

## ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

# BULLETIN

March/April 2003 • Volume 85, Number 2

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### *Hiving Swarms plus BERT Revisited*

At this writing, it's still much too cold for the bees to fly. Yet, we're fast approaching that time of year when we'll be installing new packages and dividing overwintered colonies to increase the number of hives in our apiaries. Then, weeks later, if we're lucky and the weather cooperates, it'll be swarming time. That's when the fun begins if you like to capture swarms. As you know, swarms can form anywhere the queen can fly and temporarily settle until she and her followers can find a permanent residence. It's common to find a swarm hanging on a low tree branch where it's easy to shake them into an empty super prepared with some drawn comb and honey. It's the swarms hanging on street lamps, rain gutters and other hard-to-get-to places that present a real challenge. How you get to those bees, by ladder, cherry picker or other conveyance, is up to you.

Various devices have been invented over the years to capture swarms. A cloth bag at one end of a long pole is one example, where the bag can be closed around the bees by pulling a string. Currently, I use a portable vacuum box that works well so long as I can get within arm's reach of the bees. If caught without such device and I have to improvise, simplicity is often the best solution. Shaking or brushing the bees into a cardboard box or even a burlap sack can work well, especially if they're thoroughly sprayed first with sugar syrup.

For beekeepers living in urban areas, capturing a swarm can also provide a community service. In my local association, Cook-DuPage Beekeepers, members willing and able to retrieve swarms can register on our annual "Swarm List". The list is sent to U of I Extension Offices, village halls, police and fire agencies and even pest exterminators, who are not allowed by law to kill honeybees. Then, when a citizen calls to report a swarm, the agency in turn calls the nearest available beekeeper to retrieve the bees. If all of this proceeds without a hitch, the beekeeper looks good in the public eye and his or her apiary grows by one more colony.

Of course, an individual beekeeper who wants to capture swarms can do the same by working with local authorities.

Now, to revisit BERT, the idea of organizing a Bee Emergency Response Team that I discussed in my September/October 2002 *ISBA Bulletin* message. BERT has been on the "back burner" ever since its introduction as other business took priority. But, BERT is very much alive. My congratulations to the Spoon River Valley Beekeepers in the Canton, Illinois, area. They liked the idea so well that six members have already volunteered to be on the team. Soon, I will send each local association complete details to get this project rolling.

*John Hansen*  
ISBA President

### MIDWEST BEEKEEPING SYMPOSIUM

*Saturday, March 29, 2003*

*8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.*

*McHenry County College*

*Crystal Lake, Illinois*

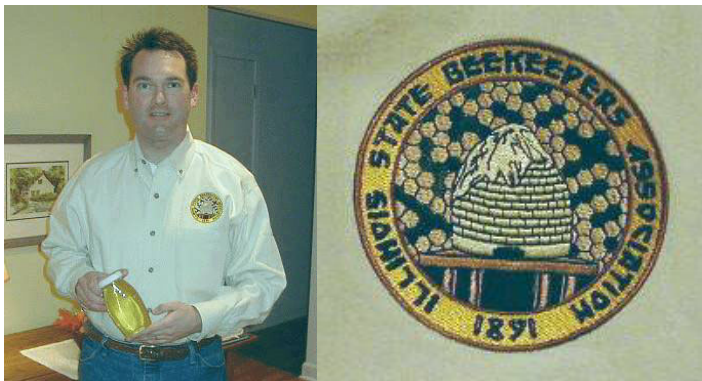
The Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association and McHenry County College present the 2003 Midwest Beekeeping Symposium. The 2003 Symposium will combine both general sessions and numerous small group sessions. The diverse and jam-packed agenda will range from beginner topics to advanced such as integrated pest management strategies and honey bee biology.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Dewey Caron, Professor of Entomology, University of Delaware. His topic will be "Integrated Pest Management - The Best Strategy for Mite and Pest Control Within the Hive." Dr. Caron, author of *Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping*, *Africanized Honey Bees in the Americas*, and co-author of *Observation Hives*, is one of the country's most popular speakers on beekeeping. His research interests are insect pollination, pest/predators of honeybees, and issues in conservation of bees and natural resources.

To receive a brochure with more information, including registration information, e-mail your name, address and phone number to [mwalsh@mchenry.edu](mailto:mwalsh@mchenry.edu) or call (815) 455-8697. Additionally, Symposium information can be found on the Illinois State Beekeepers Association website at [www.isba.ws](http://www.isba.ws). The Symposium registration fee of \$30.00 covers all presentations and lunch.

