

Illinois State Beekeepers Association



BULLETIN

1891-2019



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Corky Schnadt

Happy Memory from a Rainy April Day



I don't remember the exact year this picture was taken, but I'm sure it was in April when we were distributing packages to our club. Everyone is wearing a rain jacket, and they look cold. And it seems every year when we delivered bees, it would be rainy and cold.

I was about to leave and I turned around to say goodbye when I saw the scene in the photo. It immediately made me think that this is a lot of what beekeeping is about – the people you meet.

Joe Magyar, on the left, had just mentioned something from his many years of beekeeping, and Larry Kregel, on the right, is leaning in to listen intently. Charlie Nack, the mastermind of our package distribution operation, is in the center and on the phone brokering bee packages between those who ordered too many bee packages and those who ordered too few. He would do this for hours on the day before and the day of the package delivery. He was great at it.

I was just with Joe on his 80th birthday. His wisdom has carried many new and seasoned beekeepers through their

misadventures. He always had sage advice, and probably an extra Queen, for anyone that needed one or the other, or both. He isn't keeping bees anymore, but still sits quietly taking in everything in the room just like he always has. And you just want to wait for his next piece of advice that will be an antidote to whatever beekeeper trouble might be ailing you.

We lost Charlie a little under three years ago. I miss his advice on beekeeping, beekeepers, and how to run a beekeeping association, and many other things. We talked a lot. I often think of him.

Larry and I still work together. A lot. He's on the ISBA Board and is heading up the Summer meeting, teaching classes, and answering beekeeper questions in many venues.

All three were there that day to help others. Whether it was to get the members their bees, help them install packages, or give some helpful advice...or a little bit of all the above...they were there because people mattered to them too.

Many things in my beekeeping come and go. The good years, bad days; both get lost in time. But my memory of that rainy cold day never dims or fades. It was beekeepers helping beekeepers.

If you get a chance to help someone out, you probably should. You may just walk away with a great memory.

Corky

The ISBA Summer Meeting

This June will mark a first for ISBA, our first two-day summer meeting on June 7th and 8th. Friday afternoon has a number of short-courses offering time for conversations with beekeeping experts. Friday evening two discussion groups are planned, one on the making of mead, the other on the raising and deployment of locally raised queens. During the dinner break, there are a number of good local restaurants and the vendors attending the meeting will be available. It will be a time for gathering for a good meal and a time for leisure conversation with the vendors who serve our beekeeping needs.

Our Saturday meeting will have a variety of interesting and informative speakers with the opportunity for a sub sandwich lunch from Quiznos.

For the complete schedule, check ILSBA.com. We will meet at McHenry County College 8900 Route 14 in Crystal Lake, IL.

The registration fee will not break the budget – for ISBA members \$10.00 for a Friday afternoon short course, no charge for the Friday evening discussions, and \$25 for the presentations on Saturday. The first 100 to register for Saturday will receive the new ISBA baseball cap.

Register on line at <https://ilsba2019.bpt.me>. Or register at the door for \$5.00 additional.

We will be promoting healthy bees and happy beekeepers. Come join your fellow beekeepers.

Find McHenry County College on Mapquest –
[Directions - McHenry County College](#)

SOUTHERN DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Doug Leedle

Hi, I'm Doug Leedle, your new Southern District Representative. I want to thank you for electing me to fill Ray Chapman's big shoes. In the next few months, I hope to attend meetings of all the Southern Illinois Clubs and meet everyone.

As of April 12, 2019, swarm season has started for Southern Illinois. The swarm calls have started coming in.

St. Claire Beekeeping Association and Crossroads Beekeepers have both held well-attended Bee Schools this spring. S.I. All-A-Buzz held a Field Day which was attended by 45 individuals. S.I. All-A-Buzz plans on holding another Field Day in the Fall.

S.I. All-A-Buzz will be co-hosting with Illinois Queen Initiative, a 2 day Queen Rearing Class on May 18 and May 19th. Location is University of Illinois Extension Office, Murphysboro, IL

Shawnee Bee Club will be helping with D & M Bee School on May 25th, in Carrier Mills, IL. This is a no-cost event with guest speaker, EAS Master Beekeeper, Kent Williams.

