

Our request is for a proactive measure and not waiting for a very unfortunate reactive response which will be too late.

-Request of State Apiarist to resolve issue of 27 hives on less than ½ acre. Apiarist reported the hives were double stacked suggesting 54 hives and 4 more 4 doors down next to a public sidewalk. Apiarist sent an inspector and we were advised they would be moved.

-The infestation came back the next year. We took our issue back to the County. Once she was aware the County was getting involved the amount of bees seemed to dwindle.

-Several stings through the neighborhood. One causing a trip to the Hospital and EPI pen prescribed. That was a mistake people with heart problems should not use EPI pens. People with compromised immune systems need to be very aware of the dangers of stings.

-Aside from the frass(bee poop) sticking to everything including laundry. We have been told how to dress, do not wear cologne, do not wear flowery lotion, and use unscented deodorant.

-This is a clear example of improper beekeeping. One would hope that the beekeepers would police themselves, unfortunately not so. We get demonized they say we hate bees. We do not hate bees. Over populating and improper beekeeping would suggest that person does not care for bees.

-No hobby is cheap, if you cannot afford to operate a honey selling business properly then I would suggest that business is not for you in a residential area.

- Most of us were here long before Rena Wilson-Jones. We never had any issues until she started her experiment. We pay our taxes and we do have the right to enjoy our property without the nuisance Rena has caused.

-You have in your packet a legal brief on property rights, and nuisances.
What we have been experiencing is to the very word a nuisance.

-I strongly request the Zoning ordinance be enacted so that we may get
some part of our peace and quiet back in our homes, on our property.

Thank you

Barney Bryson

RECEIVED

JUL 29 2021

CHAMPAIGN CO. P & Z DEPARTMENT

Annette Donnelly, County Zoning Board Meeting Jul 29, 2021

I am here to ask you to consider a broader context, and potentially to win your support for a **NO** vote on restrictions to beekeeping and pollinators in Champaign County. Because of a personal dispute between two neighbors regarding bees in their pool, the county is considering legislation that will restrict beekeeping. This is concerning because the legislation inhibits site selection and imposes expensive fencing requirements on beekeepers that the bees are not likely to comply with, as they fly! In essence, the proposed rules hinder beekeepers who are unable to afford the mandates, and the bees will still go where they like, as they do!

I have learned a great deal from UI extension on the value of pollinators. I cannot share how much I appreciated learning about prairie eco systems and how our amazing park managers are conserving and beautifying our sister cities. Our parks and pollinator habitats are beautiful and abundant. Clearly, Champaign strives to create a pollinator friendly environment that is pleasing and educational for citizens.

Those of us interested in promoting a habitat and home for pollinators need to share evidence-based knowledge with you, as you consider regulations. Nationally, beekeeping is declining. The U.S. has experienced a 40% drop in managed bees from 2018-2019, due to Colony Collapse disorder. Within this context, beekeepers in the US have gone from 6 million hives in the 1940s to 2.8 million today. If these facts don't give you anxiety, consider that the insect population itself is experiencing an alarming decline which the BBC called an "insect Apocalypse" in a recent report. It is up to the beekeepers to gather data and ensure our crops, flowers and fields are pollinated.

don't read maps -
Honeybees forage in a 3 mile radius from their hive. It is difficult to imagine how far afield they travel and what backyard flowers and crops they pollinate. The honeybees amazing ability to travel far for forage makes it challenging, if not impossible, to legislate. If anything, managed hives have less of an influence on offending neighbors than rogue hives in the wild. Honeybees swarm when their colonies are at a peak and feel crowded. Beekeepers manage the colony to reduce the swarming instinct. When swarms do happen, beekeepers try to catch the swarm and create a new home for them. The honey bees will still reproduce in the wild...the question is where they will live; in a tree, an attic, the soffit of your house?