### ISBA REGALIA AVAILABLE

The Illinois State Beekeepers Association is proud to offer shirts embroidered with the ISBA logo. These shirts feature double stitching for strength, a button-down collar, an extra button, natural color and strong, long wearing 100% cotton, denim fabric. The ISBA color logo is proudly represented by over 24,000 embroidered stitches in six colors. The three-inch logo is embroidered on the left chest. Now you can show your beekeeping pride with this great shirt; it's also a great gift idea for your favorite beekeeper. The ISBA shirts are available in both men's and women's sizes. The men's shirts have a left chest pocket while the women's shirts have reverse buttons and a tailored waist.



Shirts are available in men's sizes medium, large, and extra large, and in women's sizes medium and large. These shirts are not oversized, but are true to their labeled size. If you are in doubt of which size to get, you will be safest with a larger size. Each shirt is \$27.00 plus shipping of \$4.00. If ordering more than one shirt, please include shipping costs of \$4.00 for your first shirt and \$2.00 for each additional shirt. To order, simply send a check for your total order plus shipping, your address and phone number and your needed size(s) to the address below. Please make your check payable to the "Illinois State Beekeepers Association". If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail or call. Send orders and inquiries to:

Ken Haller, Northern Region Director - ISBA  
 1543 North Kennicott  
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### TIME TO UPDATE ISBA WEB SITE

The ISBA web site ([www.isba.ws](http://www.isba.ws)) is visited several thousand times each year by people interested in finding out more about joining beekeeping associations and purchasing local honey. The ISBA web site maintains contact information for each association. Please visit this web site and examine current contact information for your association. If an update is needed, drop a note to the web master and inform him of the necessary changes. The web site is a good place to disseminate information in a timely fashion. Also, the web site is a central location for sharing information about our statewide and local associations.

If your local association has a web page, please forward the URL to ISBA web master Carl Wenning so that he might hyperlink your web page to that of the ISBA. If your association would like to have it's own web page and is an affiliate of the ISBA but does not have a place to host it, Carl is willing to provide the service at no cost using his personal computer.

Web pages can be created very simply from a MSWord document. If your organization will provide such a document electronically (via e-mail or transmitted via snail mail on a diskette), Carl will translate the document into the hypertext

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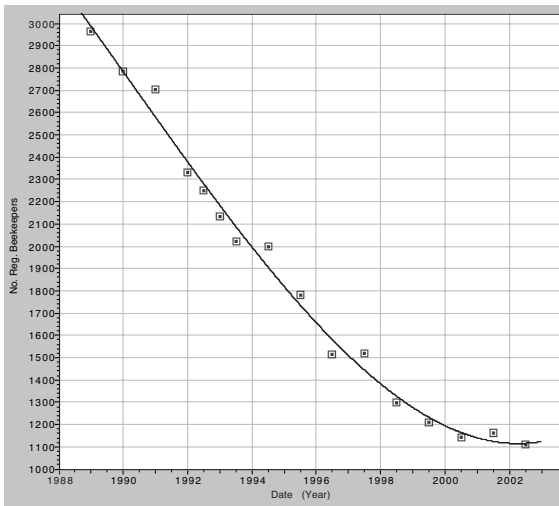
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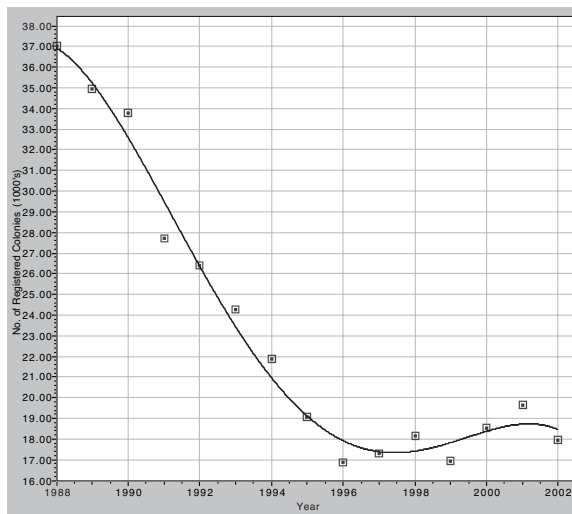
markup language (html) needed for online information. Take the advantage of the opportunity to have a free web page for your association today.