Kaskaskia Country Beekeepers Consortium along with Prairieland Beekeepers will host "A Day with Mel Disselkoen" on May 25th. It will take place at the Carlyle Knights of Columbus Hall, Carlyle I

SPRING MISTAKES

Gabe Dadant

Let me set the mood. I've turned in the deer sled for the utility vehicle. It started on the first try and is running for the first time this spring. It is a cloudy, misting, 58 degrees. The weather app on my phone says I have approximately an hour and a half to get the rounds made before the real storm front makes its way through. I've got some old leather boots on, rain gear, and bee veil. Two 40lb boxes of protein patties on my lap and bee smoker and hive tool in one hand and steering wheel in the other. I'd made it through the first set of bees and was on my way to the second set of stands when it happened. I started sliding, and as I slid, deeper into the mud I went.

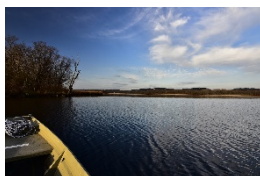


Well, so much for my 7-year streak of not rutting up the road. It happens. Even to those of us who think we have

beekeeping figured out. There are days when Mother Nature throws you a curve ball. That is what happened this year. Like many before me, I was flat out stuck. Buried up to the wheel wells in mud. Myself looking like I had just finished a summertime mud volley ball tournament. After a half hour of sweating, pulling, lifting and pushing, I finally had myself dug out. I was on to the next set of stands and luckily back to the garage before the storms came rolling in.

In beekeeping like many other professions or hobbies, we must overcome many obstacles. The first obstacle for me this beekeeping season was how to get out of the mud, for others it could be one of many things. In this article I'd like to take a look at the things that can go wrong in the spring season and how we can avoid making those mistakes.

I have made many mistakes in the spring since I started keeping a few hives of bees 22 years ago. The first mistake I recall is not feeding enough early. Spring starvation was my first mistake. I thought the bees had plenty of resources to make it through until the first black locust tree came into bloom. Boy was I wrong. I should have been feeding a mixture of 1:1 syrup and pollen sub instead



of catching my limit of largemouth up the creek on the backwaters of the old Mississippi.

The second mistake that comes to mind is not testing or treating early enough in the season for Varroa mites. I love Black Locust honey and that is our first flow here in the Midwestern part of the state. Trying to catch this flow and timing mite treatments used to be a difficult thing to do. Apistan and Checkmite were the two kids on the block when I started keeping bees, and the duration of the treatment made supering for the flow almost impossible. Treatments were cut in half or none were treated at all.

Fortunately two springtime treatments are now available and can be used in conjunction with the honey flow. Both formic acid treatments are manufactured by NOD apiaries out of Canada. The older of the two are the MAQS strips, the newer



being Formic Pro. The difference in the strips is the duration of the treatment. MAQS and Formic Pro can be used once daytime temps are steadily in the 50's. MAQS is a 7-day treatment and Formic Pro 14 days. Each advises the use of two pads placed in-between the brood boxes. The bees will carry the delivery pad out the front entrance or you can take what remains of the pad out after the treatment.

If you have a few weeks until the first flow, another option is using half a dose of Apiguard. By cutting down the standard full 50 - gram dose to 25 grams, one is able to treat two or three times prior to the flow. Apiguard works best when temps are in the low 60's to 100 degrees. Another treatment folks are finding works well for them is the vaporization or sugar water dribble of oxalic acid. Treatments with oxalic are applied when temperatures are above 50 degrees and the bees are active. For those who want to really hammer the mites, Apivar, an amitraz

treatment, works very well. The downside to it in the spring is the duration of treatment is 42 days w/no supers in place.

Another mistake I have made in the past is not treating soon enough with Antibiotics when a brood disease breaks out early spring. I know it is a sore subject within the state, but I'm not a fan of the burn-your-hive-if-you-have-EFB that some promote. I prefer to treat it with antibiotics if test show positive for European Foulbrood. Now AFB is another story. Burn that sucker down ASAP if you



have found your hives to have American Foul brood. Contact your local state inspector to help you verify any brood disease in question or send samples right away to the lab in Beltsville.

