

Illinois State Beekeepers Association Bulletin

November/December 2012 Volume 95 Number 6

Letter from the President

Jim Belli

On November 10, 2012, the Illinois State Beekeepers Association conducted its Annual Fall Meeting. The meeting was held at the Illinois Department of Agriculture's headquarters in Springfield. This year's meeting set a record with over 165 members in attendance. My sincere thanks go to Director Flider for allowing us to use this wonderful facility. My thanks are also extended to Steve Chard for handling all of the arrangements necessary to conduct a successful meeting.

The lineup of speakers and topics made this a most memorable meeting. This year's speakers included Sue Cobey, Jerry Hayes, Tom Webster and Lee Heine. At this meeting the members ratified the new ISBA Constitution and Bylaw changes. My thanks to all our members for their support and unanimous vote of approval, making these needed changes a reality. One of the changes was the creation of the new Board position of Membership Director. This position is needed due to the increase in our membership. As of the meeting date, membership in the ISBA is now at 1032 members. Sue Kivikko was elected to fill this new position. Also elected was Corky Schnadt as our new Secretary. Corky is the current President of the Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association located in McHenry County. NIBA has the second largest membership roster of our affiliated clubs, second only to the Cook DuPage Beekeepers. Corky is also a close

personal friend.

This year the ISBA recognized Lee Heine by presenting him our ISBA Recognition Award for his continued efforts in supporting Illinois beekeepers



through his years of service as Dadant's Watertown Wisconsin manager and through Lee's package bee sales. The ISBA awarded its Pioneer Award to Chuck and Karen Lorence and to Edith McDonald for their lifetime achievements and dedication to improving Illinois beekeeping. The Pioneer Award recipients become life members in the ISBA. The ISBA Beekeeper of the Year Award was given to Bill and Dorothy Buckley. This is the ISBA's highest award. This award was given to Bill and Dot in recognition of their contribution to the Illinois beekeepers and to the ISBA. Bill is a past President of the ISBA, and anyone who has ever attended a Cook DuPage Beekeepers meeting knows of the behind-the-scenes work done by Dot to make these meetings successful. This award could not have been given to a more deserving couple. My sincere thanks to all of this year's award recipients.

Finally, Karen and I would like to extend our wishes that all of you have a great Thanksgiving and a happy holiday season. Here's hoping 2013 will be a bumper honey crop year.

2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow

The 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow will be held in Hershey, Pennsylvania at the Hershey® Lodge, January 8-12, 2013. Get up-to-date information within the beekeeping industry and check out the latest products and services offered by many exhibitors and sponsors. At this conference, the American Beekeeping Federation will celebrate its 70th anniversary.

This conference features two and half days of general sessions with presentations on the latest developments in beekeeping, the 2013 American Honey Show, and the 2013 Honey Queen and Princess coronation. Also back, the everpopular Serious Sideliner Symposium with a focus on "How I Do It", the American Bee Research Conference, and a variety of specialized hands-on

workshops.

The conference schedule can be found on this website:

http://www.nabeekeepingconference.com

http://www.nabeekeepingconference.com/schedule.html.

Register by December 12th with this online registration form: http://www.nabeekeepingconference.com/registration.html

Call for Entries for the 2013 American Honey Show

ABF invites you to enter the 2013 American Honey Show, held during the 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow in Hershey. This is a prime opportunity to showcase your bees' abilities to produce the purest honey, the best wax and the most goodies. The Honey Show includes 12 classes for honey, four for beeswax and the gift basket class. The theme for the Honey Gift Basket class this year will be "Winter Wonderland."

After the entries are judged, they will be auctioned to benefit the American Honey Queen Program.

For entry form and rules, visit: http://www.abfnet.org/associations/10537/ files/2013_ABF_HoneyShow_Rules.pdf

NOTE: The entry form and appropriate fees must arrive at the ABF offices by Friday, December 14, 2012.

