in bee world, now that Big Ag companies are seeming to race against time, and each other, to re-evaluate the importance of bees in agriculture.

In this interview, we catch up with Jerry Hayes on this past year's accomplishments in Monsanto's work with honey bees, and talk about what's to come.

ISBA: What has happened since you took your position with Monsanto? Are there a lot more planes, trains and automobiles in your life now?

JERRY: You noticed! Yes, one of my goals is to do my best to connect the beekeeping world and Monsanto together in a credible, transparent and collaborative way. It is no secret that Monsanto has a bad rep on the block. Some of it, you can chalk up to ‘past’ plain old poor communication skills. This is changing now significantly. I knew this when I came, but it was worth the risk.

I thought to engage this very successful seed company who was actually already involved in beekeeping. Monsanto had already been spending about a million dollars a year on renting honey bee colonies from beekeepers for their Seminis branch, where vegetable and canola seeds are produced for commercial growers. These seeds and all the other products are what has made Monsanto successful. They are products that farmers love. If farmers didn't like the seeds and get value from them, they wouldn't buy them, simple as that. So, farmers love the seed, but nobody thinks about this as they push their grocery carts at the grocery store.

Monsanto knows how important honey bees are to agriculture and to their farmer customers, and has

stepped up to help. They have the commitment, resources, and smart people to collaboratively work with beekeepers, USDA, university researchers all under one roof. I have been in the industry a long time and this is a tipping point for us beekeepers, to have this potential that we have never, ever had before. I am out on the road telling the story and making up for lost time so we can keep all the parties engaged and do something important and amazing.

ISBA: You achieved something incredible with the Honey Bee Health Summit. There were 31 presentations on the current plight of the honey bee and the cutting edge research happening all over the United States and across the globe. It's a huge gift to the public to have a video of each presentation viewable for free on your Beelogsics website. These videos shed a lot of light on the “disappearing honey bee”, and the new world of scientific honey bee study and lets us in on Monsanto's research and development towards bringing honey bees up to speed with sustainable agriculture. Were there any special “take away” points for you? Anything that you learned or realized as a result of your Summit?

JERRY: Thanks for saying ‘you’ but nobody ever accomplishes anything by themselves. I think the success of the Summit from an internal perspective showed how much the many, many good Monsanto people - at all levels of responsibility – can get a good job done. Those who made all the facilities, and logistics, and visuals, and lunch, and tours, and on and on were personally engaged in acknowledging Honey Bee Health and the never before importance of the Summit and the participants. You don't get this kind of ‘extra’ effort by demanding certain things be done by employees. They have to feel it and it showed. It was exciting to see how everyone was as excited as I was. Then from a Summit perspective, presenters and invited audience (remember we only had so many seats) had to stick their necks out and gamble, with me, that the connection would be, could be made. It was a fantastic Honey Bee Health Summit.

What I learned, or was reinforced, is that we are all stronger together than apart. If we are to help honey bees be healthier, it will take all of us working together.

ISBA: What is your definition sustainable agriculture?

JERRY: I don't know if you read the December Bee

Culture but there was a Monsanto “Interview” section in this issue. I invited Kim Flottum to come in and have open interviews with smart leaders here. Kim asked Michael Doane, the Sustainable Ag Policy Leader here, the same question. I really like Michaels answer: “Sustainable means an intergenerational commitment to preserve resources, and its that simple”. I think that is a great definition.

ISBA: Agriculture is a booming economy, and also our means of feeding the world population. Agriculture is ever improving, yet honey bees are in decline. Your Honey Bee Health Summit addressed this paradox. Some beekeepers see big agriculture as the culprit. What reason would you give to them why beekeeping needs to be brought up to speed with big agriculture? How can you calm the fears of hobby beekeepers that see big commercial beekeeping as the downfall of the honey bee?