When I first started out and was trying to increase my numbers any way possible, I found myself at times wondering why I didn't paint four or five additional complete hives and have them ready to go

for those unexpected swarm calls. Every spring it seems we get four or five calls a week with folks who need help getting a swarm of bees down from an unexpected place. Have your boxes ready ahead of the calls so you can pick them up and transfer them at the location into their new home. Same goes for package bees, nucs, or splits that you may make. Have extra hive equipment ready to go before you need it, and you'll be happy you did.



Lastly but not least is the rotation of your boxes. I have made the mistake of not reversing brood boxes in the spring time when they should be. The queen is up above and the box below is empty. A good rule of thumb is to reverse in the spring and late summer if needed. This will help provide additional room for the queen to lay, increasing the colony's population and providing a larger field force for the first nectar flow.

Best of luck this spring. See you early summer.



Here are three things you should know about the ISBA summer meeting

1. There are four short-courses on Friday afternoon. The fee for a course is \$10.00. You may only register for one as they run simultaneously. Registration for these courses will be limited in number and is for members only.
2. There are two discussion groups on Friday evening, both starting at 7:00 pm, and are open to any interested individuals, one on mead making and one on the raising of local queens. No registration is required. There is no fee. Just come and join in.
3. Saturday, a day with many presentations, begins at 9:00 and ends at 3:30, and is open to members and non-members. Registration fee for the day is \$25.00 (\$35 for non-members) and the first 100 members who register receive a free (and collectable!) ISBA hat. Walk-in registration is an additional \$5.00. A Saturday sub sandwich lunch is available for \$10.00.

A note on lunch... our lunch will be catered by Quiznos, who will provide a selection of their toasted sub sandwiches.



Vegetarian subs will be available. Deadline for preordering lunch is June 1.

MY MEAD, FROM MY BEES

Do you like to taste of the honey from your backyard apiary? It does have its own personality. It is uniquely yours. There is a deep satisfaction when dripping the honey that you and your bees together made on your breakfast toast.

Do you wonder how it would taste if it were allowed to ferment into mead? Each batch of mead is unique. Just as different grapes and different years produce different wines, each batch of mead carries the character of the nectar source unique to that year. Your spring honey will produce a different mead than your fall honey.

Although many choose to age mead, it can be consumed after only weeks when the fermentation stops. Yet, its character will change as it ages. If you want to leave a mead legacy for future generations, do as some European mead makers do – half of each batch is designated for their grandchildren. Of course, they are drinking their grandfather’s mead!

For those who are lured by the thought of mead and a mead legacy, Friday, June 7, at 7:00 pm as part of the ISBA summer meeting, there will be a gathering of mead makers. Discussion and inspiration are on the docket, but no consumption. In keeping with the rules of our host, McHenry County College, no alcohol is consumed on campus... yes, mead is an alcoholic beverage. Think... Viking Mead.



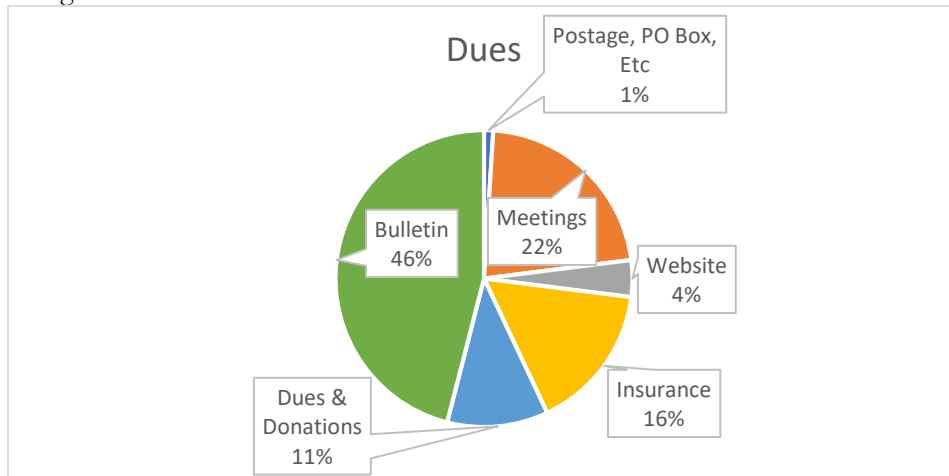
WHERE DO YOUR DUES GO?