Letter from the Editor...

Hello Beekeepers,

In the spirit of this season of holidays, I'll tribute this letter to both what I'm thankful for, and what I wish for the coming year!

First, I'm grateful to have watched the ISBA membership grow. More beekeepers means a better beekeeping community, more people to learn from, and to share techniques and management methods. More beekeepers means more projects, more innovation, and more stories. Its not only true that there are more members of the ISBA. There has been a steady upswing in the number of beekeepers registering in Illinois, and with that, a great number of local beekeepers clubs got started this year, helping beekeepers continue to learn.

As much progress was made in 2012, I still hold higher hopes for next

year. I would love to see more Illinois beekeepers join the ISBA community, and even more unregistered beekeepers step up and become a part of our great Illinois Apiary Inspection Program. I want to see more beekeepers getting involved again with the State Fair. I picture a renaissance experience as we boldly demonstrate the essential agricultural role we play.

Most of all, a big wish for 2013 would be that more of us can say with confidence that our Illinois-bred bees are better adapted than ever to survive our winters, and fight off beetles and ailments, or at least, that Illinois-bred queens seem to be holding stronger than ever. Who knows what the future holds? With so many beekeepers working to improve local stock by introducing highly esteemed queens,

some beekeepers are already noticing new strengths in their colonies.

I have truly enjoyed editing the Bulletin. With this issue, I'm happy to present new voices and views from all around the state. In 2013, I look forward to more new writers. I'm also excited for articles slated from some of our staple ISBA contributors.

As always, I welcome contributions from beekeepers of all thoughts and practices, as here, we have so much to gain by sharing our pursuits in beekeeping with one another.

Happy Holidays to all. And if I may have one more wish for 2013, it is that I can get this Bulletin out several weeks sooner. For those with content to submit, our next Bulletin article due date is January 5th. I hope to hear from you!

A Study on Bee Stings by UIUC undergraduate Chelsey Coombs

Earlier this year on a rainy Saturday in June, I learned firsthand about the importance of taking safety precautions while working with honey bees.

I had just completed the second week of my first field season as an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Gene Robinson's lab at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and I was charged with the task of disturbing a colony of bees that we were using to study aggressive behavior. This disturbance involved picking up and dropping each frame ten times.

As I walked toward the colony, I was excited to prove myself as the next great bee researcher; this was, after all, the first time that I was going to do the disturbance by myself. I opened the colony up and picked up the first frame. The bees were not thrilled that someone was messing around with their home, and the rainy weather did not help their moods. They began flying toward my hair and face, and it was in that moment that I realized in my

rush to avoid the next bout of rain, I had neglected to put a veil on.

I quickly finished the disturbance, but not before one aggressive bee had stung me on the forehead. I removed the sting and poison sac, then went home for the day. Nothing looked abnormal until the next morning when I woke up with a swollen face that marked my first encounter with a large local reaction.

This reaction did not endanger my life, and my face deflated back to its normal size within 24 hours. However, if anything out of the ordinary realm of sting reactions had occurred, I am glad to know that the Robinson Lab Sting Seminar that I had attended a few days prior would have prepared me to take the appropriate action.

The Sting Seminar is part of the UIUC Sting Safety Program at the Robinson lab that began in response to a series of anaphylactic reactions that a few undergraduate and graduate students experienced in the first few years of the lab's existence.

Dr. Robinson says that those reactions were "very alarming," and did not appear to be happening by random chance.

Various studies provide support for Dr. Robinson's impression. According to the Allergies Sourcebook (Sutton, 2011), these systemic reactions, unlike the local reaction that I had, cause symptoms in areas removed from the original sting site. The typical markers of a systemic reaction are hives, flushing, constricted airways and anxiety. However, systemic reactions can lead to anaphylaxis, which is marked by difficulty breathing, nausea and low blood pressure, and can lead to loss of consciousness or death.

