

ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN

January/February 2005 • Volume 87, Number 1

Thoughts from IDOA

Steve Chard

A big thanks to all of you who attended the ISBA Annual Fall Meeting on November 13. The attendance was great and there was much useful information presented that everyone could take home. A condensed version of my Apiary Inspection Annual Report is included as part of this newsletter.

Many of you have probably heard by now that some North Dakota beekeepers have allegedly used sodium cyanide as a means to destroy wax moths and to depopulate honeybee colonies. Fortunately, the Illinois Department of Agriculture has not detected this practice with our apiary inspections, nor have we heard of this practice being carried out in Illinois.

Besides the fact that *sodium cyanide is highly toxic and can seriously damage a person's* health, it is illegal to use that compound in Illinois. First, sodium cyanide is not registered with the USEPA as a pesticide for controlling pests in hives nor for depopulation purposes. The fine for such an action is a maximum of \$6500 per violation per USEPA regulations. Second, sodium cyanide is also not registered with the IDOA for the same purpose. Use of the compound would violate the Illinois Pesticide Act. There are numerous possible penalties for violating that Act.

I'm sure you get the overall impression that using this compound in an apiary would be nothing but a tremendous mistake. If you happen to learn of someone treating colonies with this compound, please contact me or Warren Goetsch of the Illinois Department of Agriculture at 217/785-4233. An article on this matter is included in this newsletter.



Out-going president John Hansen accepts the honorary gavel from ISBA president for 2005, Ken Beauchamp, at the November Springfield meeting. John's comment: "Now that I am leaving office I get the gavel I really could have used before!"

Forms for renewing your apiary registration, which occurs annually, have been mailed to all registered beekeepers in Illinois. Please fill out the form and mail it back to the IDOA as soon as possible. Thank you.
β

Have you filled out your state apiary



Marlin Wagner—Illinois State Beekeeper of the Year

ILLEGAL USE OF SODIUM CYANIDE

12/2/2004

Bruce E. Paulsrud
University of Illinois
Extension Specialist

Pesticide Safety Education & Plant Pathology

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state departments of agriculture have recently been alerted that some beekeepers have been using **sodium cyanide compound** to control pests in their honey bee colonies/hives. Specifically, apiarists have been purchasing and using a **sodium cyanide compound** as a fumigant in beehives to destroy or mitigate wax moths including the caterpillar and larvae, as well as to cull out weaker hives. These practices are illegal and have the potential for serious harm to human health and the environment.

All pesticides distributed in the United States must be registered by the EPA. The Federal pesticide law [the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)] defines "pesticide" to include any substance intended for controlling, mitigating or destroying pests. A substance is a pesticide and requires registration as such if the person distributing the substance (1) makes claims, either expressed or implied, that the substance can be used as a pesticide or (2) distributes the substance with the knowledge that the substance will be used to control pests. **Any individual selling or distributing sodium cyanide compound for mitigating any pest, including the wax moth, caterpillar and larvae, or any other pest for use in bee hives or colonies is selling and distributing an unregistered pesticide and subject to penalties of up to \$6,500 per violation under FIFRA.**

Currently, there are no sodium cyanide or similar cyanide compound products registered by the EPA for pest control in honey bee colonies/hives. Also, there are no estab-

lished residue tolerances for any cyanide compound in honey or beeswax. Honey analyzed and found to contain any cyanide compound residue would be considered adulterated under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, and could be seized. The seizure of honey due to adulteration with a highly toxic chemical would be detrimental to the entire apiary industry.

Further, use of **sodium cyanide** in an apiary setting can be extremely dangerous. The compound is highly toxic to humans and other warm-blooded animals, and it is a Toxicity Category I compound - EPA's highest toxicity level for pesticides. This rating indicates the greatest degree of acute toxicity for oral, dermal, and inhalation effects. It is highly corrosive to the skin and eyes. Cyanide can be absorbed through the skin and its vapor is absorbed extremely rapidly via the respiratory tract.