I am puzzled and saddened that a dispute between neighbors can turn into a zoning matter for pollinators...this is politics at its worst, and an embarrassment to the county that strives to promote a healthy ecosystem. Please consider a "**no-way**", **not on my watch** attitude regarding restricting beekeepers. The proposed legislation is not about the effect of bees – it's about a personality. The bees will fly where they wish. Personal disputes tend to make bad law – please consider the affect of your actions.

RECEIVED

JUL 29 2021

CHAMPAIGN CO. P & Z DEPARTMENT

07/29/2021

To whom it may concern:

My name is Sara and I'm the caregiver for Rena Jones' father who lives in the home with her and her husband. I've been in this family's home for the last 8 years and spend more time with them than I do my own kids. I've grown to become very close with this family and I view them as family as well. When I started working for them I had never been educated on the importance of bees or how they effect our daily living. I've been stung only twice in the 8 years I've worked there and my children have been on the property and never been stung. I know the intent of this meeting isn't to determine the character of Rena but I just want everyone to understand the ways of this generous, kind-hearted and hard working woman. Yes, there have been a few neighbors who have had issues with honeybees and anytime a problem would arise Rena was quick to try to resolve the problem the best way she could, including adding more water stations in her yard, offering honey to neighbors, offering money for car washes and just educating them on the over all purpose of honeybees. Rena and her husband Drew work effortlessly every year on a garden they maintain down the street from their residence and in that garden there are beautiful flowers as well as an array of vegetables that she's offered to neighbors just because she's that type of person. Rena had neighbors by the name of Ken and Nila Mills who I knew before I started working for Rena and after reading a typed letter that was signed by Ken I have to say it's very contradictory to what I witnessed with my own two eyes. Ken and his wife Nila would both come over to see the bees and were very intrigued and loved being educated by Rena. I vividly remember Rena having to instruct Ken on a couple of occasions to back up away from the hives because he was so eager to have an up-close experience with the bees. I say all of this to convey if Ken were still living I truly believe the words out of his mouth would not match the words of his typed letter. I understand the frustration of neighbors complaining the bees are a "nuisance" but I have to ask how is it any different from the nuisance of flies, wasps, ants, yellow jackets, raccoon or squirrels? Who do we run and complain to about them? Just because Rena is the "bee lady" in the neighborhood doesn't mean it's fair to target her and place the blame of all honeybees on her. I have a pool in my backyard and have seen bees around the water but that doesn't mean they come from a hive right next door as bees travel to find a drinking source. I've watched Rena come home from working five clients, change clothes and voluntarily move hives just to please the complaints of her neighbors. I've always admired Rena as a woman and look up to her for many reasons. Her bees are her peace and I commend her for doing her part to keep them around and I'm against any restrictions for not just her, but all the beekeepers trying to do their part to help our community.

Signed,



Sara Brown

RECEIVED

JUL 29 2021

CHAMPAIGN CO. P & Z DEPARTMENT

Susan Burgstrom

From: Maggie Wachter <maggiewachter@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 8:11 PM
To: Susan Burgstrom
Subject: Bees by Maggie Wachter

RECEIVED

JUL 29 2021

CHAMPAIGN CO. P & Z DEPARTMENT

Bees

I am a master beekeeper. I own a company called Second Nature Honey. I have been beekeeping in Champaign County for about 15 years. I have about 50 hives at 10 locations throughout Champaign County. In Urbana itself I have 4 hives at Sola Gratia Farm, 5 hives at Curtis Orchard, 7 hives at County Arbors Tree Nursery and one hive on top of the Courier Café. The rest are distributed on farms throughout Champaign County. I also teach beekeeping classes at Parkland College.

My hives are gentle. None of them are Africanized, the so-called "killer bees". They have been registered with the State of Illinois and the US Department of Agriculture. The State provides us beekeepers with a system of beekeeping resources including regional bee inspectors who provide us beekeepers with valuable guidance, advice and support.

The situation that sparked this situation seems to me to demonstrate the need for neighborly conflict resolution, not draconian regulations that will practically eradicate beekeeping for the foreseeable future.