Beekeepers that are infrequently stung are more prone to systemic allergic reactions. In a 1984 study by Bousquet and Associates published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, 45% of beekeepers with fewer than 15 stings per year experienced these reactions, while no beekeepers with

Illinois Apiary Inspection Program Page - Jim Wellwood

Last winter, I attended the Apiary Inspectors of America conference at the USDA offices in Maryland. In attendance were many of the most notable research entomologists in the country and I can share with you what they are currently thinking and how it relates to beekeeping.

Bee health seems to boil down to 5 areas:

- *Bee nutrition/ habitat
- *Pesticide /Insecticides minimization
- *Varroa reduction
- *Gut health
- *Comb replacement

Nutrition/Habitat

Bees need both sugar and pollen to be healthy. As beekeepers we are good at giving the bees sugar, but perhaps slower to give them pollen patties. According to Dr. Eric Mussen, winter losses in California have been reduced significantly in bees used for almond pollination by just feeding pollen patties. Bees also do better in bee yards that have a variety of pollen sources because all pollen is not equal nutritionally.

Further, pollen coming from pesticide coated seeds is questionable. There may be subleathal effects from this pollen which may be causing Nosema. It should also be noted that bees that are nutritionally deficient have reduced flight capacity, thus reduced foraging, reduced food stores entering the hive, and reduced numbers, which equals smaller, dwindling hives and reduced honey production. One observation is that bees that are raised in corn producing areas seem to die more often than in other areas.

Pesticide /Insecticides

While it is always obvious when a hive has a direct kill from spraying, subleathal effects of pesticides on our hives are difficult to monitor. As workers gather both nectar and pollen from chemically sprayed sources, the chemicals build up in the wax. Levels of these toxic chemicals build with time. It should be noted that our miticide chemicals also build up in wax. Some of these chemicals are mildly toxic to our bees. Fresh beeswax foundation also has levels of miticides when it is newly installed. As pesticide levels increase, Nosema spore loads can

increase. Queens can also decrease laying from exposure to some chemicals, thus reducing colony population. Related to pesticides, we also have additives, surfactants, wetting agents, adjuvents, and inerts on the labels of both pesticides and fungicides. These additive chemicals can also damage bees immune systems, so our goal should be to minimize exposure.

Varroa

One researcher said that if Varroa is effectively treated and levels are kept low, winter losses could be reduced by 25%. Varroa mites rob the colony of vitality. As mite levels go up, foraging goes down, brood viability goes down, honey production goes down. In this downward cycle, the prevalence of other bee diseases increases, further compromising the bees' immune systems. More diseases than ever are affecting our bees: Nosema Ceranae, Black Queen Cell, Deformed Wing, Israeli Paralysis, Sacbrood, and European Foulbrood are all on the increase. Powdered sugar does not seem to be an effective treatment for mites because 80% of them are in the brood and the sugar only works on the worker and house bees. Coumophas based mite treatments such as Check Mite are not effective in mite control. Api Guard works best if mite levels are low. Apistan or Fluvalinate works well, but it's effectiveness is reduced in the presence of fungicide chemicals. Amitraz is also an effective miticide. If mite levels are low in the spring, it can pay dividends thru the summer. It is imperative that mite levels be low in August and September as that is when winter bees are hatching and they need to be as healthy as possible for overwintering.

Gut Health

Nosema is a problem with the bees gut which seems to be related to nutrition, pesticides and other viruses and diseases. The black spots on the hives are a sign of Nosema apis. Clear staining is a sign of Nosema ceranae (one inspector saw it on the windshield of her car). When Nosema spore loads are up, brood levels go down. Regular Fumigilin treatments are not 100% effective. Some feel a colony can overcome the infection. Some feel that the Fumigilin treatments weaken the bees

Steve Chard, Supervisor

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A Study on Bee Stings by Chelsey Coombs, continued

more than 200 stings per year did. These reactions occur most often after the first sting of the field season in both seasoned and novice beekeepers (Müller, 2005).