Beekeepers who are currently in possession of the highly toxic, unregistered sodium cyanide compound or related products should contact their state agricultural agency for instructions on proper storage and disposal of the product. The state agricultural agency can also provide information on registered pesticides, such as paradichlorobenzene and aluminum phosphide products, that are legal to use to mitigate pests in honey bee colonies/hives. β

1. Wax moth includes both the Greater Wax Moth, *Galleria mellonella*, and the Lesser Wax Moth, *Achroia grissella*, both of which are sometimes referred to the wax wing moth.

Cyanide Poisoning

According to the Chemical Information Safety Center the consequences of cyanide poisoning can be dire.

Symptoms appear within seconds or minutes after ingestion or inhalation. Giddiness, pulsating headache, anxiety, palpitations, hyperventilation, confusion and shortness of breath are the initial signs of acute poisoning. They are rapidly followed by vomiting, coma, convulsions, shortness of breath, and hypotension.

Severe poisoning is characterized by convulsions, collapse, coma, and death, and is fatal within minutes. Mild exposure only causes anxiety, headache, nausea, and vomiting.

The beekeeper is well advised to avoid any involvement with cyanide compounds. β

Where it all started...

The concern about beekeepers and sodium cyanide grew from an incident in North Dakota where a beekeeper "lost" drums of the substance off the back of a truck and reported the incident to authorities. The beekeepers, who have never been identified publicly, contended they were using the sodium cyanide to "sterilize" their beekeeping equipment as well as for depopulating hives.

Not only were local authorities involved, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security became involved in the case. This truly became a federal case and a movement was begun to stop any further use by beekeepers.

Although other forms of cyanide are mentioned in long-abandoned texts on beekeeping, a quick survey of present Illinois beekeepers found none who had ever used this material. In fact, none had ever heard of any such a technique employed in today's beekeeping.

- the editor



Bee Shorts



More Than Just Cute Little Creatures

Honeybees are of great economic importance to agriculture not only for honey production, but also for crop pollination. Honeybees pollinate a range of agricultural crops valued at more than \$14.6 billion including apples, cherries, broccoli, onions, peppers, cucumbers, alfalfa, almonds, coffee and more than 50 other crops. β

Spring splits?

If you are thinking about making spring splits you might want to invest a little winter workshop time in making nuc boxes. Here is an internet site with plans for a 5-frame nuc box—www.beesource.com/plans/nuc.htm . β

U of I Entomologists to Occupy New Bee Lab

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has authorized the construction of a new bee research facility. This facility will support the research programs of Prof. Gene Robinson, director of the current bee research facility, and a new faculty member who also studies honey bees, Prof. Charles Whitfield. The new bee lab will be located in the area of South Farms that is being developed as part of the Master Plan for research, recreation, and technology transfer. The new 4000 sq. ft. lab will be twice the size of the current facility and will boast state-of-the art flight chambers to accommodate work on transgenic bees planned by both the Robinson and Whitfield labs. The building is expected to be completed in Summer 2005. β

EAS Summer Meeting

The Eastern Apicultural Society has set its 2005 conference for August 1-5 at Kent State University in Ohio. This is a large event drawing 400 beekeepers annually. More information is available at www.easternapiculture.org. β

HAS comes to Illinois

The Heartland Apicultural Society has set its 2005 meeting for July 7-9 on the Edwardsville Campus of Southern Illinois University. The event is chaired by Illinois' Richard Ramsey who says to keep an eye on their web site —www.HeartlandBees.com - for the latest updates on program and accommodations. β

"Instead of dirt and poison, we have chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)



"There are bees in the wall of my barn," she said, but when Gary Plazyk of Marengo pulled the boards and battens off he only found an huge abandon nest with a few robber bees. Better luck next time, Gary.

A Swarm leads to "50 Years Among the Bees"

Dr. C. C. Miller, the beekeeping "Sage of Marengo," began his life-long passion with the untimely arrival of a swarm at his northern Illinois home. In his 1911 book *Fifty Years Among the Bees* he describes the beginning.