JERRY: In the US, there are certainly honey bee health challenges. But the decline in commercially available honey bee colonies since the 1950s is more demand and demographics than anything. Here are some figures I just looked up about those engaged in “farming” in general;

1950

Total population: 151,132,000; farm population: 25,058,000; farmers 12.2% of labor force; Number of farms: 5,388,000; average acres: 216; irrigated acres: 25,634,869

1990

Total population: 261,423,000; farm population: 2,987,552; farmers 2.6% of labor force; Number of farms: 2,143,150; average acres: 461; irrigated acres: 49,404,000 (1992)

So this is 2013 and we can expect that 2.6% of the labor force to have stayed the same or decreased. Why, because farmers have better seed, more yield on the same acreage, better equipment and better pest control and can feed 330,000 million in the US and other parts of the world. We have the most efficient agriculture in the world. We eat very well in this country because of efficient farmers.

Beekeeping world wide, according to UN figures, has increased significantly. Beekeeping in North America has also increased as honey production has been supplanted by fee based pollination services. Supply and demand. But honey bee health in the US has been tenuous, mostly because of poorly controlled Varroa and the Varroa/Virus complex. We are still putting pesticides in our honey bee colonies to kill a little bug

on a big bug, 30 years after introduction. It is crazy. If we can do something non-chemically, non GM, and copy a natural process in the honey bee's body, that is the Holy Grail.

Now think about the ISBA membership and every other State Association membership. They have all blossomed as thousands of new beekeepers join this fascinating industry as hobby , and sideline beekeepers, and even commercial beekeepers. It is amazing, the growth.

The main problem is Varroa control, Varroa/Virus control. Address these safely and sanely, and honey bee health will improve 70%-80% without doing anything else...my opinion.

ISBA: When Dr. Eric Mussen, Extension Apiculturist from UC Davis presented at the Summit, he said “Please don't change the genetics of the honey bees – whatever you do.”

JERRY: I will have to check the Summit videos, Eleanor, but Randy Verhoek, Pres. of the American Honey Producers Association asked me in a Q&A session if Monsanto had any plans to genetically modify honey bees. My answer was “No, not on my watch.”

ISBA: What can you tell us about the Monsanto BioDirect products being developed by Beeologics? Any details about what they are made to do, and what kind of beekeepers they are designed for?

JERRY: Beeologics is working on inventing new technology to use nature's own defense system, RNA, to hopefully control Varroa and multiple viruses. This is a non-chemical, non-GM system that honey bees are already using, but it would be copied and given back to them only in a quantity larger than they can produce themselves for protection now. It would be kind of like a temporary vaccination.

ISBA: How soon can we expect to see them on the market?

JERRY: Not sure. We are making tremendous progress but this is new technology only getting the Nobel Prize in 2006 and I have no idea when we may find success or hit the wall, and be slowed down. In a perfect world, and realizing how well this must meet regulatory, industry and public expectations, it will probably be 5-7 more years.

ISBA: Dr. Jay Evans, research entomologist for the

Jerry Hayes, continued

USDA, ARS Bee Research Laboratory talked in his presentation about the ability of bees to find and remove mites from the colony, and talked about traits carried by bees that survive exposure to mites. Does the genetic diversity in wild-mated bees, or possible drift from a hive of feral survivor bees present problems in your research, and problems in developing a product?

JERRY: No not at all. It adds to the IPM (Integrative Pest Management) possibilities. We don't want the industry to put all its eggs in one basket as happened with chemical Varroa control. If there are several natural behavioral and biological control mechanisms that Darwin has given to survivor honey bees, that is terrific. We want more. Give Varroa and Varroa/Virus several different mechanisms to try to outwit, and it will be really hard for them, maybe impossible, to develop resistance.

ISBA: Dr. Merav Gleit is Beeologic's Bee Health Project Lead. In her presentation she talked about Beeologic's Quantigene Analysis and how helpful it is in quickly analyzing the dynamics of bee viruses and pathogens. What windows will this open up for bee researchers, field workers and beekeepers? How soon might we see this resource available outside of your labs? Who will have access to it?