The reason that more experienced beekeepers have a smaller chance of developing a systematic reaction lies in their immune systems. An allergic reaction occurs when a relatively harmless external substance is misinterpreted by the immune system as harmful, and in this situation, that largely harmless substance is bee venom (Sutton, 2011). The first time the venom enters the body, some of the immune system's white blood cells bind to the proteins of this allergen, causing the cells to become "sensitized." Some of these cells create IgE antibodies.

In most non-allergic people, IgE production will be suppressed (Sutton, 2011). However, in allergic people, IgE causes another type of white blood cell, the mast cell, to become sensitized as well. The IgE can remain bound to the mast cells for months or years at a time. With another exposure to the allergen, the IgE's of the already sensitized cells bind to the allergen, causing the release of histamine, a compound that causes blood vessels to leak their fluid and the smooth muscles of the airway to contract. It is the release of histamine that brings about the symptoms of a systematic reaction.

Seasoned beekeepers that have been stung more frequently have lower levels of IgE than novice beekeepers (Müller, 2005). Their long-term bee venom exposure, in turn, causes greater production of another antibody called IgG. The IgG is thought to be a 'good' antibody that keeps the 'bad' IgE antibody from sticking to mast cells. This reduces histamine release and prevents allergic reaction. In other words, a smaller amount of IgE and a larger amount of IgG makes a person more resistant to systemic reactions, and this occurs among those who are more frequently stung.

Most of the researchers at our lab are stung only a few times during the summer field season because as Dr. Robinson says, their experiments require 'subtle manipulations' that usually do not result in many stings. Therefore, their immune systems are more likely to be sensitized to bee venom. It is this increased risk that makes it essential for the members of our lab to understand the symptoms and protocol for dealing with a severe allergic reaction.

This education is ensured through the Sting Safety Program that Dr. Robinson has developed over the years. This year at the Sting Seminar, the members of the lab gathered to hear Emergency Management Service Educator Dan Bowton from the Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana, Illinois, talk about the ways we can keep ourselves safe while working with the bees.

Mr. Bowton highlighted the steps that our lab has taken to ensure the safety of our researchers. He said that all of the

ambulance services in the area know the GPS coordinates of our bee yards, and assured lab members that "you're not out there all by yourselves by any means." Mr. Bowton emphasized the lab's rules that researchers bring a cell phone or a buddy to off-campus areas in the case of an emergency.

Mr. Bowton also delved into the differences between a local and a systemic reaction and how to know if a sting requires medical attention, saying "not every sting warrants the use of epinephrine," but "any time you have difficulty breathing and you sort of hear yourself breathe," and "you feel respiratory stress is imminent," it is time to go to the hospital.

The presentation concluded with a hands-on training session on the way to use an Epipen, as each bee researcher at the University of Illinois is required to carry one. Due to the higher risk of systemic reaction, each researcher receives his or her own Epipen for free at the beginning of the year so that they can always feel safe when working with their bees.

The Sting Safety Program is a unique part of the Robinson Lab that was developed after a few students experienced systemic reactions. However, these precautions and the safety knowledge our lab members have gained are absolutely essential for every beekeeper to have. If beekeeping clubs and other university research labs take similar steps in developing their own sting safety programs, I am sure that the benefits will reap sweet rewards.

My rainy Saturday sting left me with a comically swollen face for a day, and although I couldn't go out in public during those 24 hours, I am certainly glad that I wasn't subjected to a systemic reaction. I am even happier to know that because of the Robinson Lab Sting Safety Program, the next time I disturb a colony, I will be prepared for any suspect situation that buzzes my way.

Acknowledgements

I thank Dr. Gene Robinson for comments that improved this manuscript.