July 5, 1861—I was in Chicago at the time. A swarm of bees passing over Marengo took in their line of march the house in which my wife was. She was a woman of remarkable energy and executive

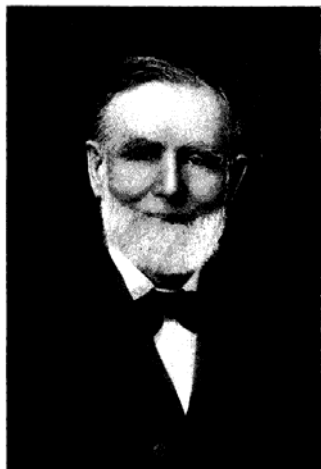
ability, generally accomplishing whatever she undertook, and she undertook to stop the swarm. Whether the water and dirt she threw among them had any effect on the bees I do not know, but I know she got the bees hiving them in a full-sized sugar-barrel.

In her eagerness to have the bees properly housed—or barreled—she could not wait the slow motion of the bees, but taking them by double handfuls she threw

them where she wanted them to go. In doing so she received five or six stings on her hands, and swelled up and were so painful as to make it a sick-a-bed affair. This was a matter much to be regretted, for ever after a sting was much the same as a case of erysipelas, preventing her from having anything whatever to do with handling bee except in the case of extremity.

Previous to that time I had not been interested to any great extent in bees. When a small boy I had captured a bumble-bee's nest and put it in a little box, but I do not recall that there was a remarkable drop in the price of honey on account of there being thrown on the market a large amount of honey produced by those bumble-bees.

Few beekeepers have come to beekeeping in such a strange way. Dr. Miller continued his passion spurred by this swarm for more than half a century. The Illinois State Beekeepers Association placed a bronze plaque in his hometown of Marengo, IL. You can see it in Spencer Park just off Illinois Route 23 when you travel through the town. β



*Cordially Yours,
C. C. Miller.*

U of I Organic Conference January 12 and 13, 2005

URBANA -- An organic conference has been scheduled for January 12 and 13, 2005 at the Holiday Inn in Normal. The conference is sponsored by University of Illinois Extension and the Agroecology/Sustainable Agriculture Program at the U of I.

The first day of the conference will begin at 9:00 a.m. and feature general presentations on organic certification, marketing and a panel discussion of farmers.

The second day will offer 20 break-out sessions along four tracks: field crops, specialty crops, livestock, and miscellaneous issues relating to organic farming.

"This conference will be helpful for those who are interested in learning more about organic agriculture but have no previous organic experience all the way to established, experienced organic farmers," said Dan Anderson, research specialist at the U of I. "Livestock and grain producers interested in organic methods, certification and marketing will also find the conference helpful."

The fee for the conference is \$75 for early registration and \$100 at the door. The fee includes all materials, as well as organic snacks and some meals.

To register contact Dan Anderson (217-333-1588; aslan@uiuc.edu) or visit www.aces.uiuc.edu/~asap/conf/index.htm. β

Organic agriculture—here is a course for the beginner and the afi-

Beekeeper Short Course In Bellville February 19, 2005

The St. Clair Beekeepers Association will offer a New Beekeeper Short Course on Saturday, February 19th, 2005. from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM in the Garden Room on the campus of Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville, Illinois. Prospective beekeepers will be instructed on the basics of beekeeping, such as honeybee behavior, biology, harvesting of a crop, and the tools and equipment needed.

The class size will be limited, so register early! Deadline for registration is Sat. Feb. 5, 2005. The fee for the course is \$25.00. For more information, you may contact Ken Klopper at (618) 458-6559 or via email at klopper@htc.net. Course Registration Forms are available on the website at www.stclairbees.com. β

FY '04 Apiary Inspection Report

Illinois Department of Agriculture

(July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004)



Steve Chard, the beekeepers' man at IDOA.

The Apiary Inspection Section of the Illinois Department of Agriculture administers the Illinois Bees and Apiaries Act. The Department's Apiary Inspectors examine honeybee colonies around the state for the issuance of moving permits, to monitor the health of the bee population, to prevent the spread of diseases and pests of the honeybee, and to provide advice on general honeybee management.

Beekeeping in Illinois continues to be a hobbyist endeavor with 85% of the bee-

keepers managing 10 colonies or less. Only 18 beekeepers maintain 100 or more colonies.

Beekeepers are to be registered with the Department of Agriculture. As of the end of the fiscal year, 1,141 beekeepers were managing 19,572 colonies in 1,940 apiaries in Illinois. The number of registered beekeepers has increased slightly compared to the past year. Seventy new beekeepers were registered during the fiscal year. Jo Daviess County had the highest number of colonies with 2,115. Peoria County was a close second with 2011 colonies.