JERRY: Kind of like everything else, new equipment is very pricey. How much were cell phones when they first came out? With wide adoption and use, prices went down. We have opened the door to use of this identification equipment to lots of others in Ag. and it is being used to identify how honey bees are coping or not with pests, parasites and pathogens. This is one advantage of Monsanto's science based approach to helping agriculture - they have lots of smart people and expensive equipment that they know how to use to best effect.

ISBA: Monsanto is helping support PAm on developing seed mixes for large scale plantings to feed bees in monoculture areas like farms and almond orchards, where bees have only one kind of pollen, or no forage at all. Being that this is one of the very top reasons why honey bees are struggling, how will farmers be convinced to use them, and is there a time line on that?

JERRY: First thing I would do is go to the Project Apis mellifera (PAm) website, <http://projectapism.org/>

and see the progress they have made. It is pretty impressive, the number of growers signed up and acreage involved. They have done a remarkable job and we are glad to be a small part of the effort. Most backyard beekeepers are in good shape with forage generally. It is the large commercial beekeepers with 1,000's or 10's of thousands of colonies who are struggling with adequate nutrition. If the largest beekeeper in the US has 100,000 colonies, and if it takes 1.5 million beehives to pollinate almonds in the winter, there are going to be nutrition problems. This is the production model of commercial beekeeping and without nutritionally complete artificial supplemental diets they will never have enough natural flowering forage. Even though PAm does a great job, nothing will feed 100,000 bees. It's a work in progress. We're looking at honey bee nutrition broadly.

ISBA: Does Monsanto have any plans to meet the Marchers Against Monsanto and put seed packets in their hands and show the protesters how they can save the honey bee?

JERRY: Great idea. I hadn't thought of that one. I am sure they would complain about that too as they eat their lunch those farmers produced and is made available to them on the picket line from the grocery store. Lunch begins with a Beekeeper and Farmer.

ISBA: Monsanto has a goal of feeding a rapidly expanding world population. Has Monsanto established a key goal for the Apiary Industry? How does Monsanto differentiate between the goals of the Commercial Beekeeping Industry and the Hobbyist Beekeepers?

JERRY: The goal is simply to add benefit to honey bee health as quickly as possible, like in our support of PAm, or creating the Summit. If the wind is with us, swift controls of Varroa and Varroa/Virus, non-chemically and non-GM. Because the problems in beekeeping are universal, there is no distinction or segregation of the different beekeepers in the industry. Monsanto doesn't differentiate between commercial and hobby beekeepers because whatever products we come up with, we hope everyone can use.

ISBA: What will it take for people to realize that Monsanto is not the bad guy?

JERRY: Monsanto has embarked on a journey to better explain what they do, how they do it, and all of the benefits that farmers get that produce "our" food. I

work with so many good people who have families, go to the grocery store, come from farm backgrounds and are amazingly committed and energized to figure out how to feed 7 billion of us going to 8-9-10 billion in a few years. We have a regulatory staff that goes above and beyond EPA and FDA requirements; we have a bunch of attorneys who don't want to screw up and a cadre of smart scientists whose only job is to make things better, safer and more abundant. But, and there is always a but, in the past, nobody said this to the general public.

I hope connecting the Beekeepers, Beekeeper supporters, NGO's and quickly solving Varroa and Varroa/Virus safely, sanely and cost effectively will be a start. All I and my colleagues who have been on this journey for honey bee health can do is our Best. If that is not good enough, well nobody can say we didn't try. We just need support and time to do it right.

ISBA: I saw this recently:

"ST. LOUIS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Monsanto recently announced its commitment to honey bee health at the 2013 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting. The multi-stakeholder coalition will include individuals involved in honey bee health as well as new stakeholders, which include agriculture commodity groups, industry groups, government agencies, environmental NGOs, and agriculture companies, all focused on improving honey bee health."

Can you tell me what the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) is and why this might be a good thing for Beekeepers?

JERRY: The CGI is a big deal globally in getting NGO's, Corporations, Nobel Prize winners, Gov. leaders etc., etc. to make a commitment in some way to helping make the world a better place. From the CGI website: "The mission of the Clinton Global

Initiative (CGI) is to turn ideas in to action.