Rose Leedle

I have been asked many times where are my \$10 Illinois State Beekeepers Association dues going? Here is a breakdown of how your dues were spent in 2018:

- \$4.60 Cost of publishing, printing and mailing Illinois State Beekeeper’s Bulletin.
- \$2.20 Cost of summer and fall meetings over what fees were charged for attendance.
- \$1.60 Insurance for meetings and special events
- \$1.10 Dues to the American Beekeeping Federation and donations to various bee research groups
- \$0.40 Cost of maintaining website.
- \$0.10 Postage, Post Office Box, Non-Profit Fees, Miscellaneous.

No funds at any time go to board members for their time and services.



THE HISTORY OF DADANT & SONS

Part 1

We currently have the seventh generation involved in the business. From humble beginnings, our company has expanded to 10 branch locations nationwide and 4 manufacturing facilities that are located near Hamilton, IL. We are happy to serve the United States beekeepers, as well as many overseas customers. Since 1863, the Dadant family has made quality products from beeswax, a natural and renewable resource.

The Beginning



Charles Dadant

The Dadant family has been interested in beekeeping for over 180 years. The founder, Charles Dadant, was born in 1817 in Vaux-Sous-Aubigny, a small village in eastern France, the second of seven children born to a small village doctor. He became interested in bees as he helped a neighboring priest remove honey from straw skeps at the early age of 12. Disillusioned with the business possibilities in France, he decided to accept an invitation of an old friend Mr. Marlot, then of Basco, IL, to come grow Champagne grapes and raise bees. In 1863, at the age of 46, he emigrated from France to America and settled in Hamilton, Illinois. The growing of grapes here did not prove to be lucrative so he abandoned them in favor of honey bees. By the end of the Civil War, Charles had nine colonies of honeybees, and traveled with his young son, C.P. Dadant across the Mississippi River to sell honey and beeswax in a neighboring town. His interest in making quality candles grew from his love and knowledge of beekeeping. Charles was once the largest producer of extracted honey in America as well as one of the first to import queen bees from Italy on a large scale as he was unhappy with the common black or German bees he found here. He began a series of experiments on the size of hives and wrote a great deal on the large hive that appeared in both American and European journals. In 1872 he was offered the editorship of *The American Bee Journal*, but refused because of his unfamiliarity with the English language. He learned to read the *New York Tribune* by digging at the words one at a time with a pocket dictionary so that he could then translate it back into French for his wife.

Charles was a dreamer, a man with ideas and determination. He was the experimenter who became more widely known abroad than in his adopted country.

The Second Generation



C. P. Dadant

When his father wrote home to France that he had settled on a 40 acre farm north of Hamilton that he had purchased from Mr. Marlot, the rest of the family packed their trunks and started for the unknown land that Camille Pierre (C.P.) had only dreamed of. Camille Pierre (C.P.) was only 12 years old when his father brought the family to America. When he first saw the Mississippi he couldn't believe how magnificent it was in its beauty, almost equal to a lake. He described living in the small log house that his father had built as the happiest time in his life. Learning to read at the age of 4, Camille was more practical than Charles and was given the responsibility of carrying the purse strings at a very young age – he was the business man of the two. He built the business around his father's knowledge and became a beekeeping leader. Every improvement and change for the better was made due to their own efforts and appreciated because of this. He would joke of a European business man and a little boy digging out oak trees and using a brush scythe to mow down all the hazel brush. The concept of a plow (pulling on the handles to go down and pressing down to bring it out of the dirt) went against all of his notions of mechanics. It was necessary for him to devote himself to the family farm and the sale of his father's honey and farm products. In 1871 when his father suffered from an asthma attack, it became necessary for him to take over the families 70 hives as well. Because there was no bridge across the Mississippi at this time, it was necessary for him to get up by 4:30 in order for him to get himself and goods to the ferry by 6:15. He considered himself lucky for many years that he was small because Captain Van Dyke never charged him for the ferry. He knew he was a grownup for the first time when the Captain held out his hand for a dime. He learned at a young age not to spend his money on candy or other desirable frivolities as it would be like throwing his money in the Mississippi for him and his family. He always got a good price for his wares when he sold them as he was a firm believer that "it pays to furnish good goods".