Since you are concerned about Champaign County resident's wellbeing, I would like to know if you have considered the impact of such a draconian regulation as you propose on birds who depend on bees for an important part of their diet, or on one third of your own diet which is pollinated specifically by honey bees or on the beauty of flowers and trees?

Beekeeping legislation for the state was crafted a few years ago with heavy input from beekeepers over many months. Beekeeping is a serious, scientific endeavor that takes years of experience. For example:

The discussion of nucleus hives is an example of your layman knowledge, for some beekeepers keep only small hives year found. This is especially true for women or others who are physically challenged.

The discussion of a fence requirement is another example of incomplete beekeeping knowledge because many hives swarm and live in the wild, often in trees. Wild bees live around us everywhere.

Another example of inadequate experience is a discussion of honey bee extermination. A few years ago a tree was cut down in Champaign where a wild beehive was living. The city tried to kill it with poison. After the bees were killed, many other bees arrive to take the poisoned honey back to their own hives to feed to their babies. Many hives were needlessly killed.

There are bee hives in the White House garden, there are others on Chicago City Hall. There are bees in the heart of New York City. Here in Illinois we already register our hives with the State.

As we consider the individual case that began this examination, let's remember that it is a single situation. We residents of Champaign County have a long legacy of agriculture. Encouraging and promoting our bees is part of our legacy as agricultural workers and human beings.

If there are regulations that are going to affect us beekeepers, then beekeepers should have integrated input. Bee happy!

JUL 29 2021

CHAMPAIGN CO. P & Z DEPARTMENT

For the Bees

Robert Meyer
Parkland College Professor of Agriculture and Business

1

Robert Meyer


- Parkland College
– Professor of Agriculture and Business for over 30 years
- Central Eastern Illinois Beekeeper Association (CEIBA) Member
- Hobby beekeeper in rural Champaign County

2

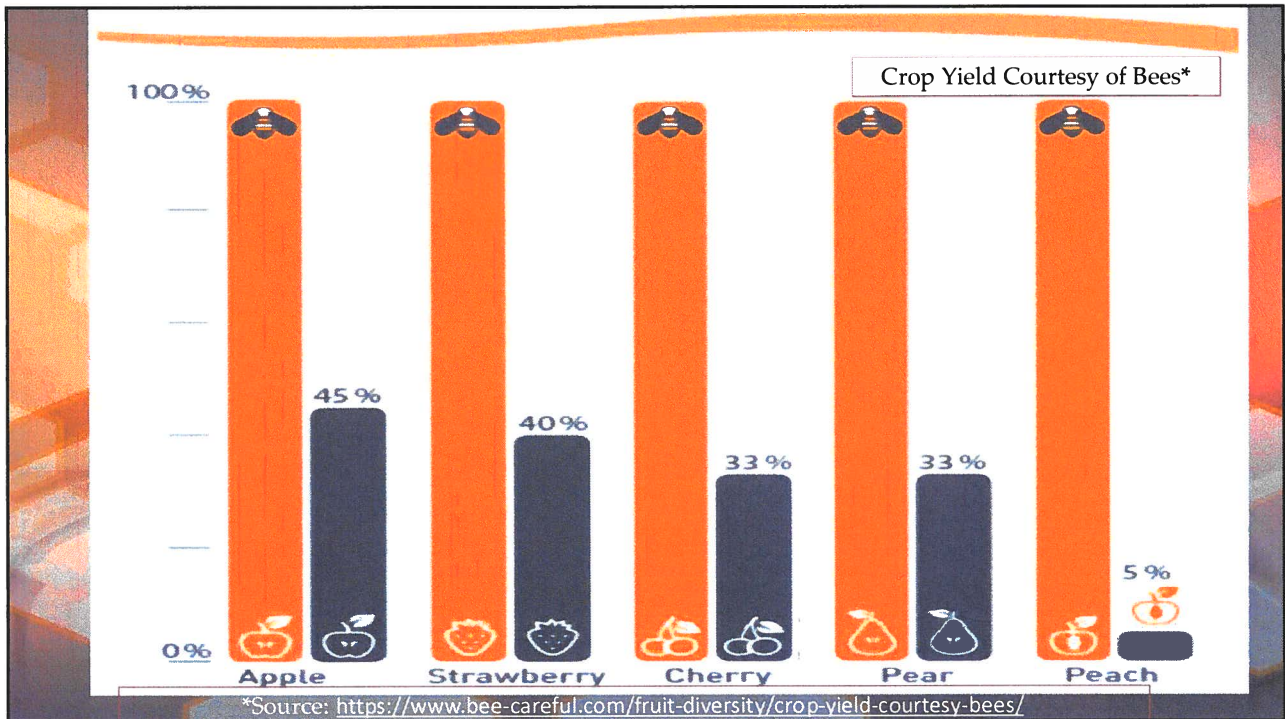
RECEIVED
JUL 30 2021
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Presentation Overview

