

# Heart of Illinois Beekeeper

A publication of the Heart of Illinois Beekeepers' Association

NEWS FROM THE HIVE

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a terrible winter for beekeepers! The reports I'm getting from most of you out there are that we are seeing winter kills ranging from 85 to 100%! This seems to be a statewide phenomenon, and was due to the prolonged cold. After all, December was the second coldest on record with only two days that were not below normal. Package bees are already in short supply. So, if you haven't ordered any, don't expect it to be easy to find any. When you do find them, don't be surprised if you are putting them in during May.

Ground moisture looks adequate for spring flowering. Varroa mites will still be around as will AFB, tracheal mites, and nosema. Don't forget to treat and follow recommendations. I am starting to feel like a farmer who will have that "big crop" this year. That's part of being a beekeeper – eternal optimism.

Steve Mayes, President

## APRIL 13 MEETING IN PEKIN

The next meeting of the HIBA membership will be in Pekin on April 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Jim Ackerman whose topic will be *Honey Bee Pollination and Pumpkin Production in Tazewell County*. The Friday evening meeting in Pekin will be held at the Tazewell Farm Bureau building, 1505 Valle Vista. Mark this date and time on your calendar now so that you won't miss this important event. In addition to this special talk, there will be the usual business meeting, and plenty of opportunities to socialize, as well as to win door prizes. As usual, members are encouraged to bring honey recipe treats to share.

## MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 9 GENERAL MEETING

The first general meeting of 2001 was held in the Farm Bureau building in Peoria on February 9. A day of nasty weather followed by a cold evening limited attendance to fifteen members and guests. The membership was called to order by President Steve Mayes at 7:35 p.m. The first order of business was the awarding of a certificate of appreciation to Earl and Nola Lutz for their many years of service to HIBA.

Tom Elston announced that Bill Fleming of the East Central Illinois Beekeepers Association will again be going south this spring to bring back package bees to central Illinois. Members placing orders can pick them up at Tom's home east of Bloomington for \$50/pkg (marked/clipped queens extra). More details are available in the December newsletter. To order call Tom at (309) 378-2871 or E-mail him at [Telston440@aol.com](mailto:Telston440@aol.com). (EDITOR'S NOTE: The deadline for ordering is now long passed.) It was also announced that a group from Sullivan, IL, will be getting Buckfast bees from Texas for \$51/pkg.

Carl Wenning announced that 75-80 people are expected for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual HIBA Beekeeping Course on February 10. The event is expected to net close to \$500 for HIBA. Also, a beekeeping beginner kit will



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be raffled with profits going to support the Honey Princess/Beekeeping Ambassador program. Carl also presented a draft honey princess brochure, eventually duplicates of which will be handed out at various meetings. The draft featured honey recipes and a photo of 2001 Honey Princess Rebecca Wenning.

The new general meeting show-and-tell feature was well received. Janet Hart showed a book entitled *4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Illinois State Beekeepers Association* published in 1919. Doug Voltz showed a group of bees embedded in clear plastic that he and wife Susan use when making presentations to school children. Don Waldman showed a homemade mite trap similar to one of the evening's door prizes. He also displayed a fan apparatus used to circulate air through a stack of supers as part of his honey drying process. Last but not least, Steve Mayes displayed a variety of items from his antique collection. Included were a very old smoker and numerous old glass, metal, and stone-ware honey containers.

Steve Chard, Illinois' chief apiary inspector, was the main speaker. He presented data showing the decline in Illinois beekeeping over the past 13 years. In 1988 Illinois had 2966 registered beekeepers managing 37,025 colonies. By the mid 90's the numbers had declined over 50%. In 2000, 18,504 colonies were being managed by only 1142 registered beekeepers. Of those almost 1000 had 10 or fewer colonies; 31 had 50-to-100; and eight had 400 or more.

As part of the learning experience in his position, Steve joined his staff in the inspection of about 4,000 hives in 1999 and 1731 in 2000, the lesser number being due to weather factors and reduced staff. Of the hives inspected in 2000, 855 were opened. Of these almost 50% had varroa mites; only 2% had American Foulbrood and none had European Foulbrood. Other points made by Steve:

- Last fall the EPA issued limits for traces of the mite treatment coumaphos to 100 p.p.b. in liquid honey and 100 p.p.m. in comb honey.
- The USDA is merging the operations of the Tucson Research Lab to the Lab in Weslaco, Texas.
- Russian bees have been found to be somewhat more mite resistant than other breeds.