Continued

In 1875 C.P. married Marie Marinelli and took her to the same log cabin his father had taken his family to. In 1878, they began manufacturing foundation for their own use and later, for sale. As the business grew, they improved upon manufacturing methods and helped to finance the invention of the Weed sheeting machine, still in use today. In 1885, the revision of Langstroth's, "[The Hive and the Honey Bee](#)" was entrusted to them and four revisions appeared under their names from 1889 to 1899. Charles translated it into French and later it was translated into Italian, Russian, Spanish and Polish. Charles died in 1902 and C.P. proceeded to produce four revisions of the book himself.

In 1904, C.P. retired and built a home in Hamilton on what is now North 7th street overlooking the Mississippi. In his retirement he became a community leader helping to establish banks, the library, and was one of five to bring about the building of the dam between Hamilton and Keokuk. On his retirement, as he watched his three sons take over the business he stated; "So we have reared a family of beekeepers. Now they can speak for themselves and we can take a back seat and watch them work." In 1912 however, his love of the honey bee beckoned to him once again. He assumed publishing of The American Bee Journal which has been published in Hamilton ever since. His goal was that the journal be the "finest publication on bees and beekeeping in the world." Camille Dadant passed away in 1938.

"So we have reared a family of beekeepers. Now they can speak for themselves and we can take a back seat and watch them work." – C.P. Dadant

To be continued...

IT'S THE QUEEN!



When a colony of honeybees does well, give the queen the credit. When a colony does poorly, of course, the queen is at fault.

Since the advent of the movable frame hive, beekeepers have had a key role in choosing the heart of the hive, the queen. When the Langstroth hive was widely adopted, the beekeeper could inspect carefully and rate the quality of the queen. Well-performing queens' genetics are welcome in the beeyard while underperforming queens are replaced. In their role, beekeepers often develop a preference for a race of bees. The beginner gets the advice, "Start with an Italian queen." Italians have the reputation of being mannerly, not overly defensive and less prone to swarming. But there are those who have learned to love the more-recently-arrived Russians. Perhaps they are a bit more mite resistant and overwinter better. Today's American beekeeper can choose among nearly a dozen "subspecies" of queens. Asking a beekeeper about a preference in queens is like asking about a preference in ice cream. One is certainly better than others, but at any given time any flavor will do.

So what of that queen reared in one's own beeyard? A mutt? A few decades ago, the advice often given suggested that swarm and supersedure queens should be killed and replaced with a mail order queen of known

lineage. Today there is an increasing number of beekeepers that now prize the locally bred queen, especially if she is the offspring of a queen known for leading a successful colony that produces honey well and survives the winter.

We are entering the age of the locally bred queen... the locally acclimated queen.

The road to prized local queens is not without its challenges and its critics. Illinois now has over 4,300 registered beekeepers who have the potential to breed that local queen. Granted it does require insight and preparation, but most any of that 4,300 could become queen independent.

Some find the thought of breeding a queen bee daunting. Some recognize they do not have the desire, the time, or the bee power. For this group, there is the possibility of acquiring local queens from local beekeepers willing to take on the challenge. There is a growing number of such marketing their own line of queens.

At the June ISBA meeting, there will be a panel discussion exploring the many aspects of the growing field of breeding local queens. Consider joining the group on Friday, June 7 at 7:00 pm as these challenges are considered.