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Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/ 15985817 Sutton, A. L. (Ed.). (2011). *Allergy sourcebook* (4th ed.). Detroit, MI:Omnigraphics. CENTRAL EASTERN ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Lorraine Wirges ~ Rantoul, IL momwirges@aol.com COOK-DUPAGE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Charles Williams ~ Glen Ellyn, IL Phone: 630.858.6308 charles.w.williams@hud.gov HEART OF ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Janet Hart ~ Brimfield, IL Phone: 309.446.3004 harthoney@msn.com KANKAKEE VALLEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Cindy Gustafson Phone: 708.468.4315 LAKE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Perry Plescia ~ Grayslake, IL Phone: 847.223.6613 p.plescia@sbcglobal.net LINCOLN LAND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Steve Petrilli ~ Springfield, IL Phone: 217.638.7891 s.petrilli@comcast.net LITTLE EGYPT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Beverly Tanner ~ Fairfield, IL Phone: 618.842.3386 ffpro2@verizon.net MISSISSIPPI VALLEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Cara Bowman ~ Hannibal, MO bowman@mywdo.com NORTHERN ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Corky Schnadt ~ Hainesville, IL corkyschnadt@gmail.com ST. CLAIR BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Vickie Piel ~ Edwardsville, IL Phone: 618.978.4369 sleepyp@att.net SOUTHERN ILLINOIS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Susan Nellis ~ Ava, IL Phone: 618.319.0285 teachmychild2@gmail.com SPOON RIVER VALLEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION Rick Camp ~ Roseville, IL Phone: 309.255.2195 campgroveorchard@mtcnow.net WILL COUNTY BEEKEEPERS

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Sue's Reviews If You Like a Good Read by Susan Kivikko

Following The Bloom

Douglas Whynott

Following The Bloom documents a year in the life of a migratory beekeeper. Migratory beekeepers transport thousands of hives around the nation for pollination of various agricultural crops. This job may seem very mundane until it comes time to take them over the mountains during bad weather or when State Troopers create road blocks trying to keep these semis from crossing state or county borders. This is when this book reads like a suspense novel as these renegades skirt around the troopers to get the bees to their destination.

Bees In America- How The Honey Bee Shaped A Nation

Tammy Horn

Bees in America is my personal favorite. Written much like Tolstoy's 'War & Peace', the first few chapters seem to bounce around from subject to subject. Reading on though, you'll be amazed at how much of our society has been influenced by the honey bee and how much of our nation's history is tied to the honey bee.

The Wisdom Of Bees

Michael O'Malley PH.D.

This book can be found in the financial section of your favorite bookstore or library. Although this was written as a resource for company and organizational success; it is a very useful book for the beginning beekeeper. There are a great many books on technical aspects of beekeeping but what I found is that since no one taught the bees how to read, it is up to us to learn how to read the bees. Mr. O'Malley puts into words beautifully the how's and why's honey bees do what they do. That, in my experience, is the most essential lesson in keeping bees.

A Spring without Bees

Michael Schacker

Michael Schacker gives tribute to Rachel Carson in this comprehensive compilation of what is happening today to our bees and other natural pollinators. He has gathered a plethora of information and countless studies regarding the new breeds of insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. Is it DDT all over again? Read the information presented in this book and judge for yourself. This is what the beekeepers have been saying for a long time but we don't have advanced degrees so what do we know? The information is well documented but is disturbing.

Letters From The Hive

Stephen Buchmann

If you like documentaries you'll like Letters From the Hive. His subtitle is 'An intimate History of Bees, Honey and Humankind.' This book reads like a documentary with many traditions dating to before Christ. Very well written for those who love ancient history.

Waxing Philosophical ~ the Beekeeping Puzzle Top Tricks for Over-Wintering Swarms

Question:

What is the best way to overwinter a swarm?