- 1) Economic and financial benefits of honeybees in Champaign County
- 2) Quiz
- 3) Beekeepers in Champaign County



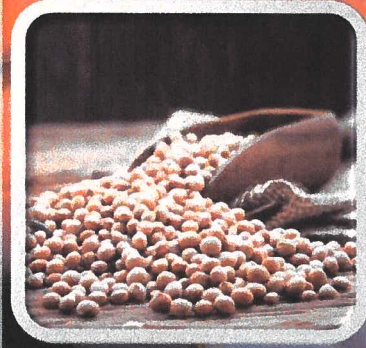
3



4

Economic and Financial Benefits of local Honeybees

- 543,765 acres of crops of corn for grain and soybeans for beans are annually produced in Champaign County**
 - According to studies, bees are currently increase yields by 10%*
 - 277,293(corn)x 2 bushels x \$4 = \$2,218,344
 - 266,472(beans) x 2 bushels x \$14 = \$7,461,216
 - \$9,679,560/year in increased crop revenue currently happening
 - Without honeybees, that are being supported by local beekeepers, Champaign county could lose this potential near \$10 million in economic revenue



**Source: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Illinois/cp17019.pdf

*Source: <https://www.bee-careful.com/fruit-diversity/crop-yield-courtesy-bees/>

5



6



7



8



9



10



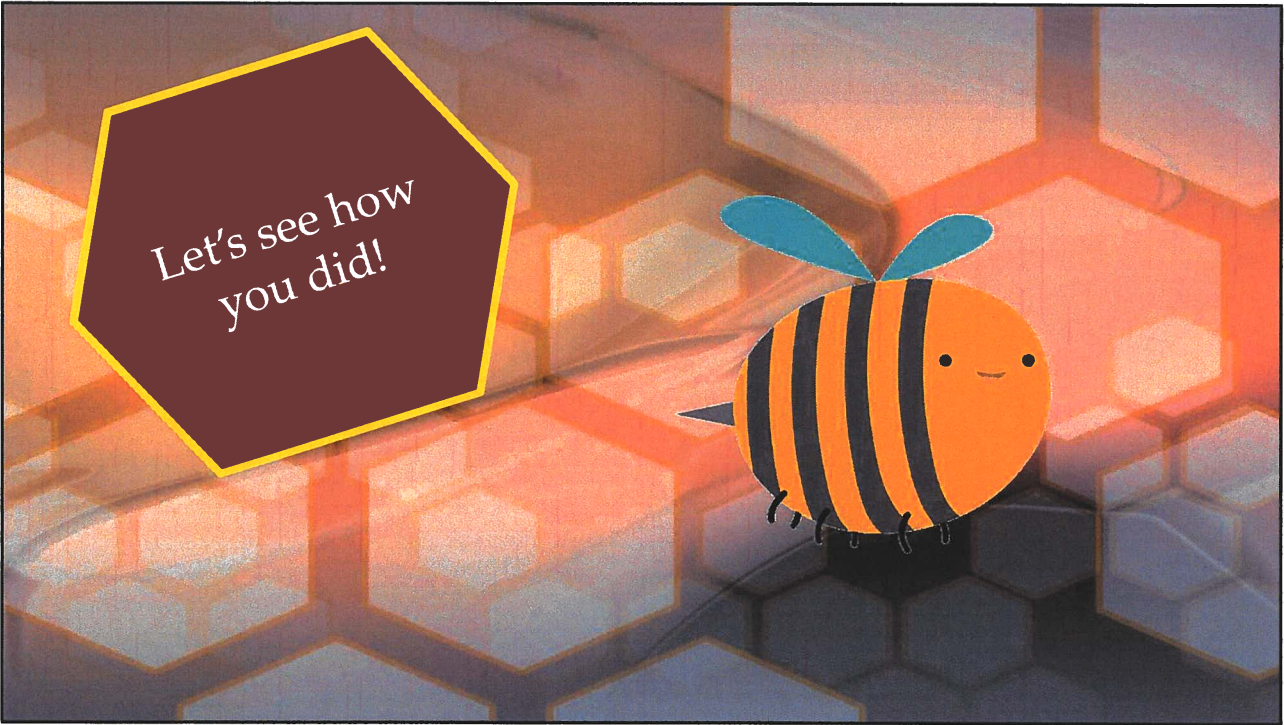
11



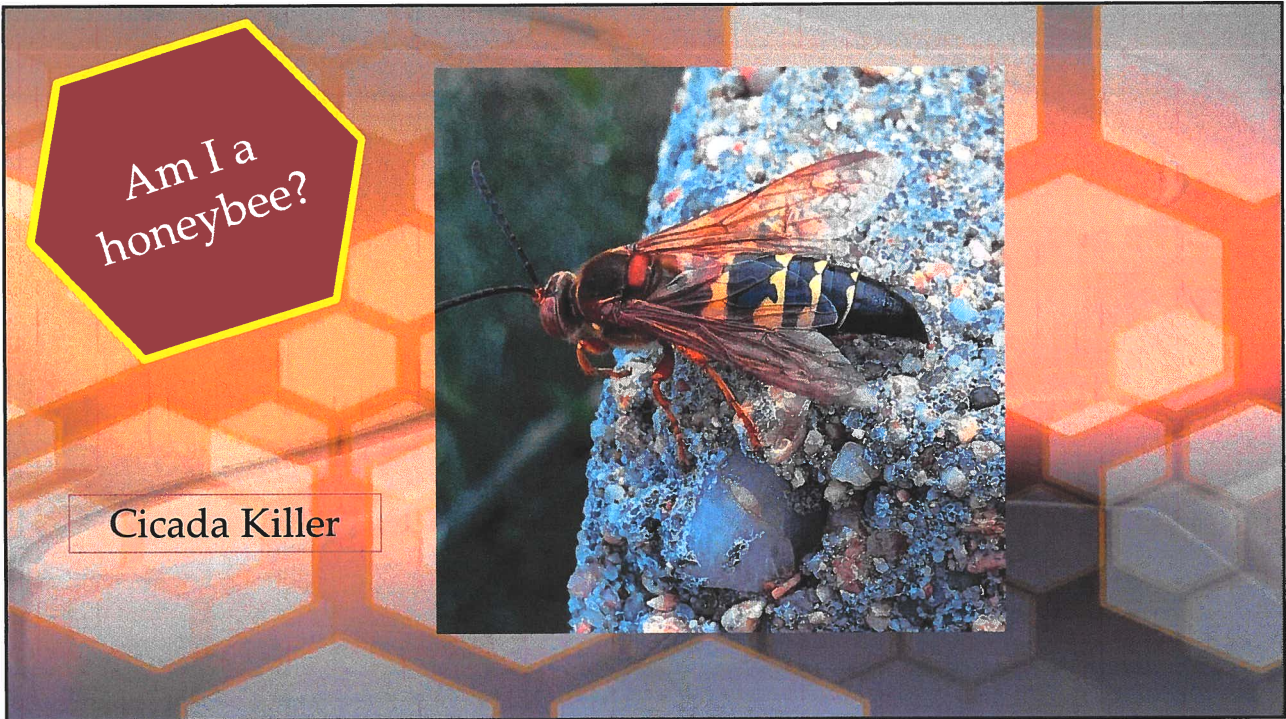
12



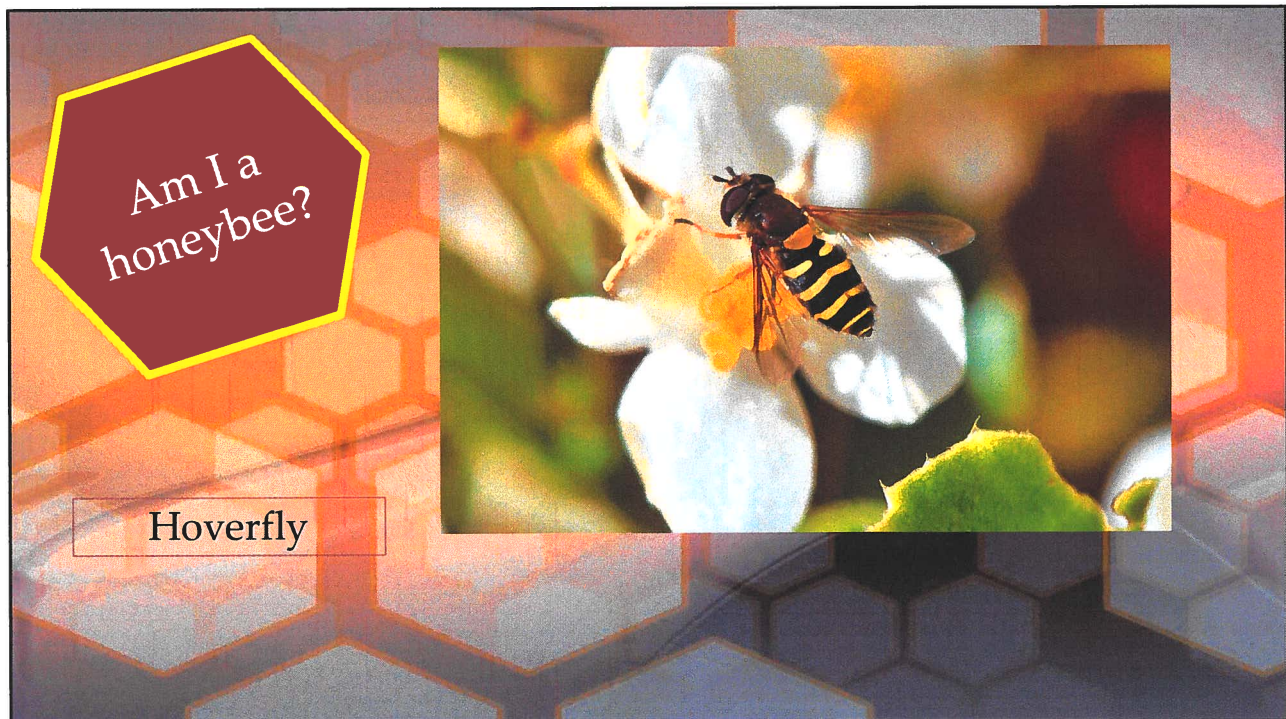
13



14



15



16



17



18



19




20



21

Beekeepers in Champaign County


- Hobby that produces honey, candle wax, and other products. Many beekeepers buy locally only.
- Beekeepers are volunteering time in schools and institutions to enlighten children and members of the community on the benefits of bees.
- Local bees are working everyday, free of charge, to ensure our local crops (even your own gardens) are producing for Champaign County.
- Beekeepers ask for no support of any kind from local authorities. They do this hobby for the betterment of the eco system, to increase crop yields in our area, and have a local positive common interest.



22

Conclusion

- Passing any ordinance that would discourage beekeeping is a financial and economic downfall of Champaign County.



23



Thank You

24