From July 1, 2003, through June 30, 2004, 219 apiaries containing almost 4,700 colonies were visited. Of these colonies, 1,747 were actually opened and inspected. American Foulbrood Disease (AFB) was detected in 37 colonies, or 2.1% of the colonies actually opened. This percentage represents a sizeable decrease in AFB infections as compared to the previous year. In accordance with the Act, these diseased colonies were destroyed. There also was a decrease in the number of colonies infected with European Foulbrood and Chalkbrood as compared to FY '03.

Varroa mites continue to be found throughout the state. Inspection reports during the fiscal year indicated a significant decrease in varroa mite levels as compared to last year. This may be due in part to the randomness of inspections, the time of year that inspections were made, environmental conditions and possibly increased vigilance on the part of beekeepers in monitoring varroa mite populations and treating accordingly.

Reports from around the state indicated that colony losses following the winter were light in some areas and moderate in other areas. Also, interest in colonies for pollination continues to increase due to the lack of feral colonies

The incidence of American Foulbrood disease decreased last

and the realization of the importance of honeybee pollination.

Tracheal mites are not listed as a regulated parasite in the Bees and Apiaries Act and rules. Examinations for tracheal mites can still be performed when requested. No tracheal mites were discovered in conjunction with department apiary inspections for FY '04.

A new pest of honeybees, the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*), was discovered in several states in the southeastern United States in 1998. Unfortunately, the pest was found in Kankakee, McLean and Will Counties during 2001. During FY '02 there was no confirmation of small hive beetle spreading to other counties. However, small hive beetles were found in isolated locations in Bureau, Henry and Whiteside Counties in FY '03. No cases of small hive beetle have been reported or confirmed outside of those six counties since FY '03. The Department continues to closely monitor the movement of the small hive beetle.

The Department requested and was initially granted a Section 18 exemption under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) for the use of coumaphos impregnated plastic strips to treat small hive beetles and varroa mites during 2000. This exemption has been renewed annually, including 2004. Varroa mites have demonstrated resistance to fluvalinate in some parts of the U.S. so another control product, such as coumaphos, is needed. β

Editor's note : The complete Apiary Inspection Report is available on the ISBA web site—www.isba.us.



Chuck Leitner St. Clare Beekeeper of the Year.

Chuck has been active in beekeeping nearly his entire lifetime and has been an invaluable asset to the St. Clair Beekeepers Assn for most of those years. He currently maintains around 40 hives and still takes time to teach new beekeepers many of his beekeeping tricks and techniques.

Chuck has also previously acted as an Illinois State Apiary Inspector and has received numerous awards at the Illinois State Fair over the years for his honey and other apiary products.

Congratulations Chuck!

Honey could help fight cancer

Studies at the University of Zagreb, in Croatia, found a range of honeybee products stopped the growth or spread of cancerous tumors in test mice. The question, says the Journal of Science of Food and Agriculture where the study was reported, is whether these results could be of benefit to human cancer sufferers.

The study examined the effects of propolis, royal jelly, and bee venom as well as honey.

Of the many aspects of this study of interest to those who eat honey regularly is the finding that honey taken orally prior to the exposure to the cancer-producing injections appeared to inhibit the development of tumors in mice.

Source: BBC Health News.

You and Your Honey are Covered

John Hansen

One benefit of joining ISBA through your affiliated beekeeper association is the liability insurance you receive. Not only are you covered while attending regular association meetings, you are covered as an individual whenever you represent your association, if you advise ISBA's insurance company of your activity. For example, if you are asked by a teacher at your local school to give a bee presentation to a class, and you represent your association in doing so, your liability is covered if the insurance company receives advance notice. Even if you sell honey at a town fair to raise funds for your local beekeeper association, you will have some product liability coverage as well.