~ Lots of food & good ventilation. ~ Lonnie Langley, Bluff City **4 votes**

~ I think we should as Beekeepers be more robust in James Bond Beekeeping....Live and Let Die. Beekeepers enact a whole plethora of management techniques to keep Honey Bees alive in situations where perhaps natural selection would be more advantageous if we truly want adapted Honey Bees. Why encourage "Welfare Bees"? ~ Jerry Hayes, St. Louis, Missouri 4 votes

~ FEED, INSULATE, VENTILATE, PROTECT - I put in entrance reducers; cover the bottom of the hives; flip over the inner cover to increase the space between the inner cover and the telescoping cover and add a piece that raises the telescoping cover about an inch or so; make fondant and feed all of the bees. I check later in the season and if they have eaten everything I add some more; I surround each hive with one inch thick ridged foil covered insulation allowing them to access the bottom front of the hive and the upper back under the telescoping cover. This also facilitates air flow through the hive and helps remove moisture too. All of my hives survived the past three winters and seemed to be stronger each spring. ~ Brenda Tracey, Belleville 4 votes

 \sim I would put them on top of a strong hive with a double screen between them with a entrance in the back. If the swarm was short on stores then rob frames of honey from strong hives and put it on top of the swarm hive. \sim Rich Ramsey, Rochester 3 votes

 \sim In a garage or in an out-building. I'm not kidding here. Out of the wind and you can even feed them. In a Nuc box, make a hole in the cover for the feeder – don't feed in front with a Boardman feeder. Easy to keep an eye on and know when to refill. Other supplements can also be added. The down-side is that they can defecate on your cars and all of the other stuff in your garage. That would say that an out–building is far better – or – create that atmosphere of protection by a similar means. \sim Dusty Combs, Solon Mills **2 votes**

~ Feed them to make sure they have adequate stores going into winter. Pollen patties may come into play as well, as that may assist them in building up the bee population, should the natural foraging sources be limited, or non existent. By far, adequate winter stores are the most important thing for any hive. We choose to leave a honey super on each hive. I feel they have worked hard to produce and store their honey, so they share some with me, and I leave some for them for winter food. I believe bees do far better eating honey than they do sugar. ~ Kevin Gerstenecker, Troy 2 votes

~ In a styrofoam nuc box is one way. ~ Susan Kivikko, Esmond **2 vote**s

Next issue's puzzling question: I would like to fill my yard with flowers for a honey crop. What are the best plants? And where can I find seeds?

Please submit your own questions to the editor, bubblebubb@gmail.com. Would you like to be on the voting panel? Just email and ask! We need you!

Jim Wellwood's Apiary Inspection Article Continued...

immune system to a point that will cause death to the colony, or cause a rebound effect to the disease, making it worse. Some say use the herbal essential oils to enhance overall bee health is the way to go. Some are using lemon juice in sugar syrup at a 1 qt lemon juice to 55 gal sugar syrup to treat Nosema. No conclusive findings yet, however.

Comb

As stated above, everything bad accumulates in the comb. At some level, it's beneficial to replace foundation. I have had good success with beeswax coated yellow

plasticell foundation, which should be free from a lot of the chemical load. Bees don't seem to take to the black stuff as well. On the same foundation note, if a colony dies and a period of dormancy exists (over the winter) with the comb, a subsequent package of bees introduced to the dormant comb has a much greater loss ratio than continuously used comb.

As with most things, the only sure things are death and taxes. So to that end, there are few "always" and "nevers" to the bee business. I hope that you find this helpful. Feel free to contact me any time.

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Are You Succeeding As A Beekeeper?

by Terry Combs, President of St. Clair Beekeepers

Larry Conner, in his book **Increase Essentials**, poses the question: "Are you just getting by, or are you doing your best with your bees?" Larry continues with a quote from Brother Adam which states that beekeepers shouldn't measure success by bumper crops, because they occur rarely, but by observing the average yield per colony over a number of years that shows an increase over time. That is an excellent approach for those keeping bees for honey production, but beekeepers keep bees for a variety of reasons; honey production being just one of them. Because of the variety of beekeepers and their diverse goals; success as a beekeeper is measured in many different ways.