DON'T WORRY, BEE HAPPY!

Eleanor Schumacher

What could be time better spent than the hours dedicated to your bee yard? If you're reading this, you obviously love the art and science of beekeeping and the act of working your bees. Out in the elements, braving the ticks, the heat, sometimes the approaching rain, or dusk, it's your time to tune into nature and the hum of the hive. This is "the zone", that moment of sweetness when everything is clicking.

You are a farmer now. You go whistling out into the sunshine to tend your flying flock. But not every day is as golden as the glistening honey that drizzles from an extractor (or a Flow Hive!). Mark Twain said, "Farming is simply gambling with dirt," but if American farming success was random luck, this nation would have gone hungry long ago. Likewise, success in beekeeping and your beekeeping happiness is won by planning ahead with solid management strategies.

Be proactive, not reactive. Surprises in the bee yard won't necessarily derail your train of bee-thought if you have a solid plan and stick to it. What separates the whistling farmer from the whispering-curses farmer is the proactive approach to animal husbandry. Even if your straw hat is a little new and a little tight, you can walk the happy farmer walk. It all comes down to scheduling, and there's nothing wrong with scheduling your "fun-in-the-sun" based on advice from your favorite happy mentor, bee hero, or bee celebrity.

My favorite bee celeb is Randy Oliver, the man behind ScientificBeekeeping.com. I had the awesome fortune of seeing his presentation in Chicago at the Garfield Park Conservatory back on March 31. When it comes to celebrity beekeepers, Randy stands apart, not just because of his academic background in entomology, and not only due to his prowess as an independent researcher, correlating a world of peer-reviewed studies, and bravely sharing his enlightened conclusions. Randy is my hero because he does all this and runs 1,000 hives, supplying almond pollination services as well as honey and nucs for sale, and he does so with radiant joy and a truly generous spirit. That golden glaze – happiness in the bee yard - is something we all can obtain. Happiness is won when problems are identified and solutions are honed. There are hundreds of articles on ScientificBeekeeping.com and all are a great reference towards happy beekeeping.

Among Randy Oliver's greatest gifts to beekeeping-kind are his fantastic biology diagrams. Crystal clear and beautifully laid-out, these diagrams are road maps to happiness. Orienting bee health and bee activity to the calendar year, a beekeeper can come to understand and anticipate the cyclical challenges that lead to loss in the



apiary. In his article, "Understanding Buildup and Colony Decline – Part 2", Randy presents his "Colony Demography" graph, which illustrates the age distribution of worker bees throughout a calendar year. Randy created this graph based on the pre-Varroa-era research of Lloyd Harris, who in the late 1970s embarked on a very difficult research project at the University of Manitoba. Harris started 30 colonies from packages and over the span of three years, marked and counted worker bees every 12 days (the length of time a bee pupates). Harris finally began publishing his dataset with his article, "Timing of production of winter bees in honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) colonies" in 2001. When he shared his original dataset with Randy Oliver, exciting explanations of hive biology followed. In Randy's article, "Understanding Colony Buildup and Decline: Part 13d – The Impacts of Parasites and CO₂", he explains how colony demography is driven by pollen availability, and how pest and pathogen pressures interact with floral timing. These works are tickets to lifelong happiness in any bee yard because coming to know nature's plant-pollinator schedule, as well as the typical honeybee pest/pathogen cycle, will help you develop a schedule of your own. Of course, Manitoba has quite different weather and floral timing than Chicago, Bloomington, Springfield, or Carbondale, and Randy's California interpretation of Lloyd Harris' data needs slight adjustment to fit the Illinois climate. That therein is where the fun begins – in adjusting Randy's calendar to your climate.

Randy presented his calendar to Illinois beekeepers at Garfield Park in a 10-phase format:

1. Early pollen and initiation of spring brood rearing
2. Spring turnover (the die-off of the very old winter bees)
3. Linear phase – 60 days of growth
4. Swarming impulse
5. Main honey flow
6. Late summer pollen decline
7. Post-frost cessation of brood rearing
8. Fall turnover
9. Winter cluster
10. Mid-winter initiation of minor brood-rearing.