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the CGI, an initiative of the Clinton Foundation, convenes global leaders to create and implement innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 150 heads of state, 20 Nobel Prize laureates, and hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations and NGOs, major philanthropists, and members of the media. To date, CGI members have made nearly 2,500 commitments, which are already improving the lives of more than 430 million people in over 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued at \$87.9 billion."

The coalition will have four priority areas of focus: 1) improving honey bee nutrition; 2) providing research investment in novel technology for varroa and virus control; 3) understanding science-based approaches to studying pesticide impacts on honey bees and increasing awareness of pesticide best management practices among growers and beekeepers; and 4) enabling economic empowerment of beekeepers.

I just got back from the first convening meeting of the Honey Bee Health Coalition. We had Corn, Soybean, Cotton, Canola grower groups, Beekeepers, PAm, Univ. Researchers, EPA, USDA, Bayer, Syngenta, BASF, Xerces, Almond Growers, Fruit and Veg. Growers and about 40 total sitting around a table to figure out how we all can work together to improve honey bee health. This was the first of its kind meeting to get all these different groups together and talk about how they could collaborate, share and partner in a way never done before.

Monsanto follows through on its promises and commitments.

A Call for Your Words

The ISBA Bulletin has enjoyed *most of all* printing article after article of member-written material. Don't stop now. Have you wanted to share a beekeeping experience? Want to let us in on your beekeeping methods and why they work so well for you? Want to send pictures? Do you have a request about a subject? Help us out! Get involved. Don't let us be too "science-y". We need articles about all areas of beekeeping. Please put your thoughts to pen and send them to the Bulletin editor at her email: bubblebubb@gmail.com.



The Buzz About Town

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KANKAKEE RIVER VALLEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Mike Rusnak www.krvba.blogspot.com

The Mississippi Valley Beekeepers Association will be having their annual **Beginning Beekeepers Class on Saturday, March 1, 2014, 9am to 3 pm, in Quincy.** Cost is \$30, which includes membership to our club, one year membership in the ISBA, and a copy of First Lessons in Beekeeping from Dadant. Coffee and donuts provided in the morning, lunch break will be on your own.

The **Crossroads Beekeepers Association** will be holding **Bee School 2014 February 1, 2014 from 8am to 4pm** at the Stewardson Community Building on **108 Pine Street in Stewardson.** Attendance will cost \$30 per person. More info will be coming to <http://crossroadsbeekeepers.blogspot.com/>

The 2014 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow will be held in **Baton Rouge, Louisiana** at the **Baton Rouge River Center, January 7-11, 2014.**

- We are introducing many new features this year!
- Optional field trip to the Baton Rouge Bee Lab, Tuesday
 - General Session followed by SIG meetings, Wednesday
 - Welcome reception and Tradeshow begin Wednesday
 - General Session and Auxiliary Meeting on Thursday followed by an optional social activity that night
 - Track sessions on Friday morning, followed by the Foundation luncheon, a keynote presentation, ABF Business meeting and the Honey Show Live Auction.

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Editor's Letter, Continued

banning neonics suddenly mean that flowers will be blooming everywhere, providing forage for poorly nourished bees? A beekeeping activist can March Against Monsanto, and feel that something was accomplished, but that beekeeper's bees might have been happier had that beekeeper spent the day planting an acre's worth of flowers on the roadside.

Everybody needs to do their part now to create a world that supports our pollinators. We all need to work together. There are a lot of facets to the problems we

face as beekeepers, and the problems faced by our bees. Many of us dedicate a lot of reading time towards discovering the root of the problems we face. We become very passionate, and when meet another beekeeper who has learned contrasting facts as ours, we have a choice. We can fight, or we can listen, and try to create a better model of the problem and its potential solutions.

Waxing Philosophical ~ the Beekeeping Puzzle

"Odd Bee-havior"

Question: "We have often seen bees on the 'front porch' of the hive, just in front of the entrance (facing the entrance) shuffling forward and back in a straight line. What causes this behavior?" ~ Dan and Annette Rubino of Cook-Dupage Beekeepers.