Honey production has been a long-standing goal and measure of success for many beekeepers, and will continue to be well into the future. Wax, pollen, propolis, royal jelly, bee venom, bees, queens, nucs, pollination, dollars and cents, and various other reasons all exist as goals and measures of success that beekeepers look to in order to judge their performance. And there are even some of my personal favorites; people who keep bees as a benefit to the local environment. Strong, healthy colonies have been cited in almost every book worth reading on the subject of beekeeping as a measure of a beekeeper's success. Strong, disease and pest free colonies are the glue that holds any type of success together in beekeeping. Increase is another way of determining success as a beekeeper. As you can see there are many measures of success in the keeping of honey bees.

So how do we, as beekeepers, measure our success at beekeeping? If you would poll 10 or more beekeepers with this question, you could get 10 or more answers. There are various methods, devices, and much creativity used amongst beekeepers that all work and give some measure of success with beekeeping at one time or another. To elaborate on all these methods, devices, and acts of creativity that beekeepers have employed would require a fairly thick book and an enormous amount of writing on my part. Also, were I to critique all these methods employed by my fellow beekeepers, there would come the inevitable backlash. All I will say about methods, practices, devices, and creativity used to achieve success at beekeeping is this; try some of the recommended ones, and use whatever gets you to your goals and the success you are striving for. Since we keep bees for many different reasons, are there any

general measures of success we can employ in order to assess our performance and success? Here are, in my opinion, the 3 general considerations that I look at and encourage others to use:

PRODUCTION: of whatever you want your bees to produce. Brother Adam's advice is probably best for whatever you are producing; look for an average that slowly increases over time, not the big bumper crop that only rarely comes.

STRONG, HEALTHY COLONIES: relatively free of disease and pest problems without the routine and preventative use of chemical treatments, and such usage only when warranted and in accordance with label directions. As Marla Spivak says; let them stand on their own 6 feet until they truly need our help. Colonies should be populous within their space with a good laying queen, healthy brood in all stages of development, with adequate food reserves, and room for expansion. Bees need to be successful in order for beekeepers to be successful.

INCREASE: As Bert Holldobler and E O Wilson point out in their book, **The Superorganism**, this is the true goal of all social insect colonies. We are occasionally going to lose colonies, but natural selection is something I embrace. Those colonies that come into spring ready to engage in swarming are doing what they exist to do; developing in order to reproduce. Beekeepers once sought to breed the swarming instinct out of their bees; nothing could be more foolish since this is what the colony must do to satisfy the goal of reproduction. Why not take advantage of it? Next spring I will have hives with 15 continuous years of letting the bees see to their own destiny that are succeeding quite nicely; something to which this Bulletin's editor can attest.

The wise will realize that these 3 considerations are all highly connected. If my colonies are producing at an increasing average level, strong and healthy, and reaching the developmental stage of colony reproduction, I feel that I am succeeding as a beekeeper and meeting my responsibility as a beekeeper in looking out for and providing for my bees. Two other considerations in evaluating my success are that I'm receiving enjoyment from this pursuit and that I am as self-sufficient as possible. Do you feel that you are succeeding as a beekeeper?

Happy Holidays to all, and good fortune in your beekeeping endeavors. -Terry Combs



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 for 2012 are \$10 for the calendar year January 1 through December 31 only. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the ISBA Bulletin. Beekeeping journals are available to ISBA members at about 25% discount. Mention membership in ISBA when sending your subscription payment to the publishers. Rates are subject to change without prior notice.

Make checks for membership payable to: Illinois State Beekeepers Association and mail to: Mike Mason, Treasurer, P.O. Box 21094, Springfield, IL 62703.

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

Reduced Journal Rates for 2012 (members only)

	<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yr</u>	<u>3 yr</u>
American Bee Journal	19.50	37.00	52.15
Bee Culture	21.00	38.00	N/A
The Speedy Bee	13.25	25.25	34.00

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