This biological routine applies to hives anywhere. The question for you then is: "Where in this scheme do I find most of my beekeeping challenges?" If you're too new to beekeeping to come up with an answer, ask your mentor – you'll probably spark a lot of thought and conversation. I always find May to be the most challenging month. May is a juggling act of several objectives:

1. Are all of my hives healthy? Do any of them need medicine or other treatment?
2. Are my hives ready for the nectar flow?
3. Can I manage the swarm impulse to expand my apiaries and maximize my honey-making workforce?

May management is an enormous determining factor to hive wellbeing for the rest of the year. Being proactive means that May management starts during late winter. What great news! This means you can start whistling and working your favorite hobby months in advance! Those dreary grey days of February and March won't depress you if you're down in your basement, mending frames and equipment, and shopping online for everything you'll need on hand. Get all of your honey supers ready to go. Get your nucs cleaned, painted, and filled with frames. Plot out your swarm trap locations. Calibrate your bee vacuum. Buy screen and cut pieces to fit over hive entrances for when you move hives. The list goes on and on. You want to get all these cold-weather activities out of the way, because every nice day that comes along in mid-March and through April, you'll have outdoor chores in your apiary. That, after all, is what you live for – standing in the sun, frame in hand, watching the bees for clues about what they do (or don't) need. This is the most fun – working outside – so you should indulge yourself and take plenty of time observing all you can about your bees' behavior.

- How are the spring bees treating their queen? Even a queen that looks big and beautiful might be approaching her last working days, and if you notice bees not paying her much attention, they might be ready to replace her – or need you to step in with a new queen.
- If bees are hanging around on the entrance, how do they look? Clues about your bee health can be found here if you notice bees with K-wing, or bees who have a shiny, hairless appearance, a tapered abdomen, or a trembling movement. Nosema and virus symptoms often present in April. If you already have an immunity booster product on hand, you may be able to save a declining hive and prevent other hives from catching the pathogen.
- What kind of pollen are bees bringing in? How is it being stored? Is there a pollen ring around the brood nest? Or are bees putting it “downstairs in the pantry,” down in the bottom box for later use?

- What is your pest load? What are your mite levels? How many small hive beetles can you kill?
- How do the larvae look? How is the brood pattern? Are you EFB-free? EFB doesn't go away on its own anymore. If you see dull, twisted, dying larvae, a quick call to your apiary inspector could save a hive – or a community of hives, as EFB is very contagious. Having your own plan and policy about how you will control or eliminate EFB is like having an insurance policy on your level of enjoyment in the bee yard.

So many beekeepers living in Southern Illinois such as myself have had to deal with European Foulbrood. Meanwhile, we're having as much fun in the yard as we ever had. I know some beekeepers in particular who started their outdoor fun earlier than before. Sharing their experiences and knowledge with each other, they decided to apply their EFB antibiotics in late February, with the idea that their antibiotic residual time would end right around tax-day, allowing them to dive right into the late-April nectar flow. Now, with May in full swing, these early-bird beekeepers are rushing less, enjoying nature more. They're noting what flowers bees are working. They're watching what dances the workers are doing. They're probably also marveling at the fact that every year, without fail, one week after the morel mushrooms pop up, the queen cells pop down. How alike they look – queen cells and morel mushrooms! Being ahead of schedule, the early-bird beekeeper probably had time for that hike in the woods that brought a whole sack full of morels. And when a neighbor asked, “Have you ever dipped a morel in honey and fried it?” the early bird beekeeper probably had time and enough morels to try it.



The sunshine, the scent on the breeze, the sound of rustling leaves and bird calls. The peace you find in your surroundings. The weight you heft when you proudly stack boxes of capped honey beside your extractor. The smiles on the faces of your repeat honey customers. These are the joys that make a happy life of beekeeping. Coming to anticipate the very time of year you'll need to watch for little pitfalls and time-stealers, and cutting them off at the pass with regularly scheduled management will keep you happy in your beekeeping year-round.