It really pays to attend HIBA general meetings. This year Steve Mayes has obtained a whole bunch of great door prizes. At this meeting prizes including a smoker, a free bee journal subscription, a mite trap, hive tools, honey jars, and jars of honey/cinnamon spread were won by 13 of the 15 people present. Honey-based treats and lively conversation followed the meeting and continued until about 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Waldman, Secretary

### **HIBA BEEKEEPING COURSE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual HIBA beekeeping course was a resounding success. Held in Bloomington on February 10, the course was attended by some 70 prospective beekeepers representing approximately 45 households from across Illinois and Missouri. Assisting with the course were HIBA members Janet and Danny Hart, Jean Nyman, Don Hughes, Tom Elston, Earl Lutz, Doug and Sue Voltz, and the entire Wenning family. Also showing up to provide emotional support were Steve and Jill Mayes who were able to attend only at the end of the day due to a concurrent ISBA Board Meeting. Several HIBA members were among those registered for the course.

This year's event had the largest enrollment in the history of the course. Over the past few years, over 250 individuals from across Illinois and adjoining states have participated in this annual event. This success story speaks volumes about three things: the interest of the general public in beekeeping, the need for additional beekeeping courses to be held throughout Illinois, and the hard work and ceaseless dedication of the Heart of Illinois Beekeepers in promoting beekeeping. In attendance at the meeting were Tony Erwin and Harvey Seering from the St. Clair Beekeepers' Association who are considering holding their own beekeeping course in the Belleville, IL, area just east of St. Louis. Also stopping in for a brief period of time were ISBA's Rich Ramsey, Rita Taylor, Udell Meyer, and Ray Chapman who happened to be in town for the ISBA Board meeting.

Financially speaking, the workshop was a great success as well. The proceeds from workshop were just under \$400, and a raffle for the Honey Princess / Beekeeping Ambassador program netted more than \$170. The total income on the day was \$570.54. Tim Speerly of Peoria won the raffle. The raffle prize consisted of a complete assembled beehive, helmet, veil, shielded stainless steel smoker, hive tool, sting resistant gloves, and the book *Beekeeping in the Midwest* by Jaycox.

Course participants were, for the first time in the history of the series, surveyed at the close of the day. The following results were obtained: 30% found out about the course from a friend, 27% from a newsletter, 20% from a beekeeping journal, 6% via a newspaper, and 17% from a variety of sources. Survey results indicate that 80% were very satisfied with the course, and 17% were somewhat satisfied. There was one non-response, and no one indicated any degree of disappointment. The written comments were extremely positive. Comments such as "Enthusiasm! Not dumbed down; not patronizing. Handouts – yeah!" and "Format is great. Keeping on time schedule great. Postponing questions 'til proper time is masterful!" and "Excellent!" The surveys will be made available at the April membership meeting for review by all who assisted. Two photographs and a short article appeared on page A5 of the Bloomington Pantagraph the day after the event.

A special note of recognition for Tom Elston, Danny and Janet Hart, and Rebecca and Carl Wenning for making presentations throughout the day. A "tip of the hat" to everyone who generously prepared a number of treats and assisted with questions during break times.



## **2001 HIBA HONEY PRINCESS UPDATE**

On Saturday, March 3, 2001 HIBA Honey Princess Rebecca Wenning presented information about honey, honey bees, and beekeeping to two groups of adults attending the *Expanding Your Horizons through Science and Mathematics* conference held on the campus of Illinois State University in Normal. A total of 26 teachers and parents attended Rebecca's two, one-hour sessions. Rebecca described the life of a colony, the protective devices and tools of beekeepers, explained the nature of a hive, and provided a number of education resources that classroom teachers could use to prepare unit plans as the basis for teaching about honey bees. Rebecca received a large number of very positive comments for her contributions.

Since being chosen to serve as HIBA's first Honey Princess, Rebecca and her parents have worked diligently on producing a brochure for promoting the use of honey. The brochure contains nine yummy, honey-based recipes as well as tips for using and storing honey. Copies of the brochure hopefully will be available to HIBA members at the April 13 meeting in Pekin.

Rebecca now has plans for additional Honey Princess presentations. On May 15 she'll speak to 4-H students in Hartford, IL. On June 19 she will speak at the Bloomington Public Library where in the past she has had audiences of 100 and more. On July 10 she will speak at Warner Public Library at Clinton, IL. Rebecca was asked to present at the Warner Library as, evidently, the BPL people who had seen Rebecca present her talk about beekeeping before were "raving" about Rebecca's earlier presentation at a meeting of library directors.

## **OUTREACH UPDATES**

On March 8, Tom Elston gave a honey bee demonstration to 50+ students and adults at the Tri-Valley Elementary School. There were several groups of kids in the audience. One group was studying the lives of pioneers and Tom had to relate beekeeping to that time period. He also gave another bee demo talk to 25 students and adults in the *Animal Awareness* class at Central

Catholic High School on Feb. 27. According to Tom, "It was fun being able to talk to an older group of kids and being able to speak more in-depth about the honey bee."

On March 11, Steve and Jill Mayes and Tom Elston went to Springfield to work the ISBA booth at the Illinois Products-Food Fair. There was a big crowd of over 3200 served by 48 Illinois vendors, and lots of samples of free food were provided. Our beekeepers talked about bees, gave out over 500 clover honey stix, passed out information and recipe brochures from the National Honey Board, and sold some honey. Fun was had by all.