1. They are doing the "Party Rock Anthem" ... Every Day I'm Shufflin'!!! ~ Larry Quicksall, Effingham, IL ~ **3 votes**

2. Those are the older bees - Alzheimer's for bees... "I know I came out here for something,,, now what was it...." ~ Jesse Will, Vergennes, IL ~ **9 votes**

3. Stretching before they start the Chicago Marathon. Or washboarding. ~ Mark Jusko, Highland Park, IL ~ **4 votes**

4. Country music played too close to the hive (ed. The Boot Scootin Boogie). ~ Charlie Linder, Flora, IL ~ **3 votes**

5. This could be answered several different ways:

This could be a type of fanning to control temperature or humidity in the hive.

Another could be a different type of fanning where the bees are communicating with a pheromone letting returning foragers know this is your hive and welcome home.

Another could be what is known as washboarding, polishing or cleaning. This is where the bees seem to be moving back and forth cleaning up any foreign particles on their hive. Some sources claim the behavior "polishes" the surface to eliminate rough spots where pathogenic organisms could grow. ~ Doug Leedle, Mulkeytown, IL ~ **8 votes**

6. It is a little known fact, but the line dancing craze that began in the late 80's early 90's was started by a beekeeper. He was showing a couple of fellow beekeepers this behavior he was witnessing. Being a typical hot Louisiana afternoon, they went to the local watering hole. By the end of closing time, line dancing was invented. I know this doesn't answer your question but an interesting fact none the less. ~ Steve Kivikko, Esmond, IL ~ **4 votes**

7. They are holding a Moon-Walking contest. ~ Mark Jusko, Highland Park, IL ~ **2 votes**

8. It's party time! Once again the ladies are showing us what we humans should do more of. They are taking time to celebrate life by socializing, dancing and partying. You go girls! ~Jim Truesdale, Wheaton, IL ~ **6 votes**

Next issue's question:

What's the most appropriate age for a drone to mate? - Lonnie Langley, Vandalia, IL

President's Letter, Continued

commercial operations, and hobbyists who present their current knowledge on the latest research and the applications of that knowledge. The American Bee Federation is another opportunity to learn from the leaders in Industry and Research as well. This year, the ABF National Meeting will be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which is relatively close and well worth the effort to attend. Here too, you are exposed to the latest research and how it is being applied. The National Honey Producers also have a great conference which tends to be geared more toward commercial operations. This would be beneficial for beekeepers with production in mind. Lastly, there are some private, for profit, opportunities for advancing

knowledge. Many are very good and worth the expense.

I feel we need to evaluate where we are and where we want to go. Education is most important and harnessing the expertise in these new affiliated Associations will make us a stronger organization. I am looking forward to working with you to see where we can go and what good we can do. Give us your ideas, look at joining the board in the future. Get involved. Join other organizations like ABF or the National Honey Producers and attend conferences by these organizations and the Heartland Apicultural Society. Always strive to become a better beekeeper and help others do the same.



Illinois State Beekeepers Association

P.O. Box 21094

Springfield IL 62708

**Honey bees in
your spray area?
illinoisbees.com**



Membership in the Illinois State Beekeepers Association is open to all persons interested in bees and beekeeping. Beekeepers are urged to join through their local associations or individually if no local associations are available. Dues are \$10 for the calendar year January 1 through December 31 only. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the ISBA Bulletin. Beekeeping journals are available to ISBA members at about 25% discount. Mention membership in ISBA when sending your subscription payment to the publishers. Rates are subject to change without prior notice.

Make checks for membership payable to: Illinois State Beekeepers Association and mail to: Rose Leedle, Treasurer, P.O. Box 21094, Springfield, IL 62708.

Address Changes: Send old and new address six weeks prior to date of change when practical to the association secretary.

Reduced Journal Rates for 2014 (members only)

	<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yr</u>	<u>3 yr</u>
<u>American Bee Journal</u>	19.50	37.00	52.15
<u>Bee Culture</u>	21.00	38.00	N/A

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