ISBA is covered by Country Companies Insurance and our agent is Lea Sommers. Lea can be reached at (618) 344-8844, or email lea.sommers@countryfinancial.com. Please notify Lea several days in advance, *after your commitment is firm*. Lea will then issue a Certificate of Insurance. You should present the certificate to the person or organization that asked you to participate whether or not they require a certificate. Lea will want to know the date, location and hours of the activity as well as your contact information (name, address, phone, etc.), your affiliated beekeeper association, and type of activity (bee lecture, exhibit at local fair, etc.).

Early this year, your local association Board will be asked to poll its members for the number of beekeepers who expect to represent their Association at special exhibits or events during 2005. For example, if you did one, two, or three bee lectures each year for the past two or three years, you can reasonably expect to do at least the same number during 2005. It's that number your Board will be asking you to give them and what we need to know. ISBA will pass that number along to Country Companies for insurance purposes so we can get proper coverage. β

A Report from the Association Treasurer

ISBA Treasurer, Udell Meyer, reported to the membership at the November meeting. The Association continues to operate well on a budget of \$10,342.96 in disbursements.

Significant items from the 2004 expenses were \$5554.62 in ice cream preparation expenses. This is the ice cream which is sold at a profit at the state fair. The Association paid \$301.56 for honey sticks that were also sold at the state fair. The cost of newsletter preparation and distribution was \$1158.45. The ISBA insurance policy with country Mutual Insurance Company cost \$851.00. Also among the disbursements were speakers fees for state meetings, renewal of ISAB's trademark, membership in the Illinois Specialty Growers Association and the American Beekeeping Federation.

Receipts of \$12,116.03 included \$1523.89 in memberships and \$86661.44 from the sale of honey at the state fair. The sale of the official ISBA shirts brought in \$1522.00. An audit of ISBA insurance needs by our carrier brought a \$70.00 return on our premium previously paid.

Udell also noted that we continue to maintain certificates of deposit and a passbook savings account with a total of \$4443.99 in deposits.

The beginning balance in the ISBA checking account was \$1160.03; with an ending balance of \$2933.10. β



A European queen honey bee surrounded by Africanized workers bees (although genetic analysis is required to tell). Part of the difficulty in controlling the influence of the Africanized bees—which began in 1990 in the US—is the tendency of the European queens to mate disproportionately with Africanized drones. (Source: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.)

ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

113th State Convention

Saturday, November 13, 2004
Illinois Department of Agriculture
Springfield, Illinois

President John Hansen called the 113th Convention of the Illinois State Beekeepers' Association to order at 9:05 a.m. President Hansen welcomed the attendees.

Chief Apiary Inspector Steve Chard introduced special guest, Chuck Hartke, Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Director Hartke welcomed everyone to the Department of Agriculture Building and made several remarks with regard to agriculture specifically soybeans throughout the state as well as other countries.

President Hansen called for the Secretary's Report. Secretary Rita Taylor reported all members had received the Minutes of the 112th Convention via the State Beekeepers' Association bulletin. Secretary Taylor read the expenses and membership for the period of November 1, 2003 to November 1, 2004. **The Secretary's Report was approved as read.** (Secretary's Report Attached)

President Hansen called for the Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Udell Meyer reported the income and expenditures of the Association for the period of November 1, 2003 to November 1, 2004. **The Treasurer's Report was approved as read.** (Treasurer's Report Attached)

President Hansen again introduced Steve Chard, Supervisor of Apiary Inspection. Mr. Chard discussed the condition of hives around the state. Currently there are 1,141 registered beekeepers. Six counties have the small hive beetle. (Chief Apiary Inspector's Report Attached)

President Hansen asked Ken Haller to introduce the 2004 Beekeeper of the Year, Mr. Marlin Wagner of Edwardsville, Illinois. Mr. Wagner was not present to accept his award.

President Hansen reconvened the meeting by introducing Bob Cox, USDA Bee Research Lab, Weslaco, Texas, Topic: "What Really Bugs the Bees: Varroa Mites"? Mr. Cox used pictures to illustrate his presentation, and introduced his co-workers at the Texas Lab. He explained several ways to detect the varroa mite; the damage that usually occurs over winter; methods of control with chemicals; management control; and using genetically resistant stock.

Local association members reported on their local meetings as well as other activities their associations are involved with throughout the year.