## THE STATE OF BEEKEEPING IN ILLINOIS

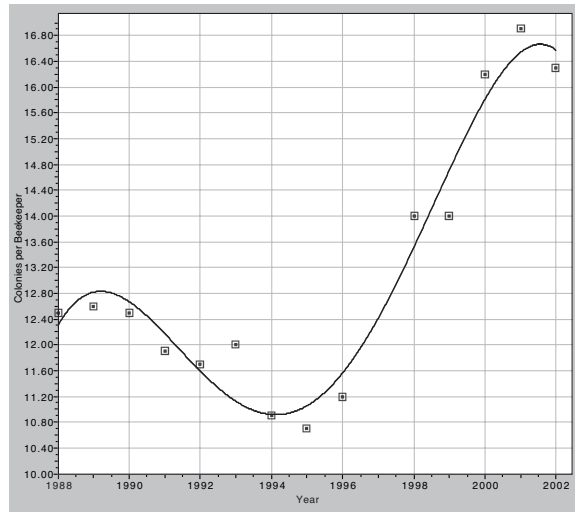
Each year the Illinois Department of Agriculture collects and makes available information about the state of beekeeping in Illinois. Data ranging from 1988 through 2002 are graphically depicted here along with simple generalizations prepared by the editor. These up-to-date graphs may now be found on the ISBA web site.



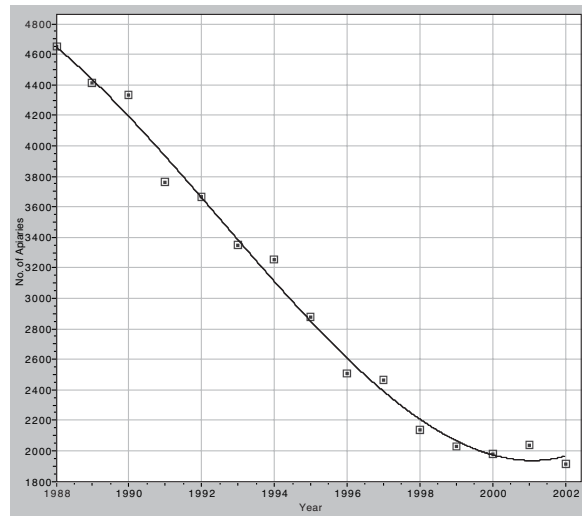
**Figure 1.** During the past 14 years the number of registered beekeepers in Illinois has dropped by a factor of two-thirds to approximately 1,100 and is now leveling off. Unfortunately, not all registered beekeepers actually keep bees.



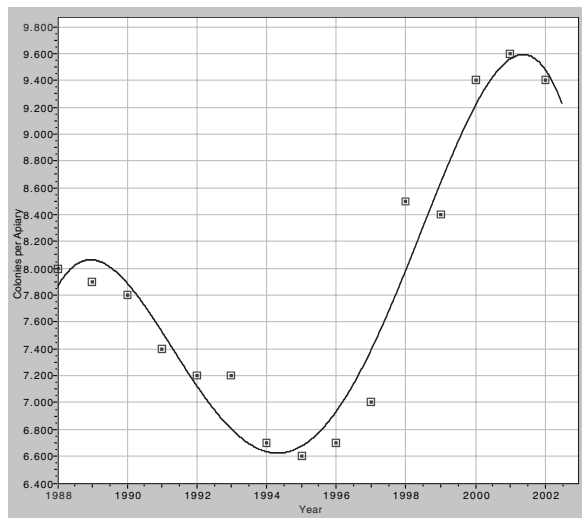
**Figure 2.** Beginning with 1997, there appeared to be a rebound in the number of registered colonies in Illinois. That rebound appears to have leveled off to around 18,000 colonies today. Future numbers are uncertain.



**Figure 3.** The number of colonies per Illinois beekeeper appears to have leveled off to about 16 during recent years.



**Figure 4.** The number of Illinois apiaries appears to have leveled off to around 2,000, two apiaries per active beekeeper.



**Figure 5.** The average beekeeper maintains two apiaries with about nine colonies in each.

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. Dues for 2003 are \$6 for the calendar year, **January 1 through December 31 only**. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the *ISBA Bulletin*. Beekeeping journals are available at about 25% discount to members as listed below; rates are subject to change without prior notice. **Make checks payable to:** Illinois State Beekeepers Association and mail to: Rita Taylor, Secretary, 4274 Taylor Homestead Road, Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024.

**Please indicate new or renewal subscription when ordering journals.**

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Send old and new address six weeks prior to date of change when practical to: Rita Taylor, Secretary, 4274 Taylor Homestead Road, Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024.

**Reduced Journal Rates for 2003 (members only)**

	1 Yr.	2 Yr.	3 Yr.
<i>American Bee Journal</i>	\$16.45	\$31.30	\$44.05
<i>Bee Culture</i>	\$17.00	\$32.00	N/A
<i>The Speedy Bee</i>	\$13.25	\$25.25	\$34.00

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