## **ERROR IN PRICE OF BEE CULTURE**

The last issue of the *Heart of Illinois Beekeeper* newsletter contained an error in the subscription price of *Bee Culture*. The price for one year read \$13; it should have read \$16. The price for two years read \$25.00; it should have read \$31. The newsletter editor regrets the error, and asks that if anyone recently renewed *Bee Culture* using the form from the back of the February 2001 issue of this newsletter, that an additional \$3.00 or \$6.00, as appropriate, be given to the Association secretary, Don Waldman, at one of the next meetings. If you choose to send the extra money to Don, you may reduce that amount by \$0.50 to cover the cost of the envelope and stamp if you wish. Again, the newsletter editor regrets any inconveniences and loss of income for the Association this may have caused.

## **PLANNING FOR TRI-STATE MEETING CONTINUES**

The ISBA "summer" meeting for 2002 will be held as a tri-state event in conjunction with the state associations of Missouri and Iowa. The meeting, to be hosted by Dadant & Sons, Inc. of Hamilton, IL, will be held in Keokuk, IA, on Saturday, March 9, 2002. Carl Wenning of HIBA is serving as central Illinois region representative on the planning committee. He joins Joe Graham of Dadants, Bob Cox of Iowa, and Larry Hensley of Missouri.

The summer meeting is being held during March to ensure maximum attendance at this meeting. Similar meetings in the early 1980's and 1990's drew between 200-300

beekeepers each time. Next year's event is expected to have the theme of "Practical Beekeeping." A number of well known researchers and authors from *American Bee Journal* will present talks. These talks are expected to fill the Saturday morning sessions, and workshops are expected to fill the afternoon sessions. During the afternoon on Friday and morning on Saturday, the main plant at Dadant & Sons in Hamilton, IL, will be open for tours and purchases of equipment.

A planning meeting will be held in Hamilton, IL, on Thursday, April 12. Carl will provide additional details at the April 13 meeting of the HIBA membership in Pekin. Carl represents not only the ISBA at this meeting, but also the central region of the ISBA that is responsible for hosting the summer meeting in 2002. HIBA last hosted the ISBA summer meeting in Bloomington during June 1999.

## **BEEKEEPING ITEMS FOR SALE**

Elmer Dotzert of Secor, IL, has shallow supers with frames and wax, hives with inner covers, lids, bottom board, and frames for sale. All key items have been torched, scraped, painted, and are in "great shape" as Elmer tells it. If you are interested in acquiring these items, call Elmer at 309-744-1986.

## **MEMBER'S ARTICLES BROADLY DISTRIBUTED**

As you probably know, Carl Wenning has been writing for *American Bee Journal* for nearly the past two years. Now, his articles are being disseminated far and wide. One of his articles, "The Language of Beekeeping," was recently reprinted in the journal *Australasian Beekeeping* and his "Profitable Beekeeping" recently was posted on the National Honey Board's website at [www.nhb.org](http://www.nhb.org). For the past three years Carl has been editing the *Heart of Illinois Beekeeper* newsletter and for the past one year the *ISBA Bulletin* newsletter. Back issues of more recent issues can be found on the WWW at [www.isba.ws](http://www.isba.ws) and [www.isba.ws](http://www.isba.ws) respectively.



# 2001 HIBA Membership Application/Renewal Form

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE NUMBER ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

LBS. 2000 PRODUCTION \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF PRODUCING COLONIES \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR STARTED BEEKEEPING \_\_\_\_\_

## 2001 Association Rate Journal Subscriptions

*Orders for journals are accepted December through April only.*

	Renewal	New	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	Amount
<i>American Bee Journal</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$15.00	\$28.50	\$40.25	\$ _____
<i>Bee Culture</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$16.00	\$31.00	N/A	\$ _____
<i>The Speedy Bee</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$13.50	\$25.50	\$34.25	\$ _____

Please be certain to indicate "renewal" or "new."

**2001 Dues** Check membership application type:  Renewal  New \$ 10.00

**Donation for Princess / Ambassador Program** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Submitted** for Journals, Dues & Princess/Ambassador Program \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Remit this application/renewal form along with membership dues and payment for desired journals to: Don Waldman, HIBA Secretary, 14409 Schlink Rd., Brimfield, IL 61517. Make checks payable to "HIBA." For answers to questions about membership, contact HIBA Secretary Don Waldman by phone at (309) 446-9728 or e-mail: [donwald@npoint.net](mailto:donwald@npoint.net).

Visit the HIBA website at the following URL: [www.hiba.ws](http://www.hiba.ws)

*If the box at the end of this line is checked, your membership will expire on April 30, 2001.*   
*Please renew your dues immediately to avoid lapse in membership and missed mailings.*

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