President Hansen reconvened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. by introducing Elizabeth Watkins, Food Processing Coordinator, Illinois Department of Public Health. Ms. Watkins discussed, "Honey Processing, Packaging and Holding". She reported the requirements of processing and packaging, and storage of products. Anyone interested in further information can access the website at: www.idph.state.il.us.

Bob Cox conducted another presentation, "Bee Diseases: Detection and Control." Mr. Cox discussed how to recognize American Foul Brood, Chalk Brood, European Foul Brood, Nosema, as well as the treatment for each.

Larry Kregel, Editor of the Illinois State Beekeepers' Association Bulletin, was introduced. Mr. Kregel asked members to send him any articles for the bulletin; and he would appreciate receiving any association newsletters. He also asked members to notify him of any topics that may be of interest for the newsletter.

Election of Officers – President Hansen introduced Earl Lutz. Dr. Lutz presided over the election. The Election Committee selected the following members as nominees: President – Ken Beauchamp; Vice President – Ken Haller; Secretary – Rita Taylor; Treasurer – Udell Meyer; and Northern Director – Bill Buckley.

Dr. Lutz called three times for nominees from the floor for each of the offices. After no other nominations were heard, each of the nominees listed above were elected to their respective office.

Ken Haller presented President Hansen with a gavel for his three years of service as President of the Illinois State Beekeepers' Association.

With no further business, President Hansen adjourned the 113th Illinois State Beekeepers' Association Convention.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita C. Taylor
Secretary
Illinois State Beekeepers' Association

A BERT Update

John Hansen

The recent bee spill in Las Vegas, NV, where 450 colonies of bees were destroyed, points up the need for organizing Bee Emergency Response Teams (BERT). Had the Nevada Beekeepers Association dispatched a BERT to the Las Vegas spill, chances are good that at least some of those colonies would have been saved.

In ISBA, we've been considering organizing a BERT in each of our eleven affiliated organizations since 2003. If organized through ISBA, would our liability insurance policy cover ISBA if one of our teams were called upon to clear a bee spill?

That question was answered last year with a clear yes, providing we comply with all of our other insurance requirements.

Finally, how interested and willing are we to organize BERTs? We got the answer last November at our Annual Fall Meeting when eighteen of the eighty attendees (22%) signed a preliminary sign-up sheet, indicating their willingness for ISBA to organize such teams. While not an overwhelming mandate, it indicates sufficient interest and willingness to go ahead with the BERT project. Stay tuned. β

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 2004 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 the association secretary.

Reduced Journal Rates for 2004 (*members only*)

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
American Bee Journal	17.20	32.75	46.05
Bee Culture	17.00	32.00	N/A
The Speedy Bee	13.25	25.25	34.00

ISBA Executive Board 2004

President

Ken Beauchamp
69 Greencastle Cir.
Springfield, IL 62712-8764
Phone (217)529-5277
Kbeauch@aol.com

Vice President

Ken Haller
627 S. Saylor Ave.
Elmhurst, IL 60126
630 359 3991
kenhaller@comcast.net

Secretary

Rita Taylor
4274 Taylor Homestead Rd.
Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024
217 626 1319
rjndelta@warpnet.net

Treasurer

Udel Meyer
8844 Trio Lane
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618 633 2429

Directors

Northern Region
William Buckley
6525 S. Western Ave.
Willowbrook, IL 60527
630 654 1867

Central Region

Jill Mayes
P. O. Box 274
Machinaw, IL 61755
309 359 8600

Southern Region

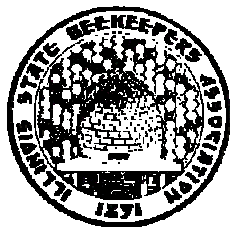
Ray Chapman
R. R. 1 Box 215
Bunker Hill, IL 62014
618 585 4506
honey@bhil.com

ISBA Bulletin Editor

Larry Krengel
9409 Voss Road
Marengo, IL 60152
815 923 4449
lkrengel@mc.net

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Rita Taylor, Secretary
4274 Taylor Homestead Road
Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024

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- ⇒ Beekeeping and Sodium Cyanide
- ⇒ Reports from ISBA annual meeting
- ⇒ Illinois Apiary report
- ⇒ Illinois beekeeper of the year.