LEARN TO SHOW HONEY



Showing honey is not for everyone, but there is a strange challenge that lures many beekeepers. Beekeepers seems to fancy their own honey. It looks good, tastes good, comes from one's own bees who service the flowers of the neighborhood. It's a personal thing. Showing your honey at a fair or conference is an easy next step. It is an itch that needs scratching.

Honey shows have been around for centuries. In the middle ages the fall honey harvest was a reason for a raucous honey faire. Today many county and state fairs have less raucous honey shows as do many beekeeping conferences such as the American Beekeeping Federation and the Heartland Apiculture Society.

Not that we want to brag, but at the 2018 Heartland Apicultural Society meeting, ISBA members won four first-place ribbons. In one category, the black jar category—a competition where honey is judged strictly on taste—ISBA member Karen Belli took first place, ISBA member Frank Moriarty placed second. Illinois does have great tasting honey. Judging that category is a sweet job!

At the June ISBA state meeting, Karen Belli, along with husband Jim, will be discussing showing honey in a Friday afternoon short-course. (Frank will be on the panel for the Gathering of Mead Makers on Friday evening.) In a three-hour session with the Bellis, pick up the hints that puts your jar of honey in the running for that blue ribbon. Bring your jars of honey along for a critique!

Keith Delaplaine, in one of his online videos, closes by saying, “Have fun with your bees.” Well, have fun competing with your bees' honey.

ASSOCIATION SPOTLIGHT

Prairie State Beekeepers Association



Prairie State Beekeepers Association is a relatively new group consisting of experienced beekeepers as well as new recruits. We are located in central Illinois and meet at the Sangamon County Farm Bureau on the first Thursday of the month. The group was formed about a year and a half ago and is a swarm from another group that had a lot of drones so we decided to abscond. We have between 70 and 100 members and concentrate on beekeeping with a very short business meeting and lots of discussion about current issues in the hive.

We have recently started an aggressive queen-rearing project and hope to harvest 60 virgin queens every ten days using the Michael Palmer method. We plan to provide queens for the club members at a minimal cost and sell the excess to other beekeepers. Profits from queen sales will be used to fund youth interested in beekeeping for 4H or FFA projects.

We also have work nights where we build beekeeping equipment and sell it to members to finance the club and help keep equipment cost at a minimum. We recently built 40 swarm boxes and 100 four-frame nucs for our queen project. We currently have a very enthusiastic group and have a lot of fun doing projects.

We just completed a beekeeping class with 40 participants and many decided to try beekeeping.

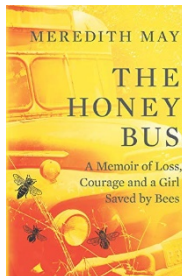
Rich Ramsey
President, Prairie State Beekeepers Association



THE HONEY BUS...

A Memoir of Loss, Courage and a Girl Saved by Bees
By Meredith May

This book would be appropriate for anyone from adolescence to adulthood. It is about an extremely dysfunctional family that begins in divorce, a move in with Grandma and Grandpa in the 70s Big Sur, California, and the redemption of the child as she matures and learns about bees from Grandpa. Although her family is flawed and maladjusted, the hive teaches her how a real family should function. One of the best things about this book is that ALL THE FACTS are 100% true. There was no flourishing, embellishing, or even telling of half-truths. This book comes HIGHLY recommended!



DADANT WILL DELIVER ORDERS TO JUNE MEETING

Dadant, Illinois-based for 150 years, will be attending the ISBA Summer Meeting on June 7 and 8. Once again, they will offer to deliver phone or email orders to the meeting.

Contact Brian Lox with your order –
(877) 232 3268 or blox@dadant.com

Thanks, Dadant, we appreciate the service.



Illinois State Beekeepers Association
PO Box 21094
Springfield, IL 62708

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 – December 31 only. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the ISBA Bulletin.

Make checks for membership payable to: ISBA and mail to: Illinois State Beekeepers Association – Membership, PO 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. At-large members can email the change to the ISBA Membership Director at spetrilli45@gmail.com

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